

**THE RISE OF NEW-SCIENCE EPISTEMOLOGICAL, LINGUISTIC,  
AND ETHICAL IDEALS AND THE RISE OF THE LYRIC GENRE IN  
THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH FOR THE  
DEGREE OF PH. D. IN THE FACULTY OF ARTS**

**1995  
CARSON ROBERT BERGSTROM  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE**



## **Table of Contents**

<b>Abstract</b>	iii
<b>Declaration</b>	v
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	vi
<b>The History of Thought</b>	vii
<b>Preamble</b>	8
<b>Chapter One - The Critical Background</b>	19
<b>Chapter Two - Experimental Science, Authority, Language</b>	57
<b>Chapter Three - Science and Lyric in the Seventeenth Century</b>	133
<b>Chapter Four - Eighteenth-Century Lyric</b>	170
<b>Chapter Five - Concluding Remarks</b>	280
<b>Notes</b>	287
<b>Bibliography</b>	356

## **Abstract**

This thesis undertakes to explore the specific ways in which the emergence of new-science epistemological, linguistic, and ethical ideals influenced and transformed how seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writers conceived of lyric experience, bringing about a metamorphosis of the lyric from a minor to a major genre.

The *Preamble* establishes the polemical and critical bases for this study, drawing attention to the ways in which eighteenth-century criticism devalues the contribution of the lyric in eighteenth-century culture and society. It shows how the lyric was the most popular poetic form throughout the century, and it provides evidence of a changing view of its expressive abilities from the early to the later decades. The *Preamble* concludes with the thesis that the lyric's change in generic valuation occurs because it shared many of the epistemological assumptions which conditioned or modified most thought and feeling throughout the century, that lyric experience evolved as part of a cultural circumambience in which, through both ideological and rhetorical precepts, experimental science was exerting an hegemonic force on every aspect of day-to-day experience. The lyric genre was that form which most readily expressed the new experience and appreciation of nature brought about by the experimental science.

*Chapter One* assesses why the modern critical tradition has conceived the image of the eighteenth-century lyric as it has done for about two hundred years. This review yields theoretical and historical fruits for the arguments of later chapters. *Chapter Two*, focusing on Bacon's *The Advancement of Learning*, the work of Wilkins, Sprat, Locke, and others,

examines those particular components of the new science which directly influenced the metamorphosis of the lyric genre--the rejection of authority, the development of epistemological principles, and adherence to a linguistic, rhetorical, and ethical code. *Chapter Three* shows how the steady advance of experimental science in the seventeenth century began to alter attitudes and perceptions of the lyric's expressive potential, entailing a discussion of how the new science altered literary values and standards which were derived from classicism. *Chapter Four* explores critical views of the genre (and of specific types) in the eighteenth century, focusing in particular on the value of poetic description, on conceptualisations of the genre's specific poetic features, on careful assessments of the rules of composition, and on other such matters. The *Chapter Five* provides a final parallel between lyric and scientific perceptions of the way in which nature leads to ecstatic experiences which are imaged spatially, and concludes with some remarks about the implications of the thesis.

### ***Declaration***

I declare that this thesis has been composed by myself. No portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning. Some of the research has contributed to conference papers.

### ***Education and Research Experience***

Since obtaining the degrees of B. A. (1981: Class 1) and M. A. (1983: Class 1) in English Literature from the University of British Columbia, Canada, I have published an article on Canadian literature, an article in *The British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, am contributing entries for a new eighteenth-century philosophical dictionary, read at various conferences and other venues on a variety of subject matter, am preparing an article on James Thomson, and undertaken research in history of the novel, pastoral, and history of language. After working as a Lecturer on the University of Manchester English Department's Part-Time Degree from 1990 - 1992, I joined the Department as a Temporary Lecturer in September 1992.

### ***Acknowledgements***

I would like to thank my supervisors, Dr Geoffrey Carnall and Dr John Price, both of whom have shown wonderful patience and forbearance for a student who suffered various travails over some ten years, and who supported a project which at times must have appeared doomed to failure. I am especially grateful to Dr Carnall and Dr Price for providing valuable assistance and encouragement after his retirement from the university: to him I owe no small degree of scholarly and personal debts. Dr Roxann Wheeler read a late draft of the thesis at a time when she could have been more profitably employed, and for this I am grateful. I would also like to give thanks to colleagues at Manchester University who advised me on the best ways to juggle teaching and writing, and special thanks to David Denison--his patience and generous loan of his computer during the usual technology crisis were much appreciated.

I could not, of course, have written this thesis without the persistent and loving help of my partner, Amanda. She rallied me from many a dark period, even when her own resources were under immense strain; without her willingness to work, her generosity of spirit, and her special understanding, I sincerely doubt that I would have found the will to finish.

*The History of Thought*

Often the things which have seemed true to me  
when I began to think about them, seemed false  
when I tried to place them on paper.

René Descartes

*Discourse on the Method*

### **Preamble**

A letter signed simply "J. A." in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for September 1786 makes the following request: "PERMIT me, under favour of your Magazine, to make this public testimony of the pleasure I have received in reading Mrs. Smith's *Elegiac Sonnets*."<sup>1</sup>

What? Pleasure from reading Charlotte Smith's *Elegiac Sonnets*? Apparently so, and four editions in two years suggests that many of J. A.'s contemporaries likewise believed that Smith's poems--her lyric poems--would yield them a high quantum of pleasure.

Coleridge provides another and obviously more intriguing instance of a positive response to lyric poems *written* in the eighteenth century. In 1789 he read William Lisle Bowles's *Fourteen Sonnets*, an event which he later recognised as personally apocalyptic.

Bowles's poems unfolded "a style of poetry, so tender, and yet so manly, so natural and real, and yet so dignified, and harmonious" that they awakened what he terms "feelings of the heart"; this awakening in turn allowed his "natural faculties . . . to expand, and [his] original tendencies to develop themselves: [his] fancy, and the love of nature, and the sense of beauty in forms and sounds."<sup>2</sup> For a time these poems even quenched Coleridge's thirst for metaphysical speculation, and he proudly confesses that he "laboured to make proselytes, not only of [his] companions, but of all with whom [he]



conversed, of whatever rank, and in whatever place.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed, not content simply to espouse Bowles's poetical merits, this zeal motivated him to transcribe some forty copies for friends! Coleridge was perhaps Bowles's most ardent fan, but besides the forty extra hand-written copies in circulation the *Sonnets* managed at least three eighteenth-century editions, while an expanded nineteenth-century volume of Bowles's poetry reached ten.<sup>4</sup>

Neither Coleridge's nor J. A.'s remarks can be discounted as isolated cases of eighteenth-century readers confessing their eccentric fondness for lyric poetry: an anthology devoted exclusively to eighteenth-century praise of contemporary lyrics would comprise a sizeable tome. John Aikin's *Essays on Song-Writing* (1772), for instance, rejects the common view “that the moderns fall short of the antients more particularly in this species of poetry than in any other.” An objective, informed comparison would, he believes, resolve that “the English names of Dryden, Gray, Akenside, Mason, Collins, Warton, are not inferior in real poetical elevation to the most renowned Grecian or Roman which antiquity can produce.”<sup>5</sup> In *An Inquiry Into Some Passages in Dr. Johnson's Lives of the Poets* (1783), Robert Potter declares that no English poet before Collins actually achieved true lyric excellence, a feat made possible because Collins's “mind was impressed with a tender melancholy, but without any mixture of that sullen gloom which deadens its powers; it led him to the softest sympathy, that most refined feeling of the human heart; his faculties were vigorous, and his genius truly sublime.”<sup>6</sup> As writers began more and more to assert the positive virtues of contemporary English poetry as a whole, Collins's lyric poetry became a focus of praise. John Gilbert Cooper, for instance, praises Collins's “Ode to Evening” because it “is animated by proper Allegorical Personages, and coloured highly by incidental Expression, [and] warms the breast with a sympathetic Glow of retired Thoughtfulness”; he adds in a footnote that Collins's “neglected Genius will hereafter be both an Honour and a Disgrace to our Nation.”<sup>7</sup> The *Gentleman's Magazine* for October 1785 described Collins's *Odes* as “truly pathetic,” while two years later, in his superbly belligerent *Letters on Literature*, John Pinkerton (published under the

pseudonym of Robert Heron) contends that he would hardly care if all of Waller's and Cowley's lyric poetry were "thrown in the fire," but he praises the "tender melancholy" which infuses Collins's verse, while Gray he designates "the first and greatest of modern lyric writers; nay, I will venture to say, of all lyric Writers."<sup>8</sup> When Aikin notes that "The graver and sublimer strains of the Lyric muse are exemplified in the modern ode, a species of composition which admits of the boldest flights of poetical enthusiasm, and the wildest creations of the imagination," he is voicing a prevalent view about the intrinsic excellence of lyric poetry.<sup>9</sup>

Yet seen through the wide angle lens of history (and without blinkers as to eighteenth-century reading prejudices) such positive responses to lyric forms should not strike the reader as odd. The lyric, after all, occupies a rather large tract of the English poetic tradition, its roots stretching deep into pre-Renaissance culture (both literate and non-literate). In his *Defence of Poesie* (1595), Philip Sidney designated the lyric as virtually the only indigenous British kind: "Other sort of poetry, almost have we none, but that lyrical kind of songs and sonnets."<sup>10</sup> Norman Maclean confirms Sidney's point, finding that "Unlike most literary species, the lyric had had a sustained English tradition and flourished before the Revival of Learning."<sup>11</sup> The work of poets like Donne, Carew, Lovelace, Waller, Cowley, Herrick, and a host of others underlines the importance of lyric forms before the eighteenth century. Indeed, the character of Eugenius in Dryden's *An Essay of Dramatick Poesie* (1668) remarks that, while the ancients could still claim the bays from the moderns in the dramatic arts, "we more surpass them in all the other; for in the Epique or Lyrique way it will be hard for them to show us one such amongst them as we have many now living, or who lately were." Eugenius, it deserves noting, does not deem the modern lyric a major genre, while those assembled at this fictional debate "were thus far of *Eugenius* his opinion, that the sweetness of *English Verse* was never understood or practis'd by our Fathers."<sup>12</sup> Although John Norris, for one, did not hesitate to voice the opinion, in 1687, that "The Pindaric way . . . is the highest and most

magnificent kind of writing in Verse," such enthusiasm as his was rare, and rarely echoed in the early decades of the eighteenth century.<sup>13</sup> For example, Prior could observe that, like a squirrel running on a wheel, those "merry Blades, / that frisk it under PINDUS' Shades," trying their luck with "noble Songs, and lofty Odes," did not produce many good poems but were "Brought back, how fast soe'er they go: / Always aspiring; always low."<sup>14</sup> Still, the evidence points to the obvious conclusion that it would be stretching credulity to insist that all Augustan or neo-classical readers differed so radically in sensibility from their predecessors that they found lyrics repugnant: Prior, after all, penned his share of lyrics.<sup>15</sup>

Indeed, the actual volume of lyrics published during the eighteenth century testifies to the genre's continued popularity with the poetry-reading public throughout the century. In 1706, for example, Congreve's Preface to *A Pindarique Ode, Humbly Offer'd to the Queen* noted that "There is nothing more frequent among us, than a sort of Poems intituled Pindarique Odes."<sup>16</sup> When Prior likewise wanted to boast about Marlborough's military successes, he penned "An Ode, Humbly Inscrib'd to the Queen. On the Glorious Success of Her Majesty's Arms" (1706), promising that "if the Reader will be good enough to Pardon me this Excursion, I will neither trouble him with Poem or Preface any more, 'till my Lord Duke of Marlborough gets another Victory greater than those of Blenheim and Ramilies."<sup>17</sup> Of course, the political turbulence of the early century provided many fruitful occasions for writers of panegyric; besides nationalistic Pindarics, readers also gave a ready reception to Horatian, Anacreontic, and even Sapphic odes.<sup>18</sup> A survey of titles in David Foxon's *English Verse 1701-1750* or of the poetical pieces in the various magazines throughout the century confirms Congreve's impression that the British muse was inspiring large numbers of lyric poems: for instance, of the approximately ninety poems (excluding prologues and epilogues) printed in the *Town and Country Magazine* for 1770, about fifty were lyric types, and a similar ratio occurs in other magazines.<sup>19</sup> In other words, when the urge to write came upon an eighteenth-century versifier, and it

often did, the mood usually transformed into a lyric poem of some kind. Thomas Gray, in a letter to William Mason, remarks that Mason makes “no more of writing an Ode, and throwing it in the fire, than of buckling and unbuckling [his] shoe.”<sup>20</sup> Such numbers, however, hardly influence modern critical perceptions or judgments of the cultural centrality of the eighteenth-century lyric. Although Oswald Doughty argued in 1924 that “The common belief that few lyrics were written between 1700-1800 is entirely mistaken. During those years so many lyrical (or would-be lyrical) poems were written as at any time probably before,” and although H. J. C. Grierson noted in 1928 that “Songs and odes were produced in abundance,” and even though some fifty years later Donald Davie stressed that “so far from eighteenth-century lyrics being hard to find, there is an embarrassment of riches,” most critics (and readers) accept Pat Rogers's assertion that the lyric genre went “its quiet, agreeable and mostly undistinguished way.”<sup>21</sup> Indeed, William Hutchings has remarked that the eighteenth-century lyric remains “a subject so little discussed that a surprising number of people still think there wasn't any.”<sup>22</sup>

The reader may now suspect that with these few evidential crumbs he will be asked to swallow the preposterous notion that contrary to firmly-established opinion the eighteenth-century was a lyrical age, and not that prosaic age during which, even for Coleridge, “the matter and diction seemed . . . characterized not so much by poetic thoughts, as by thoughts *translated* into the language of poetry.”<sup>23</sup> No, certainly not: such an exercise, besides its trivial critical utility, would provide no insight into the lyric experiences of Coleridge, J. A., or any of the other writers cited. These experiences suggest that during the eighteenth century the lyric no longer remained what Joshua Poole in 1657 designated it, “A second species of Poesie” which “may be made use of on any occasion. To this head are referred *Madrigals, Sonnets, Hymnes, Ballets, Odes*, whereof some are *amorous*, some *rural*, some *military*, some *jovial*, made for *drollery*, and *drinking*; in a word, what suits best with the Poets humour,” a categorization reiterated by Edward Bysshe in 1725.<sup>24</sup> Instead, the changing estimate of the lyric genre's expressive

potential reveals a gradual metamorphosis of a third-level poetic genre into a major one, one from which both writers and readers expected to realise the strongest poetical affects.

Such a metamorphosis does not, however, warrant the conclusion that changes in writerly and readerly expectations and appreciation of the lyric ensued as a consequence of an improvement in the *quality* of lyric poetry, that eighteenth-century lyrics show a measurable, tangible degree of aesthetic or stylistic advance over previous lyrics. While such a project might prove enlightening, providing that it was possible to establish workable principles of analysis and assessment, the task of assessing poetic quality--of comparing good or bad poetry--lies outside the boundaries of this thesis. The lyric's "rise" to major genre status during the eighteenth century does not, moreover, mean that it displaced epic and drama from Helicon's pinnacle, or that readers no longer regarded other poetic forms--satire, for instance--as vital registers of specific patterns of experience, or that other forms--the novel, to be particular--did not enjoy expanding readerships.<sup>25</sup> It means rather that at an important level of experience, where sensations, thoughts, and words collide, the lyric genre somehow came closest to satisfying the complex expressive demands made on poetry by, in particular, mid- and late-eighteenth-century readers. Indeed, as Maclean points out, however little we may think of the period as lyrical, many commentators of the age saw their special contributions to lyric expression as one of their major literary achievements.<sup>26</sup> Thus to explore and to theorize the evolution of eighteenth-century perceptions and perspectives about the lyric genre--that is, to try to understand what brought about this change in taste--constitutes the primary aim and function of this work.

The concept of taste, of course, ignites a complex range of reactions, particularly when the term is capitalised and used in conjunction with the adjectives good or bad, serving as a battle ground for competing ideologies and cultural positions; as Raymond Williams notes, the concept only begins to lose its connection as a physical sense towards the latter part of the eighteenth century when it takes on a sense of taste as a

form of discrimination, with Wordsworth later effectively severing it from the body and giving it prominence as an intellectual and moral act.<sup>27</sup> I invoked the word "taste" not to designate a superficial alteration in aesthetic or generic fashions nor to insinuate a class-defined division in cultural goods but to suggest that the gradual transformation in the lyric's generic status occurred almost at a physical state of apprehension, almost as if writers and readers found in lyrics a model of how they looked at the world (to use a notoriously suspect phrasing). In other words, the lyric's "rise" in poetical status argues strongly that in fundamental, profound, and enigmatic ways it shared many of the epistemological and expressive assumptions which conditioned or modified most thought and feeling throughout the century. Bluntly, eighteenth-century lyric experience evolved as part of a cultural circumambience in which, through both its ideological and rhetorical precepts, experimental science effectively exerted a hegemonic force on every aspect of day-to-day experience, including literary experience. As John Christie and Sally Shuttleworth argue, the Enlightenment's "cultural moment . . . was one of particular and major significance, for it marked the public ascendance of science to a position of cultural authority in the West, advancing science as the privileged form of cognition and action while recruiting its powers to aid the emerging campaign for ideological liberalism and political reformism."<sup>28</sup> In this particular cultural matrix, I will argue, the lyric genre provided that literary form which most integrally expressed the new experience and appreciation of nature brought about by the *experimental* scientists.<sup>29</sup> The stress in the previous sentence on the term *experimental* draws attention to the speciality and specificity of this new sense of science: not just science as *any* generalized acquisition of knowledge but, as Johnson distinguishes it in his *Dictionary*, a type of knowledge categorised by "Certainty grounded on demonstration." Certainty in this sense was derived either from the operations of reason working from the data of personal observation and experience, or from hypotheses rigorously tested according to the principles of scientific experiments: sense experiences--the information supplied to the mind through physical sensations--

constituted the primary ingredients of this category of knowledge.<sup>30</sup> Of course, eighteenth-century commentators often employed synonymous terms such as natural and empirical philosophy or just science, and often without seeing a need to make terminological distinctions about their particular sense of science. Unless otherwise stipulated, the term science in the following work means modern experimental science.

My view that the "rise" of modern experimental science effectively determined the "rise" of the lyric genre may doubtless do some violence to the post-Romantic perception of the lyric's emotional and spiritual "function." Even so, the task set here impels us to defamiliarise ourselves with that specific notion of the lyric and to initiate an appraisal of the genre in terms which do justice to eighteenth-century meditations on the relationships between nature, knowing, and our storehouse of language: literature. As Ludmilla Jordanova reminds us, "Science and literature are united in their shared location within cultural history."<sup>31</sup> Ironically, before the romantic era this shared relationship was probably conceptually sharper and emotionally stronger in the eighteenth century, that is, was experienced with less alienation and greater conviction about the value of their intellectual affiliations, than after it. Prior to the romantic revolution the literary genres were conceived as a means (and hence a medium) for expressing our rootedness in nature and process. Umberto Eco astutely remarks that integration of this type provides the basis for identity, for any statement of "I":

From the very beginning of time, the ability to extend one's corporeality (and therefore to alter one's own natural dimensions) has been the very condition of *homo faber*. To consider such a situation as a degradation of human nature implies that nature and man are not one and the same thing. It implies an inability to accept the idea that nature exists in relation to man, is defined, extended, and modified in and by man; just as man is one particular expression of nature, an active, modifying expression who distinguishes himself from his environment precisely because of his capacity to act upon it and to define it--a capacity that gives him the right to say "I."<sup>32</sup>

Thus, my divergence from most modern assumptions about the place of the lyric genre in eighteenth-century culture occurs precisely because I want to account for its popularity and significance in that culture, something to which most modern critics pay scant regard. Moreover, this analytical and synthetic task seems to me necessary for at least two basic

reasons: firstly, it should open up another dimension in our understanding of the complexity and diversity of eighteenth-century thought and feeling; and, secondly, it may prove beneficial in instigating new critical thinking about genre and culture in the eighteenth century.

However, before I set about justifying my claims that a reevaluation of the lyric occurs in the eighteenth century because significant features of its poetic experience cohered with the epistemological and linguistic ideals of experimental science, it seems essential to give readers an explanation of not only how but why modern eighteenth-century scholarship has generally and persistently minimized the lyric's contribution to eighteenth-century taste, to eighteenth-century imagination. *Chapter One* will therefore assess how the modern critical tradition has perceived the status of the lyric genre in the period, and why it has conceived this view of the eighteenth-century lyric for about two hundred years. This review of the critical tradition will establish the need for the theoretical and critical arguments of later chapters, particularly for *Chapter Two*. In *Chapter Two*, I will examine those particular components in the development of the new science which directly influenced the metamorphosis of the lyric genre--its rejection of authority, its epistemological ideals, and its linguistic and rhetorical code. *Chapter Three* will show how the steady advance of experimental science in the seventeenth century began to alter attitudes and perceptions of the lyric's expressive potential. *Chapter Four* will explore critical views of the genre (or of specific types) in the eighteenth century, particularly in regards to the role of description in poetry, problems of harmony and structure, and the growing sense of the genre's poetic virtues.

As noted earlier, readers should not expect this work to attempt any judgments about the poetic qualities of eighteenth-century lyrics or to "explain" the rise of the lyric mode through an analysis of individual lyric poems or even of poets. Instead, the focus will fall largely on critical commentaries, essays, prefaces, remarks and observations in magazines, essays discovered in the transactions of literary and other societies, and so



forth in order to show that the type and range of thinking which led to the lyric's improved status as a genre owes its specific intellectual flavour to the growing influence of the new science. Consequently, much of my discussion and my evidence draws largely upon little known or unknown writers at the expense, it might seem, of the more famous eighteenth-century thinkers who made offhand or more in-depth observations about many of the topics raised in this thesis. This selection of sources may therefore appear somewhat whimsical, but my reasons for examining lesser-known writers remain integral to the intellectual and critical conceptions of the work. Firstly, these writers provide a valuable historical register of changing cultural sensibilities: undoubtedly often influenced by the work of greater minds, often working with and from the ideas of more respected thinkers, they nevertheless show independence and often originality as they work through literary and other cultural matters. This independence and originality occurs, as we will see later, because more often than not they seem to approach literary and critical issues from the perspective of the new scientist, relying upon personal observations and "testing" to determine the validity of assertions about literature. Secondly, in their particular focus on the lyric genre, they encompass important and widely-ranging debates about such topics as the writing experience, the substance of poetry, the grounds of harmony, the role and value of description in poetry, the nature of the generic experience, the poet's relation to the past and to tradition, and so forth. In short, in their contribution to debate these minor writers played a significant role in the "rise" of the lyric genre, a literary phenomenon which offers a unique window onto that location where literature and science meet. Their obscurity, then, actually provides a means of charting new paths of understanding and appreciation of the dynamics of eighteenth-century culture, the continued need for which will be outlined in further detail in the next chapter.

Finally, it will become clear that much--though certainly not all--of the evidence about the lyric's potential for expressing the greatest poetical thoughts and feelings tends to derive from debates about the nature of the ode, and often about the Pindaric. Partly, of course, this apparent focus on the ode stems from the available evidence--and the

availability of the evidence--but there are good grounds for arguing that eighteenth-century writers were apt to assume that specific features of one kind could readily be applied to another kind; this easy conflation of generic features is compatible with the eighteenth-century sense of the lyric's genealogy. Particularly with this genre, which was almost always defined as the most ancient of all forms, a sense that all of its kinds developed from a specific root experience and gave rise to a typical, formulaic expression means that writers shared a good many of the same ideas about what constituted the basic lyric. The following observations provide a typical assessment: "*Songs* are a Part of *Lyric Poetry*, for *Ode* indeed signifies a *Song*"; "The Verse of the *Lyric Poetry* in the beginning, was only of one kind, but for the sake of Pleasure, and the Music to which they were sung, they so vary'd the Numbers and Feet, that their sorts are now almost innumerable."<sup>33</sup> As Poole and Bysse confirmed for us earlier, the lyric genre included a wide range of poetic forms.

## ***Chapter One - The Critical Background***

### *Section 1.*

The *Preamble* drew attention to the fact that critics have noted, occasionally, that a vast number of lyrics were produced in the eighteenth century--odes, sonnets, songs, hymns, elegies, ballads--but *most* critics for the better part of this century have seen little of importance or value in the lyric genre as a means for understanding the dynamics of eighteenth-century culture. I am by no means the first reader to discover this history of neglect, as will become clear later in this chapter, nor I suspect will I be the last to wonder why it occurred. The dismissive posture assumed by the generality of critics towards eighteenth-century lyric poetry derives its authority, of course, from intangible intellectual processes subsumed within the historical evolution of the eighteenth-century critical tradition--most of the stages of which must remain outside the orbit of the following discussion--and in no sense do I wish to point an accusatory finger at critics contributing to this tradition nor to pose as a single voice crying in the wilderness. No eighteenth-century scholar can accomplish much in the field without recognising a profound debt to a critical tradition which has, against fairly powerful odds, continued to present and represent our period's citizens and writers, their ideas and emotions; a great deal of criticism throughout this century has worked hard and successfully to revise perceptions of the intrinsic and lasting importance of the period's literature, and that work goes on. Some commentators, moreover, have taken note of the lyric and attempted to assess its general place in the hierarchy of eighteenth-century poetry. Interested generally in taking stock of its comparative or local poetic value, often seen as an indicator of nascent romanticism, individual poems or writers have received positive judgments, and a sense that the lyric genre may have played a greater role in poetic tastes than usually considered is occasionally voiced. More about that later, however. For now, it must be stressed that my intentions in this chapter are not to review the entire history of eighteenth-century criticism or to chart the success of revisionaries but to show how

certain basic perceptions--commonplaces--about the quality and nature of the poetry of this period have remained seemingly intractable to scholarly attempts to dispel them with both evidence and polemic. These commonplaces lie in the way of obtaining an appreciation of the lyric genre's growing reputation in a culture in which experimental science was likewise growing in influence and respect.

As a preliminary to exploring the lyric's transformation from a minor to a major genre in relationship to the development of eighteenth-century experimental science, this chapter will attempt to offer an explanation--a narrative, as it were--of how and why the eighteenth-century lyric has remained a largely undiscovered country from which few have returned with reports of marvellous phenomena: only by seeing the ways in which critical perceptions of the eighteenth-century have been formed can we hope to change or modify those perceptions. At the obvious danger of misrepresenting and over-simplifying the dynamic interplay of forces which converge in literary history and critical discourses, I will focus closely on the development of three separate, though ultimately related critical commonplaces, on evaluative, constitutive critical norms whose synergic influence continue to delimit effectively reader expectations as regards eighteenth-century lyric poetry (if not eighteenth-century poetry in general). The commonplace assumption that eighteenth-century poetry exudes prose virtues will, in respect of both chronology and critical influence, be addressed first; this will lay the foundation for a reassessment of the general view that the period when the lyric most clearly achieves major genre status--the mid- and late-eighteenth century--constitutes an immense poetic desert, a period of mainly banal sentiments and second-rate writing. Usually, critics perceive this period as a degenerate phase of Augustanism or as a difficult birthing stage of Romanticism. Only after an analysis of this critical background will it be sensible to discuss the few modern approaches to the eighteenth-century lyric which abut on my specific concerns.

Before plunging straight in, however, it might not come amiss to make a few observations about the formation and function (ideal and practical) of literary commonplaces with a view to understanding better both the positive and negative

consequences which flow from their application. Clearly, although they provide powerful interpretive and evaluative tools, as theoretical substructures critical commonplaces never operate in benign or salutary ways: critics formulate them not only to facilitate interpretation but in order to regulate and govern reader responses. In part, then, the intelligible way to resolve the critical impasse with regard to the eighteenth-century lyric is to delve into and discover some of the historical and theoretical conditions which sealed its critical fortune in the first place. The energy spent defining how commonplaces operate in critical analysis will, therefore, not be wasted since it will reveal those obstacles which block the general reader's view of the period and make it difficult to appreciate the role of the lyric genre in eighteenth-century culture; this, in turn, will provide additional justification for my method of tackling this issue.

The commonplaces of literary history and of criticism serve a hermeneutic function much like the scientific paradigms which Thomas Kuhn defines and analyses so suggestively in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. As Kuhn sees it, in a science's earliest stage random observation and gathering of fact produces competing schools of thought; eventually, one school establishes an interpretive model whose explanatory power triumphs over all others. This model becomes the accepted paradigm for exploring and explaining causes and effects within a more or less defined phenomenal field. Without paradigms, "progressive" scientific inquiry would rarely, if ever, occur: "In the absence of a paradigm or some candidate for paradigm, all of the facts that could possibly pertain to the development of a given science are likely to seem equally relevant."<sup>1</sup> Kuhn therefore defines paradigms as "universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners" (*SSR*, p. viii). So far so good but, despite these obvious benefits, scientific paradigms can actually constrain and limit research: if, on the one hand, "a paradigm is a criterion for choosing problems that, while the paradigm is taken for granted, can be assumed to have solutions," on the other hand Kuhn notes that "To a great extent these are the only problems that the community will admit as scientific or encourage its

members to undertake" (*SSR*, p. 37). Since a high percentage of scientific research only aims at establishing "a new and more rigid definition of the field" (*SSR*, p. 19), at proving the validity of the paradigm, researchers only study phenomena that seem likely to fit the paradigm while "those that will not fit the box are often not seen at all" (*SSR*, p. 24). In other words, within the paradigm itself lie the seeds of intellectual complacency and dogmatism.

What holds true in the realm of scientific discourse largely holds true for the development of critical paradigms. They serve, for instance, the same intellectual needs as scientific paradigms, gratifying a basic human compulsion to bring order to any field of disparate, inchoate data. As Geoffrey Hartman explains it: "We begin with a lack or excess; with a confusion in thought or language; we brood over that chaos to purify it, or to produce order. Theory-making is part of that brooding and ordering."<sup>2</sup> The commonplaces of literary history indicate regular victories of order over chaos, rewarding the efforts of critics with valuable polemical and pedagogical tools; obviously, the reader benefits, too. Yet critical paradigms, like scientific paradigms, limit the field of investigation by determining those issues which need resolution; and by encouraging constant confirmation of the dominant paradigm, critics build up an authoritative (and imposing) literature which all subsequent research in the field must attempt to address.

However, at a fundamental level of application scientific and critical paradigms operate differently, endure differently: we do not read the "book" of nature like those of culture. Unlike the scientist, whose experimental methodology (and level of technological sophistication) constrains what he can do and therefore say about his phenomenal field, literary critics may investigate their subject area in whatever fashion they desire, constructing and applying models and theories of their own design, while their utterances about that field may indulge intellectual fancies of an all-too-human nature. Inasmuch as the cultural field permits unprovable theories to become acceptable paradigms, personal prejudice, intellectual training, and cultural cecity invariably play a significant part in the production (and promulgation) of literary paradigms.<sup>3</sup> Hence, new evidence or a new

approach will not necessarily invalidate an older paradigm's influence over critical discourse: the temperature of polemic may simply go up. In short, critical paradigms can maintain a powerful influence over reader responses for long periods; they can actually resist change, go "underground" as Donald Davie aptly styles it, often resurfacing in a new guise, masked by a different terminology.<sup>4</sup> This feature of critical paradigms--their tenacious hold over critical responses--holds the key to understanding the peculiar evolution of attitudes towards eighteenth-century lyric poetry. We need, therefore, to examine the historical roots of these attitudes, roots firmly embedded in nineteenth-century views of Augustan literature.

Even a cursory glance at modern literary history discloses the pervading influence of nineteenth-century critical paradigms on modern assessments of the eighteenth-century "personality." Indeed, the power of those paradigms to condition and control critical and lay perceptions erected serious impediments in the way of those critics wanting to attain a fairer estimate of eighteenth-century literature. David Nichol Smith long ago lamented that "To a greater extent than most of us realize, we are, in matters of literary taste, the pupils of the nineteenth century. We may think that we have escaped from it, but oftener than we seem to know we are only repeating what it told us."<sup>5</sup> Geoffrey Tillotson likewise acknowledged that most readers almost invariably "approach eighteenth-century poetry by way of nineteenth-century poetry," evaluating the earlier poetry in terms of the critical, aesthetic, or "life" values espoused in the later.<sup>6</sup> F. W. Bateson surveys the nineteenth-century critical tradition in a rather more irritable mood than either Nichol Smith or Tillotson, denominating it a "debased Romanticism" which "stood for nothing better in the last analysis than self-centred emotional indulgences by the individual reader."<sup>7</sup> Many other critics, as we shall see later, have struggled with equal energy to replace this stubborn perception; the evidence would seem to justify Davie's suspicion that more often than not critical attitudes rarely go into cowed retreat but simply go "underground." Indeed, while Donald J. Greene in 1965 "wonders how the legend grew up that the eighteenth century was impersonal, objective, dispassionate. No age ever

abounded more in self-conscious, self-dramatizing writers. If the Romantics loved to contemplate their own images, they had ample precedent for doing so," Paul Whiteley reminds us in a 1994 review of new criticism of the eighteenth century that "Old habits die hard, especially in literary history and criticism, and the eighteenth century still labours in the popular mind under such labels as the 'Age of Reason' or the 'Augustan Age'. That it is hard to escape the pressure of such labelling when thinking of the literature of the period can be shown in the general image of the period as one of extreme logic and correctness."<sup>8</sup> Ideas about the period which can remain so stuck in general consciousness deserve a closer look.

Many nineteenth-century critics defined the basic temper of eighteenth-century thought and character in one word: prose. This innocuous term invoked a matrix of beliefs, values, and qualities which supposedly inhered in eighteenth-century writing, and nineteenth-century critics rejected these as inimical to great poetry, if not to life itself: the slavish worship of reason, a sublunary imagination, a cold, insensitive heart, a witty but superficial grasp of "truth," and other such negatively-charged descriptive phrases. Given the plainly unfavourable connotations of the word, nineteenth-century critics usually (though not always) expressed little sympathy for the intellectual or literary tastes of their predecessors. For example: whereas Glanville, a character in Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote* (1752), finds "inimitable beauties" in Johnson's writings, Austin Dobson suggests in his foreword to *Eighteenth Century Essays* (1889) that most of the "grave and portentous production" of the eighteenth-century essayists "has become to us a little lengthy--a little wearisome."<sup>9</sup> His anthology therefore contains only those pieces possessing "eternal" worth--"sketches of character and manners, and those chiefly of the humorous kind."<sup>10</sup> Of Johnson's many essays only *Idlers* 28 and 29 suit Dobson's purposes.

Wordsworth and Coleridge slighted eighteenth-century diction, of course, while Francis Jeffrey exulted that "the wits of Queen Anne's time have been gradually brought down from the supremacy which they had enjoyed, without competition, for the best part



of a century."<sup>11</sup> In fact, when Jeffrey adumbrates the primary traits of the Augustan "temper," he lays down the principal tenets of the prose paradigm: "of that generation of authors," he concludes, "it may be said that, as poets, they had no force or greatness of fancy--no pathos, and no enthusiasm;--and, as philosophers, no comprehensiveness, depth or originality. They are sagacious, no doubt, neat, clear, and reasonable; but for the most part cold, timid, and superficial" (p. 3). Poets trained in such debilitating habits of mind "never meddle with the great scenes of nature, or the great passions of man . . . Their inspiration, accordingly, is little more than a sprightly sort of good sense; and they have scarcely any invention but what is subservient to the purposes of derision and satire" (p. 3). When he goes on to explain their fall from poetical grace as the ineluctable outcome of a cultural era which demanded "no glow of feeling--no blaze of imagination--no flashes of genius" (p. 3), a modern reader conditioned to these images of the Augustan "personality" will knowingly nod in affirmation.<sup>12</sup>

Just after mid-century, Matthew Arnold expounded his famous arguments about the status of eighteenth-century literature. Yet he simply reworks Jeffrey's arguments, his reading staying within the boundaries of Jeffrey's paradigm: for Arnold, the Augustans did not produce great poetry because "after the Restoration the time had come when our nation felt the imperious need of a fit prose."<sup>13</sup> An age gripped by such an "imperious need" must suffer the consequences, one of which appears to be the decay of that part of the human frame which spawns great poetry, making it impossible that

a fit prose should establish itself amongst us without some touch of frost to the imaginative life of the soul. The needful qualities for a fit prose are regularity, uniformity, precision, balance. The men of letters, whose destiny it may be to bring their nation to the attainment of a fit prose, must of necessity, whether they work in prose or in verse, give a predominating, an almost exclusive attention to the qualities of regularity, uniformity, precision, balance. But an almost exclusive attention to these qualities involves some repression and silencing of poetry. (*CPW*, pp. 179-180)

Arnold then advises that of all these early prose toilers "We are to regard Dryden as the puissant and glorious founder, Pope as the splendid high priest, of our age of prose and reason, of our excellent and indispensable eighteenth century" (*CPW*, p. 180). Jeffrey's

evaluation of the eighteenth-century temper stands behind Arnold's assertion that "Though they may write in verse, though they may in a certain sense be masters of the art of versification, Dryden and Pope are not classics of our poetry, they are classics of our prose" (*CPW*, p. 181).

Jeffrey's and Arnold's categorisation of the poetry of the period does not mean, obviously, that nineteenth-century readers therefore ignored that of the eighteenth: no, they continued to read it and buy it, editions of Pope, Swift, Thomson, Somerville, Gray, Collins, Goldsmith, Cowper, Burns, and others appearing regularly. Moreover, they expressed admiration for much of this poetry, including lyric poetry by Collins and Gray in particular. Arnold, for example, maintained a high regard for Gray, though a much-qualified regard.<sup>14</sup> Yet as Nichol Smith and others tell us, the nineteenth century found it difficult to see the poetry of their grandfathers as truly inspired, as poetry of the highest merit. A few examples should suffice. George Gilfillan, the indefatigable nineteenth-century editor, classes Pope among "the equable, highly polished writers . . . in whom there are neither great swellings nor great sinkings."<sup>15</sup> William Hazlitt similarly discusses Dryden's and Pope's prosiness, while Stopford A. Brooke, writing in 1920, argues that eighteenth-century writers could not, because of their metaphysical outlook, write poetry of inspiration.<sup>16</sup> Arthur Pollard, after quoting Arnold's observations about Pope and Dryden and Gray, makes the typical point that "we today would find it hard to accept . . . his judgment and his order of priorities," but we nevertheless "can understand" his reasons for making them because "the gold did not flow abundantly and the silver was much more in evidence in the eighteenth century."<sup>17</sup> In short, the notion that the eighteenth century produced great prose but not divinely-inspired poetry had infiltrated attitudes to such a degree that it could only be countered with difficulty, and the problem for critics wanting to defend eighteenth-century poetry was how to educate readers to appreciate its poetry for qualities which deserved praise and did not at the same time appear to fly in the face of accepted perceptions. Critics somehow needed to come to terms with the prose

paradigm, and the ways in which it invariably influenced perceptions of the eighteenth-century lyric.

T. S. Eliot does not read eighteenth-century poetry in the same spirit as Jeffrey and Arnold. Eliot's reading--a defence of eighteenth-century poetry--argues that Pope, Johnson, and Goldsmith deserve a place in the poetical tradition because their poetry exhibits "the qualities which good verse shares with good prose." Eliot's argument rests on his view that in all ages good verse and good prose share the same expressive and linguistic virtues, and that "the virtues of good prose is the first and minimum requirement of good poetry." The poetry of a Goldsmith or a Johnson, according to this schema, merits a respectable degree of praise "partly because it has the virtues of good prose."<sup>18</sup> A just estimate, perhaps, and Eliot rightly notes that a good many second-rate eighteenth-century poets managed to produce moments of good verse but fell into a secondary category because they failed to achieve an idiom or style of their own: they remained too wedded to the style of Pope. However, we should note the terms on which approbation of this poetry is negotiated. It rests upon the old paradigm but reinvents it to establish a "new" paradigm for appreciating the eighteenth-century style. This kind of stylistic appreciation similarly informs Maynard Mack's view of Pope: "Pope writes a poetry with striking prose affinities. It has the Augustan virtues of perspicuity and ease which, whatever their status in poetry, are among the distinguishing attributes of prose discourse."<sup>19</sup> Most readers familiar with criticism dealing with the eighteenth century will easily recall many similar statements, testifying to the truth that the nineteenth-century view of the eighteenth as an age of prose passed into modern critical consciousness. Even when it suffered blows from small gangs of revisionist opposition, it was able to survive these attacks, going "underground" and then resurfacing to be extolled in post-1900 statements as one of the period's greatest literary virtues, as Eliot's and Mack's "positive" remarks emphatically show. Yet knowing that the prose paradigm survived and still influences critical attitudes to eighteenth-century poetry throws but a dim light on the relationship between its survival and modern assumptions about the eighteenth-century

lyric; to illuminate that relationship, the paradigm's survival and role in critical thinking needs to be situated within a larger process of development.

Many modern critics, inheritors of a tradition which for the most part evaluated eighteenth-century poetry in terms which in a romantic and post-romantic were inherently negative, approached their subject in a defensive state of mind, a point worth remembering in any hindsight judgments about shortcomings in the historical evolution of eighteenth-century studies.<sup>20</sup> Jeffrey, after all, believed that all the Augustan poets “[had] been eclipsed by those of [his] own” time, an eclipse occasioned by an irrevocable change in taste, in that faculty “most sure to advance and improve with time and experience” (p. 2). For Jeffrey, the inevitable “improvement” in taste doomed the Augustans to obscurity, and he (and others anxious not to appear unsophisticated), felt duty-bound to assist the process. Indeed, Byron's satiric repudiation of Romantic reactions to eighteenth-century poetry stands out for its eccentricity; his defence of writers like Dryden and Pope in poems such as *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* and *Don Juan* could not stand against improvements in taste. Although the poetry retained a broad base of readership, as noted earlier, the prose paradigm flourished. As James Sutherland has noted, anyone who wished to promote the merits of eighteenth-century poetry first had to overcome a welter of “pre-established codes of decision” handed down from the past and which thoroughly “obstruct[ed] the modern reader's enjoyment of eighteenth-century poetry.”<sup>21</sup>

Insofar as defenders of eighteenth-century poetry could not simply ignore or discount these codes or paradigms--after all, they had been schooled in them--they would need to make strategic critical and intellectual compromises: the type of defence to mount, for instance, the selection of which (if successful) would affect the future (and future courses) of eighteenth-century studies. Since nineteenth-century critics built the prose paradigm largely on their perception of the personalities of Dryden, Pope, Swift, and Johnson, that is, on those writers most familiar to them, modern critics naturally made these writers *cause célèbres*, stating the merits of their case on precisely those prosy

qualities which their predecessors disparaged. Rather than attempt a full-scale rebuttal, it was simpler (and politically expedient) to subsume or adapt the paradigm without taking issue with its overall interpretive justness. When, for instance, Alan D. McKillop tried to coax modern readers into an appreciation of the enduring values of eighteenth-century literature, he relies on the prose characterisation: "To an age like ours," he says, "remembering, experiencing, and anticipating one national crisis after another, the eighteenth century may seem at first an age of trivialities," yet with further study "we may come to feel that people who could work so quietly and urbanely had high and exacting standards from which we still have something to learn."<sup>22</sup> Nichol Smith made similar assurances that eighteenth-century poets do reward study because many of them "are masters in the final art of self-expression, and give us what we cannot find elsewhere."<sup>23</sup> The initial vindication of eighteenth-century poetry thus meant defending the major Augustan writers as exemplars of the prose paradigm, and the immense scholarly commitment afforded the "major writer" approach attests to its methodological value; it would be misleading (and churlish) to suggest that, given its institutional aims, a high level of success was not achieved.<sup>24</sup>

Yet writing literary history according to this model exacted its intellectual price; most obviously, it encouraged a rather limited picture of the concerns, styles, and tastes of eighteenth-century writers and readers, while making questionable assertions about the degree of influence which individual writers exerted on their culture. An early example, W. J. Courthope's *A History of English Poetry*, highlights the model's shortcomings. He sees his task quite clearly:

my design from the first has been, not to furnish an exhaustive list of the English poets as individuals, but rather to describe the general movements of English Poetry, as an Art illustrating the evolution of national taste. The poets whose works are here considered are treated as having contributed something characteristic towards these movements; but I have not thought it necessary to dwell on the lives and writings of versifiers such as Ambrose Philips, Beattie, Aaron Hill, and others, whose names appear in collections like those of Anderson and Chalmers; their poetry having too little distinctive character for my purpose.<sup>25</sup>

True, no one would seriously want to consider Philips, Beattie, or Hill major writers, but this should not obscure the fact that they earned reputation enough in their time, contributing something to “their” national taste--Philips even merited an entry in Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*.

Courthope's cavalier rejection of those writers who do not fit the paradigm should not, however, be dismissed as simply anachronistic or atypical. McKillop, while warning that “no ready-made formula” will adequately explain the dynamics of Enlightenment culture, reassuringly suggests that Europe's Enlightenment “has at least the appearance of being relatively simple and unified,” and even if contradictions exist “a plan must be had, if the course of study is to be more than a collection of disconnected impressions and facts.” Despite the many “isms” strewn throughout eighteenth-century studies, he begs the reader, as far as possible, “to see them not separately, but together.”<sup>26</sup> Franklin L. Ford makes similar claims to respect Enlightenment diversity but then declares that his “ultimate purpose is to try to get beyond the mere notation of variety to a useful redefinition of the movement as a whole, a redefinition broad enough to accommodate internal diversity, yet explicit enough to cut away elements which ought not to be, though they often are, included.”<sup>27</sup> The “ought” says it all.

I would not foolishly insinuate that every eighteenth-century critic has dogmatically adhered to a simplistic, moribund view of cultural relationships, or that much work on the period has not taken as its starting point a determination to rehabilitate the reputations of figures and to reorient critical perspectives about the period. Many admirable exceptions do exist.<sup>28</sup> Long ago Nichol Smith advised readers that “We should do well to forget [all the popular eighteenth-century paradigms] when we consider the poetry of the eighteenth century.”<sup>29</sup> Carey McIntosh, for example, drew attention to the fact that

The Age of Johnson is also the Age of Rousseau; both men spoke for their times; and although they had in common many of the ideas and attitudes endemic to Western Europe of the period, they disagree at so many points so unmistakably that it is convenient to organize a review of scholarship on the second half of the eighteenth century with both of them in mind . . . Perhaps the case with which this division between sense and sensibility can be made is itself a distinguishing characteristic of the age; and yet, having made it, there remains a large number of

writings with one foot in either camp, works that are nevertheless harmoniously single in tone and temperament.<sup>30</sup>

McIntosh's sense of the intellectual diversity of the period--and of its resistance to easy categorisation--finds confirmation in the work of many other critics. Eric Rothstein, for instance, works to dispel "the pervasive myth of the cloven century," that is, to show that a proper appreciation of the century involves a rejection of the many "isms" which lay strewn throughout literary history.<sup>31</sup> Doody, after reminding us of the problematical definitions and history of attitudes about eighteenth-century poetry (which she found still entrenched in 1985), wants "to restore the sense of excitement that can come from a reading of Augustan poetry."<sup>32</sup> Not so long ago James Sambrook noted that "it seems at times almost as if every path of thought communicates with every other"; rather than clear-cut lines of intellectual demarcation, says Sambrook, the investigator finds that "astronomy provides aids to navigation and proofs of the existence of God, current political and economic thought influences the interpretation of ancient Roman history, the empirical and mathematical methods of science are applied to aesthetics and moral philosophy; such instances, large and small, could be multiplied almost indefinitely."<sup>33</sup>

Yet the growing wealth of revisionist work does not guarantee that older paradigms, particularly the prose paradigm, or methodologies will fall into complete disuse. J. Paul Hunter welcomes what he sees as an exciting renaissance in eighteenth-century studies working to efface the view of the period as "an irrelevance," but he can still, in 1990, worry about the potential damage which could be inflicted on new approaches and views of the period by scholarship which remains rooted in narrow critical paradigms.<sup>34</sup> Hunter notes that "Not all is sweetness and light here--bees and spiders and mirrors and lamps still battle unceremoniously for turf, and scholars with single interests often seem to write past each other rather than putting their observations together."<sup>35</sup> Of course, revisionist critics often have expressed unease at the long-term effects of the prose paradigm and the major model approach on general impressions of eighteenth-century poetry, though I am probably alone in extending that worry to the eighteenth-

century lyric. A number of critics have found that, ironically, the heady application of the prose paradigm/major model approach bred a species of historical couéism detrimental to the long-term health of eighteenth-century studies. Claude Rawson, for one, condemns the scholarly tendency “to suppose that because some thinkers held certain views, all their contemporaries must also be assumed to take these views for granted, and that these views must necessarily be reflected, with an uncompromising directness, in every aspect of their art.”<sup>36</sup> O. H. K. Spate states the issue even more bluntly when he notes how easily critics accept the image of Augustan poets “as mainly a choir of singing birds nesting in the pleasant gardens of Twickenham and Stowe, with an ugly off-stage chatter of London gutter-sparrows in Grub-Street, and a few migrants between the two, such as Gay and Matthew Green.”<sup>37</sup> Rawson, moreover, berates critics who assume a “dangerously over-simplified conception of the history of ideas,” blithely personifying abstractions like historical periods or literary movements and then proceeding as if these “have thoughts and beliefs in the same way as individual beings have, and apparently that these thoughts and beliefs impose themselves with a somewhat surprising consistency, coherence, and universality of assent on individual writers of varied and complicated character.”<sup>38</sup> A novice in eighteenth-century studies hardly notices the rather odd way that critics speak about the century, accepting that its literature neatly falls into an *Age of Pope* and an *Age of Johnson*, that any utterance by a major figure constitutes the only acceptable standards by which to judge contemporary (or even later) writers, as if his opinions, ideas, and prejudices alone created the culture in which he lived and wrote.<sup>39</sup> Surely it borders on the fustian to claim, as A. R. Humphreys did, that “Of that civilization Johnson is the strongest representative; to express it was his instinctive and his deliberate aim.”<sup>40</sup> The evidence seems to suggest, then, that rather than contest critical paradigms many scholars generally preferred to integrate the “major-model” methodology with the prose paradigm's basic tenets.

A. D. Harvey, working along similar lines to Rawson's, reveals another disquieting feature of the way that critical paradigms develop. He notes the strange authority over



taste which critics typically and confidently ascribe to those few writers they most admire but who achieved little popularity in their own lifetimes: writers like Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, and Blake, he says, "have come to be regarded as epitomising the period which neglected and misunderstood them." To promulgate the view that such writers stood at the forefront of taste, as the arbiters of contemporary aesthetic values, simply ignores the "basic fact about any culture . . . that the contributors to a cultural environment are to be numbered in scores and hundreds, not in ones and twos."<sup>41</sup> Perhaps the irreverent suggestion by the anonymous author of *Ranelagh* (1777) that "CRITICS, like children and fox-hunters, have a natural antipathy to new acquaintance" contains a large grain of truth.<sup>42</sup> In any case, confessions like Coleridge's that he held a poet like Bowles in the highest esteem should be sufficient evidence of the enigmatic role of taste in the evolution of poetry, and that the line of influence between major and minor writers runs in two directions.

Generally, then, the prose paradigm/major model approach promoted a critical ethos which seemed unsympathetic to the full range of eighteenth-century literary production. As Bertrand Bronson noted irritably, the "official" version stressed "positive" virtues like repose, elegance, and civilized taste, and students learned "precisely where [the eighteenth century] stood, and what it stood for. It was fixed in its appointed place, and there it would always be when we cared to look again. We understood its values, and they bored us."<sup>43</sup> Lonsdale concurs, attributing a general apathy towards eighteenth-century poetry to the restricted focus of paradigm-governed research: "With some honourable exceptions," modern scholars have "in fact returned again and again to the same familiar material," with the rueful consequence that "The general reader seems to know all too well what to expect from the age of Good Taste and Common Sense."<sup>44</sup> Lonsdale, of course, has done much to dispel this anodyne view of eighteenth-century poetry, particularly in his two splendid anthologies, *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth-Century Verse* and *Eighteenth-Century Women Poets*, both compiled "to question

some of the deeply ingrained preconceptions about what it was possible to feel, think, and write in the eighteenth century."<sup>45</sup>

Of course part of the problem, as Bronson testifies, lies in an "official" version which stresses those qualities of writing and thought which the revisionists are trying to counter. Much evidence has already been cited on this front, but it seems worth repeating that the general lay reader or student often take their first bite of the period from handbooks and guides to literature such as *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* and *The Harper Handbook to Literature*. The entry in *The Oxford Companion*, for instance, tells us that the eighteenth century was "an age of prose rather than poetry, of lucidity, simplicity, and grace, rational and witty rather than humorous, and somewhat lacking in intensity."<sup>46</sup> Similar pronouncements turn up in Dennis Davison's depiction of the period in his introduction to *Penguin Book of Eighteenth-Century English Verse*, where he explains that, in the period after faction and violence had torn the country apart,

Characteristically, the verse of this new era was deliberately social in content, urbane and conventional in style. The cultivation of neo-classical balance and correctness, of decorum in the choice of vocabulary or genres, and the adoption of the values of a polite, urban society, are significant features of a culture which had, of course, its own contradictions, but which did manifest an overt uniformity.<sup>47</sup>

Not surprisingly, given the general dissemination of such views into the general reading culture, the editors of an anthology of eighteenth-century poetry published in 1994 still find the reputation of eighteenth-century poetry problematic, noting that it belongs to

a period which today is neither popular nor fashionable. Like every period it has its bands of industrious scholars working away at their books and articles, and fighting their concerns in academic debate, but otherwise the poetry is largely unread. Today's 'common reader' (a phrase coined by one of our writers) is perhaps the graduate of English literature. But since many English degrees offer a selective coverage of literary history, even that graduate may have only the slightest acquaintance with the work of Dryden, Pope and Johnson. Certainly, he or she will know a good deal more of Donne from the previous century or of Keats from the next.<sup>48</sup>

Yet while the editors provide a sound argument for trying to read the poetry without falling into old patterns of evaluation, they nonetheless want to retain old perceptions, though

hopefully in a new way: we should still see the century as the age of reason because “there is some truth in it.”<sup>49</sup> It might seem, therefore, that W. H. Auden's pithy couplet--“For many a don while looking down his nose / Calls Pope and Dryden classics of our prose”--captured a pervasive sentiment underlying the modern institutionalised view of eighteenth-century poetry: if the period seemed rather dull and predictable, at least one could speak with some certainty about its literary values.<sup>50</sup>

If the too-fervent commitment to the prose paradigm resulted in the general reader displaying a dismaying apathy about even the best eighteenth-century poetry, it hardly seems surprising that there were various other repercussions. Most obviously, persistent attention to specific key writers inevitably minimized the contributions of other eighteenth-century writers; less obviously, consistent discounting of the value of mid- and late-eighteenth century poetry obscured signs of the lyric's steady rise in literary status. Davie lamented, with good reason, that “there is still a very general assumption that the clocks of literary history stopped, if not in 1700, then at the death of Pope in 1744; and that they began to tick again only in 1798, when Wordsworth and Coleridge published their *Lyrical Ballads*.”<sup>51</sup> Charles Ryskamp observes: “The date 1798 is probably the one first stamped on the mind of the student of English literature, and if he goes very far in his studies he almost surely learns that few moments of literary history have been so frequently described or so thoroughly worried as the year which gave birth to *Lyrical Ballads*.”<sup>52</sup> More recently, Hutchings concluded that most readers, professional and otherwise, still assume that the century “produced only a small amount of worthwhile poetry, the rest being tedious, dispensable lumber.”<sup>53</sup> Although many recent scholars have worked hard to dispel this dismal state of affairs--studies on Collins, Cowper, Cowley, Smart, Thomson, Young, and Goldsmith appear at regular intervals, and less-known writers receive occasional attention--and attempts are now well underway to try and alter readerly perceptions and expectations of mid- and late-eighteenth century writers and writings, the task will likely prove as difficult as it did with efforts to shift the prose paradigm.<sup>54</sup> Since the same problems inherent in paradigm construction dog attitudes to the eighteenth-

century lyric, a brief review of mid- and late-eighteenth century paradigms and other issues now seems in order.

Again, Jeffrey's impressions of the period merit citation because, just as he pronounced fundamental verdicts on the Augustan writers, he sets the tone for the standard evaluative paradigm found in many later commentators:

The age which succeeded [that of Pope], too, was not the age of courage or adventure. There never was, on the whole, a quieter time than the reigns of the first Georges, and the greater part of that which ensued . . . They went on, accordingly, minding their old business, and reading their old books, with great patience and stupidity: And certainly there never was so remarkable a dearth of original talent--so long an interruption of native genius--as during about 60 years in the middle of the last century. The dramatic art was dead 50 years before--and poetry seemed verging to a similar extinction. The few sparks that appeared, however, showed that the old fire was burnt out, and that the altar must hereafter be heaped with fuel of another quality. (p. 7)

The spirit of these remarks surface in Arnold's estimate of Gray's poetical achievements. Arnold in fact considered Gray "our poetical classic of that literature and age," largely because he approved of Gray's love of Greek and Latin poetry; however, Gray failed to achieve the selfsame "independent criticism of life" as did the ancients, and what he did manage, their "point of view for regarding life . . . their poetic manner," says Arnold, was "not self-sprung in him, he caught them of others." Although Gray occasionally rose to something like an ancient's height, he did not possess the "power" or "volume" of those early writers who came "in times more favourable" (*CPW*, p. 181).

Eighty-six years later after Jeffrey, J. H. Millar's *The Mid-Eighteenth Century* simply reiterates Jeffrey's views. Millar assures his reader that "It is common ground with all modern critics, that the intrinsic value of the poetry produced during our period is singularly small." Indeed, because "The reasoning faculty, in the narrower sense, is in the ascendent," no one should expect the period after mid century to be "prolific of what are usually termed works of imagination--prose fiction always excepted." Echoing Arnold, he asserts that the "great achievement was the bringing to maturity of prose fiction," and like Jeffrey and Arnold before him, he trots out the poetry without a flame metaphor, adding that while eighteenth-century poetry lacks imagination it makes do with a lively "play of

intelligence” and a “bountiful supply of sheer cleverness.”<sup>55</sup> Since Arnold had determined that the “substance and matter of the best poetry acquire their special character from possessing, in an eminent degree, truth and seriousness” (*CPW*, p. 171), lively and clever eighteenth-century poetry would seem to preclude it from the upper echelons of the poetic hierarchy.

Similarly, when Eliot turns his evaluative eye upon mid-century poetry, he knows what he will find there: “The eighteenth century in English verse is not, after Pope, Swift, Prior, and Gay, an age of courtly verse. It seems more like an age of retired country clergymen and schoolmasters. It is cursed with a Pastoral convention.”<sup>56</sup> Admittedly, Davie’s introduction to *The Late Augustans* (first published in 1958) offers a balanced, sympathetic view, pointing out that numerous conclusions about the period were stated *ipse dixit*, notably, the level of emotion “allowed” in Augustan poetry.<sup>57</sup> Davie won few converts, however. Modern editors of scholarly anthologies, for instance, seem compelled to assure readers that most of this poetry does not merit serious attention. McKillop defines it as largely “silly, affected, and trivial,” while Richard Quintana and Alvin Whitley (who deserve praise for their attempt to dispel various prejudices about mid- and late-eighteenth century poetry) confess that “It seems scarcely necessary to point out that the poetry of these years is not the greatest in the language.”<sup>58</sup> The few critics who do cast a longer glance at this poetry usually reiterate the anthologizers’ testimony: Wallace Jackson puts forward the typical view that, while mid-century poets often managed “competent performances,” the poetry as a whole “[is] uniquely limited and only occasionally first-rate” and “of major poems or poets there are few.”<sup>59</sup> In short, those few paradigms actually formulated to illuminate mid- and late-eighteenth century poetry invariably have started from the premise that the fundamental critical issue concerns the poor quality of the poetry. Regardless of the stated intentions of the critic, most explications revert to a peevish carking about the quality of the verse, never straying far from the security of Jeffrey’s evaluative paradigm.<sup>60</sup>

The most popular paradigm for explaining the inferiority of post-Augustan poetry conceives poetic decline as the inevitable legacy of a period of great artistic creativity: cultural energies wore down, poetic enervation signalling a period of transition. Eliot, who admired eighteenth-century poetry for its prose virtues, considered the tumble in the quality of poetry after Pope as part of the inevitable movement of literary and linguistic forces. While the entire century, he says, “was, like any other age, an age of transition,” he found the poetry after Pope “intolerably poetic,” by which he meant that “instead of working out the proper form for its matter, when it has any, and informing verse with prose virtues, it merely applies the magniloquence of Milton or the neatness of Pope to matter which it is wholly unprepared for.” This amounted to a sort of radical malfunction in the use of language: the ability to master both style and feeling degenerated because “after Pope there was no one who thought and felt nearly enough like Pope to be able to use his language quite successfully; but a good many second-rate writers tried to write something like it.”<sup>61</sup> Quintana and Whitley likewise apologise for the inadequacies of the verse with the statement that “Like all other eras [the mid- and late-eighteenth century] was of course transitional.”<sup>62</sup>

Basically, the age-as-transition paradigm relies on the impossible-to-be-proved assumption that inferior poetry naturally follows a sustained expenditure of a nation's creative energy. This sounds as if the creative herd simply ran itself into the ground, the breeding stock of culture so depleted of “verse reserves” that its progeny suffered a thorough debilitation of poetic nerve. Young dispensed with this argument in his *Conjectures On Original Composition* (1759): “Reasons there are why talents may not appear, none why they may not exist, as much in one period as another.”<sup>63</sup> An essay in the *Trifler* likewise argues that “True genius never fails to force its way into the world. It will always be admired, it will always be revered.”<sup>64</sup> In fact, the same essay makes a strong argument to suggest that the present suffered not from its past but from itself, a not inaccurate observation. After all, much of the diversity which so characterizes the period owes its existence to explosion of writing, much of it led by the demand for

contributions to popular media. For example, *The Gentleman's Magazine* for 1784 says to its readers:

The Poetical department of our Magazine, though professedly a collection of fugitive pieces, has lately been so plentifully supplied with original compositions of real merit, that very little room has been left for selection. As Poetry is the feast provided for our fair readers, we would wish it chiefly to consist of delicacies; and therefore earnestly request the assistance of rising genius to contribute to their entertainment.<sup>65</sup>

Remarking that love of fame may provide a wonderful engine of progress, the *Trifler* essay adds that "its disadvantages have not been altogether inconsiderable" since the desire motivated many of the poorly qualified to attempt literary careers: "Every illiterate puppy, who can scarcely scribble his own name, thinks himself bound, with or without a patron, to communicate his stanzas to the publick; and the pedantic schoolboy, just out of his *Cordery*, sends forth some nonsensical translation to the press." With a certain acuity of insight, the *Trifler* observes that "To increase the republic of letters without adding to its stability is a useless and dangerous experiment."<sup>66</sup> This attack on lesser talents runs throughout the century and in all likelihood worried more writers and critics than any burden of the past.

Still, the argument has struck many critics as fundamentally sound, and a number of notable theories concerning poetic inheritance and the failure of mid- and late-eighteenth century poetry owe their credibility to this paradigm. Walter Jackson Bate's *The Burden of the Past and the English Poet*, for instance, has proved an influential rendering of the age-as-transition paradigm. Bate contends that poetry (or culture) declines because no poet can shoulder the combined emotional, psychological, and intellectual weight of past greatness. The poet feels "increasingly powerless to attain (or is in some way being forbidden to attain) the scope and power of the earlier poetry that he so deeply admires."<sup>67</sup> Bate illustrates his thesis with a comment from Johnson's *Rambler* 86:

The burthen of government is increased upon princes by the virtues of their immediate predecessors. It is, indeed, always dangerous to be placed in a state of unavoidable comparison with excellence, and the danger is still greater when that

excellence is consecrated by death . . . He that succeeds a celebrated writer, has the same difficulties to encounter.<sup>68</sup>

Although writers in every age feel this burden, the famous battle of the Ancients and the Moderns would seem to provide clear evidence that eighteenth-century writers felt the weight of the past increase dramatically. Unfortunately for the moderns, with rare exceptions the battle confirms their failure to reach the heights commanded by the ancients.<sup>69</sup>

As the century wears on, this sense that famous precursors necessarily produced better art seemingly becomes more pervasive. Young, for example, laments that great writers of the past “engross, *prejudice*, and *intimidate*. They *engross* our attention, and so prevent a due inspection of ourselves; they *prejudice* our judgement in favour of their abilities, and so lessen our own; and they *intimidate* us with the splendour of their renown, and thus under diffidence bury our strength.”<sup>70</sup> Young here is of course asking that readers and critics judge contemporary writers by criteria appropriate to their talents and productions. Frank Sayers, writing in 1805, adds further weight to this generally pessimistic feeling about the opportunities for writerly success, noting that “In that highly advanced state to which literature is at present arrived, few productions can be expected which may allure by the novelty of their matter, or fascinate by the brilliancy of their execution.” Sayers in fact extends this analysis to include almost all types of writing; he contends that “Not only the most attractive and prominent, but many even of the humbler themes of imagination and science, have been seized by the vigilance of genius, and moulded into forms with a skill, a fancy, and an elegance which can hardly be equalled.”<sup>71</sup> How, then, to counter this force. Young sees that writers could only reverse the “great inferiority” of contemporary poetry by producing original works, yet in practice the grail of originality simply intensified the poet's sense of futility: his inferiority occurs precisely because he lacks the imaginative strength to turn the old into the new and the vital.<sup>72</sup> Mired in history and subdued by tradition, mid- and late-eighteenth century poets could not achieve the solution arrived at by the Romantics, what Bate calls “an active debate or



dialogue within the human psyche of the past with the present," that is, "a creative use of the past." Incapable of translating tradition into vital art, these poets made their poetry into a lament for "the artist's relation to his own art," a lament which the Romantics transformed into great poetry.<sup>73</sup>

Harold Bloom stakes out similar theoretical territory, although he allows the inherited burden an element of dynamic potentiality. For Bloom, a poet earns his identity as a poet only after he enters into a deeply emotional and dynamic relationship with a father poet, and just as in the Freudian account of father/son relations, that of precursor and successor involves anxiety and conflict: "Initial love for the precursor's poetry is transformed rapidly enough into a revisionary strife, without which individuation is not possible."<sup>74</sup> Hence, unless a poet possesses "the persistence to wrestle with [his] strong precursors, even to the death," he will always lack an individual identity, will be unable to "clear imaginative space" for himself, the amount of space which he wins indicating the degree to which he has conquered the influence of his poetic father.<sup>75</sup> Yet for all the theory's syncretic neatness, Bloom acknowledges that it does not actually answer the question of how great poetry gets written: for one thing, overcoming a poetic father-figure may solve the problem of originality, but that alone will not make a poet "necessarily better."<sup>76</sup> Ultimately, only by writing better poetry will the latecomer end the struggle.

Whatever the theoretical merits of such "burden" and "anxiety" paradigms, in practice they prove both unconvincing and critically reductive. A case in point. Paul Sherwin, a student of Bloom's, applied the theory in a study of Collins, plotting Collins's failure to displace his poetic father, Milton. Unable to reach Milton's poetic standards, Collins dejectedly turns to radical experimentation (that is, to originality), sowing a few seeds which later flowered in the Romantics; oppressed by failure, he went mad and died prematurely. Locked into a reductive psychological approach, Sherwin takes scant notice of evidence about Collins's life which suggests a more plausible explanation for Collins's poetic "failure"--if what Collins did achieve could be deemed failure. Part of Collins's despair (and madness) supposedly resulted from the lack of positive response to his

poetry. In fact his first major poem, the *Persian Eclogues* (1742), found a sizable and supportive audience in the same year that Young and Pope both published major poems.<sup>77</sup> True, the initial response to the *Descriptive and Allegorical Odes* (1746) depressed Collins, but how could these poems reveal his despair even before he knew how the public would receive them? Perhaps Collins's madness stemmed from some other source. Johnson, who knew Collins well, hints that Collins enjoyed wine, women, and song, which suggests that his mental and physical infirmities resulted from his lifestyle: he probably suffered the recurring effects of venereal disease. In any case, as Richard Wendorf argues, any method of psychological profiling which relies upon hints from Collins's poetry alone "are surely subject to serious qualifications."<sup>78</sup>

Collins's "case," moreover, highlights a further weakness in the anxiety of influence paradigm: who, amongst a field of many, to designate as *the* poetic forefather. The textual and critical notes to Lonsdale's edition to Collins's poems make it clear that Collins drew upon a wide variety of sources: borrowings from Pope, Thomson, Spenser, Shakespeare, ancient Greek poetry, and Horace occur as frequently as ones from Milton, as do ones from lesser writers--the Wartons, Akenside, Tickell, Prior, John Davies, and others.<sup>79</sup> Collins, in fact, admired Thomson probably more than he did any other writer. Thus, while the reformulations of the age-as-transition paradigm undertaken by both Bate and Bloom raise important considerations about the psychological dynamics of the creative act, the burden of the past forms only one component of a complex matrix of elements which might conceivably coalesce in any one particular poet's "personality," the importance of any one element would be difficult, if not impossible, to measure.<sup>80</sup>

The transitional status allotted mid- and late-eighteenth century writings spawned other, equally unsatisfying critical commonplaces, doubtless in part because the influence of the popular paradigms already discussed remained in force. As Nichol Smith complained long ago, once critics left the calm, well-mapped seas of Augustan literature they floundered in a search for either "classic" or "romantic" tendencies, determined to categorize the poetry as the consequence of "a period of decadence" (that is, decline and

transition) or “a period of preparation” (that is, reaction and transition).<sup>81</sup> Bronson relates that as a student he learned that the only point in reading eighteenth-century poetry “was to see how the human spirit struggled out of [its Augustan] straitjacket into new life . . . we knew that its tenets had reached their probably ultimate exemplification in the work of Pope, and that what followed in its track was only feebler and more arid imitation, while the buds of fresh romantic promise were beginning here and there to peep out timidly.”<sup>82</sup>

Lending some credence to Bronson's complaint, A. Bosker offers a fairly typical summary of how and why poetry developed as it did during the century:

The literature of the Age of Johnson reflects the conflict between the two main factors in artistic creation, unimpassioned reason on the one side, emotion and imagination on the other. Reason had been the dominating force ever since the middle of the seventeenth century and under its powerful sway emotional and imaginative elements had been repressed, the old spontaneity of the Elizabethans had fled the domain of art, and the artistic expression of deep personal feelings had come to be looked upon with distrust. But the old romantic spirit, which had never become extinct, began to reassert itself and gradually restored the essential elements of poetic art to their proper places, so that the last decades of the eighteenth century saw the dawn of a new era, free from the restraints of common sense.<sup>83</sup>

The psychological paradigm (operating as a kind of historical determinism) behind this argument does not, of course, bear scrutiny, while as an account of how poets see the purpose of their work it lacks common-sense. Northrop Frye, for one, found the whole “pre-romantic” argument inherently illogical: “Not only did the ‘pre-romantics’ not know that the Romantic movement was going to succeed them,” he observes, “but there has probably never been a case on record of a poet's having regarded a later poet's work as the fulfilment of his own.”<sup>84</sup> At least seeing these poets either as reacting against classicism, Frye's position, or as actively if inadequately promoting Augustan poetic values, Bronson's view, commits no sin against chronology.<sup>85</sup> In any case, this rage to interpret the poetry after Pope according to the demands of a pre-Romantic paradigm moved Sutherland to complain that in evaluating the period critics had “too often reserved their praise for what is least characteristic of it. Their eyes have been fixed continually on the horizon; and any faint glimmerings of pre-romanticism have been extolled at the expense of the more characteristic and central achievements of the century.”<sup>86</sup>

Sutherland's remark appears just: closer examination of contemporary evidence which seems so supportive of the burden of the past theory often reveals a less pessimistic view of the cultural climate of the time. Dryden's *The Secular Masque. From The Pilgrim* (1700) offers a case in point. While it appears to lament the passing of the age, the final lines look forward with hope not resignation: "*Tis well an old age is out, / And time to begin a new.*"<sup>87</sup> Goldsmith's *An Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning* (1759), which sets out "to distinguish the decay, naturally consequent on an age grown old in literature," would seem a likely work in which to discover a lament for the passing of a golden age of English literature. Goldsmith, however, vents no such regret: although he can imagine a distant age "when taste is so far depraved" that no work will merit serious attention, he contests that "such a period bears no resemblance to the present."<sup>88</sup> In *The Monthly Miscellany* for February 1774, an essay entitled "*An Essay on the STATE of LITERATURE in Great Britain*" remarks that "About the time of William the Conqueror, all Europe was sunk in the abyss of ignorance. The learning of the ancients was forgotten, and ferocious barbarism had consigned the arts to oblivion." Now, however, "the minds of the English seem to have undergone a total revolution" as evidence of almost daily improvements in all the fields of knowledge attest, the essay concluding that "The imitative arts are now making hasty strides towards perfection."<sup>89</sup> Although the essay in the *Trifler* noted earlier took a dim view of "the genius of that unhappy, restless herd of authors, who never soar beyond the madrigals of a Grub-street garret," the essayist still feels that "the present state of the literary republic is not in so weak and tottering a condition as to require assistance from the vain, superficial, the mercenary."<sup>90</sup> Sayers, who appeared to take a markedly pessimistic view of the prospects for contemporary writers, puts on a brave face, advising that even if the past did produce great works the writers of the present age were not therefore "condemned to a mere indolent enjoyment of the delight and instruction which is already prepared for us; an examination of our literary possessions will still afford us ample occasion for the exercise

of our talents," adding that "if we cannot be as splendidly, we may at least be as usefully employed as many of our more eminent predecessors."<sup>91</sup> Stronger evidence for the declining age thesis appears in George Berkeley's poem, "On The Prospect Of Planting Arts And Learning In America" (wr. 1726; pub. 1752). He sees Europe (and Britain in particular) as a place which "breeds in her decay," her cultural, intellectual, and social achievements "already past." The Muses, "disgusted at an age and clime" which could foster such decay, move on to America and "another golden age."<sup>92</sup> Berkeley, of course, saw the new paradise first-hand and returned to Britain.<sup>93</sup>

Despite the well-founded complaints of critics like Sutherland and Frye that the pre-romantic paradigm did a disservice to mid- and late-eighteenth century achievements, and despite the evidence provided by writers in the period, the urge to make the paradigm work remains strong. For instance, the title of Marshall Brown's recent study, *Preromanticism*, indicates where his sympathies lie: full of promise and generally fine work--particularly his readings of Collins and Gray, the study does not deviate greatly from attitudes traced in this chapter. After noting that he "concur[s] with many critics who have attacked or renounced the term in its old form," he asserts that he does not accept alternative terms.<sup>94</sup> Instead, he wants to continue using the tag preromanticism for the "very reason" that it suggests the age's teleological urge: he says that most of all mid- and late-eighteenth-century writers "wanted change," wanted to escape or transcend the flux of their age which, as an "age of sensibility was inevitably an age of dissatisfaction." His book will answer the question that earlier positivist criticism could not adequately raise--"what hindered the greatest authors of the period from writing?"<sup>95</sup> Still, in its emphasis on developing an historical criticism which wants to account for generic changes as essential to understanding the relationship of writing to culture, Brown's work deserves high praise. His focus on philosophical and aesthetic developments, however, does not engage with the new science. In short, though a rich and suggestive exploration, it takes a rather different tack from mine.

Another particularly unfortunate repercussion of the age-as-transition paradigm can be seen in a general and insidious “visualizing” of the lives and writings of mid- and late-eighteenth century poets. W. K. Wimsatt, for example, pictures the age as “a relatively weak or dim inner period, a poetic valley of a shadow . . . a time full of somewhat fatigued and straining traditions, transitions, retrospective creations.”<sup>96</sup> His sketch, not surprisingly, clings to generalization, vague imagery, and dime-store psychologizing. D. J. Enright spins out the logic of the paradigm rather thinly: “Between the self-assured work of the Augustans and the energetic and diverse movements of the Romantic Revival,” he explains, “came a period of half-hearted, characterless writing, when the poets, looking backwards and forwards at the same time, drifted on a slow current of change which they could neither govern nor understand.”<sup>97</sup> Jackson follows a similar course, declaring that Collins and Gray never achieved greatness because they laboured under “a mid-century poetic of such drastic limitations that it offered to the poet no specifically contemporary act of mind and no imitative models other than the extrapolated sublimities of past poets. It was not a fertile field.”<sup>98</sup> Such remarks hardly border on sense: after all, how does a poet look both forwards and backwards at the same time, and what could Jackson possibly mean by a “mid-century poetic” which failed to offer a “specifically contemporary act of mind” to a poet?

Nonetheless, Donald Wesling would agree with both Enright and Jackson. In his eyes, the entire interval between Pope and Wordsworth constitutes “a bad time for poetry,” the vile “late Augustan time of associationism.” For Wesling, poetry written according to associationist principles struggles to represent the world as “an infinitude of things, ranged side by side,” but it fails because the linguistic strategies available to the poet could not contend with reality: “Language, in appropriating this plenitude, gestured “here,” then “there”; or “if,” then “then”; or language remarked “then it was that” and “now it is this.” Sensations, words, image words, dominated all the mind's procedures of exposition, for the major mode of perceiving the world was that of conjunction, addition, polarity, and analogy.”<sup>99</sup> Yet this casual personification of language to describe mid- and

late-eighteenth century poetic practice seems to me a more dishonest rhetorical device than that style of associationist composition which Wesling deplores: the world, after all, is “an infinitude of things,” and the mind does employ “Sensations, words, image words,” and so forth to try and represent to itself and to others its experience of the world.<sup>100</sup> In light of such appraisals as these, Benjamin Boyce's confession that “even the scholars who today devote themselves to studying these poems acknowledge some difficulty in justifying them” hardly comes as a shock.<sup>101</sup> Norman Maclean, a scholar whose work on the eighteenth-century lyric deserves much praise, happily confirms Boyce's remark, confessing that “I am one of those who have attempted to throw some ray of historical understanding upon the personified lyrics of the eighteenth century . . . I still do not like them.”<sup>102</sup>

The weight of negative commentary painted an image of Britain after mid century as a land inhabited solely by “the small fry of scribblers” who “wriggle[d] through the mud in shoals,” too self-pitying and myopic to see the real world going on about them.<sup>103</sup> To be sure, many writers wrote, as David Mallet happily confessed, from “*humble but happy retirement*,” but the reader need not conclude that such writers necessarily or willingly avoided the “potentially disturbing immediacy of the real world.”<sup>104</sup> The blame for this perception lies with modern criticism, not with eighteenth-century writers, since critics commonly portrayed these poets as either too rooted in the dullness of their culture to rise to the heights of the powerful emotional poetry which the Romantics produced, or as lightweight versifiers who merely floated on the winds of changing aesthetic fashions, halfway to rebellion but ultimately too content with the norms of Augustan expression really to break away. Lonsdale argues that “Commentators still generalise freely about large areas of experience which, it is claimed, eighteenth-century poets ignored” when, in reality, eighteenth-century poetry accommodated many styles, schools, and subjects, varied experience providing the impetus behind numerous experiments.<sup>105</sup> Poems which tell a more realistic story about the concerns of eighteenth-century writers do exist: Robert Tattersal's “The Bricklayer's Lament” (1734) describes the vagaries of seasonal labour;

Edward Rushton's "Human Debasement. A Fragment" (1793) denounces slavery, while Joseph Mather extols Paine's virtues in "God Save Great Thomas Paine" (?1792); Thomas Holcroft portrays a grim but sympathetic picture in "The Dying Prostitute, An Elegy" (1785), and Mary Leapor's "An Essay On Woman" (1751) details a woman's place in society; "Between An Unemployed Artist and His Wife" (Anonymous, 1775) discusses the prospect of the workhouse facing a married couple. The preface to Thomas Day's *The Dying Negro* (1773) explains that "Whatever reception this little piece may meet with from others, the Author can never regret that portion of time as lost, which he has employed in paying this small tribute of humanity to the misery of a fellow-creature."<sup>106</sup> Although radical literary experimentation was, therefore, occurring well before the 1790's, critics conditioned by the dominant paradigms persistently ignored, misrepresented, or undervalued these mid-century experiments.<sup>107</sup> While the critical situation is changing under new theoretical pressures and political concerns, for much of this century Norman Callan's observation about criticism of the period summed up the essential problem: "Of no other age has the poetry been so little read for its own sake, or so much for the sake of comparison with others."<sup>108</sup>

## Section 2.

At this point a reader might well be wondering why, given the lyric genre's continuing popularity and rising reputation during the eighteenth century, modern critics did not foreground lyric accomplishments in the period to rebut the charge of prosiness and in the process establish a more productive paradigm for reading mid- and late-eighteenth century poetry. Hindsight of course makes everyone wise, but the historical drift of eighteenth-century studies, governed so to speak by its own peculiar logic, militated against any such development. Although critics would often praise specific poems or point to Gray and Collins as able practitioners of lyric writing, particularly as they both seemed to fit the emerging temper of romanticism, the rise of the eighteenth-century lyric to the



status of a major genre escaped the notice of most critics and readers because it did not fit into the specific paradigms formulated to defend, explain, and promote the best poetry of the century: the issue of generic transformation as a register of cultural experience rarely contributed to debates about the "failure" of post-Popean writing or to those studies bent on spotting the train of Romanticism.<sup>109</sup> Insofar as critics showed an awareness of the lyric's presence in the cultural field, they generally couched their remarks about it in terms of the evaluative norms of the prose paradigms or its various derivatives. Doughty, for instance, found that many eighteenth-century lyrics were "not without skill and charm," but also that he was "glad also to discover how little injustice the romantics did to the period which immediately preceded their own." The problem why no lyric of this period reached romantic sublimity, he feels, lay in the repression of feeling caused by the strict application of reason, a devotion to wit, and a social function ascribed to all poetry.<sup>110</sup> Grierson, who appeared to take issue with the "commonplace of criticism that the eighteenth century was not a period which produced great poetry, was not lyrical in temperament," nonetheless concluded that the peculiar quality of the lyric--the "note of ecstasy, the piercing note of joy or sorrow"--was missing.<sup>111</sup> Although Davie queries the modern conviction that "whatever the virtues of [eighteenth-century] poetry . . . it is assumed that they cannot be lyrical virtues," he resorts to a lyric definition so restrictive that it effectively eliminates all but eighteenth-century hymns from his discussion.<sup>112</sup> In what sounds almost a refrain, A. R. Humphreys voices the basic impression that "The eighteenth century lowers the lyric to the level of prose sense."<sup>113</sup> Harvey notes that "The characteristics of the lyric--subjectivity and intensity--to which might be added comparative brevity and simplicity--were not at all the most prominent characteristics of Augustan verse."<sup>114</sup> David W. Lindsay finds that "the most interesting developments between 1744 and 1759 were in lyrical poetry," but in spite of his recognition of these developments his explanation for these developments relies upon established paradigms.<sup>115</sup> The introductory notes to a recent anthology, after telling us that "The period . . . is principally a period of the long poem, and particularly of the long meditative

poem and the long satiric poem, in which virtues are praised and vices excoriated," goes on to explain that "even the lyrics of the period, at least those belonging to its largest body of lyrics, are not such as would immediately appeal to modern readers. The Christian hymns of the eighteenth century are probably as strange to many of us as its strange genres."<sup>116</sup> McKillop, it would seem, summed up the basic standpoint quite nicely: "an age which subordinated the individual to impersonal norms did not express itself in short intense poems of personal feeling"; verse written under such an emotionally restrictive regime "tends to be trivial and conventional, or at best neat and pensive."<sup>117</sup> In brief, eighteenth-century poets simply could not write "true" lyrics.

Such remarks serve notice that, in addition to the normative view about the prosy temper of eighteenth-century poets, modern critics conceive of the nature of lyric poetry in a rather specific way; an unspoken, if ambiguous assumption about the essential fabric of "real" poetry often lies behind critical remarks about eighteenth-century poetry, and especially about the eighteenth-century lyric.<sup>118</sup> For the modern, lyric poetry is, as Hegel concisely defines it, "the expression of subjectivity," that is, it conveys profound, spontaneous, and inspired emotional experiences which for many critics constitutes the essence of great poetry.<sup>119</sup> Catherine Walsh Peltz long ago made a good attempt to argue that the Restoration and early eighteenth-century lyric, if impersonal and working largely with conventional matters (mainly love affairs), attained a certain style and manner of expressiveness, and she finds that critics overlooked these poems because "we view the neo-classical age as essentially unlyric."<sup>120</sup> To her credit, she does not pretend that neo-classical lyrics intend spontaneous effusions of self but shows that poets writing at the time worked with an altogether different conception of the lyric. Martha Collins, on the other hand, ascribes the lack of a true lyric spirit in Collins's poetry to the degree to which he shared the temper of his age, "an age in which . . . criticism was more important than lyricism."<sup>121</sup> Mark Jeffreys, disputing Próspero Saíz's and other deconstructionists' categorization of the lyric genre as a "reactionary genre" which privileges logocentrism and the authority of the self, points out that such an assertion "depend[s] on a late-

Romantic conception of the lyric and lyric subjectivity.” He argues that “only in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was [the lyric] mythologized as the purest and oldest of poetic genres and thus transformed into a nostalgic ideological marker.”<sup>122</sup> Obviously, such a conception will make certain demands, raise certain expectations, about what type of subject matter the form ought to treat and how it ought to treat it: this “lyric as expression of subjectivity” paradigm, which usually occurs in tandem with other preromantic paradigms, adds to the difficulty of appreciating the work of mid- and late-eighteenth century poets on their terms.

Since preromantic readings explore mid- and late-eighteenth century writings primarily to establish the spiritual excellence of Romantic poetry, the approach already presupposes that Romantic sensibilities provide the norm for lyric experience: by looking at the lyric backwards, so to speak, from Romantic successes to eighteenth-century half-successes, the true lyric spirit becomes manifest. *Prophetic Strain*, by Anne Williams, pursues this method. Working from Romantic models (read Wordsworthian), she defines a lyric thus: “when the author induces the reader to know, from within, the virtual experience of a more or less particularized consciousness. When this aim constitutes the pre-dominant organizing principle of a poem, we say that is a lyric.”<sup>123</sup> According to Howard Weinbrot, Williams errs in defining those forces at work in the eighteenth century which created this lyric impulse: for Williams, “‘Il Penseroso’, Protestant emphasis on the value of the senses as aids to personal response and meditation, and the particular example of Job all encouraged the personal vision and prophetic strain that found its ultimate success in Wordsworth.”<sup>124</sup> Certainly Williams is correct that Milton’s “Il Penseroso” went through a period of immense popularity, though whether this actually led to Wordsworth remains a moot point, or if it did then the line of descent needs some careful reappraisal. Shenstone observes, in 1755, that “I cannot help remarking that MILTON’s *Il Penseroso* has drove half our Poets crazy; it has, however, produced some admirable Odes to *Fancy*, amongst which, that of WARTON I think deserves the



Preference; and after his MERRICK's, PENSHURST, and the Ode on *Solitude* are of the same Tribe, and are good. The *Pleasures of Melancholy*, and MARIOTT's Ode to *Fancy*, of the same Tribe, are indifferent."<sup>125</sup> In any case, Williams's account seems both too particular and too vague to Weinbrot, and he considers this argument for the motivation of lyrics as "imprecise" and thus "fails." Williams shows little understanding of the aesthetic or historical situation of the lyric, along with a limited awareness of lyric precursors--Pindar, Horace, and Virgil, for example--and little awareness of recent work on lyric theory.<sup>126</sup> More favourably, Hutchings notes that Williams's study says "not so much about lyric poetry in the eighteenth century . . . as about how the lyric took over the major thrust of poetry through a process of 'generic appropriation'." However, like Weinbrot, he sees similar problems, noting that her definition of the lyric apparently "encompasses all" poetic acts such that "any poem can be a lyric."<sup>127</sup>

The critical treatment of Collins's personality and poetry provides a good illustration of the way in which the various Romantic paradigms determine estimates of a poet's work. On the one hand, Collins receives attention from modern critics largely because his poetry appears to concern itself with specifically "modern" issues: poetry about poetry, the poetic act, anxiety about creation, and so forth, encouraging readers to engage Collins's poetry as important documents on the way towards a Romantic poetics. On the other hand, Collins's concern with the writing of poetry invariably dooms him to failure in modern eyes: he fails because the modern perspective takes it as axiomatic that it already knows what he was saying in his poetry and why he was saying it: for example, Brown's reading of Collins's "Ode to Evening," however suggestive, suffers from a heavily-influenced Kantian romanticism, reading the poem as if Collins was trying to achieve, but not finally succeeding in, a Kantian form of transcendence beyond the empirical. For Brown, the "Ode to Evening" employs "deficient modes of time. Impure and unstable movement obscures the purified inner sense that the poem allows us finally to glimpse."<sup>128</sup> This type of observation fits Umberto Eco's argument that post-Romantic criticism often fails to appreciate the aims of pre-Romantic art precisely because the pre-

Romantic artist or writer does not articulate the basic concerns of Romantic poetics, Romantic aesthetics. Those concerns, he says, revolve around the problems of art and artistic production or, as Bate put it, "the artist's relation to his own art." Modern critics, who generally share the same aesthetic concerns, tend to evaluate a work in terms of its declaration or its statement of poetics. This means, says Eco, that the criteria for failure is the reverse for that of success: "*the success of the work will have to do solely with whether or not the artist has been able to express the problem of poetics he wanted to resolve.*"<sup>129</sup> Collins, who did not live long enough nor sanely enough, never clearly formulated (or at least never expressed) his poetics in a satisfactory way for modern tastes, and therefore he can be classified as a failed poet.

For those critics who accepted the period as a transitional phase, the apparent increase in lyrics simply provided further evidence of the radical separation of neo-classic and romantic sensibilities. In *The Mirror and the Lamp*, M. H. Abrams articulates the rationale for this approach: the contrast between neo-classic and Romantic art lies in a shift in understanding (and valuing) of how the mind works. Instead of holding up a mirror to nature, that is, pursuing a mimetic theory of art, poets began to appreciate the mind's active role in creating its reality: the mind was seen as a lamp and poetry the immediate expression of inner life. Throughout the latter decades of the eighteenth century, as romanticism slowly ripens, aesthetic and literary theory begins to emphasise more and more the expressive and emotional value of poetry, eschewing principles of order, decorum, and right reason for those of ecstasy, vision, and poetic creativity. The lyric, it is then assumed, offered poets the freedom which the new expressive ideal required.<sup>130</sup> Jackson argues that as poets began to react against their Augustan precursors they were "abetted by such contemporary fashions as the traditions of *ut pictura poesis*, by the sublime, and by the growing interest in cultural and aesthetic primitivism." Such a climate of taste required spontaneous poetic effusions and so, invoking a rather strange notion of "demand-led" poetry, he asserts that to meet the need for "an immediately affective art"

the poets put their collective heads together and agreed that “fundamentally the lyric was the literary form most able to meet this requirement.”<sup>131</sup> The results, as far as Jackson is concerned, were not overly positive.

However, if the reader can manage to disregard all the negative publicity, can forget the charge that “The poets were too sane,” it becomes evident that rather than a literary desert the decades after Pope constitute “an extraordinarily interesting period of English literature.”<sup>132</sup> Indeed, the admitted competence of these poets suggests the unfairness of most critical estimates. Wimsatt, for instance, finds the poetry “shot through . . . with many interesting flashes” which he interprets, typically, as part of an ongoing rebellion--“hard-won, even unconscious, freedoms”--but flashes which underline the fact that the roots of this poetry lie deep in the poetic tradition: “One motif intrinsic to the poetry of the whole century may be observed in peculiar concentration here--the method, the bondage, and the main freedom of all English neo-classic and pre-romantic poetry--the principle of imitation or free-running parallel.” Such imitation included all the ancient models, as well as “the whole British tradition and notably of the English poets who had already best imitated or paralleled the ancients--Spenser and Milton especially and, though he was still very near, Pope.”<sup>133</sup> The notes to Lonsdale's edition of *The Poems of Gray, Collins, and Goldsmith*, and those to James Sambrook's edition of Thomson's *The Seasons* drive home the validity of Wimsatt's argument, while Boyce, who admits that the odes of Gray, Collins, and the Wartons “seem to have lost most of their charm” for modern readers, finds mid-century odes “a very mixed breed” which a reader unacquainted with their complex cultural sensibility cannot fully appreciate. Besides requiring a good knowledge of “the odes of Pindar and Horace, with their allusive, highly decorated manner,” the reader should possess a familiarity with “Milton's shorter poems, the tradition of literary pictorialism seemingly affected by late Renaissance painting, allegorical and mythological tendencies seemingly strengthened by baroque canvases and ceiling paintings, and something of sentimental melancholy.”<sup>134</sup> In other words, paradigms which attempt to explain, define, or interpret the attitudes and

temperament of this period resist easy formulation. Indeed, critics remain divided about a name for the decades which follow Pope, in part perhaps because they have not, as Sutherland noted, "written about eighteenth-century poetry with their eyes fixed steadily on the object, or even with any apparent eagerness to study it."<sup>135</sup>

It would be senseless to challenge the premise that eighteenth-century poets gradually began to articulate expressive ideals, that this involved a new appreciation of "primitivist" or oraculist poetry, or that poets valued the lyric because it offered modes of expression closer to that of pure poetry.<sup>136</sup> Clearly, and as my own evidence presented in *Chapter Four* confirms, they did. I would nevertheless reject the leading assumptions about the nature of the lyric genre which limit and condition such interpretations: these devalue and misrepresent eighteenth-century perceptions and expectations of the lyric *qua* poetry, and they falsify the intellectual forces and norms which governed how the concept of the poetic "character" evolved in the eighteenth century. As I argued in the *Preamble*, the growing appreciation of the lyric genre's expressive capacity, registered in a wealth of critical reflections and statements of praise by a large number of minor figures, calls attention to a comprehensive evolution in the way that writers and readers, makers and consumers of culture, conceived of the lyric genre. Critically, we must accept that this culture did not conceive of the lyric in terms of Romantic poetics. And, further, as a matter of changing taste, modern views about the eighteenth-century lyric have shown little concern to appreciate the metamorphosis in the genre's reputation in terms of an eighteenth-century context in which the transformational power of experimental science played a dominant role in thinking about the arts and sciences: witness, for instance, the explosion of literary criticism and aesthetic philosophy during the century. In any case, we might at least approach with some scepticism the chorus of negative judgments concerning the importance of mid- and late-eighteenth century poetry for an understanding of the evolution of eighteenth-century culture based on estimates of the quality of the poetry. For the most part, the nay-saying simply conceals how few critics

have even bothered to investigate the cultural dynamics peculiar to mid- and late-eighteenth century poetry.<sup>137</sup> To begin rectifying that requires some attempt to contextualise the special status of the eighteenth-century lyric; to do that we must reappraise the origins and the evolution of experimental science in England and, in particular, examine a set of behavioural “ideals” which underpinned the hegemonic growth of the new science and laid down the conditions for the rise of the eighteenth-century lyric to major genre status. Further, we must depart from the usual method of evaluating the effect or influence of science upon literature. More about that in the next chapter.



## **Chapter Two - Experimental Science, Authority, Language**

### *Section 1. Science as Hegemony*

Samuel Johnson's striking his foot hard against a rock to refute George Berkeley's theory that "the *objects of human knowledge* . . . are either *ideas* actually imprinted on the senses; or else such as are perceived by attending to the passions and operations of the mind" impresses most readers as a typically humorous instance of Johnsonian reaction.<sup>1</sup> Yet in smiling at Johnson's behaviour the significance of the act as a philosophical objection can be easily misprized: it strikingly dramatised his conviction that any theories about causes and effects must pass the test of experience. The foot hitting the rock and the immediate knowledge garnered therefrom--that the idea of pain was not prior to the sense experience--served Johnson as a ready test of the credibility of Berkeley's theory, what Boswell referred to as "a stout exemplification of the *first truths of Père Bouffier*, or the *original principles* of Read and Beattie; without admitting which, we can no more argue in metaphysics, than we can argue in mathematics without axioms."<sup>2</sup> Rather than simply assent to Berkeley's hypothesis (and he likely sympathised with Berkeley's theological aims), and rather than elaborate a precise syllogistic rebuttal, Johnson based his judgment on personal experience; in fact, he habitually tested conjectures about natural processes by running experiments. Boswell describes several of Johnson's "experiments": he shaved the hair about his nipples in order to measure its rate of growth; he carried out chemical experiments of dubious merit; and he conducted experiments with plants. Johnson, moreover, retained a keen interest in medical issues and in mechanical inventions throughout his life.<sup>3</sup> In short, his "scientism" formed a vital component of his "worldview," which itself governed his response to Berkeley's hypothesis.<sup>4</sup>

Presumably, Berkeley's intellect matured within a similar cultural framework as did Johnson's. Certainly, as his *Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision* indicates, he

considered himself an experimental scientist of sorts.<sup>5</sup> That work displays a thorough grounding in the methodology of experimental science, while the analytical procedure which he adopts in his *Principles of Human Knowledge* derives from Locke, the arch-empiricist and the usual foil for Berkeley's anti-empiricist polemic. Whether Berkeley won or lost his argument with Locke does not greatly matter here; what does is that he cloaks his hypotheses in the raiment of the new science, exploiting its epistemological and methodological authority to legitimise the claims made in favour of his "worldview." Doubtless he suspected that few of his contemporary readers would sympathise with a theory of knowledge which utilised a methodology with less authority than that of the experimental method.<sup>6</sup> Thus, although Johnson and Berkeley held differing convictions about the metaphysical purpose of the experimental method of inquiry, both cases attest to the pervasive influence of that method in the intellectual and cultural life of the eighteenth century; that Johnson used Berkeley's definition of science in his *Dictionary* doubly emphasizes the complicated way in which experimental and empirical ideals worked their way into general consciousness.

The area of dispute between Johnson and Berkeley, of course, indicates not only that the cultural role but that perceptions of the meaning of the new science were by no means straight-forward or taken for granted. On the contrary, as Margaret J. Osler argues, at least two epistemological traditions competed during the eighteenth century: one, which we might designate a form of optimistic realism, held that mechanical laws actually explained reality; the other tradition, taking its cue from Locke, tended towards scepticism, particularly in matters concerning metaphysics, theology, and questions about faith and identity.<sup>7</sup> Yet the persistence of these two differing traditions does not negate my main point because, despite antagonisms about its implications and significance, both sides retained a healthy respect for the methodology and the other ideals of the new science, as well as a high degree of interest in it as an intellectual discipline. I will take up these issue in more detail later. For now we might adduce Richard B. Schwartz's roll call of notable eighteenth-century literary writers in order to underline my point that writers of

all sorts maintained an interest in some form of experimental science.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, as various studies show, as a mental discipline it contributed to developments in language and literature in general, and to the genesis of the novel in particular. In *The Rise of the Novel*, for example, Ian Watt postulates that during the era following the publication of Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, a general acceptance of the new scientific view of how the individual related to his environment paved the way for the novel's innovative exploration of personal and social identity. The novelist exploited the ramifications of Lockean psychology, developments in narrative and character formation appearing "analogous to the rejection of universals and the emphasis on particulars which characterizes philosophic realism."<sup>9</sup> In other words, under the influence of certain tenets of experimental science and Lockean psychology, writers transformed the Romance, Epic, and Travel genres into a literary form wholly in keeping with the scientific assumptions of the time. Eve Tavor, for instance, shows that the "sceptical tradition represented by Locke, Mandeville, Hume and to some extent Shaftesbury, determines the incipient novel's range of concerns and, more important, its distinctive formal features."<sup>10</sup> The lyric also underwent generic metamorphosis within this same cultural framework, and it therefore seems appropriate, indeed necessary, to isolate the core methodological and linguistic features of the new science in order to gain an appreciation of how and why they could transform perceptions and estimates of the literary value of the lyric genre.

The student of literature who wants to extract information and insight from the history of science must, however, surmount several obstacles to both method and analysis. Not only does the history of science cover an immense field of study sub-divided into diverse specialisms but its practitioners for a long time applied methods of analysis and evaluation designed to achieve specific historical aims. In a way (and this is not meant to sound disparaging), most studies in the history of science followed an almost one-dimensional path, usually explaining how certain scientific ideas came into being, how applied, adapted, refined, improved; how certain ideas appear, flourish, disappear--they study the development of scientific paradigms, what Michel Foucault sees as the

description of "the processes and products of the scientific consciousness."<sup>11</sup> Beyond these fairly limited and historically uncomplicated aims they generally, as G. S. Rousseau and Roy Porter remind us, felt little need to trespass: "history of science, with honourable exceptions, essentially celebrated the biography of humble genius and the triumphal progress of discoveries along the royal road of truth. The history of science was the spaniel of science itself. This approach had real merits, not least in spotlighting the tremendous power of science as an engine of investigation." This situation has all changed now because of new methods and attitudes, new critical and political perspectives, new concerns about the role of science in modern life, and "all these have compelled profound rethinking. Certainties have given way to questions. The history of science is no longer a scientist's hymn to science: it has become part of history itself."<sup>12</sup> In other words, history of science now plays an important role in determining issues of cultural and historical meaning. As Margaret J. Osler and Paul Lawrence Farber assert, "The scientific revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is central to understanding modern culture and the modern world. Pivotal in the development of the concepts of nature and of human nature that dominate contemporary life, this intellectual upheaval was deeply enmeshed in the religious, philosophical, and political currents of the time."<sup>13</sup> Indeed, much history of science now takes it as axiomatic that science must undergo the same interrogation of its historical context as other cultural practices, and as we will see later the intention of my work, though formulated well before I came into contact with these new theories of science and culture, falls in line with this new thinking (though less concerned here to debate problems concerning theories of history of science or to map alterations in its contemporary status).

In any case, I must differentiate my approach to science and poetry from that which has generally held in literary history, if only to provide a rationale for the type and scope of analysis which I intend to undertake. In the first place, until quite recently the literary historian's task always aimed at a somewhat more questionable end compared to that of the older history of science. Obviously, the literary historian must always conduct a

further, complicating manoeuvre, and this holds true even with the changes occurring in history of science: the critic must theorize and then apply historical information to a literary text or even to an entire corpus of texts in hopes of showing a relationship between literature and science. Thus, insofar as he pursues rather different ends than do historians of science, these ends invariably regulate the critic's interpretative task.<sup>14</sup> Faced with such an assignment, the literary student's instinct is to rehearse the evolution of the new science from its earliest stages up to some point in the eighteenth century, locating and examining seminal moments and texts which help throw light on particular literary issues or writerly aims: for example, the formation of the Royal Society, the Ancients versus Moderns dispute, Newton's *Principia*, Thomson's imagery. This type of analysis guarantees a wealth of information fascinating in its own right, and it allows the critic to validate his efforts by showing where poets imported new scientific conceptions of nature or the universe into their poetry, or how new mechanical inventions--the microscope, for instance--generated interesting new poetic images, or how new scientific discoveries affected the poet's psychological outlook. Marjorie Hope Nicolson's *Science and Imagination*, for example, promises to "follow the development of the telescope and microscope as they appear in literature, watching new figures of speech, new literary themes, new cosmic epics, most of all the transformation of poetic and religious imagination by ideas which, once grasped, man has never been able to forget."<sup>15</sup> Similarly, William Powell Jones's *The Rhetoric of Science*, a fine study in many ways, ferrets out a welter of images which owe their genesis to scientific writings.<sup>16</sup>

No one would seriously dispute the necessity of such work or the valuable contribution which it makes to eighteenth-century scholarship. Our appreciation of the complexity of Johnson's thought, for instance, owes much to the efforts of a critic like Richard Schwartz to trace out how Johnson's attitude to science informed and complicated his thinking. Even so, the undoubted value of such scholarship disguises its limitations as an interpretive strategy since, as Kester Svendsen notes, "There is no settled methodology for studying the impact of science on structure or form of poetry and

prose.”<sup>17</sup> On the one hand, the guiding rationale for much of the literary historian's research into science seems (in many cases) to amount to little more than an exercise in influence-peddling. A scientific text, say, Newton's *Opticks*, undergoes extensive examination and explication; then a cornucopia of citation plucked from literary texts follows which either “proves” how little a writer understood those ideas or “proves” a writer's affiliation to scientific ideas. An instance of the first approach is voiced by Carson S. Duncan, who condemns seventeenth-century poets for remaining locked into cosmological conceptions (particularly astrological ones) belonging to the older science and for using poetic images derived from classical sources. Presumably, as the new science replaces the old cosmology, the poet should expunge all thoughts of the old from his mind and writing. This seems a hard, even senseless demand: even Locke could speak as if the old astrological superstitions still had some communicatory value: “For I cannot but think it an odd persecution of my stars, that I who meddle with no affairs but my own, that seek nothing but retirement and books to pass the remainder of my time in an air that favours my health cannot be permitted it.”<sup>18</sup> Nicolson's *Newton Demands the Muse* provides a case-book example of the phylogenetic approach. Her work establishes beyond doubt the widespread influence of Newton's *Opticks* and *Principia* on poetic imagery throughout the eighteenth century (and especially on Blake's imagery). Yet the wealth of citation rarely gives rise to deeper reflection about the relationship of science to poetry, Nicolson preferring evaluative to analytic criticism; consequently, when she remarks that Thomson “admired the surpassing intellectual attainments of Newton,” that azure “was a color in which Thomson found special pleasure . . . a happy color,” or that he “played delightedly with the spectrum,” she effectively depreciates his engagement with Newton's theories.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, G. C. Macaulay and Douglas Grant, both admirers and on the whole helpful critics of Thomson, do not offer much more than Nicolson in the way of insight into Thomson's use of Newton's theories.<sup>20</sup> In the end, this type of critical treatment means that Thomson's (or any other writer's for that matter) poetry simply

disappears as a distinct imaginative entity, re-appearing as a curious hybrid of Newton's *Opticks* and *Principia*.

On the other hand, the unavoidable and extensive decussation of scientific and poetic texts begets interpretive familiarity: literary students learn how scientific discoveries affected every thinker and writer during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, how it affected cosmological and religious beliefs, how it "decentred" man's traditional place in the cosmos (and thus decentred his consciousness), how it reduced man to an atomic bit of a large mechanistic construct, and how imagination, spirit, and poetry suffered under its influence.<sup>21</sup> A typical sense that scientific discoveries decentred man's place in the universe underlies Thomas Docherty's *John Donne, Undone*. He argues that "What was fundamentally new in the work of Copernicus . . . was the fact of his decentring the earth itself; and subsequently, the impact of *De Revolutionibus* was felt primarily as a threat to the credibility of humanity's special relation to God and the world," while Gary F. Waller similarly notes a "longing for a stable center" occurring everywhere in the poetry of the latter sixteenth century; however, he links this yearning to the rise of the Protestant view of personal identity conflating with the conventions of Petrarchan love poetry (in which the unrequited lover experiences a fall into confusion and psychic disarray), and in a more general recognition of the mutability of human life (a common theme of classical and humanist literature).<sup>22</sup> Louis T. Milic looks at the way in which time and space were used in everyday speech, noting that general usage of these two metaphors shows that these two fundamental elements of reality "helped to explain certain beliefs and especially that they supported the possibility of an all-powerful God. The unsatisfactory implications of a mechanical universe were not clear to the general in the time of Pope or Swift."<sup>23</sup> The hypothesis that some sort of psychic crisis and insecurity developed as a consequence of the discoveries of early science, and particularly of early astronomy, suffers therefore from a number of weaknesses. Indeed, many of those observers closer to the action, as it were, did not always consider astronomical discoveries in the way pictured by modern critics. For example, Joseph Moxon writes that the immense size of the universe simply

proves God's power: "if you weigh well with your selfe this little parcel of fruit Astronomical; as concerning the bigness and distance of the Stars, &c, and the Huge massiness of the Starry Heaven, you will find your Consciences moved with the Kingly Prophet to sing the confession of Gods Glory."<sup>24</sup> Similarly, but ninety years later, an essay called "Observations on the UNIVERSE, and the different Systems of which it is composed," in *The Royal Magazine* for January 1760, explains that its frontispiece "presents a small sketch of the universe, according to the discoveries of the moderns, wherein every fixed star is supposed to be a real sun, with planets revolving round it, like that fountain of life and heat, placed by Omnipotence in the center of our system." It goes on to say, and the argument bears quoting in full, that our mind,

while it is contemplating the works of its Maker, is lost in astonishment. If we consider the universe in no other light than as it appears to the eye of a spectator placed on the surface of our earth, it is really astonishing, even in this confined, this imperfect view. How beautiful does the apparent arch of heaven appear, when the sun is sunk beneath the horizon, and the fleecy clouds are wafted beyond the limits of our sight! How magnificently is it adorned with gems of the most brilliant lustre, whose rays penetrate the sable mantle of the night, and throw a faint and trembling light over the dusky landscape! What are all the decorations of human art, when compared to these glowing lamps that adorn the ample circuit of the skies!

The author then supplies a statistical barrage to emphasise the Earth's insignificance in the universal scheme, noting that "if the grandeur of this system alone cannot be fully comprehended, how will the human mind be able to form a proper idea of the universe, where this system is but a point; and, were it annihilated, could not be missed by an eye capable of taking in the whole circle of creation." This information does not, however, lead to a debilitating psychological defragmentation but to an assertion of mankind's moral duties: "Absorbed in the enchanting idea of riches, we forget that we are only sojourners here, and that we must shortly leave our possessions to others. We view the works of Omnipotence with a frigid indifference, and are too often more charmed with the poultry decorations of a theatre, than with the majestic, the refulgent scenes of creation."<sup>25</sup> The author here clearly invokes the spirit of *Psalms 8* and, in short, scientific discoveries could just as easily root faith more deeply as tear it out.



Thus, in conjunction with a general complacency that a restatement of scientific ideas in poetic dress offers the only significant level at which science might influence poetry, a simple dislike of science clouds thinking about the complicated (and complicating) intertextuality of poetic and scientific writings, a point which Rousseau and Porter both wish to emphasize and part of the blame for which they place on history of science itself. They argue that "the eighteenth century *is* a problem" because even historians of science "have tended to regard it as a tiresome trough to be negotiated between the peaks of the seventeenth and those of the nineteenth century; or as a mystery, a twilight zone in which all is on the verge of yielding. This judgement may seem paradoxical. For even by the most conventional 'internal' standards of evaluation, the eighteenth century was one of noted achievement." Interestingly, and appropriate given the history of criticism traced in *Chapter One*, they note that the neglect of the period belongs to a myth which "is part, of course, of the Romantic and counter-French-Revolutionary reaction against all facets of the eighteenth-century world: its religion, its art and poetry, its history-writing," and they add that "So potent does the myth remain that many fields of Enlightenment ideas and culture--perhaps especially gauging the pitch of its religion--suffer from scholarly neglect at least as seriously as its science" (p. 3).<sup>26</sup> Of course, students will encounter a huge range of studies which attempt to put the relationship between science and literature into a positive and integrated framework, as Schwartz's study on Johnson suggests, but literary history and criticism for a long period of time tended to focus on and emphasize satiric and negative views, and in the process giving the impression that science promoted anti-human, anti-literary values.<sup>27</sup> Douglas Bush, for instance, explains that "the romantic faith in nature, man, imagination, myth, and beauty was a genuine rebirth of the human spirit which still has meaning for us," especially the "revolt against mechanistic rationalism," while B. Ifor Evans contends that experimental science wreaked a "great cleavage in human thought," leaving modern man "frightened, anxious, incompetent." In typically romantic terms, he believes that the only alternative lies in the poet who "assert[s] a life of the imagination," who develops his

“prophetic or visionary power.” He instances Blake and Keats as exemplary poets “who regarded science as the enemy.”<sup>28</sup> C. J. Horne tells us that 1660 marks a turning point in which we witness writing decidedly “more modern in style and spirit than much that was written only a few years earlier. This modernity, as also a depression of the poetic imagination that went with it, is to be explained in part by the remarkable advance of science in the seventeenth century and the dominance of the scientific attitude throughout the eighteenth.”<sup>29</sup> Even a fairly helpful work like Basil Willey's *The Eighteenth-Century Background* transmits an anti-science bias. Although the spirit of scientific investigation helped to dispel “the fogs and glooms of history,” replacing the “ignorance and barbarism of the Gothic centuries” with a more hopeful “common daylight,” it produced a “prosaic” world whose “steady and serene” beams would soon make all “dark with excessive light.”<sup>30</sup> A typical example of the Romantic bias can be found in Bush's *Science and English Poetry*. While promising a sensitive analysis of the role of science in the post-Renaissance era, Bush actually charts a course designed to appeal to post-Romantic prejudices. In the initial stages of his argument he declares that, because the post-Medieval world underwent complex changes as a result of science, readers must become aware of its “effects upon the life and spirit of man in general and poets in particular.” Of these manifold effects, the literary critic should mark “the changes in the technique and texture as well as the content of poetry that have been wrought by the great changes in the poet's outer and inner world.”<sup>31</sup> Unfortunately, he never actually enlarges upon the changes in “technique and texture,” at least not in the eighteenth-century poetry which he discusses. He sees, instead, “the further development of science, of anti-Christian rationalism and evangelical Christianity, and of poetry . . . dividing a community of relatively homogenous culture into groups embracing diverse and opposed kinds of knowledge and belief.”<sup>32</sup> Modern science (unlike previous forms of science) wreaks havoc on the homogeneous, harmonious cultural consciousness and eighteenth-century writers therefore get short shrift from Bush, who indicts them for their “acceptance” of science; he

goes on to praise the romantic “revolt of the feeling heart and the senses and the imagination against mere reason and its abstract picture of the world and man.”<sup>33</sup>

Such observations about science and poetry moved Rousseau to conclude that, like “so many other humanistic scholars,” most literary critics “share an ingrained resistance to science and the history of science.” In Rousseau's eyes, such resistance encourages unwelcome, even pernicious, habits of mind: too often literary critics “intentionally diminish the role science played in the history of human culture, and take less account of it in their scholarship than is historically accurate or ideologically healthy.”<sup>34</sup> This type of unhealthy scholarship slips easily into the critical paradigms already detailed, pronouncements about the relationship of science and literature leaning heavily upon established opinions. The scientific or rationalist “temper” of the period, for instance, merges (and even helps to explain) the period's disposition to prose, while critics imbued with the anti-scientific biases of post-romantic paradigms happily distort the eighteenth-century accommodation of emotional and rational life. Richard F. Jones, for example, remarks that “The spirit of utility, which derived its strength from the new science, and which recommended the latter to the Puritans, demanded that language be considered only as a means to an end, and upon its subordination to the useful study of nature.”<sup>35</sup> As Rousseau points out, most post-romantics find it inconceivable that a religious, spiritual, or aesthetic conception of life could subsist with an interest or training in science:

Ever since the Romantic thinkers rebelled against both mechanism and empiricism, religion and science construed as separate domains have been much *further apart* than they were in the eighteenth century, and it is almost impossible for most contemporary intellectual historians, as well as literary historians, to imagine that religion and science could still have been wedded as recently as the eighteenth century.<sup>36</sup>

A quick glance at Isaac Watts's writing career supports Rousseau's point. While Watts could write a poem like “The Hurry of the Spirits, in a Fever and Nervous Disorders,” a piece which uses the type of decentring imagery often cited by critics of romantic tastes as indicative of the eighteenth-century mania for mechanism or of signs of nascent

romanticism ("The engine rules the man"; "little restless atoms rise and reign / Tyrants in sovereign uproar"), he could also write a best-selling course on logic (heavily indebted to Locke) and a poem praising Locke's achievements ("To *John Locke, Esq. Retir'd from Business*").<sup>37</sup> Ironically, instead of objectively engaging the human elements which motivate all cultural expression, critics of a romantic hue too often prefer an abstract and ultimately automated response to the dynamics of cultural evolution.

Or perhaps, as Gabriel Josipovici contends, the modern reader naturally resists the scientific temper of the eighteenth century because he sympathises more with (or yearns for) a Medieval and early Renaissance worldview than with later ones.<sup>38</sup> Even so, such "sympathy" hardly licenses the type of scholarly prejudices which, according to Rousseau, informs most critical pronouncements about the supposed worldview of the eighteenth century. He scathingly concludes that "Most 'world-picture' or 'background' books omit science altogether; and those that include it cursorily focus on one or two main tendencies."<sup>39</sup> The irony of such background studies lies in the fact, says Rousseau, "that scientific thought and the 'paradigms' [that is, the books] that are its results are largely responsible for creating the worldview of a given age" and that, regardless of the type or level of science current in any age, it will share certain features in common with the literary worldview of the time, and he goes on to note that in the development of literary analysis a critic needs to be aware that "there is a great deal more in common between, for example, Sophoclean narrative and the philosophy of ancient Greece vis-a-vis the nature of man, than there is in common between this narrative and philosophy and the narrative of *other ages*."<sup>40</sup> Nostalgia for a golden age prior to the emergence of modern science does not change the fact that when science itself changes it necessarily transforms the worldview of a culture, which in turn alters both literary expectations and the boundaries of the imagination, reshaping the literary genres and the literary worldview.<sup>41</sup> Seen in this light, we can agree with John Christie and Sally Shuttleworth's argument that "Our culture and criticism tends to pair literature and science as opposites.

Thus any attempt to study literature and science as a field of positive relations will be an effort to work against dominant cultural and scholarly conventions, to cross barriers, and hence to transgress."<sup>42</sup>

The preceding remarks make it clear that traditional methods of analysing and marking the intertextuality of poetry and science cannot, because of the basic presuppositions and prejudices which govern such analyses, illuminate *how* eighteenth-century lyric experience and critical attitudes to the lyric altered in light of the shaping force of experimental science on the worldview of the time. In short, as a means of exploring the lyric's transformation from minor to major genre it will do no good to focus on the immediately visible and tangible results of the new science, that is, on such achievements as its new discoveries into planetary motion, the flow of the blood, the microscopic world, or on its mechanical and technological innovations. It would, of course, be wrong to underestimate the importance of discoveries and innovations in winning acceptance and respect for the new science, or of the power of such marvels to spark a writer's interest. None of these, however, actually initiates the new-science's transformative force in both collective and individual thinking processes, but they signal the consequences of that new thinking process. To appreciate how the new science could shape and inform lyric experience, how it could help reveal and lead to a reevaluation of the "verities" of the lyric genre, we must first transgress, or to use a less loaded term, we must reassess (and reaccess) the nature and force of the epistemological, expressive, and ethical ideals which lay behind the thought and practice known as the experimental method. After all, during the initial stages of its development the proponents of the new science drew inspiration and motivation for their activities from these ideals: they were more concerned with contemporary needs than with future achievements about which they could know nothing whatsoever.

In broad terms, the new science provoked a radical reorientation of the concept of intellectual identity, liberating the individual from the fetters of tradition and authority: it freed the intellect to interact with and respond to nature, giving primacy and credibility to

knowledge or theories based on the personal observation of phenomena. The united powers of mind and body were given a unified role in the pursuit of knowledge and truth. At the same time, the new science demanded a high level of self-discipline, set limits to what any one individual might know, and put responsibility for the "truth-value" of the mind's discoveries and formulations on the individual. The new science, in other words, formulated an ethos of research into phenomena which required the adoption of a strict methodology that, besides promising certain practical and limited achievements, promoted intellectual humility and social duty. Equally important, the early scientists elaborated and expounded a linguistic or communicative ideal which put special constraints on both the aim and the style of scientific language usage.

Loosely schematized and defined in the abstract terms outlined above, any attempt to apply a theory of the influence of new-science epistemological, linguistic, and ethical ideals to the evolution of critical esteem and valuation of the lyric genre must appear a questionable project, and at least as unlikely to make any greater inroads into understanding the relationship of science to poetry as those approaches criticised earlier. In all likelihood, the range and depth and type of influence on the evolution of literary and critical issues which I attribute to the new science cannot be proved absolutely. Indeed, the methodology employed to argue my case--analysis of textual materials drawn from different disciplines which were for different aims and audiences; searching for and collating linguistic and other resemblances in the formulations of critical issues and problem solving in scientific texts, texts about science, and literary texts (relying often on analogical and comparative methods of analysis not on objective facts); the attempt to chart critical estimates of, and attitudes to, the lyric genre in parallel with an ever-increasing growth in acceptance of the values of empirical science--structures a concentrated focus on specific elements in the materials drawn upon for evidence. It means, therefore, that other evidence and theories about cultural change either must be ignored or insufficiently explored. Social, religious, political, and other forces at work undoubtedly affected perceptions of the value and function of lyric poetry (I will make

reference to these on occasion), but the argument as constituted does not lay any claim as a final word on lyric poetry, or that lyric poetry improved or degenerated in a cultural climate in which the new science was an important force. Like the epistemological principles which underwrote experimental science itself, the best that can be hoped for in an interpretive task of this nature are a degree of probability and credibility, not proof of any absolute cause. My claims, though argued with conviction, go only so far as to suggest that new-science ideals initiated and governed many lines of thought and judgment during the same long period of time in which critical estimates of the lyric's expressive potential underwent a radical transformation; that this reevaluation of the lyric genre occurs largely during the mid- and late-eighteenth century; and that, whatever other forces were at work on lyric experience, when we come to consider the evolution of critical estimates of the lyric genre we remember to include reflection on the instrumental power of new-science ideals on thought processes. In remaining alert to the role of science in the cultural context of the lyric genre's evolution, we add a vital perspective to our appreciation of its history and to the myriad ways in which science and literature transgress each other's boundaries, if boundaries there be.<sup>43</sup>

To initiate the process of "re-seeing" how new-science ideals could be diffused throughout the same culture which they shared with the lyric genre, I want to theorize their dynamic functionality in terms of the intellectual conflicts, interpenetrations, and confluences which always occur as part of the evolving drama of cultural practices. In other words, from its inception the new science was always more than just a new methodology, more than just a new way of measuring and weighing natural phenomena. As an epistemological and methodological (that is, as a thinking) practice it evolved, first, from a loose amalgam of ideals into a coordinated ideological construct, and then, over a significant period of time, it passed beyond the stage of ideology into what Raymond Williams calls "hegemony."<sup>44</sup> I would wish to make the distinction between science as ideology or as hegemony because, as Williams points out, the concept of ideology by itself cannot account for the actual intellectual movements, conflicts, and transformations

which occur in a culture *over time*. In the first place, whereas the concept of culture posits culture “as a ‘whole social process’, in which men define and shape their whole lives,” that of ideology abstracts and formalises a particular system of meanings and values into “the expression or projection of a particular class interest” (*ML*, p. 108). The abstraction of a system of ideas as a single class or world-view, however, must either exclude or ignore the “relatively mixed, confused, incomplete, or inarticulate consciousness of actual men” (*ML*, p. 109) who, subject to time, undergo varying degrees of cultural assimilation and actualization.<sup>45</sup> The concept of culture will always, therefore, subvert the concept of ideology; but, at the same time, the concept of culture as that by which “men define and shape their whole lives” likewise simply states an abstraction because “In any actual society there are specific inequalities in means and therefore in capacity to realize this process” (*ML*, p. 108). Neither concept adequately captures the process of historical actualization (or, for that matter, of the experience of alienation), nor do they grant the dynamic reciprocity of scientific, literary, and critical paradigms in the play of consciousness, paradigms which emerge as a consequence of heterogeneous historico-intellectual processes: all three operate across and through social and ideological structures.

The concept of hegemony, on the other hand, does. Since it includes both culture and ideology within it, hegemony encapsulates the entire spectrum of lived, historical actuality, encompassing any and all paradigms:

It is a whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of living: our senses and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our world. It is a lived system of meanings and values--constitutive and constituting--which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality for most people in society. (*ML*, p. 110)

As a “lived” process, moreover, hegemony goes beyond the concepts of both culture and ideology in two unique ways: first, says Williams, “It is not, except analytically, a system or a structure. . . . In practice, that is, hegemony can never be singular”; second, because it crosses ideological borders “it does not just passively exist as a form of dominance. It has



continually to be renewed, recreated, defended, and modified. It is also continually resisted, limited, altered, challenged by pressures not at all its own" (*ML*, p. 112). Hence, an evolving hegemony will typically not only come into conflict with already developed, specific elements of ideology and culture, but it will clash with the larger components of other emerging and declining hegemonies. As Williams says, a hegemony "is never either total or exclusive. At any time, forms of alternative or directly oppositional politics or culture exist as significant elements in the society" (*ML*, p. 113).<sup>46</sup> Given Williams's breakdown of hegemonic "structure" and activity, I would suggest that most "conflicts" take place at the paradigm level: well-established paradigms function, so to speak, like "regional" hegemonies. When a series of paradigms coalesce and move beyond the stage of ideology to become hegemonic, they operate in a multidimensional way throughout the culture, existing and persisting along with other ideologies and evolving hegemonies. Only as an hegemony could the new science become an integral force in cultural life, affecting and influencing thinkers and writers of varying temperament and conviction; only as an hegemony could it inexorably reorganize and reshape modes of apprehension and standards of expression. In short, any writer thrown into this culture would in important ways be subjected to the hegemonic force of the new science; it would influence his identity, his concept of vocation, his attitude to knowledge, his use of language, his choice of genre.

## Section 2. *Making the Break*

Francis Bacon's *The Advancement of Learning* (1605) offers a natural starting point for a discussion of science and the lyric genre in the eighteenth century for two reasons. Firstly, most eighteenth-century British observers regarded Bacon as the founding father of the new science. As the author of "An Essay on the STATE of LITERATURE in Great Britain" testifies, the Renaissance in Britain began with Bacon: "About this time the great

chancellor Bacon enlightened the world by his writings . . . He pointed out at a distance the road to true philosophy, and recommended experiments and observations as the only assistants to discover the secrets of nature."<sup>47</sup> Peter Williams, in his *Letters Concerning Education: Addressed to a Gentleman entering at the University* (1785), makes a similar point, explaining that when "my Lord Verulam introduced the method of Inquiry by means of *Experiment*," he "removed the prejudices of former times, and placed Philosophy on a *new* and more *extensive* basis."<sup>48</sup> Although Bacon considered his treatise "not much better than that noise or sound which musicians make while they are in tuning their instruments," his attack on scholastic philosophy and medieval science forms a leitmotif in eighteenth-century appraisals of his achievements.<sup>49</sup> For the eighteenth-century observer, Bacon's spirited defence of learning provided the irrefutable rationale for the experimental method of philosophical investigation.

Secondly, it was Bacon who first articulated the various intellectual and practical ideals which comprise the bone and muscle of seventeenth-century science, providing it with a powerful and comprehensive body of theoretical principles.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, the structural integrity of *The Advancement of Learning* seems well-designed as a founding text. He develops his theory of science by mobilizing his defence around a number of different issues, entwining arguments one into another: nature as the source of all human knowledge merges with Bacon's belief in the primacy of the senses and personal experience for verifying knowledge; the dynamics of the master/disciple relationship links with his reevaluation of the thinker's duty to the past, to tradition and to authority. These arguments, moreover, revolve around his specific assault on the abuse of rhetoric and the peculiar institutional structure and function of scholastic debate. In that sense, modern experimental science owes its formulation to a conflict over the role of experience and the purpose of language in the pursuit and presentation of knowledge, and the hegemonic force of these in the evolving epistemological "matrix" of the modern age merit attention

for obvious reasons: when science impinges on poetry, it does so at the level of thought and language.

As *The Advancement of Learning* makes clear, Bacon entertained no illusions about the status of Renaissance humanism: anxiety about its fragility permeates his text.<sup>51</sup> He recognised that the Renaissance ideal of intellectual freedom grew out of religious and theological power struggles, and that for the most part the combatants fought each other with and over rhetoric.<sup>52</sup> He describes the origins and early evolution of Renaissance rhetoric in succinct fashion:

Martin Luther, conducted (no doubt) by an higher providence, but in discourse of reason, finding what a province he had undertaken against the bishop of Rome and the degenerate traditions of the church, and finding his own solitude, being no ways aided by the opinions of his own time, was enforced to awake all antiquity, and to call former times to his succours to make a party against the present time: so that the ancient authors, both in divinity and humanity, which had long time slept in libraries, began generally to be read and revolved. This by consequence did draw on a necessity of a more exquisite travail in the languages original, wherein those authors did write, for the better understanding of those authors, and the better advantage of pressing and applying their words. And thereof grew again a delight in their manner of style and phrase, and an admiration of that kind of writing. (*AL*, p. 25)

Insofar as the battle against “the degenerate traditions of the church” mattered to Bacon, it did so because it commenced a process of freeing individual thought and expression; as a humanist moral philosopher he could not help but applaud the rediscovery of ancient texts and the exposure to different rhetorical modes and styles which this entailed. Yet he could not applaud all the purposes to which the new rhetorical tools were put.

At first, noticeably different rhetorical styles distinguished the opponents. The humanist rhetorical style emphasised matter and clear diction, while the arguments of the schoolmen “were altogether in a different style and form; taking liberty to coin and frame new terms of art to express their own sense, and to avoid circuit of speech, without regard to the pureness, pleasantness, and . . . lawfulness of the phrase or word” (*AL*, p. 25). It would be wrong to suppose, however, that early humanist argument did not contain its ratio of emotion. Initially, says Bacon, the new oratory “was much furthered and precipitated by the enmity and opposition that the propounders of those primitive but

seeming new opinions had against the schoolmen," and since each side needed adherents, the rhetorical element intensified: "the great labour then was with the people . . . for the winning and persuading of them there grew of necessity in chief price and request eloquence and variety of discourse, as the fittest and forciblest access into the capacity of the vulgar sort" (*AL*, p. 25). In such a competitive milieu, eloquence itself became a primary aim of debate; rather than try to clarify an issue with sound argument and sensible illustration "men began to hunt more after words than matter; more after the choiceness of the phrase, and the round and clean composition of the sentence, and the sweet falling of the clauses, and the varying and illustration of their works with tropes and figures" (*AL*, p. 26). Soon both sides adopted rhetorical styles which did not rely "so much upon evidence of truth proved by arguments, authorities, similitudes, examples, as upon particular confutations and solutions of every scruple, cavillation, and objection" (*AL*, p. 28). To the uninitiated or the disinterested observer this type of argumentation would appear to be nothing more than "monstrous altercations and barking questions" (*AL*, p. 29), a poor recommendation for the value of learning.

In short, the schoolmen triumphed, and instead of legitimising intellectual freedom and extending the horizons of thought, the "commonwealth" of learning became a closed society in which servile imitation and superficial learning steadily devalued "worth of subject, soundness of argument, life of invention, or depth of judgement," until learning "grew . . . to be utterly despised as barbarous" (*AL*, p. 26). Bacon viewed this as the complete negation of the purpose of learning, which was to "taketh away the wildness and barbarism and fierceness of men's minds" (*AL*, pp. 54-55). Still, that such a promising intellectual movement could be checked so easily taught him an important psychological lesson: elocution hinders "the deep progress into philosophy" because "it is too early satisfactory to the mind of man, and quencheth the desire of further search, before we come to a just period" (*AL*, p. 27). In light of the historical evidence, Bacon concludes that before all else thinkers needed a set of guidelines which would restrain and regulate their

seemingly natural instinct towards rhetorical excess, some guide which would help them avoid that fall into the "first distemper of learning" (*AL*, p. 26). They needed, in short, a linguistic or communicative ideal, an ideal based upon observation of the way the mind actually seemed to function rather than upon rhetorical principles derived from compositions whose specific aims dictated their structural organisation.

In keeping with his distaste for overcomplicated hypotheses, Bacon advances a conventional view of how the mind works: "God hath framed the mind of man as a mirror or glass, capable of the image of the universal world, and joyful to receive the impression thereof" (*AL*, p. 7).<sup>53</sup> Bacon admits, however, that sense impressions do not always reveal nature's truths immediately, and he therefore argues that "by comparison, by help of instrument, and by producing and urging such things as are too subtile for the sense to some effect comprehensible by the sense, and other like assistance," the mind can decipher and "read" its environment "sufficient to certify and report truth" (*AL*, pp. 121-122). Of course, if the mind functioned in such a simple, straightforward way, arguments would never occur because everyone would agree: Bacon recognised this facet of his argument and used it to advantage.

First, he qualified his mind-as-glass metaphor, explaining that man's mind "is far from the nature of a clear and equal glass, wherein the beams of things should reflect according to their true incidence; nay, it is rather like an enchanted glass, full of superstition and imposture," and until the "beams of things" are "delivered and reduced" (*AL*, p. 127), that is, until sense-impressions are assigned either a mental image or an expressive form, chaos or silence reigns. If the mind functions primarily and initially as a reflector of the external material world, it follows therefore that "words are but the images of matter" (*AL*, p. 26); arguments will always arise because they "consist of propositions, and propositions of words, and words are but the current tokens or marks of popular notions of things" (*AL*, p. 121). Truth and understanding lay behind words, in the experience itself, and it was the philosopher's task to communicate that truth in as clear

and precise wording as possible: successful communication indicated that real learning had preceded the words.<sup>54</sup>

Accordingly, to combat the urge to logomachy every thinker should bend his mind to “work upon matter, which is the contemplation of the creatures of God,” and while he might be “limited thereby” at least in so doing he would “worketh according to the stuff” (*AL*, p. 28). Bacon concludes that an habitual neglect of “sensible and material things” (*AL*, p. 9) will inevitably corrupt the bond between mind and matter to such a degree that the mind will become an “unequal mirror” capable of communicating only “deceiving and deformed images” (*AL*, p. 29). To prefer words before matter indicated, therefore, not only a basic misunderstanding of the function and purpose of words but an intellectual propensity bordering on the pathological: “except they have life of reason and invention, to fall in love with them is as to fall in love with a picture” (*AL*, p. 26). With the sad history of Renaissance rhetoric in view, he determines that matter before words must constitute the primary linguistic ideal of science, a simple enough formula in itself but in practice requiring complicated behavioural and mental disciplines.

Significantly, the demand that thinkers put matter before words did not mean that Bacon wanted all figurative or metaphorical language eliminated from scientific or philosophical discourse. Students of literature all too easily misconstrue Bacon's attack on excessive rhetorical language as simply the misguided notions of a thinker too rooted in concrete reality to understand the potential for figurative language to move the mind, too rational to admire beautiful words. As Charles Whitney shows, Bacon draws heavily on myth and allegory to think through and express his philosophical ideas.<sup>55</sup> In fact, Bacon insists that poets, as an intellectual species, can legitimately exploit all the resources of language in the pursuit of their special goals; of poetry as a form of learning he “can report no deficiency,” and “to ascribe unto it that which is due, for the expressing of affections, passions, corruptions, and customs, we are beholding to poets more than to the philosophers' work” (*AL*, pp. 82-83); he also argues for the necessity of imagination in

all thought, especially higher forms of thought (*AL*, pp. 116-121). Thus, concerned that thinkers “clothe and adorn the obscurity even of philosophy itself with sensible and plausible elocution” (*AL*, p. 26), he counsels that “words . . . are not to be despised, specially with the advantage of passion and affection” (*AL*, p. 183). René Descartes makes a similar point about the value of beautiful language to thought in his *Discourse on the Method*, noting that he “deemed Eloquence to have a power and beauty beyond compare; that Poesy has most ravishing delicacy and sweetness.”<sup>56</sup> The arts of language (grammar, logic, rhetoric, the medieval *trivium*) retain a vital role in scientific discourse and, if anything, the thinker should master rhetoric as a means of controlling his urge to linguistic excess, but Bacon insists that in no instance should the presentation of a scientific argument depend upon a rhetorical appeal to the passions, on the “delicacies and affectations” (*AL*, p. 27) of a complex trope, on a cleverly constructed syllogism; a scientific point, clearly presented or disposed, should meet with impartial agreement, instilling intellectual harmony, not “barking questions.” Ultimately, unless “the more severe and laborious sort of inquirers into truth” resolutely pursued the ideal that “substance of matter is better than beauty of words” (*AL*, p. 27) nothing would differentiate the truth-value of their ideas from those of the rhetoricians who would, as history starkly showed, remain victors of the field.<sup>57</sup>

Bacon appreciated that to realise his linguistic ideal would involve more than the simple implementation of another mechanical art of rhetoric: it would require a revolution in life-style, a transformation in which the ideal would form a reflex of thought, becoming habit, custom, second-nature. In other words, he grasped that success would depend upon a lived process of study not dissimilar to the comprehensiveness and intensity of scholastic training. Yet that style of existence would need to be the obverse of the monastic regime, which took thinkers blessed with “sharp and strong wits,” allowed them an “abundance of leisure” but confined them to a “small variety of reading,” with obvious results:

their wits being shut up in the cells of a few authors (chiefly Aristotle their dictator) as their persons were shut up in the cells of monasteries and colleges, and knowing little history, either of nature or time, did out of no great quantity of matter and infinite agitation of wit spin out unto us those laborious webs of learning which are extant in their books. (*AL*, p. 27)

While Bacon accepts that initially the schoolmen produced solid and valuable knowledge, he laments the experiential barrenness of their scholarship which precluded the wider application of their work. Aloof from the crucible of experience their arguments soon became hopelessly tautological, Bacon regarding it as axiomatic that even sound knowledge would putrefy and dissolve into a number of "subtle, idle, unwholesome, and . . . vermiculate questions" (*AL*, p. 27) in a closed system. Left alone and with few opportunities to explore alternative sources of data the mind will simply "work upon itself, as the spider worketh his web," work which "is endless, and brings forth indeed cobwebs of learning, admirable for the fineness of thread and work but of no substance or profit" (*AL*, p. 28).<sup>58</sup>

In opposition to the restricted life-style which ended in the spider-argumentation of the schoolmen, Bacon posits the ideal of the active life. Outside the cloister every thinker could approach nature as an infinite field free "for the contemplation of God's creatures and works," an endless space in which "nothing parcel of the world is denied to man's inquiry and invention" (*AL*, p. 7). This view that a cloistered environment did not nurture original thinking or an expansive attitude towards life forms, we might note in passing, an important aspect of eighteenth-century thinking about what constituted a beneficial education. A letter to *The Gentleman's Magazine* (1786) signed Clio states:

It is universally confessed that learning is an invaluable acquisition, but that a continual intercourse with books, without the possession of a distinct knowledge of mankind, is at best but an incomplete endowment. It is not the life of a college makes a wise man, where abstruse researches are made into the depths of philosophy, and where remote reflections and observations on the manners of humanity are so rarely encouraged; where, if any knowledge of the world is acquired, it is gained . . . through the spectacle of books--it is made through a mist of obscurity.<sup>59</sup>

An essay entitled *The Defects of Modern Education*, in *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure* (Vol. L, June, 1772), passes a similar judgment, noting that



"We owe not to universities the few philosophers, who have enlightened us since the revival of letters," and that figures such as Montaigne, Bacon, Descartes, Newton, Locke, Leibnitz, Shaftesbury, and Maupertius "were formed in the midst of the world, of business, of camps. If those great men had subjected themselves to scholastic instructions, their genius would have been stunted by the contagious mediocrity of their preceptors."<sup>60</sup> Of course, when Bacon articulated his axiom of freedom it squarely attacked the schoolmen's privileged control of the curriculum, and like Adam the new scientist envisaged by Bacon could be charged with "the aspiring to overmuch knowledge [which] was the original temptation and sin whereupon ensued the fall of man" (*AL*, p. 6).<sup>61</sup> Certainly that type of presumption could be charged against a figure like Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola, whose oration, *De dignitate hominis*, or "Of the Dignity of Man" (delivered in 1494), championed man's free-will and intellectual striving, defining man as neither beast nor angel but free to make himself either. God, he declared, created man with

the seeds of all good and the germs of every form of life. Whatever seeds each man cultivates, those seeds will grow to maturity and bear him their own fruit. If they be vegetative, he will be like a plant. If sensual, he will become brutish. If rational, he will issue as a heavenly being. If intellectual, he will be an angel and the son of God. And if, happy in the lot of no created thing, he withdraws into the center of his own unity, his spirit made one with God in the solitary darkness of God who is set above all things, he shall surpass them all.<sup>62</sup>

Galileo walks a similar tightrope in his *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*, but he does not, as Craig points out, give man the same mental powers as God.<sup>63</sup>

However, Bacon's definition of the mind as a mirror of material reality once again rescues his argument: knowledge of divinity or immateriality lay outside of the mind's capacities because God, the first cause, "worketh nothing in nature but by second causes" (*AL*, p. 9), and the only intimation of the first cause allowed to man derived from his understanding of the second causes, "which are next unto the senses" (*AL*, p. 9). By studying nature man could attain some degree of knowledge about its laws and phenomena, but with "regard to God, no perfect knowledge, but wonder, which is broken

knowledge" (*AL*, p. 9), and he adds that "if any man shall think by view and inquiry into these sensible and material things to attain that light, whereby he may reveal unto himself the nature or will of God, then indeed is he spoiled by vain philosophy" (*AL*, pp. 8-9). Milton would make a similar point in *Paradise Lost*: arguing through the persona of the Angel Michael, he advises that "objects divine / Must needs impair and weary human sense."<sup>64</sup> To crush out the thinker's urge to indulge such vanities--which had so bedevilled the progress of science in the past--Bacon insists that studying the second causes (nature) cannot prepare the mind for divine revelation, and to pursue such a desire strikes him as inimical to true philosophy.<sup>65</sup>

Armed with this schema of how the mind functioned, Bacon throws the charge of intellectual hubris back, claiming that in its pursuit of certain "truths" scholastic learning abused the mind's logical and rational functions. By training the mind to produce clever syllogisms and by constructing elaborate systems of thought which "proved" the existence of God or the justness of his laws, the schoolmen deluded themselves into believing that mind unaided could actually reveal God's divine attributes. Such presumption inculcated "too great a reverence, and a kind of adoration of the mind and understanding of man," a conceit which tempted the schoolmen to withdraw "too much from the contemplation of nature, and the observations of experience" (*AL*, p. 34), to withdraw like Pico into "the solitary darkness of God." Thus encouraged by their intellectually narrow training "to leave the oracle of God's works" (*AL*, p. 29), scholastic philosophy perpetrated "the greatest error of all . . . the mistaking or misplacing of the last or furthest end of knowledge" (*AL*, p. 36) for the first, making the phenomena fit the logically derived system rather than trying to comprehend the actual system in which God placed man.

Bacon's attack on scholastic hubris dovetails, of course, with a growing demand in the seventeenth and the eighteenth century for religious humility and a belief in the benefits of employing the intellect on practical tasks, another testament perhaps to the

hegemonic force of new science ideals. Two examples must suffice. In Book VII of

*Paradise Lost* the Angel Michael checks Adam's desire to know

what cause  
Mov'd the Creator in his holy Rest  
Through all Eternity so late to build  
In *Chaos*

with the statement that he will

answer [his] desire  
Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abstain  
To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope  
Things not reveal'd, which th'invisible King,  
Only Omniscient, hath suppress in Night.<sup>66</sup>

And in his prayer of August 12, 1784, titled "Against Iniquities and Perplexing Thoughts,"

Johnson writes:

And while it shall please thee to continue me in this world where much is to be done and little to be known, teach me by thy Holy Spirit to withdraw my Mind from unprofitable and dangerous enquiries, from difficulties vainly curious, and doubts impossible to be solved. Let me rejoice in the light which thou hast imparted, let me serve thee with active zeal, and humble confidence, and wait with patient expectation for the time in which the soul which Thou receivest, shall be satisfied with knowledge.<sup>67</sup>

Bacon's strategy for encouraging such attitudes to intellectual humility employed his usual method of arguing from an everyday appreciation of reality. Since God equipped man with the necessary tools to make sense of his environment, the way to attain this goal required the thinker to admit that human (or as he termed it humane) knowledge relied upon the physical senses. Sense impressions provided the raw material, as it were, which the mind transformed into ideas and words. However insufficient, they formed the bedrock upon which all greater knowledge rested. Thinkers, says Bacon, "ought not to attempt to draw down or to submit the mysteries of God to our reason; but contrariwise to raise and advance our reason to the divine truth" (*AL*, pp. 86-87). As long as the mind cleaved to the things of this world, beginning with simple and intelligible truths, and building step by step an understanding of nature's workings, it would not lose itself in metaphysical speculations about the divine attributes or other such abstruse conundrums. As Milton's Michael will tell Adam, the secret of human striving lies in man's recognition that he can

“by small / Accomplish[ ] great things,” which knowledge the Angel calls “the sum / Of wisdom.” Significantly, after this “revelation” which must serve mankind until doomsday, the Angel tells Adam to “descend now . . . from this top / Of Speculation.”<sup>68</sup> In any case, insofar as the senses limited the attainment of knowledge it was impossible to “search too far, or be too well studied in the book of God's word, or in the book of God's works, divinity or philosophy” (*AL*, p. 9).<sup>69</sup> Indeed, as he goes about his careful and controlled study of nature the “serious inquirer” will learn all he needs about “the omnipotency and wisdom of the maker, but not his image” (*AL*, p. 86). A consistent and continuous appeal to the evidence provided by the senses would thereby reduce the potential for error and would, furthermore, reveal the paradox that “they be not the highest instances that give the securest information . . . it cometh often to pass, that mean and small things discover great, better than great can discover small” (*AL*, p. 70). History proved, moreover, that learning degenerated into folly and spider-argumentation whenever philosophers forgot that “in nature, the more you remove yourself from particulars, the greater peril of error do you incur” (*AL*, p. 206). Thus, Bacon will pursue a humbler path, determined to rely upon his natural if limited senses and his personal experiences for guidance and direction, determined to avoid the “root of all error,” that is, “too untimely a departure and too remote a recess from particulars” (*AL*, p. 92). In simple terms, this rejects the scholastic desire to, like Socrates, “call philosophy down from heaven to converse upon the earth” (*AL*, p. 36).

Remaining humble in the face of nature, however, did not mean prostration to the works of other writers or to the achievements and intellectual monuments of the past. Bacon rejects any urge to maintain the intellectual status quo, arguing that in order for learning to advance the philosopher must attain a proper regard for both past and present knowledge, which in practice would require a reformulation of the relationship between master and disciple. If the recovery of ancient authors initially extended the light of learning, that light was dimming because the moderns accorded the ancient authors

“overmuch credit . . . making them dictators, that their words should stand, and not consuls to give advice; the damage is infinite that sciences have received thereby, as the principal cause that hath kept them low at a stay without growth or advancement” (*AL*, p. 31). Importantly, this particular argument found many adherents throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: it became an ideological rallying cry. Bacon’s complaint, for example, echoes well down into the eighteenth century, *The Adventurer* No. 63 noting that

THE number of original writers, of writers who discover any traces of original thought, or veins of new expression, is found to be extremely small, in every branch of literature. Few possess ability or courage to think for themselves, to trust to their own powers, to rely on their own stock; and, therefore, the generality creeps tamely and cautiously in the track of their predecessors.<sup>70</sup>

Interestingly, Blake coins a proverb in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* which nicely encapsulates Bacon's frustration with intellectual timidity: “The eagle never lost so much time as when he submitted to learn of the crow.”<sup>71</sup> For Bacon, then, a writer's value rested solely on the progress which he made in revealing nature's workings, this progress laying the foundation for future exploration: “Antiquity deserveth that reverence, that men should make a stand thereupon and discover what is the best way; but when the discovery is well taken, then to make progression” (*AL*, pp. 32-33). An author deserved all honours due, but this respect should not hinder the progress of thought in the present, or as Bacon phrases it, that “time, which is the author of authors, be not deprived of his due, which is, further and further to discover truth”; in other words, disciples “do owe unto masters only a temporary belief and a suspension of their own judgement till they be fully instructed, and not an absolute resignation or perpetual captivity” (*AL*, p. 32). The disciple who accepts all that his master says “without due and mature suspension of judgement,” suppressing misgivings or questions in an “impatience of doubt” (*AL*, p. 35), usually ends in a state of intellectual uncertainty or falls into one of dogmatic blindness, neither of which are desirable results. Following Cicero, he reiterates that “the sinews of wisdom are slowness of belief and distrust” (*AL*, p. 181). Instead of rote learning and imitation, Bacon

wants the master/ disciple relationship to involve a process of “copious suggestions of all doubts and difficulties, and acquainting the mind to balance reasons on both sides, and to turn back the first offers and conceits of the mind, and to accept of nothing but examined and tried,” a process which “taketh away all levity, temerity, and insolency” (*AL*, p. 55) from both master and disciple.

The conflict inherent in the master/disciple relationship allows Bacon to refine further his ideal of learning. Although his epistemological perspective tacitly assumes that the pursuit of knowledge aids the development of consciousness and the unfolding of personal identity, he insists that a social purpose should underwrite all intellectual endeavour. In opposition to scholastic teaching, which directed (and regulated) its pupils along a path toward personal revelation, he makes it the new scientist's duty to pursue knowledge which will benefit all mankind: “the more constant and devote kind of professors of any science ought to propound to themselves to make some additions to their science” (*AL*, p. 35). Of course, a philosopher would need to mix at large in society in order to establish what kind of knowledge would most benefit mankind, what achievements of the past could or should be improved upon, and how to present any new knowledge so that it might receive a sympathetic hearing.

To illustrate how the philosopher could make better use of the achievements of the past, Bacon contrasts the usual procedure followed in the mechanical arts. In the more abstract sciences and arts the ideas of an original or influential writer are treated like holy writ, most of the energies of later thinkers engaged in exegesis or exhortation, with little attempt to prove the validity or applicability of the ideas. Yet how, for instance, could “knowledge derived from Aristotle, and exempted from liberty of examination . . . rise higher than the knowledge of Aristotle” (*AL*, p. 32)? It cannot, of course, nor would it so long as scholastic metaphysical thought paid scant attention to practical or “vulgar” proofs.<sup>72</sup> Bacon finds a general “rejection of experiment familiar and vulgar” among scholastic philosophers for whom “it is esteemed a kind of dishonour unto learning to descend to inquiry or meditation upon matters mechanical, except they be such as may

be thought secrets, rarities, and special subtilities" (*AL*, p. 70).<sup>73</sup> He contrasts this with the attitude which prevails in the mechanical arts where, even if a new invention or mechanical process at first appears clumsy or crude, with experience and experiment subsequent users introduce modifications which make the invention more efficient or "perfect":

For many operations have been invented, sometime by a casual incidence and occurrence, sometimes by a purposed experiment: and of those which have been found by an intentional experiment, some have been found out by varying or extending the same experiment, some by transferring and compounding divers experiments one into the other, which kind of invention an empiric may manage. Again by the knowledge of physical causes there cannot fail to follow many indications and designations of new particulars, if men in their speculation will keep one eye upon use and practice. (*AL*, p. 97)

Thus Bacon finds that studying the mechanical arts, besides helping to break habits of mind inculcated by scholastic modes of thought, "is of all other the most radical and fundamental towards natural philosophy; such natural philosophy as shall not vanish in the fume of subtile, sublime, or delectable speculation, but such as shall be operative to the endowment and benefit of man's life" (*AL*, p. 71).<sup>74</sup>

Building upon his analysis of the methods practised in the mechanical arts Bacon isolates three important lessons. First and most obvious, that all human productions, whether mechanical or mental, should undergo the test of experiment. The process of experiment would establish the real value or worth of an idea or theory of knowledge, and it would indicate what aspects or features needed further refinement or, if wrong or not testable, letting go. Second, that not every experiment will yield immediate benefits but may require some other experiment to "complete" it. Progress, inasmuch as small particles of knowledge often laid the ground for much greater results, therefore needed to be measured in relative terms. Finally, that in the quest for really useful and enduring knowledge, the greatest progress could only be made through cooperative and communal efforts, not through individual and competitive means.

Hence, at the same time as the ethical command that the pursuit of knowledge should produce tangible benefits modifies scientific activity, it also fits the whole of

Bacon's new science into a larger metaphysical structure. Indeed, throughout his analysis of the need for a new science he maintained that it could only be valuable in terms of a larger project of thought. Bacon accepts that "physic carrieth man in narrow and restrained ways, subject to many accidents of impediments, imitating the ordinary flexous course of nature," and while "physical causes give light to new invention in *simili materia*" (*AL*, p. 93), ultimately science must justify itself as part of the greater purpose of metaphysics. Thus, as Mary Hesse points out, Bacon's varied comments about the purpose of experimental science should "put us on guard against a frequent misinterpretation of Bacon as a mere fact-collector"; instead, we ought to see that Bacon wished to develop a new science which could "correct on the one hand the excessive rationalism of the ancient philosophers, who leaped straight from particulars to ill-founded general axioms and then reasoned only by the syllogism, and on the other hand it was to correct the unregulated empiricism of the alchemists and natural magicians, who wasted their time in unfruitful experimenting."<sup>75</sup> At the core of Bacon's philosophy lies the conviction that in his researches into nature the philosopher must be guided by the fact that

it is the duty and virtue of all knowledge to abridge the infinity of individual experience, as much as the conception of truth will permit, and to remedy the complaint of *vita brevis, ars longa*; which is performed by uniting the notions and conceptions of sciences. For knowledges are as pyramides, whereof history is the basis. So of natural philosophy, the basis is natural history: the stage next the basis is physic; the stage next the vertical point is metaphysic. As for the vertical point, *opus quod operatur Deus a principio usque ad finem*, the summary law of nature, we know not whether man's inquiry can attain unto it. But these three be the true stages of knowledge. (*AL*, pp. 92-93)

In other words, only metaphysics can sanction scientific inquiry and free it from the constraints of institutionalized power because the true spirit of metaphysics "doth enfranchise the power of man unto the greatest liberty and possibility of works and effects" (*AL*, p. 93).<sup>76</sup> For Bacon, then, the whole purpose of scientific inquiry stems from his belief that "men must know, that in this theatre of man's life it is reserved only for God and angels to be lookers on" (*AL*, p. 149). Accordingly, the philosopher, thinker, orator,



politician, should not assault mankind with “barking questions” or burden it with “vain matters” but strive to obtain that knowledge which will promote social and civil good.<sup>77</sup>

This element of Bacon's programme, not surprisingly, infiltrated eighteenth-century attitudes about the relationships between knowledge and its social functions, and particularly in regard to the truth aims of writing.

### *Section 3. After Bacon: The Advance to Hegemony*

The ideas expounded by Bacon in *The Advancement of Learning* did not fall, as Hume complained about those of his *A Treatise on Human Nature*, “dead-born from the press,” but found their way into the mainstream of cultural debate and began to alter thinking patterns (and thus individual worldviews) relatively quickly.<sup>78</sup> However, and understandably, Bacon's ideas did not march along parallel lines into intellectual consciousness. As Ernan McMullin emphasizes, the change from a metaphysical *epistēmē* which worked from a priori principles to that of a theory of science which could deliver a more systematic knowledge of nature through an a posteriori methodology was a curious and by no means straightforward one, in large part because the older traditions of thought continued to infiltrate and condition both epistemology and the nature of scientific research. In the seventeenth century, he says, no one “had a single, consistent, well-worked-out view of the nature of scientific knowledge, which is hardly to be wondered at.”<sup>79</sup> Thus, while Bacon envisaged the new science as an integral, unified activity, the fulfilment of his ideals could be achieved only in and through a social process involving conflict and assimilation. Certain elements of his programme appealed more readily than others, and they did so for reasons peculiar to the evolving cultural gestalt of seventeenth-century British life: the collision of historical events with, as it were, evolving intellectual themes activated the ideological symbiosis of the new science and seventeenth-century culture, which in turn transformed science into an hegemonic force.

For an understanding of the relationship between science and poetry this impact cannot be underestimated, although in the discussion which follows an occasional sideways glance at these historical and cultural changes must suffice. I intend to direct attention to those "themes" of the narrative of science which relate most directly, and plausibly, to the metamorphosis of the lyric genre.

The revolt against authority (signalled throughout the seventeenth century by the trumpeting of the individual's right to determine the plausibility and credibility of all claims to truth) marks the first stage in the appropriation of the ideology of experimental science. John Wilkins's early work *The Discovery of a World in the Moone* (1638), a work which relies at various moments on "*the learned . . . the judicious Verulam,*" asserts the necessity for greater intellectual freedom both in the reading of the ancients and in the study of nature or matters of fact.<sup>80</sup> The paralysis of contemporary science stems, he says, from imitative and uncritical study of the canonical authors, or rather, of one author: Aristotle. While Wilkins accepts that "the world is much beholden to *Aristotle* for all its sciences," he opposes the practice of submitting new discoveries or new ideas about natural processes to Aristotelian paradigms: "tis not *Aristotle*, but truth that should be the rule of our opinions."<sup>81</sup> A dogmatic reliance on an ancient author not only arrested curiosity about the ways in which nature functioned, it nurtured an intellectual breeding-ground for superstitious and fabulous explanations of natural phenomena. This state of affairs leads, he sees, to a vicious logic: "here's the misery of it, wee first tie our selves unto *Aristotles* Principles, and then conclude, that nothing could contradict them but a miracle."<sup>82</sup> Worse, the recourse to miraculous and fabulous explanations, besides confounding common-sense and bewitching the mind, degraded the reputation of science and turned men of learning into popular targets of satire.<sup>83</sup>

Wilkins therefore marshals practical arguments why the moderns should study those ancient authors not included in the canon. Insofar as gaps must have occurred in the transfer and transmission of knowledge during the ancient and medieval eras, it

follows that "*Tis a false conceit, for us to thinke, that amongst the ancient variety and search of opinions, the best hath still prevailed.*" Furthermore, of those works which did survive the ravages of time and circumstance many will "*have for a long time lien neglected*" in libraries (as many still do), and Wilkins assures his readers that these writings contain "*many truths well worthy of your paines and observations.*"<sup>84</sup> By inference, any philosopher worthy of the name would value these alternative explanations of natural phenomena and hope to exploit whatever potentialities they might possess.

Two years later, in *A Discourse Concerning a New Planet Tending to prove, That 'tis probable our Earth is one of the Planets*, Wilkins perseveres in his revolt against ancient authority, declaring that thinkers no longer needed to be "so superstitiously devoted to Antiquitie, as to take up every thing for Canonically, which drops from the pen of a Father, or was approved by the consent of the Antients."<sup>85</sup> The same point will be echoed over and over in the period, John Norris feeling that a main encumbrance to thinking was the "*over-fond and superstitious deference to Authority, especially that of Antiquity.* There is nothing that cramps the Parts, and fetters the Understandings of men like this strait-lac'd humour. Men are resolv'd never to outshoot their forefathers mark; but write one after another and so the dance goes round in a circle; and the world is never the *wiser* for being *older*. Take an instance of this in the *School-men.*"<sup>86</sup> Wilkins, however, supplements his rejection of ancient authority with a clarification of the proper approach to questions of knowledge; equating deductive logic with devotion and deference to ancient ideas and canonical authors, he rejects both. "In the examination of Philosophical points," he says, "it were a preposterous course to begin at the testimony and opinion of others, and then afterwards to descend unto the reasons that may bee drawne from the Nature and Essence of the things themselves."<sup>87</sup> This deductive method of explaining nature's workings, which goes by the name of "inartificial Arguments (as the Logicians call them)," never produces "any cleere and convincing evidence" about matters of fact or about the relationships between things.

Wilkins then performs the obvious, though nevertheless vital, reversal, making the state of intellectual freedom indivisible from the practice of inductive analysis:

It behooves every one in the search of Truth, alwaies to preserve a Philosophicall liberty: not to be so inslaved to the opinion of any man, as to thinke what ever he sayes to be infallible. We must labour to find out what things are in themselves by our owne experience, and a through examination of their natures, nor what another sayes of them. And if in such an impartiall enquiry, we chance to light upon a new way, and that which is besides the common rode, this is neither our fault, or our unhappinesse.<sup>88</sup>

Hence, whenever a free-thinker tackles an issue which involves matters of fact he will, as a matter of principle, set aside all questions regarding final causes; after first establishing “those that are of more necessary dependence,” he will slowly progress to a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena. Only much later, once he can adduce clear and convincing evidence, should he venture upon “inartificiall Arguments,” and even then only “rather to confirme, than resolve the Iudgement.”<sup>89</sup>

Wilkins's early writings present, as it were, a paradigmatic illustration of the unsystematic process through which Bacon's ideas merged into the orbit of intellectual debate. Like Wilkins, other thinkers, religious dissenters, philosophers, and writers throughout the seventeenth century seized on the principle that every individual possessed an inalienable right (as well as a duty) to judge the truth-value of all statements and hypotheses concerning the natural world. For instance, around the same time that Wilkins rejects the whole programme of deductive reasoning, Thomas Browne abandons the conventional orthodoxy of *Religio Medici* (published 1635-36) to champion Bacon's attack on scholasticism in his *Vulgar Errors* (1645).<sup>90</sup> In many cases, references to Aristotle signal changing attitudes and the steady advance of Bacon's programme. During the seventeenth (and eighteenth) century, Aristotle's name functions synecdochically which, when invoked, signified everything that the new science opposed, and all that it promoted. He symbolised the ancient thinker who merited respect but whose treatment by the schoolmen and divines testified to the need for intellectual freedom. For example, in *A Proposition for the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy* (1661), Cowley articulates the normative view: “Not that I would disparage

the admirable Wit, and worthy labours of many of the Ancients, much less of Aristotle, the most eminent among them; but it were madness to imagine that the Cisterns of men should afford us as much, and as the wholesome Waters, as the Fountains of Nature." He then observes that "Many Persons of admirable abilities (if they had been wisely managed and profitably employed) have spent their whole time and diligence in commenting upon Aristotles Philosophy, who could never go beyond him, because their design was only to follow, not grasp, or lay hold on, or so much as touch Nature." Instead of attaining a real knowledge of nature, their adherence to Aristotle's notions meant that "they catcht only at the shadow of her in their own Brains," and Cowley therefore concludes "as a certain Foundation, that we must not content our selves with that Inheritance of Knowledge which is left us by the labour and bounty of our Ancestors, but seek to improve those very grounds."<sup>91</sup> Similarly, Simon Patrick observes that "the Theater of nature is much enlarg'd since Aristotles time," and he then asks: "Must we now after all these and many more discoveries about natural bodies, confine our selves to what we find in *Aristotle* who never dream'd of any such things?"<sup>92</sup> Locke, in rejecting the notion of innate ideas, relies upon the same principle of personal authority:

Not that I want a due respect to other Mens Opinions; but after all, the *greatest reverence is due to Truth*; and, I hope, it will not be thought arrogance to say, That, perhaps, we should make greater progress in the discovery of rational and contemplative *Knowledge*, if we *sought* it in the Fountain, *in the consideration of Things themselves*; and made use rather of our own Thoughts, than other Mens to find it. For, I think, we may as rationally hope to see with other Mens Eyes, as to know by other Mens Understandings. So much as we our selves consider and comprehend of Truth and Reason, so much we possess of real and true Knowledge. The floating of other Mens Opinions in our brains makes us not one jot the more knowing, though they happen to be true. What in them was Science, is in us but Opiniatrey, whilst we give up our Assent only to reverend names, and do not, as they did, employ our own Reason to *understand* those *Truths*, which gave them reputation. *Aristotle* was certainly a knowing Man, but no body ever thought him so, because he blindly embraced, and confidently vented the Opinions of another. And if the taking up of another's Principles, without examining them, made not him a Philosopher, I suppose it will hardly make any body else so. In the Sciences, every one has so much, as he really knows and comprehends: What he believes only, and takes upon trust, are but shreds.<sup>93</sup>

Locke here actually uses Aristotle as an exemplar of the appropriate stance to take to authority and to the pursuit of knowledge. What seems clear from these examples is the importance of establishing a sense of individual distance from tradition, and that this constituted a fundamental intellectual strategy for those thinkers who found the new science appealing.

Famously, Hobbes bases his philosophy upon the lessons of everyday human experience, encompassing personal and social responses and feelings about events which occur to us: "*Science* is the knowledge of consequences, and dependence of one fact upon another: by which, out of that we can presently do, we know how to do something else when we will, or the like another time."<sup>94</sup> In the Port-Royal generated *Logic; Or, The Art of Thinking*, a similar attitude, though a different aim, prevails. The authors start from the premise that

NOTHING is more desirable than Good Sense and Justness of Thought in discerning Truth from Falshood. Every other Quality of the Mind is of limited Advantage; but Exactness of Reason is of universal Use, and serviceable in all the Parts and Offices of Life. It is not in the Sciences only that it is difficult to distinguish between Truth and Error, but it is the same in most of the Subjects upon which we discourse, and in the Affairs wherein we are concerned. We almost every where meet with two Tracks, the one leading to Truth, the other to Falshood, and it is Reason must make the Choice which to follow. Those who chuse Right, are those who are endued with a Justness of Thought; those who chuse Wrong, are those who have a Falseness of Thought; and this is the first and most essential Difference between the Qualities of Mens Understandings.<sup>95</sup>

Of course, in order to make such fine distinctions the philosopher must embark upon a training in logic, defined by the authors as "the Art of rightly directing our Reason in the Knowledge of Things, in order to instruct both ourselves and others in the same."<sup>96</sup> Like Bacon's new scientist, the logician must direct his efforts towards the greater social good.

Significantly, because the logician endorses only those propositions and theories which pass reason's scrutiny, he submits to no single authority. Like Wilkins, the Port-Royal authors decry the privilege accorded Aristotle's works; while admitting that "'Tis hard Measure to condemn all *Aristotle's* Opinions in general, (as has been formerly done)," they retort that "it is as hard to force Men to subscribe blindly to every thing he

says, and to make him the Standard of the Truth of Philosophical Opinions. . . . Men cannot long endure such Tyranny." Although dogmatism may rule men's minds for long periods, "by degrees they will recover the Possession of their natural and reasonable Freedom, which consists in approving what we think true, and rejecting what we think false."<sup>97</sup> The Port-Royal authors take care, however, to delimit the proper sphere in which free reason operates: "Reason does not refuse to submit to Authority in those Sciences which, treating of Things that are above Reason, must follow another Light, which can only be Divine Authority. But in Humane Sciences, which profess the Support of Reason only, no body can bear to be forced to submit to Authority, contrary to Reason."<sup>98</sup> Hence, by definition reason cannot function at its best without complete freedom in secular affairs, a view which merges easily with the aim and practice of experimental science. This conviction that every one must be free to pursue their thoughts without fear of authority probably encouraged a tendency during the seventeenth century in which, as T. A. Birrell notes, almost every facet of intellectual concern--philosophy, religion, logic, rhetoric, and so forth--"seems to fall together in a loose but inevitable synthesis."<sup>99</sup>

Simon Patrick's *A Brief Account of the New Sect of Latitude-Men, Together with some reflections upon the New Philosophy* (1662) provides a fitting exemplification of this synthesising urge.<sup>100</sup> For Patrick, the equation is a simple one: God granted man reason so that each individual could exercise it to secure personal faith:

For Reason is that faculty whereby a man must judge of everything, nor can a man believe any thing except he have some reason for it, whether that reason be a deduction from the light of nature, and those principles which are the candle of the Lord, set up in the soul of every man that hath not wit fully extinguished it; nor a branch of Divine revelation in the oracles of holy scriptures; or the general interpretation of genuine antiquity, or the proposal of our own Church consenteous thereto, or lastly the result of some or all of these: for he that will rightly make use of his Reason, must take all that is reasonable into consideration.<sup>101</sup>

Thus, by refusing to adopt the teaching or doctrines of any particular church, school, or sect, preferring instead to determine the truth of scripture through the use of their own reason, the Latitudinarians were simply displaying a right regard for the function of reason. Patrick intimates that this attitude towards tradition and authority formed the

essential spirit of the modern thinker: the Latitude-Men do not “hold any other Doctrine than the Church, since they derive it from the same fountains, not from the *Spinoze scholmen*, or *Dutch systematics*, neither from *Rome* nor *Geneva*, the *Council of Trent*, nor *Synod of Dort*, but from the Sacred writings of the Apostles and Evangelists,” and when they interpret the scriptures, “they carefully attend to the sense of the ancient Church, by which they conceive the modern ought to be guided” (*BA*, p. 9). Echoing Bacon, Patrick then sketches out a familiar history of learning, satirising with gusto the excesses of scholastic practices and religious conflicts which made the Latitudinarian attitude necessary during a time when faith in the Church and in God “have been almost exploded in these latter degenerate ages of the world” (*BA*, p. 19). Fortunately, he detects “an infinite desire of knowledge broken forth in the world” (*BA*, p. 23) which aimed primarily at restoring religious belief.

This reforming desire, however, was not occurring in the churches or schools but in “different persons upon different accounts” (*BA*, p. 10), and it becomes clear that experimental scientists form a large percentage of those “different persons.” Their analytical procedures supported reason in its quest for truth, and the early successes of many experiments struck Patrick as sufficient evidence of the promise of the new science. Accordingly, he opposes those who believe that “all innovations are dangerous,” that “*Philosophy* and *Divinity* are so inter-woven by the School-men, that it cannot be safe to separate them,” countering such an apology for the status quo with the argument that “new *Philosophy* will bring in new *Divinity*; and freedom in the one will make men desire a liberty in the other” (*BA*, p. 22). In any case, since the evidence from both reason and scripture attested to “an eternal consanguinity between all verities,” it followed that “nothing is true in *Divinity*, which is false in *Philosophy*, or on the contrary” (*BA*, p. 11).<sup>102</sup> It seemed unlikely to Patrick, therefore, that new discoveries in nature could rattle real faith: “True *Philosophy* can never hurt sound *Divinity*” (*BA*, p. 24). In practice, then, “it must be the Office of *Philosophy* to find out the process of the Divine Art [that is, how



nature functions] in the great automaton of the world,” and to make such discoveries would require the true philosopher to eschew the seductions of a systemizing or syllogistic form of philosophy and instead to apply the inductive method, “by observing how one part moves another, and how these motions are varied by the several magnitudes, figures, positions of each part, from the first springs or plummets . . . to the hand that points out the visible and last effects” (*BA*, p. 19).

To dispel doubts that greater intellectual freedom and new discoveries about nature would produce negative consequences, Patrick employs a geographical analogy.<sup>103</sup> If, he says, mariners had been “forbid the reading of any more Geography than is found in *Strabo or Mela*” (*BA*, p. 22), that is, in ancient authorities, they would never have discovered the new world: modern mariners sailing forth in contradiction to ancient belief relied instead on what reason and experience taught them. Does anyone, Patrick wonders, therefore think that “it be unlawful to use the advantages of such noble achievement” (*BA*, p. 22). He knows the answer, of course, and so demands to know why “Philosophy alone [must] be bound up stil in its infant swadling bands” (*BA*, p. 22). Since the history of the times proves that it will not “be possible otherwise to free Religion from scorn and contempt, if her Priests be not as well skilled in nature as the people” (*BA*, p. 24), Patrick concludes that the schools and churches should, rather than fighting against the aims of the new science, become actively involved in promoting its ideals. Many churchmen, of course, did just that.

As suggested earlier, the repudiation of ancient and medieval intellectual authority could not in itself provoke the wholesale adoption of the experimental method. A successful cultural appropriation of new ideas does not depend upon their intrinsic merits alone but upon complex and sometimes unlikely extrinsic factors. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say that without the political and religious ferment which dominated early seventeenth-century life, Bacon's ideas might never have received a serious hearing.<sup>104</sup> As Thomas Sprat explains in *The History of the Royal-Society of London*

(1667), "It was . . . some space after the end of the Civil Wars at *Oxford*, in Dr. *Wilkins* his Lodgings, in *Wadham College*, which was then the place of Resort for Vertuous, and Learned Men, that the first meetings were made, which laid the foundation of all this that follow'd."<sup>105</sup> The meetings attracted men who wanted "onely the satisfaction of breathing a freer air, and of conversing in quiet one with another, without being ingag'd in the passions, and madness of that dismal Age" (*HRS*, p. 53). In the quiet of Wilkins's rooms these men deliberately fashioned their behaviour in marked counterpoint to scholastic debate: no "monstrous altercations or barking questions." Yet these early recruits to the new science did not possess a clearly articulated set of rules or procedures for experimental practice, proceeding "rather by action, then discourse; chiefly attending some particular Trials, in *Chymistry*, or *Mechanicks*: they had no Rules nor Method fix'd: their intention was more, to communicate to each other, their discoveries, which they could make in so narrow a compass, than an united, constant, or regular inquisition" (*HRS*, p. 56). In other words, by the middle of the seventeenth century the new science to a large extent still so to speak remained hidden within the closet: while a small band admired its intellectual ideals, few executed its methodology in a disciplined way, while the greater public remained largely unaware of this science which promised to bestow great benefits upon it.

Sprat thus undertakes the *History* in order to codify the ideals and methods of the new science as a distinct intellectual unity. Behind his confidence about its advantages for human life, however, the work exudes as much anxiety about the fate of experimental philosophy as *The Advancement of Learning* did about the future of learning in general. Sprat voices his apprehensions (and obviously those of other members of the Society) when he states that, confronted by the many "*Detractors of so noble an Institution*" and in light of "*their Objections and Cavils*," it became necessary "*to write . . . not altogether in the way of a plain History, but sometimes of an Apology*," adding that his book takes "*a liberty*" because it offers, besides history, "*a Defence and Recommendation of*

Experimental Knowledge *in General*.”<sup>106</sup> The *History*, he promises, will “set on foot, a *new* way of improvement of Arts, as *Great* and as *Beneficial* (to say no more) as any the wittiest or the happiest Age has ever invented” (*HRS*, p. 3), thereby proving to the detractors the error of their ways.

Sprat begins by refuting a charge levelled against the new scientists which echoed Bacon's dislike of scholastic learning. Sceptics and other antagonists had pointed out that, despite claims about the superiority and the immediately practical social value of their method, the experimenters produced little useful knowledge. Sprat does not sidestep this charge but deflects it in two ways. Firstly, he reminds the sceptics that, before they ridiculed the new science on the basis of its as yet small successes, they ought to recall the shameful state at which scholastic learning had arrived. In doing so they would see “how farre more importantly a good Method of thinking, and a right course of apprehending things, does contribute towards the attaining of perfection in true knowledge, then the strongest, and most vigorous wit in the World” (*HRS*, p. 15). Secondly, he recurs to the historical context in which these first meetings of the Royal Society occurred: an extended period of religious and civil strife had militated against concerted and joint experimental efforts, both of which he later stipulates as essential conditions for a successful scientific experiment. In any case, if the results of these meetings seemed inconclusive, they still performed a vital function: “by this means there was a race of yong Men provided, against the next Age, whose minds receiving . . . their first Impressions of *sober* and *generous knowledge*, were invincibly arm'd against all the enchantments of *Enthusiasm*” (*HRS*, p. 53). Sprat recognised the importance of these meetings as preliminary stages in the development of a full-fledged ideology of science: since the main ideologies which conditioned behaviour in the past had provoked so much discord and bloodshed, fanaticism and ignorance, it was time to formulate clearer intellectual ideals which could cultivate more socially cooperative behaviour.<sup>107</sup> Cowley's *A Proposition for the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy* (1661) lays down

similar rules of behaviour for the professors in his ideal college of experimental science: "they shall all keep an inviolable and exemplary friendship with one another, and that the Assembly shall lay a considerable pecuniary mulct upon any one who shall be proved to have entered so far into a quarrel as to give uncivil Language to his Brother-Professor, and that perseverance in any enmity shall be punish'd by the Governours with expulsion."<sup>108</sup>

Understandably, then, the Society's early activities were of "necessity . . . about *Preparatory Affairs*," though Sprat observes that its members "have not wholly neglected their *principal End*; but have had Success, in the tryal of many remarkable things" (*HRS*, p. 3). In addition, the men who attended these meetings--Wilkins, Wallis, Boyle, Wren, Ward, and others--actively disseminated their ideas and the results of their experiments, as Sprat notes, in the culture at large: "Nor were the good effects of this conversation onely confin'd to *Oxford*: But they have made themselves known in their printed Works, both in our own, and in the learned Language: which have much conduc'd to the Fame of our Nation *abroad*, and to the spreading of profitable Light, *at home*" (*HRS*, p. 54). Later, after 1658, as the original members dispersed to pursue their respective careers, they met at least twice a week at Gresham College; membership increased, and the meetings took on a more formal structure. Importantly, many of the members were influential in the administration of civil, religious, and governmental affairs, while the Royal Charter awarded by Charles II in 1662, of course, accorded the new Society a prestige which doubtless many hitherto noncommittal observers could not resist. The overall influence of the monarch on the development and acceptance of the new science, however, would be difficult to judge.<sup>109</sup>

The main stumbling-block to wider acceptance, Sprat finds, was that contemporary judgments about the value of the new experimental philosophy were either paradoxical or morally reductive. On the one hand, "some over-zealous *Divines* do reprobate Natural Philosophy, as a carnal knowledge, and a too much minding worldly things," while "the

men of the World, and business on the other side, esteem it meerly as an idle matter of Fancy, and as that which disables us, from taking right measures in humane affairs” (*HRS*, p. 27). If true these charges were damning, but inasmuch as they were contradictory and levelled from extreme positions Sprat counters that these charges simply proved that the Society was “guilty of neither of these faults” (*HRS*, p. 27); still, the sources of these paradoxical views force Sprat to admit tacitly the need for a clearer, more substantial statement of the aims and methods of the experimental philosophy, not only to convince the detractors of their misjudgment but to remind the practitioners themselves of their duties as experimental philosophers.

To this end, Sprat insists upon a fundamental rule of all scientific activity: “The true Philosophy must be first of all begun, on a scrupulous, and severe examination of particulars: from them, there may be some general Rules, with great caution drawn” (*HRS*, p. 31). Establishing plausible causes for certain observable effects, restraining the urge to speculate wildly upon initial findings, a determination to explain and convince by means of experiment and demonstration--these form strict rules of conduct for the natural philosopher. Building upon a careful examination of particulars, of the “observable” relations of cause and effect, the experimental philosopher slowly forms a better understanding of how nature works, with each new advance in understanding laying the ground for further experiment: he “must advance those Principles, to the finding out of new effects, through all the varieties of Matter: and so both the courses must proceed orderly together; from experimenting, to Demonstrating, and from demonstrating, to Experimenting again” (*HRS*, p. 31). Equally important, consistent application of the method verifies for the experimenter the basic truth that no “one Man, by wonderful sagacity, or extraordinary chance, shall light upon the True Principles of Natural Philosophy” (*HRS*, p. 31).

Sprat pursues the logical conclusion to this assumption about the limitations of human intellectual powers, using the argument to root science in a framework of moral

behaviour. Experimental philosophers must “make all their Labours unite for the service of man-kind” (*HRS*, p. 76); they must “meddle no otherwise with *Divine things*, than onely as the *Power*, and *Wisdom*, and *Goodness* of the *Creator*, is display'd in the admirable order, and workman-ship of the *Creatures*” (*HRS*, p. 82).<sup>110</sup> They should only seek that knowledge which “might be brought within their *own Touch and Sight*” (*HRS*, p. 83), accepting the reports and observations of others only with the greatest caution; every sober inquirer therefore ought to consult and compare his observations and experimental results with others. Since the contentious debates of the scholastic philosophers proved how “cautious ought men to be, in pronouncing even upon Matters of Fact” (*HRS*, p. 73), all knowledge needed to survive the test of experiment, and this, says Sprat, constitutes a “*Fundamental Law*” (*HRS*, p. 83) for all members of the Society. Other members reiterated this law over and over again. John Wilkins bases his theological understanding on “that *Physical Certainty* which doth depend upon the Evidence of *sense*, which is the first and *highest kind of Evidence*, of which humane nature is capable,” while Robert Boyle insists on a scrupulous confirmation of experimental results:

For though unwillingly, yet I must for the truth sake, and the reader's, warne him not to be forward to believe chymical experiments when they are set down only by way of prescriptions, and not of relations; that is, unless he that delivers them mentions his doing it upon his own particular knowledge, or upon the relation of some credible person, avowing it upon his experience. For I am troubled, I must complain, that even eminent writers, both physitions and philosophers, whom I can easily name, if it be required, have of late suffered themselves to be so far imposed upon, as to publish and build upon chymical experiments, which questionless they have never tried; for if they had, they would, as well as I, have found them not to be true.<sup>111</sup>

Thus the ideal of the experimental attitude, with its contingent views about the function of knowledge and its social function, builds into itself a thorough-going ethical principle, as well as the criteria for judgment and progress. Cowley, for instance, stipulates that every professor in his academy must investigate natural phenomena wherever they find themselves: each would “take a solemn Oath never to write any thing to the Colledge, but what after very diligent Examination, they shall fully believe to be true, and to confess and recant it as soon as they find themselves in Error.”<sup>112</sup>

In rounding off his defence of experimental science, Sprat makes two related qualifications about experimental practice. Firstly, he maintains that as long as the experimenter dutifully observed the correct method, even those experiments which ended in error or with inconclusive results were valuable: “the tracing of a *false* Cause, doth very often so much conduce; that, in the progress, the *right* has been discover'd by it” (*HRS*, p. 108). This sense that in the pursuit of knowledge errors invariably occurred was obviously important. Boyle, for example, makes a similar point in *The Sceptical Chymist*:

I blush not to acknowledge that I much less scruple to confess that I doubt when I do so, than to profess that I know what I do not: and I should have much stronger expectations that I dare yet entertain, to see philosophy solidly established, if men would more carefully distinguish those things that they know from those that they ignore or do but think, and then explicate clearly the things they conceive they understand, acknowledge ingenuously what it is they ignore, and profess so candidly their doubts, that the industry of intelligent persons might be set on work to make further enquiries, and the easiness of less discerning men might not be imposed on.<sup>113</sup>

Hence, unlike someone who “has fix'd on his *Cause*, before he has experimented” (*HRS*, p. 108)--the scholastic philosopher, perhaps--a naturalist who conducted disciplined experiments which honestly tried to discover the truth about some object, motion, effect deserved praise regardless of the results. Indeed, since the experimenter should have “never affirm'd any thing, concerning the cause, till the trial was past: whereas, to do it before, is a most venomous thing in the making of *Sciences*” (*HRS*, p. 108), many experiments will end in a failure to validate the hypothesis, but far from casting aspersions on the intellectual capacities of the thinker, this process will actually help to bring about “a full *comprehension* of the object in *all* its appearances” (*HRS*, p. 85); which, in turn, will lead to greater understanding and certainty, though still falling short of complete knowledge.

Secondly, Sprat recognised that such a mental discipline seemed ill-designed to avoid either the dogmatism or the sterility which infected medieval and early Renaissance science. Accordingly, he differentiates the method or “*Art of Experimenting*” (*HRS*, p. 89) itself from the way the mind should respond or react to the influence of phenomena. The

art of experimenting, he declares, should neither “prescribe” nor “circumscribe” the thoughts or ideas of the experimenter: “The true *Experimenting* has this one thing inseparable from it, never to be a *fix'd* and *settled Art*, and never to be *limited* by constant Rules” (*HRS*, p. 89). The raw data should be examined, measured, weighed, and tested in a rigorous and methodological way, but the experimenter should not bring to his search any expectations or presuppositions about the how or the why of some particular natural process or phenomenon. Hence, rather than mount an experiment to prove how some event occurs because of the effect of one or other of the four primary elements, he must allow the phenomena to direct the course of enquiry, altering and formulating his ideas according to the information or facts discoverable from the objects at hand.

Conflating the experimental methodology and the ideal of free thought in this way clearly enhanced the new-science's hegemonic potency: together they offered a desirable paradigm for all social and intellectual behaviour.<sup>114</sup> For example, Sprat deems such a state of intellectual readiness essential for the operation “of *Invention*,” and he also likens it to “that which is call'd *Decence* in humane life; which, though it be that, by which all our Actions are to be fashion'd . . . yet it is never wholly to be reduc'd to *standing Precepts*; and may almost as easily be *obtain'd*, as defin'd” (*HRS*, p. 90). By analogy, then, rules of behaviour and rules of expression or composition must naturally alter with the discovery of new laws or operations at work in nature: rules cannot prescribe but only guide, especially as even the short history of experimental science had shown that the discovery of new causes, new laws of nature, ruled out any fixed canon of rules. These principles of the method appealed to many observers. William Wotton, for example, undertook a series of reflections upon learning and asserts the tremendous value of the Royal Society's intellectual policies:

The *New Philosophers*, as they are commonly called, avoid making general Conclusions, till they have collected a great Number of Experiments or Observations upon the Thing in hand; and, as new Light comes in, old Hypotheses fall without any Noise or Stir. So that the Inferences that are now a-days made from any Enquiries into Natural Things, though perhaps they be set down in general



Terms, yet are (as it were by Consent) received with this tacit Reserve, *As far as the Experiments or Observations already made, will warrant.*<sup>115</sup>

Clearly, Wotton feels that if this new and potentially powerful method could be instituted as a general discipline, it would offer a new model of intellectual behaviour. Cowley goes so far as to argue that because normal educational practices generally meant that children wasted “six or seven years in the learning of words only, and that too very imperfectly,” his college would make certain that children were “initiated in Things as well as Words,” which would require an educational method “for the infusing Knowledge and Language at the same time into them; and that this may be their Apprenticeship in Natural Philosophy.”<sup>116</sup>

No one, however, would appreciate the great value of the experimental method if scholastic rhetorical practices continued to seduce the new scientist, that is, if he failed to deliver his results in a clear and concise language. Yet just as many of his contemporaries in the learned and everyday worlds misprized both the need for and the value of a proper method, Sprat finds the new scientists indicted on the charge that their linguistic ideal remained the same as that of the scholastics: “in this . . . the *Experimental Philosophy* has met with very hard usage: For it has commonly in *Mens Censures*, undergone the imputation of those very faults, which it endeavors to correct in the *Verbal*” (*HRS*, p. 26). Following Bacon, Sprat affirms that a form of linguistic purity remained the primary aim of the new science; besides conducting experiments themselves, of “all other businesses, that have come under their care; there is one thing more, about which the *Society* has been most solicitous; and that is, the manner of their *Discourse*” (*HRS*, p. 111). Typically, he condemns “the luxury and redundance of *speech*” which “indeed may be justly condemn'd for filling mens thoughts, with imaginary Ideas of conceptions, that are no way answerable to the practical ends of Life” (*HRS*, p. 26). While this disease infects all the sciences, Sprat warns the Society's members that “unless they had been very watchful to keep in due temper, the whole spirit and vigour of their *Design*, had been eaten out” (*HRS*, p. 111). After listing the damage inflicted upon knowledge by the abuse

of figurative language and tropes, he puts linguistic excesses down to unsound methodology. Consistent attention to the experimental method “is the surest guide, against such Notional wandrings: opens our eyes to perceive all the realities of things: and cleers the brain, not onely from darkness, but false, or useless Light” (*HRS*, p. 26). Eloquence, it would appear, could offer the scientist little of any lasting value--contrary to Bacon, Sprat seems to feel that science must do without the charms of rhetoric.

Yet the ornaments of language originally served a useful purpose, says Sprat, and he freely admits that they were “an admirable Instrument in the hands of *Wise Men*,” particularly when (and Sprat here makes a typical qualification) “they were onely employ’d to describe *Goodness, Honesty, Obedience*; in larger, fairer, and more moving Images: to represent *Truth*, cloth’d with Bodies” (*HRS*, p. 112). Conceding that eloquence and rhetoric had played an historically valid role in teaching both science and morality, Sprat still seems to conceive of rhetoric as limited to its conventional use as a means of adornment. However, he goes on to make an important and radical modification to the drift of his thought, stating that rhetoric’s real task was “to bring *Knowledg* back to our very senses, from whence it was at first deriv’d to our understandings” (*HRS*, p. 112). In this formulation he effectively reverses the honoured dictum that poetry leads to a form of divine madness; instead, it actually helps to reintegrate the mind and the senses into their original unity, which leads to a greater awareness of consciousness and truth.<sup>117</sup>

Moreover, Sprat sees that the poetic resources of language, particularly such devices as personification, simile, and metaphor, give language its vital power to explain, persuade, and communicate, the purpose of all discourse. The degeneration of language (and shortly thereafter that of learning) occurs, therefore, because speakers, writers, poets misuse the resources of language, deviating from its basic aims and functions. Hobbes similarly attributes faulty reasoning and “absurd conclusion” to the misuse of language, and he provides seven different causes of this misuse, the first of which he considers “want of method” and the sixth “to the use of metaphors, tropes, and other rhetorical

figures, instead of proper words." Yet Hobbes, in common with other seventeenth-century thinkers like Sprat, accepts that common speech legitimately makes use of figures of speech but that "in reckoning, and seeking of truth, such speeches are not to be admitted."<sup>118</sup>

Given that the tendency towards linguistic excess persists even after Bacon's analysis of this disease of learning, Sprat notes that all members of the Royal Society agreed to practice a linguistic discipline consistent with both their view of how the human mind functioned and their ideal of experimental practice. The members

have . . . been most rigorous in putting in execution, the only Remedy, that can be found for this *extravagance* . . . a constant Resolution, to reject all the amplifications, digressions, and swellings of style: to return back to the primitive purity, and shortness, when men deliver'd so many *things*, almost in an equal number of *words*. They have exacted from all their members, a close, naked, natural way of speaking; positive expressions; clear senses; a native easiness: bringing all things as near the Mathematical plainness, as they can: and preferring the language of Artizans, Countrymen, and Merchants, before that, of Wits, and Scholars. (*HRS*, p. 113)

This statement of linguistic practice articulated a concise alternative to scholastic rhetoric, and it appealed not only to those disaffected thinkers who related the social disjunctions of the earlier part of the century to the excesses of scholasticism but to others, too.

Dryden, for example, notes that "The great art of poets is either the adorning and beautifying of truth or the inventing pleasing, and probable fictions."<sup>119</sup> In this aspect of their writing some latitude or poetic licence could be deemed acceptable, but poetic licence and extravagant language were hardly sufficient qualities to make a great poet. Dryden contends that "to be a compleat and excellent Poet" required a high degree of learning "in severall Sciences" as well as "experience in all sorts of humours and manners of men." Equally important, the poet "should have a reasonable *Philosophicall*, and in some measure *Mathematicall* head." The reason why a poet must acquire a proficiency in these areas of learning lies in the special nature of his work and in the tools of his trade: words. While the means by which a poet attains his ends--fiction, feigning, and emotion--he must still use words that tell true, that can be verified (because imitations or

representations of "truth"), and that will move the auditor. Accordingly, Dryden accepts that while "Poetry should not be reduced to the strictnesse of *Mathematicks* . . . it ought to be so far *Mathematicall*, as to have likeness, and Proportion."<sup>120</sup> This clear, mathematical style, then, could attain an appealing degree of dignity and eloquence, and it could therefore be held up as a standard of writing and of personal behaviour, as Boyle clearly felt. He explains that he chose to write his *The Sceptical Chymist* in

a style more fashionable than that of mere scholars is wont to be . . . that to keep a due decorum in the discourses it was fit that in a book written by a gentleman, and wherein only gentlemen are introduced as speakers, the language should be more smooth and the expressions more civil than is usual in the more scholastic way of writing. And indeed, I am not sorry to have this opportunity of giving an example how to manage even disputes with civility; whence perhaps some readers will be assisted to discern a difference betwixt bluntness of speech and strength of reason, and find that a man may be a champion for truth without being an enemy to civility; and may confute an opinion without railing at them that hold it.<sup>121</sup>

Here Boyle nicely encapsulates the new attitude of the scientists to knowledge, their prose style itself expressing their ethical and social ideals.

Sprat's call for scientific standards in thinking and writing soon reverberated throughout the latter decades of the seventeenth century and down through the eighteenth, an ideal of spoken and written practice which diffused itself into all the other arts, an essential element in the hegemonic power of the new science. For example, in three separate works--Wilkins's *An Essay Towards a Philosophical Grammar, Real Character, and a Philosophical Language* (1668), Locke's chapters on language in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), and Defoe's *An Essay Upon Projects* (1697)--each writer promotes the linguistic creed as articulated by Bacon and then codified in Sprat's *History*. Each in his own fashion rescripts the logic of the linguistic code, justifying and reinforcing it as an integral supplement to experimental practice. As we saw with Bacon, a word was the image of a thing, a mental representation of some aspect of sense experience, acting as a medium between external and internal impressions: its function was to communicate the idea generated in the mind by the sense-image. The word itself and its particular sound, however, was an arbitrary

invention whose meaning was sanctioned through a combination of personal experience and social conventions; and since God created all men with the same capacities for apprehending the world, and reason sufficient to draw intelligent conclusions for survival in their environment, confusions and disagreements signalled that a breakdown between sense experience and word had occurred; or, if debate degenerated into conflicts about the arbitrary meanings of words, that the disputants no longer grasped the arbitrary relationship which cohered between thing and word. Consistent and serious application of the experimental method would realign that relationship.

Wilkins bases his *Essay* (read to the Royal Society) on the principle that, "As men do generally agree in the same Principle of Reason, so do they likewise agree in the same *Internal Notion or Apprehension of Things*," by which he means that everyone's senses report the same thing: "That *conceit* which men have in their minds concerning a Horse or Tree, is the notion or *mental Image* of that Beast, of such a nature, shape and use."<sup>122</sup> Thus every perceiver's ideas of a horse always agreed because their senses had always conveyed, and always would convey, the same or similar images, irrespective of the various articulate sounds assigned to those images; for proof of this point, Wilkins notes that "The *Names* given to these in several Languages, are arbitrary *sounds* or *words*, as Nations of men have agreed upon, either casually or designedly, to express their Mental notions of them" (*ETRC*, p. 20). Connaturality of sense experience, however, does not transfer straight over into words whose meanings remain fixed for all time, in part because men acquire words "by way of *Imitation*," and in part because words "in a long tract of time, have, upon several emergencies, admitted various and *casual alterations*" (*ETRC*, p. 19) in pronunciation and meaning. In short, language inevitably becomes infected with "manifold defects and imperfections" (*ETRC*, p. 19).<sup>123</sup> Although grammar and the rules of language do provide some corrective to linguistic decay, they do so only partly because grammatical rules are "of much *later invention than Languages themselves*, being adapted to what was already in being, rather than the Rule making it

so" (*ETRC*, p. 19); in itself, then, grammar cannot protect the meanings of words from altering or becoming confused, ambiguous, unclear.

Wilkins thus speculates that, over time, men failed to appreciate the damage inflicted upon language by the multiplication of both words and equivocal meanings. In the natural maturation of culture "the native simplicity" of unadorned speech loses value, while verbose, abstruse, and inexact elocution soon masquerades as sophisticated intellectual attainment, with society rewarding those "who are skilled in these Canting forms of speech, though in nothing else" (*ETRC*, p. 18). Moreover, the arbitrary equation of sounds to words allows words to function "like other things of fashion," which is to say, they "are changeable, every generation producing new ones; witness the present Age, especially the late times, wherein this grand imposture of Phrases hath almost eaten out solid Knowledge in all professions" (*ETRC*, p. 18). While Wilkins accepts that language evolves in this way according to the exigencies of human nature and the mechanics of language acquisition, he insists that science, whose object is general, solid nature, cannot follow fashion. As he puts it, "though the varieties of Phrases in Language may seem to contribute to the elegance and ornament of Speech; yet, like other affected ornaments, they . . . contribute to the disguising of it with false appearances" (*ETRC*, p. 18). In this respect, science can do without synonyms, which "make Language tedious, and are generally *superfluities*, since the end and use of Speech is for humane utility and mutual converse" (*ETRC*, p. 18). In a truly philosophical or scientific language, every word "ought in strictness to have but one proper sense and acceptance, to prevent equivocality" (*ETRC*, p. 318). If nothing else was accomplished by a philosophical grammar and character, at least the necessity to state ideas unequivocally would force philosophers to think more carefully about words.

In any case, since it was the proper task of the various branches of philosophy to reduce "all things and notions unto such a frame, as may express their natural order, dependence, and relations" (*ETRC*, p. 1), it followed that "a regular *enumeration* and

*description* of all those things and notions, to which marks or names ought to be assigned" (*ETRC*, p. 1) would prove of utmost value to science. Consequently, a great deal of scientific work must inevitably focus upon enumerating, defining, and describing the species and classes of flora and fauna. This work of classification would go some way to help determine "their primary significations" (*ETRC*, p. 22). Once these had been agreed upon, occasions for conflict and argument would be reduced, not only in natural science but in other fields as well; practitioners in all fields could utilise the linguistic ideal of the new science to "improve" their own performances; as well, opportunities for argument and discord would be reduced.

Indeed, Wilkins confesses that he accepted the task of trying to formulate a philosophical language precisely because it offered an opportunity to improve social concord, first by "*facilitating mutual Commerce, amongst the several Nations of the world, and the improving of all Natural knowledge,*" and in addition it would "*likewise very much conduce to the spreading of the knowledge of Religion*" (*ETRC*, sig. B). A philosophical language would further the cause of religion because it would "*contribute much to the clearing of some of our Modern differences in Religion, by unmasking many wild errors, that shelter themselves under the disguise of affected phrases*" (*ETRC*, sig. B). Part of Wilkins's confidence in the validity of this programme derives from the general sense in the period that the study of nature would lead to a greater understanding of the mind's various functions. Typically, nature was conceived as the visible sign of God's creative power, offering humankind a "book" in which to read His magnificence and take lessons for our humility. As the anonymous author of *Theologia Ruris sive Schola et Scala Naturae: Or, The Book of Nature, Leading Us, by Certain Degrees, to the Knowledge and Worship of the God of Nature* (1686) argued, "God calleth thee into this richly furnisht Palace of his, not to be a judge but a witness of his munificence"; the true suppliant looked upon nature as "Man's School, and God's Temple," as "a large Book" in which we "daily read new Lessons to thy Mind, Lessons of Calmness, Contentedness,

and Confidence."<sup>124</sup> Religious terms and concepts, like those used in other fields, would first be "*Philosophically unfolded, and rendered according to the genuine and natural importance of Words,*" a process which would not only strengthen the grounds of belief since the study of nature--God's book--formed its cornerstone, but it would prove invaluable for revealing the roots of "*inconsistencies and contradictions. And several of those pretended, mysterious, profound notions, expressed in great swelling words, whereby some men set up for reputation, being this way examined, will appear to be, either nonsense, or very flat and jejeune*" (*ETRC*, sig. B).<sup>125</sup> Dryden puts forward a similar plea in his *Religio Laici or, A Layman's Faith* (1682):

If still our Reason runs another way,  
That private Reason 'tis more Just to curb,  
Than by Disputes the publick Peace disturb.  
For points obscure are of small use to learn:  
But *Common quiet is Mankind's concern.*<sup>126</sup>

It would be wrong to assume, however, that Wilkins felt that his philosophical language could somehow fix for ever the meaning of words, or that scientific knowledge could be communicated effectively without making use of the poetic resources imbedded in the everyday use of language. New advances in scientific understanding would coin new words and terms, and the meanings of older terms might require re-definition. Thus, he wants his philosophical language to incorporate a "way to change and vary the sense of any word, as may with all, leave it free from ambiguity" (*ETRC*, p. 318), and he suggests that tropes, metaphors, personification and other figures of speech are capable of communicating ideas in concise and exact terms. Accordingly, figures of speech "may be well enough retained in a Philosophical Language" (*ETRC*, p. 324), as long as the user paid close attention to the ideas and relationships united within the figure itself. Such careful usage would "much promote the copiousness and elegancy" (*ETRC*, p. 318) of scientific discourse.

The verdicts which Locke passed on such issues as philosophical authority, the relationship between experience and knowledge, and the natural limitations of the human



capacity to know provide further (and pivotal) evidence of the steady advance of scientific hegemony: to give the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* its due would, unfortunately, require lengthy digressions into arguments already well explored. Yet the *Essay* cannot be by-passed unnoticed, especially as Locke consistently justifies and reinforces the ideals of the new science, and my treatment intends only to focus upon those aspects of his work which help underscore the develops traced in earlier arguments. His attitude towards the search for knowledge, for instance, parallels those of his predecessors:

*he who has raised himself above the Alms-Basket, and not content to live lazily on scraps of begg'd Opinions, sets his own Thoughts on work, to find and follow Truth, will (whatever his lights on) not miss the Hunter's Satisfaction; every moment of his Pursuit, will reward his Pains with some Delight; and he will have Reason to think his time not ill spent, even when he cannot much boast of any great Acquisition.<sup>127</sup>*

Moreover, his explanation for taking up the writing of the *Essay* shares the experimentalists' view of the reach of human mental abilities. He explains that

If by this Enquiry into the Nature of the Understanding, I can discover the Powers thereof; *how far* they reach; to what things they are in any Degree proportionate; and where they fail us, I suppose it may be of use, to prevail with the busy Mind of Man, to be more cautious in meddling with things exceeding its comprehension; to stop, when it is at the utmost Extent of its Tether; and to sit down in a quiet Ignorance of those Things, which, upon Examination, are found to be beyond the reach of our Capacities. We should not then perhaps be so forward, out of an Affectation of an universal Knowledge, to raise Questions, and perplex our selves and others with Disputes about Things, to which our Understandings are not suited; and of which we cannot frame in our Minds any clear or distinct Perceptions, or whereof (as it has perhaps too often happen'd) we have not any Notions at all. If we can find out, how far the Understanding can extend its view; how far it has Faculties to attain Certainty; and in what Cases it can only judge and guess, we may learn to content our selves with what is attainable by us in this State. (*ECHU*, pp. 44-45)

Here Locke's declaration that he wants to teach others to restrain their intellectual pride belongs to a by now familiar intellectual ancestry. Yet while Locke proposed "to enquire into the Original, Certainty, and Extent of humane Knowledge . . . to consider the discerning Faculties of a Man, as they are employ'd about the Objects, which they have to do with," and to do so in an "Historical, plain Method" (*ECHU*, pp. 43-44 ), the *Essay* served another equally urgent objective: namely, to establish "the natural Advantages and Defects of Language; and the remedies that ought to be used, to avoid the

inconveniences of obscurity or uncertainty in the signification of Words, without which, it is impossible to discourse with any clearness, or order, concerning Knowledge" (*ECHU*, p. 404).<sup>128</sup> Like Bacon, Wilkins, and Sprat before him, Locke expected the serious thinker to "use no Word, till he views in his Mind the precise determined Idea, which he resolves to make it the sign of" (*ECHU*, p. 13); consequently he feels compelled to denounce, even as late as the 1690s, the persistent use of "Vague and insignificant Forms of Speech" (*ECHU*, p. 10) and rhetorical excess as the great enemies of scientific discourse. As Hans Aarsleff remarks, Locke's *Essay* "was, as it were, intended as a manual in the epistemology of the Royal Society, whose aim was the promotion of natural knowledge."<sup>129</sup>

Before recommending "remedies" with which to combat the misapplication of words, however, Locke first examined how the epistemological structure of the word as a sign made communication possible, and in light of this investigation he theorised about how its mental processing contributed to a psychological disposition to word abuse. His observations both advance and qualify the new-science view of language explored thus far. Moreover, his analysis of how the basic mechanics of word acquisition induced a psychological proclivity for word abuse further justified the call for a "plain" style in scientific discourses but did not, significantly, put the same strictures on "common" speech. Equally critical, his deliberations on the word/idea structure further emphasised and enhanced the view already noted amongst seventeenth-century scientists, that a "poetic" as opposed to a rhetorical use of language was legitimate and even desirable.

Although more extensive and subtle than his predecessors, Locke's views about language cover roughly the same ground. For instance, he considered language a special tool granted man by God to serve the twin aims of communication and social cohesion. For Locke, the function of language derives from a simple logic: "GOD having designed Man for a sociable Creature, made him not only with an inclination, and under a necessity to have fellowship with those of his own kind; but furnished him also with Language,

which was to be the great Instrument, and common Tye of Society" (*ECHU*, p. 402).

Locke's appeal to this notion that God gave man the capacity for speech for the foundation of social order was, of course, a commonplace of linguistic theory right through to the nineteenth century (and beyond); undoubtedly, this view owes its strength and cogency to the power of Christian hegemony. Hobbes, for instance, subscribed to it, as does Tamworth Reresby, writing in the early years of the eighteenth century: after dismissing theories about gradual language acquisition which rely on classical philosophy, Reresby declares that "Christians need not go far in Quest of the Original of Languages, being very well assur'd, that God created Man with all the Perfections that appertain to his Nature. That as he was made for Society, and as Speech is its primary and necessary Tye, so must he of Course have been provided with that Faculty from the first Moment of his Creation." Indeed, he takes it as axiomatic "that Man no sooner enjoy'd an Existence, but he enjoy'd Thought; that he no sooner conceiv'd any Notion, than he desir'd to communicate it." Fired by this desire to communicate his impressions and notions were "follow'd by certain Traces in his Imagination, proper to invest them with Body; and by certain Dispositions in the Organs of Voice proper to form expressive Sounds. So that all his Thoughts, in the whole Course of his Life, were invested with all the Images and all necessary Expressions, to render them as clear, conspicuous, and intelligible to others as they were to himself; and all this was done by the Direction of God."<sup>130</sup>

Locke, then, followed a tradition which relied upon divine authority for the purpose of speech, but he agreed with Bacon, Sprat, and Wilkins that at a primitive stage of language development words acquired meaning only because all the ideas which they expressed "originally come either from sensible Objects without, or what we feel within our selves, from the inward Workings of our own Spirits" (*ECHU*, p. 404); and that, even at sophisticated levels of use all words "which are made use of to stand for Actions and Notions quite removed from sense, *have their rise from thence, and from obvious sensible Ideas are transferred to more abstruse significations*" (*ECHU*, p. 403).<sup>131</sup> Like so

many other scientifically-minded thinkers of his time, Locke considered sense perceptions the bedrock of all higher forms of mental activity, but he also saw them as the key to the dynamic nature of knowledge. He asks where the mind comes

by that vast store, which the busy and boundless Fancy of Man has painted on it, with an almost endless variety? Whence has it all the materials of Reason and Knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, From *Experience*: In that, all our Knowledge is founded; and from that it ultimately derives it self. Our Observation employ'd either about *external, sensible Objects; or about the internal Operations of our Minds, perceived and reflected on by our selves, is that, which supplies our Understandings with all the materials of thinking*. These two are the Fountains of Knowledge, from whence all the *Ideas* we have, or can naturally have, do spring. (*ECHU*, p. 104)

Locke likewise concurred that speech succeeded only because men shared the same or similar sense-experiences and therefore the same or similar ideas. Clearly, to reform the scientific use of language, to gain control over the meaning of words, some standard of reference was necessary. The experimental scientists made sense-experience that standard, and in this way they forced opponents to prove the basis upon which their ideas rested.

Despite his adherence to the popular theological/anthropological paradigm for explaining the origins of language, Locke questions whether the ability to utter "*articulate Sounds, which we call Words*" (*ECHU*, p. 402) denotes a special feature of the human use of sounds--parrots and other birds, after all, make distinct sounds. Nor did the paradigm satisfactorily explain how words acquired their separate, intelligible significations. Without invoking a theological doctrine, and without leaving the orbit of experience and simple inference, he nonetheless solves this problem in a novel and compelling way. Locke, of course, figured the mind untouched by experience as a "white Paper, void of all Characters, without any *Ideas*" (*ECHU*, p. 104). Working with this image of the mind he argued that, whereas birds and other animals simply made noises, man alone possessed the capacity to "*use these Sounds, as Signs of internal Conceptions; and to make them stand as marks for the Ideas within his own Mind, whereby they might be made known to others, and the Thoughts of Men's Minds be conveyed from one to*

another" (*ECHU*, p. 402). Men used articulate sounds, as it were, to "write" their impressions or experiences of things upon this blank sheet, enabling them "to record their own Thoughts for the Assistance of their own Memory," and in turn "to bring out their *Ideas*, and lay them before the view of others" (*ECHU*, p. 405). So far, so good: this account helps clarify how sounds could somehow be used to capture the manifold nature of human experiences.

It does not, however, resolve how words can communicate ideas, meanings, nor illuminate how men could abuse a faculty intended by God to facilitate their social good. Even if the evidence strongly supported the assumption that words conveyed ideas because men shared the same or similar sense-experiences, Locke recognised that prior to an idea's articulation a man's ideas must originally take form "within his own Breast, invisible, and hidden from others, nor can of themselves be made to appear" (*ECHU*, p. 405). Locke does not question whether or not these "silent" ideas represent clearly and distinctly to a man's consciousness his outward and inward sensible experiences; as long as these meanings remain mute, incommunicable except in the most incomplete or rudimentary fashions--gestures, grunts, shrieks--the issue remains undebatable. The question of clear and determinate meaning can arise only after the fact of communication, and this obviously happens only when two (or more) speakers agree that a particular sound or sequence of sounds will refer to or signify an idea in their respective minds of a particular thing or experience. The key to successful communication therefore relies upon "a voluntary Imposition, whereby such a Word is made arbitrarily the Mark of such an *Idea*" (*ECHU*, p. 405); over the course of time "common use, by a tacit Consent, appropriates certain Sounds to certain *Ideas* in all Languages, which so far limits the signification of that Sound, that unless a Man applies it to the same *Idea*, he does not speak properly" (*ECHU*, p. 408). The sound (or sounds) appropriated to mark the idea of a horse, for example, may differ in disparate parts of the world--*horse*, *pferd*, *cheval*--but the idea of a horse in the mind of all these speakers remains the same. Otherwise, the idea of

a horse would not translate: ideas get translated, not sounds. People obviously enter into conversations with others because each believes that the other “cannot be supposed wholly ignorant of the *Ideas*, which are annexed to Words by common Use, in a Language familiar to him” (*ECHU*, p. 522). In this way the invisible or hidden ideas become known to others.<sup>132</sup>

Yet arbitrarily agreed meaning still fails to reconcile the fact that a fortuitous procedure for marking sounds upon the mind cannot in itself guarantee to report ideas accurately or “meaningfully.” After all, the perceptual and epistemological process by which everyone turns sounds into words means that “every Man has so inviolable a Liberty, to make Words stand for what *Ideas* he pleases, that no one hath the Power to make others have the same *Ideas* in their Minds, that he has, when they use the same Words, that he does” (*ECHU*, p. 408).<sup>133</sup> Of course, social necessity should stimulate each speaker to obtain a degree of correlation between his ideas and words and those of others, but in the final analysis the process only rarely manages to bring word meanings “within some tolerable latitude, that may serve for ordinary Conversation” (*ECHU*, p. 522).

Thus, the potential for confusion and misunderstanding would appear to be an in-built feature of the word/idea structure, and to complicate matters further Locke uncovers other factors inherent in the mechanical acquisition of language which make the abuse of words inevitable. The procedure induces, so to speak, a psychological “complex” or predilection in the mind of the speaker to misuse words. In particular, since language learning starts “from our Cradles” and involves the constant repetition and imitation of sounds, “we come to learn certain articulate Sounds very perfectly, and have them readily on our Tongues, and always at hand in our Memories” (*ECHU*, p. 407). Every child therefore learns a great many words before it actually experiences the ideas to which (in customary usage) they refer; this process continues into maturity, the appropriation of more sophisticated words occurring without the speaker ever *experiencing* the ideas which furnish the meanings or ever bothering to “examine, or settle their Significations

perfectly" (*ECHU*, p. 407). Eventually, every speaker throughout a society presupposes that a word means the same thing or idea for every user; and, as few understand the simple distinct meaning of a word, and fewer the complex determined meaning, learning and language degenerate, with a concomitant rise in communication failures, disputes and conflicts.<sup>134</sup>

The unfelt, unreflective use of certain sounds to signify certain ideas propagates other psychological repercussions: lacking the experiential meaning of a word, most speakers usually become confused about the relationship between words (sounds) and things. As Locke puts it, "Because *Men* would not be thought to talk *barely* of their own Imaginations, but of Things as really they are; therefore they *often suppose their Words to stand for the reality of Things*" (*ECHU*, p. 407). The failure to acknowledge the arbitrary connection between sound and thing invites a reverence for word over matter--men "do *set their Thoughts more on Words than Things*" (*ECHU*, p. 408)--which ultimately alienates the speaker from his language and degrades the real experience of things, the precise state of affairs which so worried the new scientists. In part the confusion of word and thing occurs because the "Understanding, like the Eye, whilst it makes us see, and perceive all other Things, takes no notice of it self: And it requires Art and Pains to set it at a distance, and make it its own Object" (*ECHU*, p. 43). Since the mind functions without ado, a speaker may on the surface appear to use language efficiently, effectively, even meaningfully, but at a deeper level his lack of "reality-testing" or experiential validation of a word's signification has beguiled his mind with second-hand ideas: "*there comes by constant use, to be such a Connexion between certain Sounds, and the Ideas they stand for, that the Names heard, almost as readily excite certain Ideas, as if the Objects themselves, which are apt to produce them, did actually affect the Senses*" (*ECHU*, p. 407). The way in which the human mind processes words, Locke discovers, interferes with and conspires against a clear understanding of immediate experience. And worse, the illusion of certainty created by the use of language nullifies appeals to experience or

common-sense: these can only serve to reinforce the solipsistic delusions of the speaker.<sup>135</sup>

Given that most speakers “arrive” as it were unconsciously at a state of certainty regarding the meaning of words, using them as if they knew their significations, Locke wonders “whether Language, as it has been employ'd, has contributed more to the improvement or hindrance of Knowledge amongst Mankind” (*ECHU*, p. 510). The reply to that, taking into account the outcome so far of Locke's “Historical, plain method,” would suggest that no remedy could overturn the combined forces of nature and custom. Yet not everyone succumbs entirely to the desensitising process of language attainment. Society always throws up those who do not accept as gospel the commonly received definitions of things, substances, and the like, those “who search after Knowledge, and philosophical verity” (*ECHU*, p. 521). Although the combined power of nature and custom make this a formidable task, one in which the searcher would appear to be left largely to his own resources, Locke urges such thinkers to “go a little farther, and enquire into the Nature and Properties of the Things themselves, and thereby perfect, as much as [they] can, [their] *Ideas* of their distinct Species” (*ECHU*, pp. 520-521). Fortunately, in order to verify the precise signification of words the seeker can follow a standard path: “*natural History is to be enquired into*” (*ECHU*, p. 521). The appeal to study natural history follows logically from Locke's epistemological schema, which posits that “the only sure way of making known the signification of the name of any simple *Idea*, is *by presenting to his Senses that Subject, which may produce it in his Mind*, and make him actually have the *Idea*, that Word stands for” (*ECHU*, p. 515). However much a speaker may confuse things and words, he can never “corrupt the Fountains of Knowledge, which are in Things themselves” (*ECHU*, p. 510). Like his precursors, Locke sends the philosopher back to the things themselves.<sup>136</sup>

Locke, of course, recognised the impossibility of an in-depth examination of every thing, every experience, every word. Although firmly convinced of the value of the dictum



that "A Man should take care *to use no word without a signification, no Name without an Idea* for which he makes it stand" (*ECHU*, p. 512), he appreciated that the level of discipline which this required went beyond human capacity. Indeed, to demand such application from men went against nature and could only prove counter-productive.<sup>137</sup> Locke therefore accepts as necessary a certain quantum of second-hand knowledge in scientific discourse, provided it was obtained "from such as are used to that sort of Things, and are experienced in them" (*ECHU*, p. 521). Ideally, he thinks, scientific learning would greatly benefit if

Men, versed in physical Enquiries, and acquainted with the several sorts of natural Bodies, would set down those simple *Ideas*, wherein they observe the Individuals of each sort constantly to agree. This would remedy a great deal of that confusion, which comes from several Persons, applying the same Name to a Collection of a smaller, or greater number of sensible Qualities, proportionably as they have been more or less acquainted with, or accurate in examining the Qualities of any sort of Things, which come under one denomination.<sup>138</sup> (*ECHU*, p. 521-522)

If nothing else, this type of encyclopaedic resource could provide a standard (an authority) for helping settle debates which had foundered upon the meaning of a term.

Attaining a clear understanding or idea of a word's true signification solved, of course, only one part of the problem of word abuse as it pertained to the sciences. A scientist who communicated his ideas to an audience faced the task of trying to convince them about the accuracy of his observations and the justness of his conclusions. In other words, the arts of language--rhetoric and eloquence--complicated matters still farther, easily leading the scientist down the slippery slope. Locke counsels that "Right reasoning is founded on something else than the predicaments and predictables, and does not consist in talking in mode and figure itself."<sup>139</sup> Before they addressed an audience (whether in person or print) thinkers who took their vocation seriously "should think themselves obliged to study, how they might deliver themselves without Obscurity, Doubtfulness, or Equivocation" (*ECHU*, p. 509), especially in those scientific discourses intended for instruction and information.<sup>140</sup> Therefore says Locke, following in the path of the early experimentalists who regarded rhetorical excess as an obstruction to and a

deviation from solid learning, if “we would speak of Things as they are, we must allow, that all the Art of Rhetorick, besides Order and Clearness, all the artificial and figurative application of Words Eloquence hath invented, are for nothing else but to insinuate wrong *Ideas*, move the Passions, and thereby mislead the Judgment; and so indeed are perfect cheat” (*ECHU*, p. 508).<sup>141</sup> The scientist preparing to communicate his findings need only follow a basic law: restrict himself to words and terms which, “if they be *simple* must be clear and distinct; if *complex* must be *determinate*, *i.e.* the precise Collection of simple *Ideas* settled in the Mind, with that Sound annexed to it, as the sign of that precise determined Collection, and no other” (*ECHU*, p. 512-513). He might then avail himself of rhetoric to attain the necessary “Order and Clearness” for the particular discussion in which he troubled himself.

It should be made clear, however, that despite Locke's attack on rhetoric and eloquence he was not inherently suspicious of words *per se* but considered them admirably adapted to perform their primary function. Indeed, he accepted that “Vulgar Notions suit vulgar Discourses: and both, though confused enough, yet serve pretty well the Market, and the Wake. Merchants and Lovers, Cooks and Taylors, have Words wherewithal to dispatch their ordinary Affairs; and so, I think, might Philosophers and Disputants too, if they had a Mind to understand, and to be clearly understood” (*ECHU*, p. 514). While he condemns the “*learned but frivolous use of uncouth, affected, or unintelligible Terms, introduced into the Sciences*” (*ECHU*, p. 10) as a waste of energy, his analysis of the word/idea structure shows how at every level of articulation speech necessarily functions “poetically.” After analysing how man's unique use of sounds allows him to record his experiences and impressions of things, Locke adds that “It is not enough for the perfection of Language, that Sounds can be made the signs of *Ideas*, unless those *signs* can be so made use of, as to *comprehend several particular Things*” (*ECHU*, p. 402). In many instances, of course, a single word may adequately signify a single thing, but in many others the mind must first separate, analyse, and evaluate a whole series of

particular experiences and then, leaving some out, abstract and re-combine those remaining into a general idea; and, finally, it must use a sound to “mark a multitude of particular existences” (*ECHU*, p. 402). The word “tree,” for instance, encompasses the ideas of leaf, trunk, branch, bark, root, and so forth: a speaker does not need to repeat each separate word to express the general term tree. Indeed, he does not even need to “experience” all its separate parts or all the separate species of trees in order to comprehend the meaning of the word tree as a genera. If the mind did not possess an ability to abstract and distribute meaning in this way, the multiplication of sounds would quickly overtax the memory's capacity and thereby subvert the ends of speech.

Thus, while alterations in sound do signal and help convey various meanings, they do not generate the difference in meaning. It is only the mind's unique ability to ascribe different ideas or even various ideas to a word that makes sound an effective medium of communication. Compression, allusion, equation, making a part stand for a whole or a whole for a part, combining ideas into one word--Locke's analysis of the word/idea structure implies that these fundamentally “poetic” resources of words make discourse possible. Poetic devices and figures of speech, although more complex as structures and more complex to use, belong to the same process. Locke, in fact, made allowance for the non-scientific use of words. After all, experience and observation of human social activity impressed upon him that,

Since Wit and Fancy finds easier entertainment in the World, than dry Truth and real Knowledge, *figurative Speeches*, and allusion in Language, will hardly be admitted, as *an* imperfection or *abuse* of it. I confess, in Discourses, where we seek rather Pleasure and Delight, than Information and Improvement, such Ornaments as are borrowed from them, can scarce pass for Faults. (*ECHU*, p. 508)

Throughout the *Essay* he accepts that in general the type of linguistic strictness required in the sciences did not extend to other spheres of discourse. For instance, he would consider it mere vanity for anyone to believe that he could “attempt the perfect *Reforming* the *Languages* of the world, no not so much as that of his own Country, without rendring himself ridiculous. To require that Men should use their words constantly in the same

sense, and for none but determined and uniform *Ideas*, would be to think, that all Men should have the same Notions, and should talk of nothing but what they have clear and distinct *Ideas* of" (*ECHU*, p. 509). Similarly, Hobbes defines one of the special uses of speech as an ability "to please, and delight ourselves and others, by playing with our words, for pleasure or ornament, innocently."<sup>142</sup> Common, everyday usage allowed a great deal of leeway and inexactness in the use of words, and word-play even provided a large measure of pleasure; indeed, Locke wrote to Edward Clarke to make certain that his child be taught "to speak handsomely and well on any occasion . . . there being nothing more becoming a gentleman, nor more useful in all the occurrences of life, than to be able to speak well, and to the purpose."<sup>143</sup> Even so, Locke expected serious writers--those who intended to instruct and inform, as well as to delight--to use words of which they have attained "clear and distinct *Ideas*." In this he was not alone.

In *An Essay Upon Projects* (1697), Defoe puts forward a plan for a society or academy dedicated to the advancement of the English language, similar in many ways to the French Academy, but likely to prove more successful and valuable because English, he boasts, is "capable of a much greater Perfection."<sup>144</sup> Like the Royal Society, he wants his academy royally chartered, and its sole purpose

to encourage Polite Learning, to polish and refine the *English* Tongue, and advance the so much neglected Faculty of Correct Language, to establish Purity and Propriety of Style, and to purge it from all the Irregular Additions that Ignorance and Affectation have introduc'd; and all those Innovations in Speech, if I may call them such, which some Dogmatic Writers have the confidence to foster upon their Native Language, as if their Authority were sufficient to make their own Fancy legitimate. (*EUP*, p. 233)

Defoe's ideal of speech parallels the "close, naked, natural way of speaking" defined by Sprat as the aim of scientific discourse, but whereas Sprat offered a voluntary code Defoe expects the members of his society to make it their business "to Correct and Censure the Exorbitance of Writers, especially of Translators" (*EUP*, p. 236). As well, they would adjudicate upon the use of new words, irregular usages, and so forth. Like Locke, Defoe accepted that in general "Custom is allow'd to be our best Authority for Words," yet the

members of his society would not invariably accept the dictates of custom as the final standard. Whenever a dispute arose about the actual signification of a word, "Reason must be the Judge of Sense in Language, and Custom can never prevail over it" (*EUP*, p. 243), and given Defoe's stated ideal of speech it is easy to imagine how reason would go about setting a standard of measurement.

Who, though, would comprise the body of this society? Other than stating that it would be "composed of none but Persons of the first Figure in Learning" (*EUP*, p. 232), Defoe does not actually nominate anyone. Instead, he excludes certain types: on the one hand, "very few, whose Business or Trade was Learning" because "great Scholars, meer Learned Men, and Graduates in the last Degree of Study" for the most part vocalise a form of English "far from Polite, full of Stiffness and Affectation, hard Words, and long Coupling of *Syllables* and Sentences, which sound harsh" (*EUP*, p. 234). Clearly not suitable candidates, and besides these Defoe would prohibit, for understandable reasons, the "*Clergyman, Physician, or Lawyer*" (*EUP*, p. 234). On the other hand, he praises merchants and traders, manufacturers and businessmen for their plain-speaking and for their straightforward techniques for solving problems, considering their exposure to worldly affairs a better training in language and thought than that of "meer" scholars. Presumably, he would draw members of his society from their ranks; after all, it would make sense to chose those who habitually spoke in a plain way rather than those who, like Sprat's scientists, needed to learn how to do so.

From the foregoing illustrations, this much seems clear: as the turn of the century approached, the miscellaneous ideals and perspectives espoused by the experimental scientists had obtained a degree of hegemonic force. Writers in unrelated fields of interest were beginning to view questions of style, pursue critical, religious, or historical issues, and evaluate the failures and achievements of their culture in terms set by scientific discourse. John Norris's essay, *Of the Advantages of Thinking* (1687), takes it as axiomatic that thinking aimed at "the perfection of our Rational part . . . that is, to be able

to frame clear and distinct conceptions, to form right Judgments, and to draw true consequences from one thing to another." Echoing Locke, he says that thinking goes astray whenever the mind remains satisfied with "the wrong *perceptions* of things. When the simple Ideas of our minds are confus'd, our Judgments can never proceed without error," and this occurs through "the natural inability of our faculties" and a "want of *Attention* and close *application* of mind. We don't *dwell* enough upon the object; but speculate it transiently and in hast; and then, no wonder that we conceive it by halves."<sup>145</sup>

A critic of intellectually conservative sentiments like Thomas Rymer, for example, complains in *An Essay, Concerning Critical and Curious Learning* (1698) about the many "superficial *Wits* and pretended *Virtuosos*" who take "wonderful Pains about little insignificant things, as in tracing the rise and progress of *Words*," a practice "fit only for Pedants and School-masters to amuse their boys withall," who have overrun the commonwealth of learning.<sup>146</sup> He finds it disturbing that so many apparently well-educated men in responsible positions could propound unfounded and specious hypotheses "which the wiser part of Mankind have concluded above their Knowledge, and which they themselves must confess to be nothing better than *Learned Amusements*" (*ECCL*, pp. 7-8). Initially, Rymer's blanket criticisms convey the impression that he considers *all* curious speculation as nothing more than frivolous research, but when he remarks that such trifling inquiries "are wholly Forreign to the acquisition of solid and real Knowledge" (*ECCL*, p. 9), he discloses the source of his displeasure.

Rymer admits that only some types of learning merit wholesale condemnation, that other types of "Curious and Critical Observations are very commendable," and in a crowded field "that of *Experimental Philosophy* is the most noble, beneficial, and satisfactory" (*ECCL*, pp. 9-10).<sup>147</sup> Experimental philosophy, unlike other speculative practices, cleaved to the testimony of experience, which taught "that [Humane Reason] is bounded and limited in many respects, even in those things that are more immediately within its compass" (*ECCL*, p. 7). Moreover, its application of strict mental discipline to a

testable subject matter reduced the possibilities of error and self-delusion: "For the Mind is not there seduced with abstracted Arguments and Chymerical Notions; but is determined by Demonstrations and Matter of Fact. It is the great Instrument by which such admirable Effects in Nature have been discovered" (*ECCL*, p. 10). Rymer deems the study of natural philosophy "desirable and entertaining in it self to an inquisitive Genius" (*ECCL*, p. 10) and applauds the determination of its practitioners to apply themselves for the benefit of all humankind.<sup>148</sup>

Up to this point Rymer has more or less followed a path already well trod, and as a critic and not a scientist his remarks might seem to amount to little more than a polite bow in the direction of the new science. After all, the modernity of the new science, with its emphasis on particulars, would likely strike Rymer's conservative tendencies as innately wrong. However, he actually develops critical concepts and perspectives which both pivot around and build upon the ideals of the new science, not only furnishing further evidence of the hegemony of the new science but generating some interesting and suggestive critical results. In particular, in order to oppose the sort of etymologically-grounded critical speculation which he considered trite and dilettantish, Rymer advances and maps out an interesting theoretical account of how the faculty of invention functioned.<sup>149</sup>

The opinion that a critical rule puts "a Restraint upon a Writers Invention, and does more harm than good in Composition" (*ECCL*, p. 29) triggers Rymer's deliberations. In the first place, whenever a writer observes and adopts the critical rules he does no more than display "a strict attendance to the Rules of Nature and Reason"; hence, so far from doing the imaginative or inspirational process harm, the critical rules "never impede or clog an Author's Fancy; but rather produce and enlarge it" (*ECCL*, p. 31). In order to justify this claim, Rymer invokes the epistemological theories of the new science, accepting that "It is the Condition and Circumstances of Humane Nature, under its present Depression, to acquire Science by Steps and Gradations"; we cannot acquire knowledge through revelation because the "Conveyances to our Understanding, are too gross to be consistent with an immediate Intuition, which is the Happiness and Prerogative of Spiritual

Intelligences only” and because our mind “takes Impressions from External Objects; and these Impressions make her reflect upon the Nature of the thing, from whence she receives them, leading us through a long Chain and Series of Thoughts before we can arrive at any Conclusions” (*ECCL*, pp. 35-36). To transform impressions into conclusions, the mind of man must incorporate two primary and related faculties: reason and memory, the former he defines as “an Active Principle,” the latter “more perceptive and passive” (*ECCL*, p. 34). In designating memory as passive he echoes Hobbes's view of memory as that sense impression which “is fading, old, and past” and which, when it encompasses many records of this “*decaying sense . . . is called experience.*”<sup>150</sup>

Since all human knowledge or “Conclusions” as Rymer calls them, result from the interaction of reason and memory, to produce “Clearness and Perfection” (*ECCL*, p. 36) of thought from these chains of remembered impressions entails a consolidated effort of synthesis from contingent faculties. At first glance, this appears a rather haphazard procedure, almost as if knowledge occurred through some fortuitous conflation of reason and memory, but Rymer explains that both memory and reason “are mightily heightened and improved by Exercise. But if they are neglected and unimproved, they will shrink and contract themselves, and be unable to answer their proper Functions” (*ECCL*, pp. 33-34). Memory, more so even than reason, benefits from constant activity; otherwise it “could neither retain nor return those Idea's and Images recommended to it, unless it were often proved and examined. It would have but a very Dark and Unfaithful Conception of Things” (*ECCL*, p. 34). The most obvious form of exercise for both reason and memory involves the use of words, of turning sense impressions into sounds and images, and these into ideas and concepts, and so forth. In this way, Rymer shows how the faculty of invention plays a principal role in putting words into communicable forms.

Rymer maintains that thoughts only achieve a state of clearness when they take form as words. Unarticulated ideas which lay in the mind as “Private Thoughts and Internal Reflections” remain “always a little dark and cloudy” (*ECCL*, pp. 36-37).



Unexercised, the memory fades, and with it, as Hobbes said, so to does the force of the experience; but if the mind uses the image marked upon it as a word, that image “becomes more clear and determinate . . . and is, as it were, a second time submitted to the Censure of the Mind” (*ECCL*, p. 37). Thus, putting ideas into the shape of words will “instruct and inform the very Mind that produces them, by putting it still upon a more intense Application” (*ECCL*, p. 36). The process of invention forms more complicated and compelling images out of individual ideas, and it presents to reason a more unified picture of reality; after invention completes its business, reason may then pass judgment upon the truth-value of the new signification. In this way the mind checks that pernicious tendency in every one to “flatter [them] selves with false Beauties and Appearances” (*ECCL*, p. 37). Rymer concludes that “the *Judgment* could never determine aright of that huddled perplexed *Chaos* of Knowledge, or rather Ignorance, we should have within us” (*ECCL*, p. 35) unless the faculty of invention first worked upon that chaos.

While invention plays an obvious role in the generation of all speech, Rymer contends that only the act of writing pushes invention to its limit. Writing brings all the mind's higher operations into play because the use of invention exercises both memory and reason: memory, of course, because it renders material for the invention; reason, because it judges the final output. Studying the works of other writers--an extensive and dynamic history of how they employed their invention--supplies the individual writer with both an invaluable guide and a infinite source of inspiration. All texts leave a record of their author's invention, and the best writings exemplify how to put the poetic devices of language to best use: hence Rymer's claim that critical rules drawn from “Nature and Reason” cannot hinder the Fancy.<sup>151</sup> Poetry, in particular, offers “the knowledge of Figurative Ornaments; *with that fertility of Imagination, and that Beauty of Conception, which is the Mother of Eloquence, and of all that is graceful in Speaking. So that Invention in any kind will turn to some Advantage or other*” (*ECCL*, pp. 40-41). Hence, Rymer finds in the epistemological schema of the new science an intellectually satisfying and

comprehensive theory which assists his conceptualisation of invention, locating its role as integral to the mind's proper functioning; and which, if exercised consistently would yield "Pleasure or Profit, and still the Mind must be improved" (*ECCL*, p. 41).

The full title of Thomas Baker's *Reflections Upon Learning*, Wherein is shewn the **INSUFFICIENCY** thereof, in its several Particulars: In order to evince the **USEFULNESS** and **NECESSITY** of REVELATION (1700) trumpets his antagonism to the whole drift of modern learning, which includes at first glance the aims of the new science. His prefatory remarks object to an intellectual climate which actively expounds the axiom that "*nothing will pass with our Men of Wit and Sense, but what is agreeable with the nicest Reason, and every Man's Reason is his own Understanding.*"<sup>152</sup> After announcing that he "always had a mean Opinion of two things, Human Understanding and Human Will; The Weakness of the latter is a confessed thing; we all of us feel it, and most Men complain of it, but I have scarce yet met with any, that would own the Weakness of his Understanding" (*RUL*, p. 1), he concludes that in the "mighty Controversie betwixt the Old and New Philosophers . . . neither side has reason to boast" (*RUL*, p. 2). Reproving the solipsistic humour of the times and its mutual rage for making "Discoveries of *New Worlds of Learning*" and "accurate Enquiries" (*RUL*, p. 6), Baker regards the modern pride in intellectual achievement as misplaced, in part because the old philosophy offered more certainty than the new. Baker states:

since *Aristotle's* Philosophy has been exploded in the Schools, under whom we had more Peace, and possibly almost as much Truth as we have had since, we have not been able to fix any where, but have been wavering from one Opinion to another. The Platonick Philosophy was first introduced with the Greek Learning, and wonderfully obtain'd for some time, among the Men of Polite Letters; but however Divine it might seem at first, and for that reason was entertain'd more favourably, it was found upon a short tryal to lead to Heresie, and so went off again under a cloud.<sup>153</sup> (*RUL*, p. 4)

Other attempts to replace the old philosophy with new systems proved equally unsuccessful, and so far from enjoying a state of certainty about nature "we are yet much in the Dark, that many of our Discoveries are purely imaginary, and that the State of *Learning* is so far from Perfection, much more from being the Subject of Ostentation, That

it ought to teach us Modesty, and keep us Humble" (*RUL*, p. 6). In striking that note of intellectual humility, however, Baker echoes sentiments firmly embedded in the ethos of the new science; in fact, as his polemic progresses he more and more weaves the ideals of experimental practice into the fabric of his *Reflections*.

Baker notes, for example, that "Words at the best are no very certain signs of things; they are liable to Ambiguity, and under that Ambiguity are often subject to very different Meanings" (*RUL*, p. 7). Heeding Locke's view that custom largely governs the meaning of words, he accepts that this serves well enough in the common run of affairs, but like Locke he advises that "in Matters of Science, it is much otherwise; these are nice things; the strict Meaning is to be observ'd in them; nor can we mistake a Word without losing the Notion" (*RUL*, p. 8). Reiterating the views of the new scientists, Baker makes the familiar distinction that because "in reality there is no internal worth" in words: speakers must first "attend to the things" (*RUL*, p. 9) in order to learn a word's proper signification. For Baker, like so many other seventeenth-century observers, the proper route to real, solid knowledge, the only type of knowledge worthy to "deliver" (*RUL*, p. 9) to an audience, runs through the rocky field of language.

Baker, not surprisingly, agrees that writers should use simple and plain language in all discourse, and he evaluates the place of rhetoric in learned discourse in much the same terms as the new scientists. While granting that the rhetorical arts showed how to use language "elegantly, by adding Beauty to that Language, that before was naked and Grammatically true" (*RUL*, p. 37), he nonetheless recurs to history to illustrate the destructive consequences of excessive rhetoric. In the past (both ancient and modern) rhetoric's improper application "had occasion'd Tumults and concussions of State," ancient Rome providing an excellent instance of how, once "Demagogues begun to harangue the People, there was no more Peace in that State, nothing but continual Broils and intestine Commotions" (*RUL*, p. 39). Indeed, whatever positive benefits which they offered the writer, in practice the arts of rhetoric proved that "our common Eloquence is

usually a Cheat upon the Understanding, it deceives us with Appearances, instead of Things" (*RUL*, p. 48), and men of real learning would wisely avoid relying upon rhetorical tactics to force through their views.

As Baker moves on to tackle other issues, it becomes clear that he has adopted as his critical standard many of the methods and ideals integral to the new science. At one point in his survey of the history of learning, for instance, he examines Descartes's philosophical treatment of motion and rejects it outright because "We have been taught to distinguish betwixt *Hypotheses* and *Theories*, the latter of which are shrew'd things, as being built upon Observations in Nature, whereas *Hypotheses* may be only Chimera's" (*RUL*, p. 96). Descartes's philosophy smacks of a desire to explain and master nature without bothering to test the validity of his theories. Although Baker doubts that he will ever see a theory which bears up under the rigours of testing--the rigours of observation and demonstration strike him as too time-consuming and complicated--he compares Descartes's approach to that adopted by the Royal Society and notes admiringly that "however successful they may have been . . . The Genuine Members of that Society have other thoughts of things, being far from any hopes of mastering Nature, or of ever making such progress, as not to leave Work enough for other Men to do" (*RUL*, pp. 98-99).<sup>154</sup> Baker also notes that, "WHEN I speak of Observations and Experiments, I would not be thought to under-value a Society, which has been erected to that purpose, and whose Endeavours have been so successful that way already" (*RUL*, p. 99). Thus, from an attitude which initially condemned the rage for experiment, Baker ends with praise for the achievements of the Royal Society.

### *Chapter Three - Science and Lyric in the Seventeenth Century*

The advance of experimental science in Britain during the seventeenth century did not vault the lyric to major genre status at one bound. All hegemonies, Raymond Williams observes, die hard, if ever, since all constitutive transformations in the general worldview of a culture require a lengthy process of debate, qualification, reiteration, and consolidation. Williams maintains that significant elements from superseded, weakening, or concurrent hegemonies always remain active and affective, tempering the intellectual dynamics of a culture:

their active presence is decisive, not only because they have to be included in any historical (as distinct from epochal) analysis, but as forms which have had significant effect on the hegemonic process itself. That is to say, alternative political and cultural emphases, and the many forms of opposition and struggle, are important not only in themselves but as indicative features of what the hegemonic process has in practice had to work to control.<sup>1</sup>

In a textual culture, then, hegemonic survival and modification would constitute core features of its "evolutionary" movement. Slowly nudged on by Bacon's exhortations to replace scholastic methods with a more hands-on and fruitful approach to gathering and assessing knowledge, abetted both by political events and by an accumulating record of success, the new science probably "arrived" as an hegemonic force about the 1690s. It would therefore be a senseless pretence to argue that the ideals which emerged from Bacon's experimental programme immediately revolutionised perceptions of the lyric's standing in the generic hierarchy, especially as the rise of the lyric involved a complicated interleaving of different hegemonies: not only did the English lyric enjoy a popular reputation prior to the appearance of the new science but it was undergoing a process of modification as a direct consequence of the impact of the growing hegemony of classical literary values on British writing.

Yet just when, how, and with what degree of intensity the new-science ideals sketched out in the previous chapter influenced lyric developments in the seventeenth century must remain a point in question; clearly, too, we cannot ascribe the ethos of the

new science to sixteenth-century poets, though in their critical judgments about the genre and the poet's vocation they may in fact already be contributing to debates in ways which will form part of the temper of later hegemonic conflict and conflation. Gary F. Waller rightly notes, for example, that "classicism was to become the hegemonic period style" in writings throughout the seventeenth century, and he sees this as "more than a literary phenomenon since its hegemony was incorporated into a peculiarly repressive cultural apparatus, the effects of which were felt in every field of human production from economic organization to educational practices." He concludes, moreover, that such a repressive hegemony could not nurture lyric expression and, in addition to the new view of language promoted by the Royal Society, argues that the lyric was pushed "underground," presumably not to return again until the Romantic revival.<sup>2</sup> Obviously, Waller ignores the wealth of lyric poetry written during the seventeenth century, as well as observations like those of Dryden in *An Essay of Dramatick Poesie*. I would argue, in opposition to Waller, that the theories about the linguistic sign developed by the new scientists, much of which relied upon Christian notions of language, and their concern for accurate descriptions and precise language, part of which derives from their preferred classical rhetorical models, actually nurture the lyric genre's place in the poetical hierarchy. From an historic perspective, the collision of classicism, Christianity, and new science proved vital for the lyric's rise to major genre status for three reasons: it intensified the appeal of certain facets of the native species; it broadened the subject-matter and "purpose" of the lyric as a whole; and it initiated a thorough reevaluation of the poet's vocation and cultural identity. Ironically, it was partly the exploitation of ancient rhetoric in scholastic and religious debates (the excessive use of which Bacon attacked as fundamentally anti-learning and anti-expressive) that wrought decisive changes to the way in which the lyric genre was perceived and appreciated, changes which aided and facilitated its metamorphosis into a major genre in the eighteenth century under scientific hegemony. In the next development of my argument, then, I want to explore briefly the lyric tradition before Bacon launched the new science, which will lead into a discussion of the lyric's "progress" in the

seventeenth century. Importantly, my argument will try to show that poets and critics of the late sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century normally follow the high classical line on most issues, as we might expect, but when writers from the mid to late seventeenth century actually set about trying to explain or theorize about the nuts and bolts of poetry--how it functions, how the poet organizes his language, how it affects readers--they qualify classical ideals through a thinking and evaluative process which suggests the growing influence of new-science ideals, invariably working out classical matter in light of the principles, the attitudes, and the language of the new science.<sup>3</sup>

Richard Dutton observes that during Sidney's "retirement" at Wilton, after 1579, he regularly met with Edward Dyer, Fulke Greville, and Spenser to discuss "such matters as the reform of English poetry, the use of classical metre in English verse, the possibility of integrating poetry and music, and the moral significance of literature--which must always have been a central issue since the moral influence of literature was the chief accepted justification for its existence."<sup>4</sup> Sidney's complaint (cited in the introductory preamble to *Chapter One*) that his native tradition boasted no indigenous poetic species except for a "lyrical kind of songs and sonnets" testifies on the one hand to its general popularity, but on the other to its general critical neglect--we might speculate that reform of the lyric often topped the agenda of informal discussion at Wilton. As Germaine Warkentin points out, even if Sidney apparently viewed English lyrics with some disdain, "he clearly read them very attentively," and she goes on to show just how much he learned from them.<sup>5</sup> Although it would be an impossible task to account entirely for the lyric's critical neglect, several reasons suggest themselves. Firstly, the "local" lyric encompassed a diversity of subject matter: love, sex, wooing, adultery, ageing, death, the changing seasons, nature's bounty and scarcity, the joys of drink, and so forth. It crossed into both oral and literate cultures and appealed to all classes. Although many lyrics prior to the sixteenth century feature a broadly didactic aim, as did most literature, in practice it was a species dedicated to the temporal, the trite, the truistic, the transmissible--many lyrics, of course, were composed as musical pieces or else later adapted to music.<sup>6</sup> The lyric was taken to

task because it resolutely refused to conform to a strict didactic aim, often being labelled as a tavern genre. Secondly, and wholly in keeping with the unpretentious treatment of its subject matter and its reliance upon ballad-like formulas, early lyric writers shared and exploited a huge fund of conventional phrases, attitudes, themes, devices, and rhythms: these were more than adequate to meet the lyric's expressive aims. Finally, there would arise few occasions and less need to remark critically upon the genre's features during the fairly stable hegemonic conditions which inhered throughout most of Europe for several centuries. Of course, the formulaic and conventional quality which marks so much pre-seventeenth-century poetry did not necessarily make it less "expressive" or appealing.<sup>7</sup> In short, the long course of time and settled experiential patterns firmly encoded the characteristic features of the native genre: simplicity of material, thought and emotion; a plain though by no means unemotive diction; and a narrative which was a reflex of immediate, personal responses to events and things.<sup>8</sup>

Although lyric imports from the continent (the Petrarchan sonnet, for instance) encouraged a degree of experiment, these did not noticeably affect the lyric's subject-matter or, for that matter, alter general perceptions of the poet's identity or cultural vocation. If anything, these imports initially *reinforced* the secondary stature of the vernacular lyric. Indeed, Robert Southwell felt moved to censure those native-born poets who, "by abusing their talent, and making the follies and faynings of love the customarie subject of their base endeavours, have so discredited this facultie, that a poet, a lover, and a lyer, are by many reckoned but three words of one signification."<sup>9</sup> Throughout the latter decades of the sixteenth century, however, as British writers increasingly voiced admiration for the verbal and moral qualities displayed in classical literary models, increasingly turned to these models for inspiration and critical direction, and increasingly applied to poetry the formal principles of composition found in classical rhetoric, they attempted to reorient the common estimate of the poet's cultural standing.<sup>10</sup> Comparison of the generic features of their most popular poetic species with those found in classical kinds stimulated a reassessment of both its generic "function" and its expressive potential.



The Preface to John Hawkins's translation of *The Odes of Horace* (1631), for example, emphasizes both the lyric genre's expressive and didactic features. Besides valuing Horace's *Odes* because in them he finds "*Morality* touched, and *Vertue* brightened," he notes that Horace's poetry displays "clearnesse of *Spirit*, and accuratenesse of *Judgment*."<sup>11</sup> As part of a general transformation of cultural values, then, the native lyric became a focus for new critical thinking and a *locus in quo* for poetical experiment. Indeed, as Norman Maclean notes, "possibly more of English criticism of the Renaissance is devoted to the lyric than to any other species, the drama alone excepted."<sup>12</sup> Waller goes further, and in his discussion of the force of *ideology* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (a discussion which, like mine, obviously owes important debts to Williams's analyses) Waller sees the lyric's role in cultural evolution as similar to mine: "the lyric no less than the epic occupies a place within the age's ideological struggles."<sup>13</sup> The first attempts to "improve" the vernacular lyric, the first shots in the ideological struggles, occurred at the immediate levels of diction and syntax, and greater changes followed.

Critics usually attribute the initial merger of classical literary values with the native lyric to Surrey. Working with the compositional principles which underpinned Latinate rhetorical "elegance," he forged a more rhythmically regular and syntactically balanced line, while smoothing out the metrical patterns and introducing greater variety and diversity into the conventional speech-patterns of the English lyric.<sup>14</sup> His experiments appeared in *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557), and their impact was felt immediately. Following Surrey's example, other writers set about to promote the union of classical and native lyrics: Barnabe Googe, for example, whose *Eglogs, Epytaphes, and Sonettes* (1563) Frank B. Fieler considers a principal work in the refinement of the latter sixteenth-century lyric. Googe, besides learning from Surrey, also draws upon Wyatt and Grimald, both of whom Tottel also published. From Wyatt, a serious student of both the native and the Italian lyric traditions, Googe learned "the values of controlled, sparse, precise diction," while from Grimald he "derived a preference for the longer lyric measures . . . and the

Humanist oriented practice of using classical rhetorical theory to order his poems."<sup>15</sup> His best lyrics display "a merging of the native lyric tradition with the *schema* of classical rhetoric, emphasizing *inventio* and *dispositio*: a poetry of logical statement, whose emotion is consciously restrained and controlled."<sup>16</sup> Thus Googe, while retaining the simple materials of the vernacular poem but making them fit a more ordered structure, produced lyrics which Fieler contends "lead directly to the great plain style lyrics of the seventeenth century."<sup>17</sup> Googe's intuition about the centrality of *inventio* and *dispositio* on the responses generated by the poem becomes a pivotal ingredient in later theorizing about composition as a whole; and, as we have seen already, when writers turn their attention upon invention and arrangement, they do so, as it were, with the lens of experimental science. In short, by following specific rhetorical precepts, British poets of the latter sixteenth century refined and heightened features which already distinguished the native lyric: simplicity and plainness.

As well as prompting formal experimentation, the example of classical literature instigated a thorough reevaluation of the type of subject matter which poetry ought to illuminate, vibrations from which still actuate ruminations on the poet's identity and vocation. In *The Defence of Poesy*, a keynote text in terms of its enunciation of classical literary values, Sidney recurs time and again to the respect accorded poets during the great classical eras. That Sidney takes up his defence when he does seems significant and a brief examination of its matter thus seems in order.<sup>18</sup> In the first place, as S. K. Heninger, Jr. argues, Sidney's *Defence* works to adjust to changing ontological views of man's place in the cosmos brought about by changes occurring in cosmology, theology, and psychology. Importantly, the *spirit* of empiricism, which for most of the sixteenth century came down to a new belief in the forms of nature as constituent of essential reality, was shaking the old Christian/Platonic concept of eternal forms, and Sidney consciously develops a view of the poet which places him side by side with the new empiricists.<sup>19</sup> Strategically, he begins by reminding his readers that insofar as "the authors

of most of our sciences were the Romans, and before them the Greeks," that is, since we respect and follow their opinions in so many other facets of intellectual life, it made sense to "a little stand upon their authorities" in this matter.<sup>20</sup> Since an etymological analysis of the Greek and Latin meanings of the word "poet" helps to establish the poet's credentials as a prophet and a maker, a figure of near-divine proportions, he puts forward a programme which will raise the status of the English poet to a similar level.<sup>21</sup>

Sidney's interpretation of the pedagogical structure of classical learning verifies, moreover, the central educational function allotted poetry in the ancient sciences, and the reasons for continuing that practice remained just as valid. Philosophy (natural or moral) and history, for example, tackled subjects both dry and hard and therefore generally reached small audiences: although the knowledge gained from these studies was vital for everyone, it held little appeal for those outside these sciences. The poet, by means of invention and the medium of fiction, however, re-combined and re-presented this dry and difficult matter and transformed it into "sweetly uttered knowledge" (*SW*, p. 10). Unlike the philosopher, historian, or theologian, the poet

beginneth not with obscure definitions, which must blur the margent with interpretations, and load the memory with doubtfulness; but he cometh to you with words set in delightful proportion, either accompanied with, or prepared for, the well enchanting skill of music; and with a tale forsooth he cometh . . . with a tale which holdeth children from play, and old men from the chimney corner. (*SW*, p. 120)

As evidence for the validity of this claim Sidney argues that during the early era of Grecian history no philosopher would dare "appear to the world but under the mask of poets. So Thales, Empedocles, and Parmenides sang their natural philosophy in verse; so did Pythagoras and Phocylides their moral counsels"; and even later, when Greek philosophy reached more sophisticated levels of thought, "the skin as it were and beauty" of the Platonic anti-poetry philosophy "depended most of Poetry" (*SW*, pp. 103-104).<sup>22</sup> In other words, ancient history proved that unless the philosopher or the historian had received "a great passport of Poetry" he could not hope to enter "into the gates of popular judgements" (*SW*, p. 104), and Sidney accordingly boasts that in the kingdom of the sciences "our poet [is] the monarch" (*SW*, p. 119).

As Sidney sees it, man shuns that knowledge which might prove most beneficial to him because he would prefer to shirk the hard mental discipline which its attainment appeared to demand of him; hence, the means employed to educate him must be such that it actually made him willing to pursue the ends of education. In other words, the poet faced a twofold task: "to teach and delight" (*SW*, p. 108). The difficulty of this labour could not be underestimated or overvalued because, not only must the poet "delight to move men to take that goodness in hand, which without delight they would fly as from a stranger," but he must also "teach, to make them know that goodness whereunto they are moved" (*SW*, p. 109). Of course, this argument became both conventional and popular. Joseph Moxon, for instance, appeals to its spirit in his *A Tutor to Astronomy and Geography* (1670). Noting that the ancient poets saw astronomy as a "commodity singular in the life of man," but that it "was almost of all men utterly neglected," they "began to set forth that Art under Fictions; that thereby, such as could not be perswaded by commodity, might by the pleasure be induced to take a view of these matters." This, he submits, explains why the ancient poets gave names and narratives to the constellations: "to make Men fall in love with Astronomy."<sup>23</sup>

To fulfil this tall order, Sidney needed to persuade his audience that there was nothing essentially deceitful in the poet's use of language. His task dictated that he adopt specific strategies and techniques for communicating knowledge which differed from those of more specialized thinkers. While they laboured with hard terms to express their abstract ideas, logical propositions, or moral doctrines, the poet communicated the substantial idea, event, or emotion by mastering the "art of imitation," an art which Sidney describes as "a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth (to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture)" (*SW*, p. 108). So, instead of explaining why the vice of avarice is ugly or how God's will was ultimately good, the poet reorders all the salient knowledge and figures it forth in a fable, myth, or image which disclosed the essential points. Such agility and plasticity of mind earned the poet his unique cultural status. Significantly, as Heninger

points out, while Sidney claims to owe Plato most obeisance, he turns here to Aristotle and his theory of poetry as mimesis to situate the poet at the centre of his culture, and thereby effecting a compromise between the neoplatonic image of the poet and the demands of the emerging empirical ideal.<sup>24</sup>

In defending the poet on the grounds that he possessed a special genius for recasting knowledge (whether of nature or of divinity) into more useful and palatable forms of expression, Sidney clearly hoped to situate the poet at the fulcrum of learning, especially moral learning.<sup>25</sup> While he tempts men to study nature and the sciences in a way that "giveth so sweet a prospect into the way, as will entice any man to enter into it," the poet at the same time "doth intend the winning of the mind from wickedness to virtue" (*SW*, pp. 119-120). This axiom of poetic identity permeates virtually every later apology and defence of poetry.<sup>26</sup> Jonson, complaining in his *Epistle to Volpone Or, The Fox* (1607) that he lived during "an age wherein poetry and the professors of it hear . . . ill on all sides" (admittedly, with some cause), characterises the poet as "the interpreter and arbiter of nature, a teacher of things divine no less than human, a master in manners." After reminding his readers of past services rendered unto humankind by the poetic art, Jonson thunders that "it were an act of the greatest injustice either to let the learned suffer or so divine a skill (which indeed should not be attempted with unclean hands) to fall under the least contempt."<sup>27</sup> In a similar mood Giles Fletcher's preface to *Christs Victorie, and Triumph in Heaven, and Earth, over, and after death* (1610), a defence of the poet, draws attention to the many poetic passages in the Greek, Hebrew, and Latin philosophers, ancient writings thereby proving that poets were the first teachers and civilizers of mankind.<sup>28</sup>

This steady if uncoordinated campaign to raise poetry's reputation as a vehicle for learning both natural and moral, and to elevate the poet's cultural status, steadily gained ground throughout the seventeenth century. Although this movement clearly originated in humanist readings of classical literature and subsequently drew upon this literature for

intellectual justification, the development of classical ideals in the form of cultural hegemony does not fully account for the various qualifications and modifications which register in thinking about poetry in general and the lyric in particular during the seventeenth century. It does not seem mere coincidence, though it might be the case, that a desire to make the poet more socially responsible and valuable--to establish, that is, the intellectual and practical benefits which flowed from the poet's art--finds expression and becomes a focus for critical debate during that period in which the proponents of the new science demanded that intellectual activity ought to serve the temporal needs of a suffering mankind. In other words, insofar as the process to redeem the poet occurs roughly at the same time as experimental science begins to emerge, and as this process continues throughout the same period that the influence of science on the culture intensifies, it seems feasible that the intellectual temper of the new science would sooner or later come to bear upon the as yet newly-derived classical conception of the poet's identity and vocation. As we will see in *Chapter Four*, many eighteenth-century critics take it as axiomatic that a poetry of truth can only survive if the poet adopts the principles and practices of the experimental scientist. The new science, then, in various ways significantly modifies estimates of the scope and purpose of the poet's activities.

Dryden, for instance, admits as much in his *An Essay of Dramatick Poesie*. As Dryden's characters sit ruminating on the differences between ancients and moderns, the character Crites wonders if "almost a new Nature has been reveal'd to us," particularly since "more errors of the School have been detected, more useful Experiments in Philosophy have been made, more Noble Secrets in Opticks, Medicine, Anatomy, Astronomy, discover'd, than in all those credulous and doting Ages from *Aristotle* to us." Crites draws, moreover, the obvious lesson, that "so true it is that nothing spreads more fast than Science, when rightly and generally cultivated."<sup>29</sup> Eugenius then picks up Crites' point, using it to propound a doctrine of artistic freedom, and raising the by now routine arguments about the negative effects of authority and imitation on the health of culture. By

analogy with the revolution in natural philosophy, he concludes that it would be best if creative writers did not follow too closely ancient authority "but those of Nature . . . for if Natural Causes be more known now than in the time of *Aristotle*, because more studied, it follows that Poesie and other Arts may with the same pains arrive neerer to perfection."<sup>30</sup>

Similarly, near the end of the seventeenth century the writer of "*An Apology for Poetry, in an Essay directed to Walter Moil Esq*" declares that

IN an Age when e'ery ignorant *Scribler* sets up for a Man of Authority; and as many as can tell their Syllables on their Fingers, without Genius, without Learning, or any Excuse for Writing, arrogate the Glorious Name of *Poets*, and, by their Scandalous Pretensions to it, bring the *Pride of Conquerors*, and the *Envy of Philosophers*, into an unjust and shameful Neglect; 'Tis the Duty of an humble and zealous Admirer of those God-like *Few*, whom Art, Nature, and Heav'n have evidently exalted to that supream Dignity, to make an Apology for them.<sup>31</sup>

After lamenting the lack of enlightened patrons but not the shortage of those who, "tho' they value themselves as Men of Sense as well as Fortune, their Dogs and their Bottle are more their Care, than the Darlings of Heav'n the Poets," the essay repeats the same justifications for the poet as Sidney's *Defence*.<sup>32</sup> The essay, for example, argues that "If we regard the Antiquity of Its *origine*, the Nobleness of its Subject, or the Beauty of its Aim, or Design (which three Things are the Test of the Excellence of Arts and Sciences, in reference to each other) we shall easily find *Poesie* most ancient in its Rise, most honourable in the Subjects and Matters it adorns, and most transcendently excellent in its Usefulness and End," and it goes on to confirm poetry's reputation and utility in terms heavily indebted to Sidney:

And justly too did the Ancients term *Poetry*, a more excellent Philosophy; for if the Excellence of a thing depend on its more or less aptness to obtain the End 'tis designed for, the Prerogative is justly given to Poetry: The End of Philosophy is to form in the Mind Ideas's, and habits of Virtue, and they are fixt there better by Pleasure than Pain, because the Mind is naturally averse to Pain, and propense to Pleasure. But the *stiff*, and difficult Method of those who are *Simply* Philosophers, perplexes us too much with Metaphysical Notions, Logical Distinctions, and a long train of Arguments, which gives the Mind a fatigue to gain the Knowledge it aims at; whereas the Poetic Philosopher proposes a fairer, more adequate, compendious and comprehensive Instruction, which the Mind is so far from labouring to Unriddle, and Understand, that it at first sight perceives it, is in Love with its Beauty, and greedily takes the charming Impressions it gives, whilst convey'd into it by Melodious Numbers, bewitching Expression, Mighty Thoughts, and Illustrious Examples.<sup>33</sup>

Yet the essay does not simply parrot Sidney but goes beyond a conventional defence and develops a primary distinction between philosophic and poetic thinking, asserting the vitality and the necessity of the latter. In this essay we can see, moreover, how new-science ideals influenced critical thinking about the nature of the writing process.

Philosophers, the essay notes, esteem two types of study, the contemplative and the practical. They favour the former because "Contemplation is pleasant for and in its self, and therefore more Noble"; the practical philosopher, though less noble, merits a status just below that of the contemplative: throughout the history of philosophy most thinkers either chose one or the other path, depending on their respective natures.<sup>34</sup> Obviously, this schema of intellectual preferences ranked the poet's achievements somewhere below these two types of thinking. In *The Republic*, of course, Socrates censured the poet's mental attainments, finding the poet satisfied with the mere appearances of things and uninterested in attaining anything but a superficial knowledge of nature, mechanical operations, or morality, and producing nothing of any practical value. The writer of the "Apology" refutes this claim and bases his arguments, significantly, upon his observations of both the writing process and the final product.

He argues that a poet could never compose a great poem which displayed any degree of "elaborateness and perfection, unless he first *dispose* his Speculations, and before consider, and weigh the Materials, and the peculiar Artifice that must be us'd in setting them off to their best advantage, and in the true Light, and Colours." The stage of *dispositio*, then, demands a full understanding of the things, events, and emotions to be represented, and this could only occur if the poet first entered into a period of deep contemplation. After contemplating his materials, the poet turns to the difficult phase of *inventio*, that is, when he "contrives, invents, and puts his Thoughts in Metre." This the essayist considers an active, practical element of the poet's vocation since he does not simply sit back and contemplate but actively writes and produces a valuable product, a "fairer, more adequate, compendious and comprehensive Instruction."<sup>35</sup> Understood from



the perspectives of experience, observation, and result, the creative process appears to involve a complex interweaving between disposition and invention, which means that unlike the two types of philosopher the poet is "compos'd of Speculation and Action."<sup>36</sup> *Propter hoc*, he rates higher than either in the intellectual hierarchy.

The essayist's desire to accentuate the poet's active engagement with his materials reveals, I would suggest, a conflation of the poet's identity (and presumably his practice) with that of the experimental scientist's. Indeed, in emphasizing the poet's special aptitude for communicating knowledge--his use of signs, words, language--the writer describes an approach to words in terms which parallels the ideal of scientific language. Building upon his earlier verdict that "*Contemplation and Thinking* is peculiarly the Poet's business," he explains that a poet trains his mind not to run "away by halves, with imperfect Appearances that please the Imagination." Plainly, he wants to differentiate an imaginative flight of fancy which derives from careful observation, discrimination, and insight from one based upon extravagant and disconnected fantasy. Accordingly, instead of allowing the imagination to wander freely and aimlessly, to be "taken with all that glitters," the essayist explains that great poets "dive into the Nature of Things, and fix the Judgment to decide the Truth, or falsity of what is Charming, and Beautiful, and what seems so, at a sudden view." This procedure allows the poet to "come to a justness and trueness of *Thought*," nor will he avoid this exacting task inasmuch as "on this Depends all the Beauties of Thought," and from these "proceed Justness, Proportion, and Harmony" in language.<sup>37</sup> Like the experimental scientist, the poet must undertake a rigorous mental training, testing his ideas and visions against nature. Yet the essayist does not go so far as to suggest that the poet needs to undergo *the same training*, nor does he demand of the poet that he speak only of real and substantial things: he only hints at the similarities between their aims. He does not, moreover, advise the poet on the type of genre which he might employ to express these beautiful thoughts.

It did not escape Sidney's attention that in addition to using poetry to convey their natural philosophy and other hard truths of science, ancient poets chose lyric forms through which to celebrate great events and noble achievements, and in particular to praise their heroes and their gods. He remarks that among the ancients it was the lyric poet "who with his tuned lyre and well-accorded voice, giveth praise, the reward of virtue, to virtuous acts; who gives moral precepts and natural problems" (*SW*, p. 124); the extensive variation in subjects, styles, and moods of Pindar's odes persuaded Sidney that of all the poetic genres the lyric "is that kind most capable and most fit to awake the thoughts from the sleep of idleness, to embrace honourable enterprises" (*SW*, p. 125). More urgently, because Pindar used his odes as a vehicle for religious sentiments--he often "raiseth up his voice to the height of the heavens, in singing the lauds of the immortal God" (*SW*, p. 124), his example offered a means by which to increase the reputation of the lyric mode. Emulating the classical lyricists, Sidney urges his fellow-poets to sing "the praises of the immortal beauty, the immortal goodness of that God who giveth us hands to write and wits to conceive" (*SW*, p. 143), and in making their verse attend to "higher" matters they might thereby raise the status of both poetry and themselves. Perhaps in accentuating the lyric's historical fitness as a means for awakening thought and moral piety, Sidney had in mind Socrates' statement that poetry could return to his republic "if she can make her defence in lyric or other metre."<sup>38</sup>

Besides justifying the sacred function of poetry itself, the pious character of many ancient lyrics provided ammunition for a protracted attack on the native tradition. Southwell, for instance, connected the amorous subject-matter of many vernacular lyrics to the general disrepute of poetry, and he lays the blame squarely on his native tradition:

But the devill, as he affecteth deitie and seeketh to have all the complements of divine honour applyed to his service, so hath he among the rest possessed also most Poets with his idle fansies. For in lieu of solemne and devout matter, to which in duty they owe their abilities, they now busie themselves in expressing such passions as onely serve for testimonies to how unworthy affections they have wedded their wills.<sup>39</sup>

The abuse of poetry by the corrupted, however, should not for serious minds determine their judgment of its real cultural value. The recovery of ancient texts certified its divine and lawful pedigree which, whether pagan or Christian, illumined for Southwell its proper function: "not onely among the heathen, whose gods were chiefly canonized by their poets, and their paynim divinitie oracled, in verse, but even in the Olde and Newe Testament, it hath beene used by men of greatest pietie, in matters of most devotion."<sup>40</sup> Southwell even finds it necessary to add that "Christ Himselfe, by making a hymne the conclusion of His Last Supper, and the prologue to the first pageant of His Passion, gave His Spouse a methode to imitate, as in the office of the Church it appeareth; and to all men a patterne, to know the true use of this measured and footed stile."<sup>41</sup> Allowing due reverence to poetry's original function as a medium for expressing religious devotion, Southwell says that the excesses of human vanity and ignorance cannot "counterpoise the authoritie of God, Who delivering many parts of Scripture in verse . . . warranteth the art to be good, and the use allowable."<sup>42</sup> Southwell, echoing Sidney, declares that poets should, instead of writing lyrics which treated of vulgar topics, follow the example set "by His Apostle willing us to exercise our devotion in hymnes and spiritual sonnets."<sup>43</sup> The language or diction of devotion should not, as Sidney put it, appear as "honey-flowing matron eloquence apparelled, or rather disguised, in a courtesan-like painted affectation," gaudily decked out "with figures and flowers" (*SW*, p. 143), but in simple, plain, unaffected words, in fact, in much the same fashion as that diction already coded into the native genre.

Clearly, we can see here that at least two hegemonic influences--classicism and Christianity--are coming into play when late-sixteenth and early seventeenth-century writers evaluated the lyric genre's potential as a medium for producing and encouraging certain emotional and mental effects. Yet it would be difficult, if not impossible to determine how the new science actually influenced thinking about the lyric genre because, obviously, at this point in history its main ideals remained unsystematized, unstructured, unarticulated; it would, moreover, prove even more problematical to argue

that the new science influenced a poet's decision to work in the lyric genre. Indeed, in light of both Williams's concept of hegemony and the history of the lyric traced thus far, any speculation about the relationships between a writer to new-science theories or to scientific discoveries and to the lyric genre can only be made with utmost caution. My earlier analysis of a work written late in the seventeenth century--"*An Apology for Poetry, in an Essay directed to Walter Moil*"--suggests that such speculation can be stated with a degree of confidence, and later I will try to indicate through careful analyses and comparisons of language, conceptualisation, and problem-solving how to understand and appreciate the complex pressures exerted by the new science on critical thinking and ideas about the lyric. Even then, this comparative methodology, relying as it does on resemblances, analogies, and repeated patterns of thought will not for every reader actually prove that the epistemological, linguistic, and ethical ideals of the new science lie behind alterations in lyric tastes and valuations.

That said, for now just a few words more about the dangers inherent in undertaking any interpretation of the relation of scientific discoveries to writing poetry, particularly lyric poetry. It is, for example, difficult to credit Thomas Docherty's assessment of the Copernican revolution on Donne's personality, or his argument that Donne chose the lyric to counter his "decentred" personality. Docherty declares that in general Copernicus's effect on sixteenth-century philosophy

was the fact of his decentring the earth itself; and subsequently, the impact of *De Revolutionibus* was felt primarily as a threat to the credibility of humanity's special relation to God and the world. In a geocentric, anthropocentric world-model, it is easy to lend belief to the notion that the universe is made by God, for the delight of humanity or for the exercise of human ingenuity appreciated by God. . . . The Copernican propositions disturb this complacency in their implications of a *number* of possible worlds or 'centres' in the universe.<sup>44</sup>

As we saw with Wilkins's positive response to the possibility of endless planets and other worlds, blanket judgments about the negative psychological repercussions of scientific discoveries on a whole culture often ignore alternative evidence. Moreover, the old Christian hegemony was still powerful, active, while the function and status of the lyric

itself was altering under the hegemonic ascendancy of classical literary values. Docherty argues that Donne chooses the lyric genre in a reaction to the brute facts of the new universe, but this assumes that Donne and Donne's culture conceived of the lyric genre's function in the same way as post-romantics do (a weakness, we should recall, which Eco considers implicit in most post-romantic criticism). As so often with interpretations which give more space to modern theoretical explications than to examinations of contemporary evidence, the theory fails to convince.

We can return now to examine other issues and developments which surface throughout the seventeenth century in arguments extolling poetry's antiquity and sacred function. "The Preface to the Reader" (probably written by Joseph Beaumont) of Richard Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple* (1646) observes that examples from the Psalms, the Gospels and all the other religious songs of the Bible attest the urgency to rescue lyric poetry from "*those under-headed Poets, Retainers to seven shares and a halfe; Madrigall fellowes, whose onely businesse in verse, is to rime a poore six-penny soule, a Subburb sinner into hell.*"<sup>45</sup> Partly, of course, it could be seen that this particular stress on the lyric's value as a suitable mode for expressing religious feelings derives from the rejection of institutionalised religious teaching as the only means of finding faith. This doctrine of personal freedom, while rooted in Protestant movements, clearly gains strength from the growth of new-science ideals. Daniel Featly exhibits this spirit in his foreword to Phineas Fletcher's *The Purple Island, Or The Isle of Man: Together With Piscatorie Ecloges and other Poetical Miscellanies* (1633) when he declares that "HE that would learn *Theologie*, must first studie *Autologie*. The way to God is by our selves: It is a blinde and dirty way; it hath many windings, and is easie to be lost."<sup>46</sup>

The dedicatory poem in Joshua Poole's *The English Parnassus* (1657)--"To the hopeful young Gentlemen, his Schollars in that private School, at Hadley, kept in the house of Mr. *Francis Atkinson*"--proposes a variant of the religious function of poetry. The poem urges the development of an educational environment in which the "first milk," so to

speak, of a child's learning would be "the sacred dew of Helicon." Nurtured on poetry and taught to think in verse, this training would reap a harvest of poets whose outpourings would insure that

sacred verse may be  
 No longer call'd the thred-bare mystery;  
 Let the world see, what yet it scarce before  
 Hath known, there are good Poets, yet not poore,  
 Whose inspirations, and rich phancies be  
 More than a Taverns frothy tympany,  
 That conjure not up wit with spirits of wine,  
 Nor make the bay, supported by the vine.<sup>47</sup>

John Norris advances a similar complaint about the degeneration of poetry's high purpose: whereas the poet in ancient times "*had then his Temples surrounded with a Divine glory, spoke like the Oracle of the God of Wisdom,*" and poetry esteemed the "*Mistress of all the Arts in the Circle, that which held the Rains of the world in her hand, and which gave the first, and . . . perhaps the best Institutes for the moralizing and governing the Passions of mankind,*" few serious men now looked upon poetry either as divine or as capable of teaching important truths. Instead of boasting a poetry inspired by high or noble thoughts, England possessed something which had "*dwindled down to light, frothy stuff, consisting either of mad extravagant Rants, or slight Witticisms, and little amorous Conceits, fit only for a Tavern entertainment.*" Norris therefore declares the time ripe to "*restore the declining genius of Poetry to its Primitive and genuin greatness,*" a feat which could only be accomplished by tuning "*the strings of the Muses Lyre.*"<sup>48</sup> The type of morally uplifting lyre which he intends to tune is the Pindaric.<sup>49</sup>

In practice, however, attempts to narrow the lyric's subject range, to prescribe permissible topics which excluded the native lyric's focus on love and other "vulgar" issues, did not meet with resounding success. Clearly, not every writer at this time read and valued ancient poetry for the same qualities or drew the same lessons about the nature and purpose of ancient lyrics. Not every writer concluded that ancient lyrics only praised noble deeds and the gods. Thomas Campion, seeking justification for the brand of lyric poetry employed in his *A Booke of Ayres* (1601), draws two conclusions from his

reading of the ancients. The first, a formal point, that "*The Lyrick Poets among the Greekes and Latines were first inventers of Ayres, tying themselves strictly to the number, and value of their sillables*"; the second concerned the content: "*The subject of them is for the most part, amorous, and why not amorous songs, as well as amorous attires? Or why not new Ayres, as well as new fascions?*"<sup>50</sup> Since the ancient lyric included amorous subjects, he sees no reason why he should restrict his freedom to treat of a diverse range of topics.

Michael Drayton takes a similar position to Campion, using his sense of the classical model to support his approach. He tells his reader that

*ODES I have called these my few Poems; which how happie soever they prove, yet Criticisme it self cannot say, that the Name is wrongfully usurped: For (not to begin with Definitions against the Rule of Oratorie, nor ab ovo, against the prescript Rule of Poeticall Argument, but somewhat only to season thy Pallat with a slight description) an Ode is knowne to have been properly a Song, modulated to the ancient Harpe, and neither too short-breathed, or hasting to the end, nor Composed of the longer verses, as unfit for the sudden Turnes and loftie Tricks with which Apollo used to manage it. They are (as the Learned say) divers: Some transcendently loftie, and force more high than the Epick (commonly called the Heroique Poeme) witnesse those of the inimitable Pindarus, consecrated to the glorie and renowne of such as returned in triumph from Olympus.*<sup>51</sup>

Since his reading of the ancients authorizes his choice of form, he can modulate his voice and approach to writing. He makes, for instance, the following boast in his *Idea. In Sixtie Three Sonnets*:

*My verse is the true image of my mind,  
Ever in motion, still desiring change;  
And as thus to varietie inclin'd,  
So in all Humors sportively I range.*<sup>52</sup>

In keeping with this independent attitude, he similarly boasts that his "Muse is rightly of the English straine"; in his *Odes. With other Lyrick Poesies* (1619), moreover, he contends that the emotive power of English poetry derives from its native lyric tradition:

*Th'old British Bards, upon their Harpes,  
For falling Flatts, and rising Sharpes,  
That curiously were strung;  
To stirre their youth to Warlike Rage,  
Or their wyld Furie to assuage,  
In these loose Numbers [I] sung.*<sup>53</sup>

Drayton's arguments here obviously contain a measure of nationalism, but that he chose to make his stand on the ground of native lyric poetry, that he saw it as the most appropriate form in which to establish the autonomy of his personal voice (in preparation, perhaps, for longer poetic efforts), in opposition to the refinements and values of classical poetry, does not seem entirely insignificant. His (and perhaps Campion's) stance may derive, in part, from the way in which the ethos of the new science fostered new ideas and attitudes about writing in general, and to the past in particular, and this culture of independence may have infiltrated attitudes to the writing of poetry. Writers simply felt freer to take individualistic positions on a range of issues, the impulse to reject canonical authority which so marked the initial steps towards new-science hegemony spilling over into poetical and critical debates, notably as a desire for a measure of creative and evaluative independence from classical strictures. Whether Drayton (or any poets at this particular period) knowingly looked to the new science as support for his position must of course remain speculative, especially as its main ideals were, as noted earlier, largely unsystematized, but I detect some coalescing of shared outlooks and attitudes, and this grows more evident as the seventeenth century progresses.

Poole provides an interesting and instructive case of how classical values could merge with the ethos of the new science. Even as classical literary values increased in currency, evident especially in declarations about the poet's social and sacred identity, the ideals of the new science were gathering force and would, as the "*Apology for Poetry*" testified, soon affect vindications of the poet's special nature. In *The English Parnassus*, Poole takes the common view that harmony in speech provides a marker for the level of civilization reached by a culture. To attain harmony, whether in prose or poetry, required "an exact placing of the accent, and an accurate disposition of the words," two features which were necessary for reaching and sustaining cultural superiority because, in "delighting the ear," harmony "doth in a manner captivate the passions and the understanding."<sup>54</sup> Poetry, of course, supplements the charms of harmony with measure,



proportion, and rhyme, great poetry providing another criterion of a nation's cultural advance.

Moreover, just as the early scientists expressed a willingness to build upon the real achievements of ancient writers, Poole accepts that because English poetry "admits of the same division into species, as the *Greek* and *Latine*, we must, being obliged to them for their *Termes*, submit to their *Method*" (*EP*, sig. A3<sup>v</sup>-A4). By method he means writing about the same subject-matter as they did in the appropriate genre, and following the same principles of composition for the disposition of words. Yet Poole would not expect an English poet to neglect the potentialities of his native language; after all, the history of poetry proves that "there are in every language certain *heights* proportionate to their *Idiome*, as may very much advance *Poetry*" (*EP*, sig. A3). In any case, comparing the poetic language of the modern to that of the ancient and judging the former "as savage and barbarous" made little sense since the modern language, greatly improved by recent additions in learning, was now "much the more excellent." Besides which, says Poole, the use of rhyme, which every judicious critic acknowledged as one of the greatest beauties of verse, makes English poetry "the most susceptible of Poesie" of all the languages, ancient or modern.<sup>55</sup>

At this phase in his argument Poole manifests even more plainly that he shares the temper of the times. While rules and the judgments of authority must play a part in educating the faculty of taste, in the final analysis the poet (and the reader) must rely upon his own senses, particularly the sense of sound. When the poet undertakes to write verse he must, of course, dispose the words harmoniously and as much as possible according to the principles of classical composition. Errors and "violence," however, are "soon discovered by the ear," the highest court of appeal in such a matter.<sup>56</sup> When it comes to the sense or expression of ideas, Poole looks askance at long or wordy descriptions of things or events. A poet should "avoid as much as may be long *Parentheses*, which are a certain torture to the Reader, forcing him to alter his tone till he

come to the close of the Parenthesis, and causing in the hearer a distraction and suspence." Noting that "Some late writers have endeavoured to avoid them even in Prose," Poole agrees that this type of brevity of statement "ought to be cherished and seconded, nor indeed is it very difficult" (*EP*, sig. A6). He argues, finally, that while English poets should study and learn from the ancient genres, they should not tie themselves down to a strict imitation of these forms because "the English Language ariving daily to greater perfection and purity, Poesie must needs accordingly extend to all subjects and occasions, incident to humane life" (*EP*, sig. A3). In other words, just as the new scientists felt constrained by authority and tradition, Poole urges poets present and future not to remain rooted in modes and forms of expression which not only belonged to a wholly different time but which, aimed at different type of audience, might prove inadequate to the needs of contemporary expression.

The stout rejection of authority propounded by the new scientists spawned a comprehensive array of correspondent attitudes--freedom to experiment, think, judge, choose, and express. This ethos of freedom, which in many ways symbolizes the special nature of new-science hegemony, invites new estimates of the poetic value of the lyric genre. In a culture which was beginning to idealise independence of mind, belief, and expression, the lyric possessed a generic pedigree wholly appropriate to expressing these attitudes. We saw Drayton's and Campion's reasons for choosing lyric forms, and in his prefatory remarks to the reader Thomas Flatman outlines his reasons for choosing the lyric genre. He begins with the observation that, "*instead of an elaborate Harangue in Commendation of Art in general, or what, and what Qualifications go to the making of a Poet,*" he wants his reader to know that "in [his] *poor Opinion Poetry has a very near Resemblance to the modern Experiment of the Ambling-Saddle; It's a good Invention for smoothing the Trott of Prose; That's the Mechanical use of it.*" In the same fanciful vein, Flatman explains his fondness for writing Pindaric odes. First, this type of lyric gave him "*a liberty now and then to correct the saucy forwardness of a Rhime, and to lay it aside till*

I had a mind to admit it." And in the second place, the eccentric stanzaic forms allowable in Pindarics meant that he could freely adapt form to content or vice versa. Thus, when Flatman found that he could not fill up a stanza, he "*had then opportunity to fill it up with a Metaphor little to the purpose, and (upon occasion) to run the Metaphor stark mad into an Allegory, a practice very frequent and of admirable use amongst the Moderns.*"<sup>57</sup> In terms of its formal potentialities, then, Flatman selects the lyric precisely because it permitted him the freedom to experiment and to adapt his ideas to different expressive needs and different expressive moods. He was not bound to produce exact imitations of his precursors in this generic tradition but could employ the form according to his creative urges. No doubt, Flatman would have agreed with Drayton's remark that a poet "must have the Trick / Of Ryming, with Invention quick, / That should doe *Lyricks* well."<sup>58</sup>

Flatman, however whimsical he sounds at times, does in fact make some serious remarks about why he opted for Pindarics; and, while his account covers some familiar territory, it also offers interesting testimony of how, under the hegemony of science, the lyric's peculiar generic identity began to undergo evolution. Besides its ability to smooth the "Trott of Prose," poetry in general served deeper purposes. For Flatman, poetry could touch him "*Physically,*" that is, it could induce "*present Ease to the Pains of the Mind, contracted by violent Surfeit of either good or bad usage in the World.*" Poetry functioned like one of his senses, capable of impressing upon his mind experiences or ideas from written sources with forceful immediacy. On the other side of the coin, moreover, while writing poetry seemed to many observers to serve as nothing more than "an Innocent Help to Sham a Man's time when it lies on his hands and his Fancy can relish nothing else," Flatman asserts that only the medium of poetry can express certain emotional or mental states such as anger, indignation, pleasure, and the like: in these states he eschewed the help of writing "*in downright Prose*" because he found such moods more "seasonable for Ryming." Again, poetry provided an immediate outlet for expression and no one, moreover, could disprove this to him since he "speak[s] but [his] own

Experience."<sup>59</sup> Of course, he finds lyric forms--songs, Pindarics, Horatian odes--a suitable vehicle for expressing the urgency of his experiences, to "run stark mad."

Samuel Wesley's *An Epistle to a Friend Concerning Poetry* (1700) provides another excellent and intriguing example of the ways in which the ethos of the new science infiltrated attitudes and thinking processes. Not surprisingly, Wesley does not fit into my argument as easily as most of the other writers examined thus far because he worries about the damaging effect of certain trends of the new science on religion, as his Preface to the *Epistle* makes clear. To Wesley, many of the new ideas propounded by the experimenters and the naturalists--particularly those free-thinkers whose ideas were moving towards a concept of natural as opposed to revealed religion--were sounding the trumpet of atheism. They were atheists because they "impudently defend and propagate that ridiculous Opinion of the Eternity of the World, and a fatal invincible Chain of Things."<sup>60</sup> These two notions destroyed common faith and, in denying "any sort of Freedom in Humane Actions," they reduced "Mankind beneath the Brute-Creation" (*ECP*, n. pag.). Indeed, in images which would have done a Romantic proud, Wesley sums up God's place in the new universe as "only a State Engin to keep the World in Order" (*ECP*, n. pag.). In the *Epistle* Wesley offers more extensive elaboration of his reservations about the drift of contemporary thinking. The passage bristles with satiric anger:

There are who *can* whate'er they *will* believe,  
 That *B[ayle's]* too hard for *B[entley]*, *Three* are *Five*:  
 That Nature, Justice, Reason, Truth must fall,  
 With *Clear Idea's* they'll *confound* 'em all:  
 That *Parallels* may *travel* till they *meet*;  
*Faith* they can find in *L[ocke]*, no *Sense* in *STILLINGFLEET*.  
 Disturb 'em not, but let 'em still enjoy  
 Th' *unenvy'd Charms* of their *Eternal Moi*.  
 (*ECP*, ll. 240-247)

It would seem, then, that Wesley did not share the same admiration for the achievements or the methods of the new science as did so many of his contemporaries, but his championing of Bentley over Bayle should alert us to avoid making a hasty judgment about his attitudes to the new science.

Indeed, a rather more complex picture of Wesley's intellectual temper emerges when he turns to discuss issues related to art and poetry. For example, he counsels anyone wanting to become a poet to ignore the wealthy, fashionable, or shallow members of society who might offer themselves as patrons. Rather than wait for some patron to give direction and support, the poet should compare himself to Columbus and, taking courage from his example, set out to explore his own poetic oceans. Since no one "shew'd *Columbus* where the *Indies* lay" (*ECP*, l. 234), the poet should likewise simply "charge through, and force to *Fame* the way!" (*ECP*, l. 235). Once he gained the confidence to forge ahead on his own, he could be his "own Patron" (*ECP*, l. 230) and would not have to show obeisance to some cultural dictator in the hopes of winning some financial advantage from him. However, confidence alone cannot guarantee success in the poetic art, and as he outlines the various qualities required in a poet his arguments show similarities and a degree of confluence with those of his contemporaries.

Wesley, in common with many other poet/critics in the latter stages of the seventeenth century, thought about the nature and the function of poetry largely under the influence of classical ideals, though these ideas were generally made to fit within the older boundaries of Christian hegemony. Relying upon both biblical and classical analogues to determine the nature of the poet's vocation, Wesley thereby doubly reinforces the poet's link to his poetic tradition and to his sacred lineage, equating the writing of poetry with divinely-inspired acts of praise. Yet as Wesley delves deeper into the "mysteries" of the art, he finds himself needing to "fit" this classically-derived view of the poet into an image of how the mind works, and his account of mental operations follows in most essentials a Baconian or Lockean construction of mind. Wesley's analysis of this "process" makes for an eccentric but instructive account.

Since Wesley held to the classical view that poets belonged to a sacred or near-divine lineage, he necessarily envisages the poet's vocation as a serious and difficult one. The poet's mind, unlike a mere mortal's, engages the world on a different and much

higher level of apprehension; accordingly, the individual blessed with a poetic talent must strive to fulfil his potential in ways specific to the fabric of a true poet's mind:

First *poize* your *Genius*, nor presume to write  
 If *Phebus* smile not, or some *Muse* invite:  
 Nature refuses *Force*, you strive in vain,  
 She will not *drag*, but struggling breaks the Chain.  
 How bright a Spark of *Heaven'ly Fire* must warm!  
 What *Blessings* must a *Poet's Mind* to form!  
 How oft must he for those Life-Touches sit,  
*Genius, Invention, Memory, Judgement, Wit?*  
 There's here no *Middle-State*, you must excel;  
*Wit* has no *Half-way House* 'twixt *Heaven* and *Hell*.  
 (ECP, ll. 16-25)

Clearly, given the elements in this schema, unless the poet attains an accurate estimate of the nature and function of each faculty--genius, invention, memory, judgment, wit--he will never excel. Wesley therefore takes the time to provide a definition and explanation of each faculty.

Wesley describes genius as "the full *Power* and *Energy* of *Mind*" (ECP, l. 32), and without it no poet could hope to reach those divine heights which separate good from great poetry. A true genius displays "A *Reach* of *Thought* that skims all Nature o'er, / *Exhausts* the narrow *World*, and asks for *more*," that is, since neither space nor time can confine it, the faculty of genius "Can frame a *New Creation* of its own" (ECP, ll. 33-36). However, Wesley does not cling to a Platonic yearning to negate the material world: genius does not despise the natural world but uses it as a springboard, so to speak, to articulate a visionary universe which illuminates heavenly and earthly connections. In Wesley's scheme, the role that genius assumes in the creative act parallels that of imagination: as a creative force, genius constitutes a greater power than mere fancy. Closely allied to genius are invention and memory, which Wesley calls "Nymphs" (ECP, l. 61). Although Wesley becomes somewhat vague here, it would seem that memory records sense-perceptions, while invention tries to keep the fancy aligned with sense. Wesley may be influenced by Sidney here, who termed invention "Nature's child."<sup>61</sup> In any case, together these nymphs "guide" genius through "all the Realms of *Sense* and *Fancy*"

(*ECP*, I. 62). Equally important, they provide a “wondrous *Storehouse*” (*ECP*, I. 82) of the poet's day-to-day experiences; out of this storehouse the poet's genius gathers together the materials which will go into making new artistic creations. In short, while a poet may feel the force of inspiration as a discharge from a divine source, Wesley accepts the empirical evidence that the matter out of which the poet actually fashions his creation derives from a less exalted origin.

After adding invention and memory to the faculty of genius, the poet must then apply that of wit, a concept which exercised a large number of writers at this time. Like *inventio* and *dispositio*, the writer makes use of wit in the way that he uses language, but Wesley's discussion of wit shows that he cannot easily merge it into his explication of the poetic process. As part of a complex intellectual mechanism, wit's role was difficult to define and harder to justify. As Maynard Mack points out, the concept of wit underwent numerous attacks and redefinitions during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, largely as a consequence of the criss-crossing of hegemonic and other factors: a deepening and more articulate Protestantism; the rise of new and powerful economic classes; important changes in the publishing business which related to the rise of new reading groups; and the force of science upon the development of two features of cultural debate--the value it placed on a certain style of thinking, and its growing capacity to affect public opinion.<sup>62</sup> In terms of the input of science into this overall debate, the most important element would be the willingness of thinkers imbued with the ethos of experimental science to delineate its peculiar emotional and intellectual features and to explore the psychological ramifications of wit on the reader or audience.

Although a full discussion of this debate and its history lies well outside the boundaries of this study, certain features of the various theories about wit deserve some discussion, in part because they show how, as they explored the way in which wit functioned, eighteenth-century critics and writers gained a greater awareness of generic functionality and generic appropriateness. In their examination of wit such issues as the place of passion in writing, the role of fancy in creating images, and the value of judgment

in writing all became clearer (and hence more debatable). Moreover, the line of thinking about wit shows, in a minor way, how the ethos of the new science influenced the direction of debate.

Hobbes seems the best place to start. In *Leviathan* Hobbes distinguishes between two types of wit, the natural and the acquired, both of which he considers intellectual virtues. Before he defines these two types of wit, he qualifies his meaning of natural: in particular, he specifies that natural wit does not mean a facility born with one, like the senses, but an ability which develops simply through experience and use. Acquired wit occurs through a process of "method, culture, or instruction," and it involves the application of reason and "the right use of speech, and produceth the sciences."<sup>63</sup> The primary virtues of natural wit Hobbes considers a "*celerity of imagining*, that is, swift succession of one thought to another; and *steady direction* to some approved end." Those who lack this type of imaginative ability belong to that class of individual commonly attributed with "DULLNESS, *stupidity*, and sometimes by other names that signify slowness of motion," qualities of mind which would later much occupy Dryden, Swift, and Pope to a large degree.<sup>64</sup>

Hobbes argues that what constitutes a good wit depends upon the way thoughts succeed one another in the mind, and whether or not the individual perceives variations, similarities, and differences in relations between things, ideas, and so forth. When a person consistently makes striking observations about similarities which escape most people's notice, then that person's wit means equally "a *good fancy*." When someone can do the same consistently with dissimilar things and ideas, can make distinctions and discernments which most people fail to see, then that type of wit constitutes "a *good judgment*." Hobbes adds that this type of wit generally shows itself in social affairs, in business, and in conversation, in which instances it appears as "DISCRETION."<sup>65</sup> Both types of wit, whether natural or acquired in Hobbes's sense, will prove valuable in



discourse of all kinds so long as some degree of "steadiness" controls the overall aim of the speech.

The key ingredient, however, which determines the difference between types of wit, the quality of wit, and the success of language is passion: "The causes of this difference of wits, are in the passions."<sup>66</sup> Hobbes notes that many elements affect the level of passion in any one person--physical considerations, custom, education--but that only those with strong passions will possess a great fancy or a good judgment. Strong passions, he says, lie at the root of all desires for power, whether that power takes the form of riches, honour, knowledge: to lack this desire for power "is to be dead . . . is dullness."<sup>67</sup> In language virtually the same as Hobbes's, Dryden agreed that "Men that are given over to fancy onely, are little better then Madmen: What people say of Fire . . . may not unaptly be applyed to Fancy, which when it is too active Rages, but when cooled and allay'd by the Judgement, produces admirable Effects."<sup>68</sup> Thus, for Hobbes and Dryden wit plays a significant role in the constitution of personality, considering an excessive or unsteady wit as akin to madness; moreover, he valued fancy, and judgment for the role that they play in discourse because together they help to produce wit.

Locke, of course, does not say a great deal about wit, generally following Hobbes, though differing in the weight which he puts on judgment; he accepts, however, the relationship between fancy and wit, and he makes it clear that in certain types of discourse--the entertaining, the literary--a degree of laxity does no harm.<sup>69</sup> Addison, of course, popularised Locke's views on wit: Addison calls Locke's account "the best and most philosophical" and agrees that wit "consists in . . . Resemblance and Congruity of Ideas"; he then adds that wit requires more than just resemblance and congruity if it would give "*Delight and Surprise* to the Reader: These two Properties seem essential to Wit, more particularly the last of them. In order therefore that the Resemblance in the Ideas be Wit, it is necessary that the Ideas should not lie too near one another in the Nature of things; for where the Likeness is obvious, it gives no Surprise."<sup>70</sup> In his *An Essay Upon Wit* (1716), Richard Blackmore essentially reiterates Locke's position, attacking what he

perceives as a general licentiousness of wit in most modern writing, largely because the people prefer it to serious works. Blackmore contends that wit has

no place in the Works where severe Knowledge and Judgement are chiefly exercis'd; those superior Productions of the Understanding must be express'd in a clear and strong manner, without intervening Strains of Wit or facetious Fancies, which, were they admitted, would appear incongruous and impertinent, and diminish the Merit of the Writing. Hence Wit has no place in History, Philology, Philosophy, or in the greater Lyric or Epick Poems; the two last of which containing either the Praises of Deities or Demi-Gods, or treating of lofty and illustrious Subjects.<sup>71</sup>

However, Blackmore modifies his strictures on wit and, in distinguishing superficial from serious applications of wit, his views fall in line with a general development in eighteenth-century views of wit.

Leonard Welsted, for example, sees wit as the antidote to the too serious moral flavour demanded of all literature. Shaftesbury, of course, had argued in his "An Essay on the Freedom of Wit" (1709) that "Pedantry and bigotry are mill-stones able to sink the best book which carries the least part of their dead weight. The temper of the pedagogue suits not with the age. And the world, however it may be taught, will not be tutored."<sup>72</sup> Yet Shaftesbury equally censured those writers who would try to introduce wit which fails to hit its target. Welsted follows suit, asking

Who can endure what is like Wit, in such a Way, as to be worse than the entire want of it? For my part, I acknowledge, the sprightly Nonsense of some Writers has far more Charms for me, than the dull Sense of others; there is in Fustian and in Impertinency, when they are alert, something that awakens one; but this sober, tastless, I know not what to call it, raises no Passion, nor of Laughter, nor Joy, nor Admiration.<sup>73</sup>

However, Welsted's view of the poetic art (as we shall see in the next chapter) walks a fine line between passion and judgment, and his concern for the reputation of poetry as a whole means that he will brook no excessive display of wit; indeed, he considers such excessiveness largely responsible for the decline of poetry: "It is the Plenty of Composition of this Strain, which has brought Poetry itself into disgrace with the Ignorant, and even made some Persons, that do not want Shrewdness in other respects, treat it as a Trifle, and at the best but a plausible Folly."<sup>74</sup>

Thus, while critics like Blackmore and Welsted condemned the licentious use of wit, they still somehow needed to mesh the element of wit with their conviction that the poet's and the priest's roles dovetailed: both were "engag'd, as indeed they ought to be, in the same good Designs, Interests, and Pursuits."<sup>75</sup> In other words, Blackmore sees that wit pertains to the dual function of writing as defined by Sidney and later reiterated by Addison: "The End and Usefulness of this ingenious Qualification," Addison says, "is to delight and instruct."<sup>76</sup> Thus Blackmore finds himself arguing that, while certain low forms of wit only please the senses, the success of more serious and profound works will necessarily require some degree of higher wit, and particularly if the writer aims at "The Strength and Dignity of the Sublime Stile."<sup>77</sup> By introducing the element of the sublime, he raises a crucial problem for critics and fans of wit, that of the effect of wit on the mind and the imagination. Clearly, in defining wit most writers either consciously or unconsciously use language and terms equally applicable to the positive values and dangers of metaphor and other figurative resources. Just as the experimental scientists wished to establish acceptable boundaries for the use of ornamental language, so the critics find themselves trying to delimit the freedom of wit in literary writings, particularly poetry.

Part of the problem lay in definitions of what exactly the beauty or delight of poetry consisted, especially as this delight or sense of beauty was determined by a structure of sense impressions and language working upon the mind. As Addison argued, "it is impossible for any Thought to be beautiful which is not just, and has not its Foundation in the Nature of things: That the Basis of all Wit is Truth; and that no Thought can be valuable, of which good Sense is not the Ground-work."<sup>78</sup> The focus here on truth as the basis of wit, however, raises another weighty problem for the writer. Shaftesbury had stated "that truth is the most powerful thing in the world, since even fiction itself must be governed by it, and can only please by its resemblance. The appearance of reality is necessary to make any passion agreeably represented."<sup>79</sup> Hobbes, of course, focused the debate upon the passions, and most commentators agreed that good wit represented a happy mixture of fancy and judgment given life by passion. Thus Blackmore: wit "strikes

the Imagination, touches the Passions, and recreates the Intellectual Faculties," largely because "the Taste of the Soul is more delicate and exquisite than that of the Body."<sup>80</sup> Welsted, after arguing that, conceptually, wit like humour is the result of "too vague and indefinite an Idea, and is of too general a Nature," follows Blackmore and others: "the Name of *Wit* . . . is no other than some uncommon Thought or just Observation, couch'd in Images or Allusions, which create a sudden Surprize through their Agreeableness, and the Lustre with which they strike the Imagination; that Agreeableness mostly arises from the blending together different Ideas, which naturally suit with and illustrate one another; and when this is done happily, it makes what we call *Wit*."<sup>81</sup> A piece in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1732) makes use of a similar definition: "Wit is a Start of Imagination in the Speaker, that strikes the Imagination of the Hearer with an Idea of Beauty common to both; and the immediate Result of the Comparison is the Flash of Joy that attends it; it stands in the same Regard to Sense, or Wisdom, as Lightning to the Sun, suddenly kindled, and as suddenly gone."<sup>82</sup> The main problem with this dynamic feature of wit lay in the fact that "it as often arises from the Defect of the Mind, as from its Strength and Capacity . . . Just, solid, and lasting Wit is the Result of fine Imagination, finished Study, and a happy Temper of Body."<sup>83</sup> Most of Blackmore's remarks and those of anonymous in the *Gentleman's Magazine* appear in other pieces devoted to the topic as, for example, the anonymous *An Essay On Wit: To Which Is Annexed, A Dissertation on Antient and Modern History* (1748), which goes so far as to separate mere wit from all sublime, passionate, and beautiful works, though wit is allowed back into the discussion in the form of humour.<sup>84</sup>

In short, the concept of wit, a chameleon faculty in many ways, did not lend itself to an easy merger with any of the hegemonic forces of late seventeenth and early eighteenth century culture, particularly given the many ways in which wit could be employed to serve different purposes. As one famous voice lamented, "There is indeed something very barbarous and inhuman in the ordinary Scribblers of Lampoons. An

innocent young Lady shall be exposed, for an unhappy Feature. A Father of a Family turn'd to Ridicule, for some domestick Calamity . . . So pernicious a thing is Wit, when it is not tempered with Virtue and Humanity."<sup>85</sup> Corbyn Morris, in language familiar to the theme, likewise noted that "WIT, in its sudden *Flashes*, makes no Pretension to *Reasoning*; but is perceived in the pleasant *Surprize* which it starts, and in the *Light* darted upon a Subject, which instantly vanishes again, without abiding a strict Examination."<sup>86</sup> Clearly, in its various guises it could both stabilize and destabilize writing and thinking; yet even when it was condemned by harsher critics, they often allowed it back into their considerations because no other concept seemed to link so many aspects of creative productions. Wit, for all its licentiousness, made language capable of moving and delighting the reader, and this pertained to sublime and serious works just as much as to superficial ones. In the final analysis, most critics saw it as one of the greatest dangers for a writer, but all they could counsel was for the writer to walk a fine line in using his wit. Dryden's famous definition of wit, for example, states simply that "Wit (which has been so often attempted, and ever unsuccessfully by many poets) is only this: that it is a propriety of thoughts and words; or, in other terms, thoughts and words elegantly adapted to the subject."<sup>87</sup>

To return, then, to Wesley. He invokes a fairly conventional definition of wit. Following Dryden, he defines it as "The *Beauty* and the *Harmony* of Mind" (*ECP*, I. 44), operating somewhere between, and yet in tandem with, both memory and invention. He accepts that wit alone makes an old language into a new, and that it turns hard and disagreeable ideas into agreeable and pleasurable ones; in a great genius it transforms sublime images and profound feelings into words and figures that move the reader to similar states of mind. Yet wit, like genius, does not by itself create works of poetry: it adds an important facet to the language of poetry, somehow linking poet and reader in a sympathetic union, but it cannot form the basis of great poetry. Wesley would have agreed with the anonymous author of the 1748 *An Essay On Wit* that almost all the

sallies of wit are "quite vague and superficial; they don't enter, but only play upon the Surface of the Soul."<sup>88</sup>

The final factor in the creative act--the judgment--shows clearly Wesley's attempts to effect a compromise between his classical views of the poet's identity and his acceptance of the epistemological convictions of the new scientists. The poet, no matter how great his genius or how ready his wit, will not attain the reputation of a great poet unless he joins all to a correct judgment: "these alone, tho much they can, suffice, / Judgement must join, or never hope the Prize" (*ECP*, ll. 51-52). He then outlines the judgment's role:

*Judgement's the Act of Reason; that which brings  
Fit Thoughts to Thoughts, and argues Things from Things,  
True, Decent, Just, are in its Balance try'd,  
And thence we learn to Range, Compound, Divide.  
(ECP, ll. 57-60)*

Although not as eloquent as Fulke Greville's definition of reason as "the fire wherein men's thoughts be prov'd," in Wesley's formulation we see him making judgment a consequence or reason's self-discipline.<sup>89</sup> That conception of reason, of course, was traditional, but Wesley makes it clear that judgment succeeds in its task when it works over its materials according to a set methodology. We may question whether Wesley consciously wanted to define a pattern of mental discipline which sounded similar to that of the experimental scientists, but he does emphasize that his poet carefully establishes the relations between things and ideas, laying a solid basis upon which to build higher and more significant knowledge before he puts pen to paper.

In fact, Wesley's struggle to define the ambiguous roles of poetic judgment, invention, wit, and so forth differs from the type of defence mounted by Sidney, and given the time in which Wesley writes this change in emphasis hardly seems surprising since the poet must compete with other mediators between man and nature. As Dryden had noted, writers now lived "in an age so sceptical, that as it determines little, so it takes nothing from antiquity on trust; and I profess to have no other ambition . . . than that

poetry may not go backward, when all other arts and sciences are advancing."<sup>90</sup> Almost stridently, Wesley envisions poets as "*Uncommon Souls, who nearest Heav'n ascend / Far more, at once, than others comprehend*" (*ECP*, ll. 89-90), pointedly drawing an ascending arc to the poet's career. At the turn of the eighteenth century, of course, a figure like Newton appeared more likely to ascend towards the heavens than any poet. Thus, it might be argued, the subtext of the poem suggests that unless the poet approached the study of nature and acquired knowledge in much the same manner as the experimental scientist, he would fail to fulfil his sacred task: certainly, as we will see later, poets writing after Wesley put this argument in unequivocal terms. Wesley, we might note, does exhort poets to study nature in all its aspects: natural history, psychology, astronomy, morality. The true poet

The *Rules of Life, and Manners* knows and *Men*  
 And by what *Balance Just and Right* are try'd:  
 How *Kindred-Things* with *Things* are closely join'd;  
 How *Bodies* act, and by what *Laws* confin'd,  
 Supported, mov'd and rul'd by th'*Universal Mind*.

. . . . .  
 He knows those *Strings* to *touch* with artful Hand  
 Which rule Mankind, and all the World command:  
 What *moves* the *Soul*, and every secret *Cell*.  
 Where *Pity, Love*, and all the *Passions* dwell.  
 The *Music* of his *Verse* can *Anger* raise,  
 Which with a softer *Stroak* he *smooths* and *lays*:  
 Can *Emulation, Terror*, all excite,  
 Compress the *Soul* with Grief, or *swell* with vast Delight.

(*ECP*, ll. 101-105; 110-117)

A writer thus faces a simple choice: unless he willingly pursues this rather onerous and immense task, he must simply remain "content to *Rime*" (*ECP*, l. 121) and "a *Poet* n'er expect to be" (*ECP*, l. 120).

Two significant consequences result from Wesley's determination to force the poet to the top of the intellectual heap. One relates to the way that a writer confronts the poetic tradition; the other to his choice of genre. Plainly, since Wesley uses the poet's ancient lineage as proof of the poet's enduring cultural value, he cannot ignore the weight of tradition and authority, particularly that of the ancients. They, after all, invented and

“perfected” most of the poetry known to man, or so Wesley and his contemporaries largely understood that tradition. To achieve their greatness would require close imitation of their poetic models, as well as pursuing the same aim, to teach and delight. To follow the ancients, however, puts the poet on the horns of a dilemma. The course of learning which he sets the modern poet would place a heavy load on even the most exalted intellect, as he confesses:

To such *Impracticable Heights* I strain  
 A Poet's *Notion*, that if *This* be *He*,  
 There n'er was one, n'er is like to be.  
 (ECP, ll. 123-125)

Now, if my suspicions about the subtext of the poem are plausible, and we saw earlier that Wesley at least shared his epoch's rejection of authority, then we might expect him to recognise that simply imitating the ancients will not challenge the growing power and intellectual influence of the new scientist, that resolving this dilemma in favour of the poet will require careful reflection. He resolves this problem by taking two different perspectives on it.

First, Wesley accepts that no poet can ever write without incurring some degree of imitation, that earlier models will always impinge upon the imagination, and that the poet partly aims to copy as best he can the perfect original. However, rather than accept that the ancients discovered the original genres, Wesley simply goes farther back in time, claiming that all inspiration to write comes from God; poetic inspiration involves a call to represent God's will and design as closely as possible, even though no writer could ever hope to achieve a perfect copy of this will and design:

  may we not *copy* well  
 Tho far th'*Original*, our *Art* excel?  
*Divine Perfection* we our *Pattern* make  
 Th'*Idea* thence of *Goodness* justly take;  
 But they who *Copy* nearest, still must fall  
 Immensely short of their *Original*.  
 (ECP, ll. 126-131)

Although doomed to imitate or copy perfection (an argument which thus opens the way for creative adoption of ancient genres), Wesley does not equate imperfection with failure.



Indeed, once the poet no longer needs to exercise himself overly much about following the ancients, he can aim at a new standard, that of representing God's will and design, the source of which lies, of course, in the study of nature. To reach "the *craggy Top of Fame*" (*ECP*, I. 248) now requires supreme artistry in language (wit and judgment) and a willingness to experiment with new forms: Wesley asks why poets should "be *lazily content / With threadbare Schemes*, and nothing *new* invent?" (*ECP*, II. 260-261). In short, the poet should study nature and then write, and while the products of the imagination should be tendered to friends or other judges to consider, in the final analysis the poet must believe that

Your *Friend's a Mortal*, and like *you*, may *err*.  
 Upon the *last Appeal* let *Reason* sit,  
 And *here*, let all *Authority* submit.  
 (*ECP*, II. 126-131)

These declarations of freedom would have sounded familiar to his contemporaries.

Typically, Wesley's explication of poetry leads him to consider the various kinds of poetry and to pass judgment on their generic history. As we should expect from a writer of this period, he gives the bulk of his attention to the recognised higher forms--epic and tragedy--and to satire (his preferred form at this period). When he comes to discuss the lyric (he focuses upon the ode), he rehearses a by now conventional statement of their divine origins (Moses and David were lyricists) and of their primacy as the first type of poetic utterance--the "*first great Mother* she of all the rest" (*ECP*, I. 1019). He notes, moreover, that of all the poetic kinds the lyric particularly requires "Sparks of *heav'nly Fire*" (*ECP*, I. 1022). Just as Flatman found, Wesley finds that the lyric sanctions a freer, more independent attitude towards authority and the critical rules, especially as the poet's sacred task demands that he rove unconstrained through nature's wonders. Thus, Wesley can state confidently that by trying to adhere to the "*tedious Rules*" which every writer invariably transgresses, "We make the *Trouble more* who strive to make it less" (*ECP*, II. 214-215). Nothing proves this more than the lyric mode.

## ***Chapter Four - Eighteenth-Century Lyric***

### *Section 1 - Scientific Hegemony and Changing Attitudes to Genre*

The function of the two prior chapters was principally to demonstrate my contention that poetry and science do converge radically, organically, intertextually, more so than any parade of poetic images drawn from science could ever suggest. Additionally, the argument as formulated intended to show that selective culling of expressions of unease at the “new” universe revealed by science simply distorts the dynamic character of the relationship between science and literature and deters exploration of their deeper connections. Another function was to illustrate the process by which critics and poets, even as they proclaimed and promulgated principles of composition derived from classical or biblical models, found intellectual justification for their defence of poetry in the evolving ideals of the new science. After delineating those distinctive scientific ideals which emerged during the seventeenth century it was possible to undertake a comparative analysis of the different ways in which the experimental method directly and indirectly stimulated new critical perspectives about poetry. While classical hegemony clearly influenced thinking about issues such as the “origins” of poetry and its function as one of the sciences, the nature of the poet's vocation, and so forth, and while the Christian temper of the times combined (or was made to combine) with classicism to defend the reputation of poetry and poets, many writers adopted and adapted the experimental, empirical scientists' verdicts on matters such as epistemology, authority, the structure of language, and the benefits of methodology to writing, which in turn modified those classical dicta just noted. The flexuose intellectual contortions which Wesley performed as he tried to assimilate and to harmonize religious beliefs with classical and scientific values into an intelligible theory of poetic creation provided an instructive case of how an individual could adapt to various hegemonic forces. Indeed, as he accommodated his religious anxieties to empirical epistemological assumptions about how the mind

functioned, Wesley confirmed a central component of Williams's theory of hegemony: that resistance to particular elements of an hegemony does not lessen its capacity to act as a constitutive factor in intellectual processes. Berkeley, of course, provides another interesting example of a devout, traditional mind coming to terms with the various demands of his evolving culture. He shows an amazing capacity to adopt and reformulate new scientific theory and concepts to his intellectual bent. In *Guardian* No. 49, for instance, he takes up a newly emerging sense of instinct and makes it do duty as part of a moral hierarchy, and in No. 117 he explains Newton's laws of attraction and then argues, from analogy, that the same principles hold true in "the Moral World"; men, he says, "are drawn together into Communities, Clubs, Families, Friendships, and all the various Species of Society . . . linked by an imperceptible Chain to every Individual of the Human Race."<sup>1</sup> In summary, both chapters showed how the experimental ethos stimulated and focused debate about such disparate matters as how the mind produced signs and acquired language, how words functioned in the act of invention, how poetic metres affected harmony, how different kinds of language imitated nature, how poetry disseminated knowledge; both accentuated my argument that the most serious intellectual affiliations and confluences of poetry and science occurred at the level of genre. In particular, during the seventeenth century poets and critics more and more focused ideas about the poetic process and the nature of poetry on the lyric genre.

Duplicating a similar chain of analysis and illustration in order to verify the place of science in the eighteenth century would now serve little purpose. The sheer range of eighteenth-century science and the multifarious forms in which it received articulation and support should obviate the need for marshalling detailed evidence about its presence in the eighteenth century. After all, an optimistic (most would say naïve) belief in the value of scientific progress remains one of the more conspicuous (and for many embarrassing) features of eighteenth-century thought, labels such as the *Age of Reason* and the *Age of Enlightenment* broadcasting the fact that literary history has leaned heavily upon the new

science in the formulation of its dominant interpretive paradigms. Peter Gay, for instance, complains that historians have tried to define the Enlightenment “as a compact body of doctrine, an Age of Reason” which has “served them for so long and so badly” because it necessitates excluding “the vitalism of Diderot, the passion of Rousseau, or the scepticism of Hume, as foreign bodies, harbingers of Romanticism.” He calls this “definition by larceny; it is to strip the Enlightenment of its wealth and then to complain about its poverty.”<sup>2</sup> Does this mean, therefore, that modern criticism has mapped and thoroughly gauged the reach of science into eighteenth-century culture, and that eighteenth-century science no longer rates serious critical attention? No, in fact: as Rousseau cautioned, modern scholars consistently misconstrue the extent and the nature of eighteenth-century confidence in science, the wisdom of modernity largely disregarding science's role as a shaping intellectual force, except perhaps as a sinister ancestor in the romantic genealogy.

Indeed, many literary critics tend to trivialize that eighteenth-century confidence, seeing it as an immature enthusiasm which would eventually wane or as an insignificant force in literary developments compared to other influences in the configuration of literary tastes. Yet as Roy Porter reminds us, interest in science ran deeply through eighteenth-century culture, in part at least because the scientists and pseudo-scientists actively took the message to the people. Porter states:

Scientific lectures burst on the scene as the Enlightenment's answer to the itinerant preacher, trading on the new prestige of the Newtonian science and the magic of experiments and dazzling apparatus. . . . By the end of the century most towns of any size had been milked by science lectures offering courses of six or a dozen lectures, selling books and instruments.<sup>3</sup>

Evidence from the wealth of letters and the often extensive book reviews in the magazines and newspapers testifies further to the popular interest in science; respect for it did not lessen as the century neared its close but, as Hans Eichner shows, actually grew apace.<sup>4</sup> In April of 1789, *The Universal Magazine and Review* published *An Essay on the present State of Society in all civilized Nations, but particularly in France and*

*England*. In this essay the writer notes that "The spirit of experimental philosophy has of late been rapidly increased and extended. If this spirit, in the sixteenth century, be reckoned at the number one, and in the seventeenth at two, and in the first fifty years of the eighteenth century at four, it may, for the last forty, be computed at eight." The reason for this extensive spirit can be attributed to the great successes in "mechanical invention" (which Bacon knew it would do), invention which "abridges the labours, and multiplies the comforts of mankind. In England, the country that gave it birth, it is intimately connected with the prosperity and grandeur of the nation."<sup>5</sup> That the method would prove beneficial if applied in all manner of endeavour, including intellectual pursuits, seemed obvious to the essayist. The reader needed only to consider the great advances in natural philosophy for sufficient proof of this claim, and the essayist goes on to make the typical statement that modern natural philosophy "excels that of the ancients, because it is experimental."<sup>6</sup>

In short, it does not seem over-judgmental to contend that modern critical presumptuousness (another holdover of nineteenth-century highhandedness?) about the role of eighteenth-century science generally fails to appreciate how thoroughly that confidence was predicated on the steady accrual of evidence which proved the value of the experimental methodology, not only in natural history but when applied in other fields of knowledge. That, perhaps more than any other feature, stands out largely and distinctively in the intellectual landscape of the eighteenth century. In fact, the diversity, the contradictoriness, and the startling intellectual inventiveness which so stamp eighteenth-century writings--and which so frustrate the critic's desire for a settled interpretive paradigm--probably resulted from the willingness of eighteenth-century writers to experiment with the experimental method and to start investigations based on empirical and personal experience. For example, in his *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751) Hume explains that after appraising systematic, abstract philosophy and the experimental method in order to select the one which promised the greater success for discovering "the true origin of morals," he opted for the experimental. In part he did so because the desires and activities of humankind constituted "a question of fact, not of

abstract science” and in any attempt to resolve a question of fact, according to Hume, “we can only expect success, by following the experimental method, and deducing general maxims from a comparison of particular instances.” The phenomenal field at issue--the manifold activities of humankind--would not yield much insight to abstract philosophy because such a mode of inquiry--its method--“suits less the imperfection of human nature, and is a common source of illusion and mistake in this as well as in other subjects.” In addition, Hume confesses that he chose the experimental method because “Men are now cured of their passion for hypotheses and systems in natural philosophy, and will hearken to no arguments but those which are derived from experience.”<sup>7</sup> The writer of *An Essay on the present State of Society in all civilized Nations, but particularly in France and England* agrees with Hume: “The spirit of experiment has extended from natural to moral philosophy. The operations of the mind, the rise and progress of the passions, are watched with care, and made the subject of observations intended as a basis for pneumatics.”<sup>8</sup> Berkeley would probably have accepted these reasons for applying the experimental method to other disciplines.

Henry St. John Viscount Bolingbroke, Pope's close friend, similarly shared Hume's views about the limited prospects of gaining certain knowledge about human matters, defining “the condition of humanity” as “an intellectual twilight, where we discover but few things clearly, and none entirely, and yet see just enough to tempt us with the hope of making better and more discoveries.”<sup>9</sup> Typically, he refuses to consider metaphysics or ontology as proper forms of first philosophy but sees these rather as types of learning “spun into an immense web out of scholastic brains” which served solely “to propagate an unintelligible jargon”; such jargon, rather than providing a tool for enlightenment, was employed primarily “to control the particular and most evident truths of experimental knowledge.”<sup>10</sup> In the sciences as a whole Bolingbroke places natural philosophy at the head (“the mother of them all”), *the* science which alone can establish first principles, and he distinguishes between real and fictitious science on the degree or ratio of sense

experience incorporated into the formulation of theory: "all science, if it be real, must rise from below, and from our own level. It cannot descend from above, nor from superior systems of being and knowledge."<sup>11</sup> Bolingbroke reiterates the Baconian conviction that steady and controlled study of particulars, of causes and effects, tested through experiments, leads to as much certain knowledge as the human mind ever appears capable of attaining; and as long as the processes of thought remained in contact with the evidence of the senses, real and positive knowledge would follow. For Bolingbroke, then, "Experiment is the pillar of fire, which can alone conduct us to the promised land: and they who lose sight of it, lose themselves in the dark wilds of imagination."<sup>12</sup> Like the many expositors of experimental science before him, however, Bolingbroke modifies his bluntness with positive observations about the role of eloquence in argument and the value of making preliminary hypotheses.<sup>13</sup>

Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), of course, takes a determined and radical empiricism to his analysis of aesthetic experiences. In his Preface to the second edition, he defends his method on familiar grounds, noting that while his inquiry will not lead to a perfect knowledge of the subject the process will prove a beneficial personal discipline. Indeed, Burke emphasizes that to pursue knowledge along the same empirical lines as the new scientist may, though "carefully conducted . . . fail at the last of discovering the truth," but that may be considered of less importance than the possibility that "it may answer an end perhaps as useful in discovering to us the weakness of our own understanding. If it does not make us knowing, it may make us modest."<sup>14</sup> The method induces a positive sense of the inquirer's place in the overall scheme of knowledge, and it initiates a positive concept of identity and self-achievement. Burke counsels that "Whatever turns the soul inward on itself, tends to concenter its forces, and to fit it for greater and stronger flights of science. By looking into physical causes our minds are opened and enlarged; and in this pursuit whether we take or whether we lose our game, the chace is certainly of service."<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, he sees a need to undertake a study of the imagination because, in

investigating the nature of the passions which govern our sense of taste, it will give "the taste a sort of philosophical solidity," and that will aid the acts of judgment and discrimination; this, in turn, "may reflect back on the severer sciences some of the graces and elegancies of taste, without which the greatest proficiency in those sciences will always have the appearance of something illiberal."<sup>16</sup> In other words, by giving the taste some philosophical grounding, it would improve the aesthetic sense of the scientist, making his use of language more conducive to all readers.

Near the end of the century, a figure who possessed a rather different temperament to either that of Bolingbroke's or Burke's shows himself equally concerned to establish the validity and credibility of new-science principles and procedures in the struggles of daily life. In his essays collected under the title of *The Enquirer* (1798), William Godwin organizes his inquiry according to an axiom which he considers a basic truth of all human endeavour:

The intellectual eye of man, perhaps, is formed rather for the inspection of minute and near, than of immense and distant objects. We proceed most safely, when we enter upon each portion of our process, as it were, *de novo*; and there is danger, if we are too exclusively anxious about consistency of system, that we may forget the perpetual attention we owe to experience, the pole-star of truth.<sup>17</sup>

Based largely upon this conviction, Godwin rehearses a theory of intellectual development from childhood to maturity which relies heavily upon Locke's ideas about children and the acquisition of knowledge; he argues that, insofar as higher levels of intellectual activity were improved and strengthened through experience and education, even genius could benefit from a suitable programme of instruction. A carefully designed educational regime which took account of how the mind actually responded to phenomena could extend and refine the force of genius. However, he also accepts the validity of Hume's insights into the role which habit and custom play in determining the usual processes of thought. Godwin, in fact, sees in these two standard features of mental development a principle which underlies "the entire basis of human knowledge": drawing the obvious conclusion that our sense of uniformity and predictability rely upon a matrix of habit and custom, he



concludes that these actually instill a propensity in the mind to discover order and system in the external world of nature.

The great danger of this self-educative process, of course, lies in its capacity to make reason stubborn about the relationships of cause and effect. As Hume argued, because habitual responses condition our comprehension of the seeming stability of common everyday reality, we “are apt to imagine that we could discover these effects by the mere operation of our reason, without experience.” Hume points out that most of us do not actually make inquiry into the way things operate one upon the other, taking it upon trust that we know how the laws of gravity or impulsion work: “We fancy, that were we brought on a sudden into this world, we could at first have inferred that one Billiard-ball would communicate motion to another upon impulse.” The depth of this confidence derives from the force of custom in all thought, and Hume concludes that where its power “is strongest, it not only covers our natural ignorance, but even conceals itself, and seems not to take place, merely because it is found in the highest degree.”<sup>18</sup> Blind to the actual connection between things and ideas, reason proceeds to formulate comprehensive statements about the world based upon an at best rudimentary grasp of the phenomena. Hence, says Godwin, “We perceive the succession of events, but we are never acquainted with any secret virtue, by means of which two events are bound to each other”; even so, this basic ignorance of cause and effect does not hinder speculation about the entire fabric of the universe, Godwin finding that “there is a regularity and system in the speculations of philosophers, exceeding any that is to be found in the operations of nature. We are too confident in our own skill, and imagine our science to be greater than it is.”<sup>19</sup> Of course, this argument supports further the claim of the new scientists that our understanding of words relies too much upon an easy acceptance of the constituents and the relationships of things to sense to signs.

Tamworth Reresby provides a good example of a writer who pursued the type of reasoning censured by Godwin and Hume. In his *A Miscellany of Ingenious Thoughts and Reflections* (1721), Reresby articulates a series of arguments based upon a

confident sense of cause and effect, asserting principles of knowledge and articles of belief which rested upon presuppositions about the framework of human intelligence. In an essay titled "*What most conduces to the Improvement of Human Understanding,*" Reresby begins with the belief that "the *Perfection of the Mind or Understanding* consists in its *Union* with GOD, who is its sole and true Good." From this principle it follows that "*Truth* could not be any *Perfection*; of our *Understanding*, if it were not the same with the *Divine Essence*; and since that is the only necessary or *Ideal Truth*, it follows likewise that this only is the *Objective Perfection of humane Understanding.*"<sup>20</sup> He rejects all studies which do not lead to this perfection as useless and vain, finding that "*true Learning* resides only in the *Comprehension* of those *Sciences* whose *Foundations* are fix'd and immutable."<sup>21</sup> As Hume and Godwin testify, only a method which could inhibit Reresby's brand of confident philosophizing deserved the respect of serious thinkers, and only by means of a method which forced reason to focus primarily upon the connections between real things could a serious education occur.

Such remarks as Hume's, Bolingbroke's, Burke's, and Godwin's underscore the cardinal worth assigned to the methodology and the ethos of experimental science in the eighteenth century: its hegemonic potency hinged on its capacity to function as an intellectual catalyst, to forge bridges amongst differing phenomenal fields. Confirming what a number of Enlightenment scholars see as an essential element of its temper, Norman Hampson concludes that, if the label *Age of Enlightenment* retains any descriptive currency at all, it simply "refers to ways of thinking and behaving that permeated many aspects of life." In other words, the term does not define a limited set of philosophical, theological, or aesthetic positions but encouraged "an attitude of mind rather than a course in science and philosophy."<sup>22</sup> Ernst Cassirer concurs, stipulating that Enlightenment "thinking cannot be seen in its purest and clearest form where it is formulated into particular doctrines, axioms, and theorems; but rather where it is in process, where it is doubting and seeking, tearing down and building up." The

philosophical ethos of the eighteenth century can therefore neither be abstracted from nor be reduced to the views of its leading figures because "it consists less in certain individual doctrines than in the form and manner of intellectual activity in general."<sup>23</sup> Hume, again, embodies this attitude perfectly when he determines to "reject every system of ethics, however subtle or ingenious, which is not founded on fact and observation."<sup>24</sup> Even Reresby, however much he yearned for the certitudes of idealistic philosophy, accepted that only that thinker who possessed "an awaken'd *Genius*" and who put that genius to work "furnishing his Mind with the clearest *Ideas*, in settling the Relations and Consequences of one to another, and in disposing these after an orderly Method in his Brains," deserved "a title to *true Learning*." Learning, says Reresby, should produce an individual who "not only thinks *distinctly*, but is able at all times to set his Thoughts in the best Light, and argue independently, and consequentially."<sup>25</sup> The emphasis here on clear and distinct ideas, of course, echoes a basic epistemological principle of the new scientists, one which found its most influential statement in Locke's work.

Thus many of the seemingly confused or contradictory utterances about such matters as the correlation between thing and word, the faculties of mind essential to great poetry, the primacy of form over content (or the contrary) which litter the literature of the eighteenth century do begin to make more sense when we unravel the various strands of their hegemonic "lineage." Reflection upon Addison's remark about Horace--that Horace "declares that he is not offended with those little Faults in a Poetical Composition, which may be imputed to Inadvertency or the Imperfection of Human Nature"--for example, shows Addison finding classical support for a developing critical attitude to writing which also seems to share the new scientists' sense of the impossibility of achieving perfect or complete knowledge. Just as the scientists accepted that human frailty and limitation eventually stymied all attempts to comprehend nature in its full complexity, so Addison can assert a critical maxim that "The truth of it is, there can be no more a perfect Work in the World than a perfect Man. To say of a celebrated Piece that there are Faults in it, is in

effect to say no more, than that the Author of it was a Man."<sup>26</sup> The numerous rescriptions on the same or similar themes (like the debate about the necessity or otherwise of rhyme in poetry), the poetic value derived from certain features of poetry (such as description or personification), the various (and often competing) assessments of a particular genre--all these represent ongoing, transactional discourses which make tangible the shaping power of scientific hegemony upon eighteenth-century culture.

The persistence of the classical and Christian hegemonies in intellectual life guaranteed that most of the themes and concerns which exercised seventeenth-century poets and critics continued to occupy those of the eighteenth: the poet's sacred role both as the mediator between man and nature; the moral function of poetry; the "proper" subject-matter allowable in the respective genres; the type of language appropriate to poetry; the ways in which poetry produced differing degrees of delight. The seemingly reiterative (and so for many annoying) nature of eighteenth-century critical debate does not, however, prove that their views about literature created a stultifying, blandly prescriptive critical environment. The reiteration indicates rather that the old issues and doctrines were undergoing constant questioning, and the willingness to question and analyse was motivated partly by the new and powerful intellectual ethos and epistemological ideals put into practice through the application of experimental science. Moreover (and this, it needs saying, remains significant), eighteenth-century writers prosecute more detailed examinations into "approved" theories of the genres as a whole, and they show a greater willingness to examine the verities of literary doctrine, than did their precursors. They may persist in their admiration and respect for ancient literature and ancient poets (particularly Homer, Horace, and Virgil), they may often appeal to ancient models for guidance or authority, but they almost always retain independence of mind and the confidence to challenge the dogma of fixed genres.<sup>27</sup> A common and mundane remark like the following, by the anonymous editor of *The Beauties of Poetry Display'd* (1757), that "Every Species of Poetry has its Rules, which, being founded on Nature, must be observed by every one who would excel in this agreeable Art" would

appear to provide fairly conclusive evidence that the taste of the age accepted that no poetic rules remained to be discovered.<sup>28</sup> Yet the clause, "being founded on Nature," points to the basic conviction held throughout the period that experience and "life" lay at the heart of the poetic genres, and therefore that ultimately the genres were dynamic not inert forms of expression. In literature, as elsewhere, the eighteenth century prided itself on the principle that a close study of nature would yield new innovations and new materials for invention: just as new knowledge in natural history and in many of the other sciences pushed these to new discoveries and "improvements," so this suggested that the literary genres were neither static nor perfected. A year after publication of *The Beauties of Poetry Display'd* Hume writes that

It is evident that none of the rules of composition are fixed by reasonings *a priori*, or can be esteemed abstract conclusions of the understanding, from comparing those habitudes and relations of ideas, which are eternal and immutable. Their foundation is the same with that of all the practical sciences, experience; nor are they any thing but general observations, concerning what has been universally found to please in all countries and ages.<sup>29</sup>

Throughout the eighteenth century many other writers, of all ranks and abilities, revert again and again to personal experiences, to the evidence of their senses, to the "natural" as justification for their choice of expression and for the strength of their literary responses. The type of emotion allowable in a certain species, how a particular type of poem should be structured, the value of rhyme in poetry--personal experience and personal judgment more and more provided the standards for settling such issues. For instance, the author of an essay titled "Some Account of Elfrida, a dramatic Poem; written, on the Model of the ancient Greek Tragedy, by Mr Mason; with Remarks" asserts that it may once have been appropriate to esteem the ancients during the initial stages of the Renaissance, but now that "learning has been not only revived but improved, after genius has again formed the taste, and criticism regulated the judgment, the same fondness for antiquity is ridiculous; nor is it more absurd to prefer the philosophy of *Aristotle* to that of *Newton*, than to prefer his rudiments to the most perfect plan of the modern drama."<sup>30</sup> Thus many writers, even if they pay a measure of obeisance to the

ancients, as often as not reject the prescriptions of classical authority when they deem it contradictory to the veracity of their own perceptions, the spirit of “natural invention” increasing as the century progresses. A number of illustrations should make the point sufficiently.

In 1695 Samuel Cobb makes a complaint (which was to become rather familiar in the eighteenth century) in his Preface to *Bersaba: Or, The Love of David* about a disturbing development in the world of letters--that “every paltry Apprentice that has read a few Plays, sets up for an Author.” If such authors could accept their minor successes (and major failures) with humility, or better yet silence, Cobb could stomach their effusions; instead, lacking any sense of their own mediocrity as writers, these authors turn into vicious critics: because “they have no Wit themselves, [and] will not allow any in others,” they attack “like a Pack of Irish Wolves.” These newfangled critics never make just or discerning observations about the merit of any work because they lack a sufficient knowledge of the ancients and the rules of poetry deduced from classical works. On the contrary, with such critics “it is grown a modern Vice to amuse the Reader with Criticisms upon the Ancients.”<sup>31</sup> During this phase of his career, Cobb belongs to that set of neo-classical writers for whom the moderns appeared a mere excited rabble (his remarks obviously owe much to his class bias); however, twelve years later he strikes a rather more rebellious, anti-authoritarian tone. *In a Letter to (Richard Carter Esq.): late of the (Middle-Temple) now living in (Barbados) (1707)* still registers anger at criticism born of “the pure Effect of Spleen, Passion, and Self-Conceit,” but he now expresses less willingness to side uncritically with the ancients.<sup>32</sup>

On the one hand, as a writer born into a culture deeply-rooted in classical literature and which considered the ancients both a source of sublimity of language and for models of the best composition, Cobb shows himself responsive to the classically-derived view of the bard's sacred vocation as the rightful mediator of truth, the arbiter of nature and morals who can, Cobb writes, “teach more good than *Hobbs* or *Lock* can do” (*PSO*, sig.

A4<sup>y</sup>). On the other hand, not only does he belong to a culture which was putting new value on the rejection of authority and of self-expression but he harbours a poet's typical ambitions, and in *Of Poetry: A Poem* he states his desire to write verse which would rival that of his illustrious precursors:

O cou'd my Muse reach *Milton's* tow'ring Flight,  
Or stretch her Wings to the *Maeonian* Height!  
Thro' Air, and Earth, and Seas, I wou'd dispense  
His Fame, and sing it in the loudest Verse.

(*PSO*, p. 221)

Of course, to reach such glorious heights a poet must stand away from the normal herd of writers; he must fashion an identity for himself, a poetical ethos, in keeping with the poet's high calling. Like Wesley some few years before him Cobb sees that, inasmuch as he entertained serious hopes for poetical success, he must tackle both the problem of traditional authority (the burden of the past) *and* formulate an intelligible ideal by which to govern a writing process which could meet the needs of the present.

Cobb argues that classical writers achieved supremacy precisely because they would not allow rules to fetter the form or content of their expression. The greatest geniuses of the past wrote without regard for a set of prescriptive laws, leaving the dissemination of rules to the grammarians and rhetoricians. Accordingly, if he hopes to mould and exercise "*Reason, with a free, generous and Manly Spirit,*" like the hero or the prophet, Cobb proclaims that the poet must snap the chains of custom and education:

*Who knows the secret Springs of the Soul, and those sudden Emotions, which excite illustrious Men, to act and speak out of the Common Road? They seem irregular to Us by reason of the Fondness and Bigotry we pay to Custom, which is no Standard to the Brave and Wise. The Rules we receive in our first Education, are laid down with this Purpose, to restrain the Mind; which by reason of the Tenderness of our Age, and the ungovernable Disposition of Young Nature, is apt to start out in Excess and Extravagance. But when Time has ripen'd us, and Observation has fortify'd the Soul, we ought to lay aside these common Rules with our Leading-strings . . . Thus a Good Poet should make use of a Discretionary Command.*<sup>33</sup> (*PSO*, p. 223)

Once a poet gains control over his rational and imaginative resources, he will no longer look upon the ancients as the only writers worthy of imitation, as the only guides to expression. In the first place, Cobb reasons, the great span of time and the wholly

different cultural tastes which separated the ancients from the moderns actually disqualified the ancients as appropriate models for contemporary writers. *Their* understanding of nature and *their* cultural experiences could offer the modern poet but scanty assistance as he went about trying to achieve mastery of a vocation which, after all, required the writer to “strictly shew / In *Charming Numbers*, what is false, what true” (*PSO*, n. pag.).

Furthermore, if an aspiring poet blindly or uncritically followed rules of composition drawn from the ancients or from other illustrious models, he would inevitably begin to detest the nature of his task, and eventually his energy and his love of literature would dissipate. He might imitate well and correctly, but he would take little pride in works which did not release his imaginative power (a factor which Locke considered a stumbling-block to every educational endeavour). Cobb puts it in the following terms: “*He who creeps by the Shore, may shelter himself from a Storm, but is likely to make very few Discoveries: And the cautious Writer, who is timorous of disoblising the captious Reader, may produce your true Grammar, and unexceptional Prosodia, but most stupid Poetry*” (*PSO*, p. 221). Hence, the poet must approach the practice of writing with the courage and confidence to make great attempts, to make mistakes, and to risk failure and even obscurity. Instead of worrying ceaselessly about committing small errors in taste, expression, or form--errors a discerning reader would in any case silently pass over--the poet should assume “*the Boldness of an enterprizing Author, whose artful Carelessness is more instructive and delightful than all the Pains and Sweat of the Poring and Bookish critick.*” Instead of burdening the poet with rules which deaden his spirit, Cobb advises that he should allow himself to “*follow the Talents that Nature has furnish'd him with, and his own Observations has improv'd,*” and in the course of time the moderns could expect “*to see Inventions in all Arts, which may dispute Superiority with the best Athenian and Roman Excellencies*” (*PSO*, n. pag.). Bacon could not have stated it any more bluntly or enthusiastically.



Thomas Parnell, although he considered his age "*much beholden to Antiquity for those excellent Compositions by which Writers at present form their Minds,*" similarly qualifies his respect for the ancients, carefully putting forward the suggestion that no poet should *exactly* imitate them in every facet of their poetry: "*it is not so much requir'd of us to adhere to their Fables, as to observe their Manner.*" By manner, Parnell means that writers should study the way in which the ancients treated their respective subject-matter, how they shaped and crafted their poems, how they employed certain figures to describe objects or passions, and so forth, but as for the actual content of the poem, a modern must rely upon his own stores of knowledge and experience, applying his own talents to create imaginative forms. Even if the ancients provided a storehouse of excellent models and apt observations which no serious poet would ignore, Parnell can see that "*if we preclude our own Invention, Poetry will consist only in Expression, or Simile, or the Application of old Stories; and the utmost Character to which a Genius will arrive, will depend on Imitation, or a borrowing from others.*"<sup>34</sup> Parnell adds that illustrations drawn both from the ancients and from illustrious British examples (Milton and Spenser, for instance) proved not only that "*Invention is not bounded by what has been done before*" but that slavish and pedantic imitation would frustrate its main purpose, which was to "*open our Imaginations*" to a universe of beauty and truth.<sup>35</sup>

Parnell's remarks indicate that, as with the concept of wit (and other terms relating to the literary faculties), the concept of genius underwent re-evaluation and re-definition during the century. A full study of the concept of genius cannot be undertaken here but, interestingly, just as wit became linked with imagination and invention, writers began to see genius as essential to invention; more importantly, they conceived genius in terms which related it to the ethos of the new science. *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. XXIII, July 1753, remarks:

Few words have been oftener used, and, perhaps, less understood than the word *genius*; it has been applied indiscriminately to denote a superiority of parts and abilities; but it is misapplied, as often as it means only a larger share of learning, or profounder capacity than other men possess. Capacity is no genius; it is something

passive, as the word implies, in which sense it has ever been used by all good writers and should mean no more than a faculty of apprehending, and a power of retaining ideas; it has nothing to do with the disposing of them afterwards. It is invention, and that alone which deserves the name of *genius*. A *tall faculty of the intellect*, (if I may be pardoned the expression) which looks around on every side, finds out all that has any native relation to the object we contemplate, perceives relations which are not obvious to others, and from their connexions can infer certain truths and distant conclusions. (pp. 331-332).

The writer then goes on to instance Bacon, Boyle, Newton, Shakespeare, Milton, and Dryden as instances of true genius. Towards the end of the century, Francis Webb will put forward a similar argument about the power and function of genius.<sup>36</sup>

Many writers, particularly in the earlier decades of the century, endorsed a stricter view of the value of the classic writers for the moderns. Indeed, the weakness and decadence of modern verse was often blamed on those writers who showed “a *too partial and unmanly fondness of their own Wit*,” who ignored the invaluable mine of poetic expression and of correct literary models found in ancient authors and whose perfection no modern poet could hope to surpass.<sup>37</sup> To achieve even a minor success, or so the argument went, the poet must diligently study and imitate the ancients, a point trumpeted by Bezaleel Morrice in his *An Essay on the Poets* (1721):

YE *Bards!* of shallow Sence, but specious Sound;  
Ye *Critics* too, preposterously profound;  
Hither, with Me, direct your needful Sight,  
And much insulted Nature, learn to right:  
Nature! whose sacred Laws ye disallow,  
And to vain Idols of your Fancy bow:  
View each discreet, and glorious antient Bard,  
Some Moderns too with proper Care regard;  
Thus with submission due, receive your Law:  
And Rules to frame your future Conduct, draw.<sup>38</sup>

Morrice here equates nature with the ancients, an equation often made by other defenders of tradition. Thus Henry Baker, who pays tribute to modern discoveries in “the Knowledge of Nature” and the many unmistakable and important “Improvements in the Productions of Art,” upholds the ancients as “confessedly the Standard of all that regards the Beauty of Sentiment, or the Delicacy of Expression. . . . we are indebted [to them] for every thing that is great in Design, and agreeable in execution.” Baker contends that every

modern poet who ever produced a work which won universal admiration relied heavily upon some ancient model, that even the most original moderns "frequently condescend not only to copy, but translate." He concludes by assuring the modern poet that careful imitations will not render his art less delightful to his modern reader--indeed, that reader would enjoy an added pleasure in tracing out "the original Strokes" of the ancient embedded in the modern copy. Admittedly, this reduces the poet to the role of "a skilful Architect," but since he cannot hope to attain to greater art than that of the ancients, he must remain content.<sup>39</sup> In brief, as the reviewer of Gilbert Wakefield's edition of Gray makes clear, there were many readers who praised what they considered good uses of imitations:

NOTWITHSTANDING the late Mr. Gray possessed an inexhaustible fund of invention, perhaps no celebrated writer, in so small a compass, has so much availed himself of the thoughts and observations of others. This remark, which might seem, on a superficial view, to convey a tacit censure of his character as a writer, will, however, on a nearer inspection, constitute a considerable portion of his praise; for, when we see with what exquisite taste he has selected, and with what inimitable skill he has appropriated what he has taken, the most rigid criticism will be constrained to acknowledge, that he has manifested in this, not only the excellency of his judgment, but the powers of his genius.<sup>40</sup>

Ironically, it would appear from this argument that a writer could, like Gray, become "inimitable" through a genius for imitation, the reason why, perhaps, so many writers followed the advice of observers like Morrice and Baker.<sup>41</sup>

In contrast to Baker's rather narrow perspective on the merits of imitation, John Pinkerton, writing (under the pseudonym of Robert Heron) about fifty years later, strikes a more combative pose. Although he begins with a statement of high esteem for ancient writers--he cannot imagine that any sophisticated and sensitive reader would not consider classical works as the repository of all worth striving for in culture--Pinkerton vigorously attacks the doctrine of imitation and the rules derived from ancient poetry and criticism. His views about poetry revolve around a fundamental conviction that

no good poetry can be written by an author who pays the smallest attention to the arts of poetry. Which *arts* of poetry are, indeed, . . . so many contradictions in terms; for poetry is a faculty, not an art, an exertion of the mind to be circumscribed by rules, only when some wonderful inventor shall teach watches to think; there

being fully as much absurdity in the idea of giving mechanism to thought, as in that of giving thought to mechanisms.<sup>42</sup>

Since the ability to write good verse requires a seemingly innate talent for it, Pinkerton defines imitation as “in fact only a decent and allowed plagiarism. When it appears in a certain degree, it is pronounced literary theft . . . in other degrees, and in certain forms and dresses, it is called honourable: but in fact it only differs in the degree of disrepute” (*LL*, p. 356). Echoing Cobb's call for boldness in writing, Pinkerton stipulates that all young writers should be taught to hold imitation in the highest contempt; indeed, “They ought even to be told that there is more applause due to a bad original, than to the best of copies” (*LL*, p. 363). Once young writers learned that they could write according to their own inclinations and judgments they would, he declares, “at least endeavour to be original; and this they cannot accomplish without trying to think for themselves, and to dig diamonds from the mines of invention of their own labour. A point of the utmost consequence to every kind of science” (*LL*, p. 363).<sup>43</sup> The final clauses reveal the analogy which regulates Pinkerton's concepts: the poet should investigate nature, examine his findings, and express his ideas with the same freedom as the experimental scientist.

Pinkerton, in fact, generally resorts to scientific criteria to evaluate and resolve questions which arise in all fields of human endeavour. For instance, when a writer takes up, say, some question of moral philosophy (“The Art of Life,” he terms it), the way forward lies along the path laid out by Hume: “Till authors can be persuaded to drop generalities, and minutely examine particulars; not upon theoretical, but upon experimental principles, it is in vain to expect any progress in this great science” (*LL*, p. 409). Although he advocates originality and novelty in literature, he nonetheless ranks good sense as a necessary ingredient of all composition--“the salt that preserves the other qualities from corruption” (*LL*, p. 57)--a point which the poet must always keep in mind because his task demands such an extensive knowledge of life and manners. Not surprisingly, when Pinkerton evaluates the critical works handed down from the ancients he similarly disdains to follow in their footsteps. Calling Aristotle's *Poetics* “a crude and

indigested performance, written by the author in his silly vanity of dictating in every science then known to man," he finds it "full of gross improprieties and absurdities, that could only proceed from an author's writing on a subject he knew nothing of" (*LL*, p. 230). He later turns on Longinus, a critic in whom he finds (probably following Burke) that "the Sublime is confounded with the Beautiful and the Tender, qualities of writing directly opposite" (*LL*, p. 231); Longinus, Pinkerton concludes, "wrote on the sublime in a total ignorance of what it was" (*LL*, p. 511). Hence, since ancient criticism can offer no perfect system either of the genres or of the psychological effects of poetic language, he contends that a poet should at all costs avoid chaining himself to a "system: with attachment to which if a writer is tainted, he can never acquire wide and lasting fame" (*LL*, p. 212). Corbyn Morris made a similar claim, claiming that he had endeavoured "to give *Definitions* of the Subjects, upon which I have treated; a *Plan* the most difficult of all others to be executed by an Author; But such an one, as I apprehend, deserves to be more generally introduced and established. If once it was expected by the Public, that *Authors* should strictly *define* their Subjects, it would instantly check an Inundation of Scribbling." Such a self-discipline would lead to positive progress in the quality of writing because "The *desultory* manner of Writing would be absolutely exploded; and *Accuracy* and *Precision* would be necessarily introduced upon every Subject." This determination to provide accurate definitions of all his critical terms, he says, "is the *Method* pursued in Subjects of *Philosophy*; Without clear and precise *Definitions* such noble Advances could never have been made in those Sciences; And it is by the Assistance of *these* only, that Subjects of *Polite Literature*, can ever be enlightened and embellish'd with just Ornaments." Morris concludes that, "If *Definitions* had been constantly exacted from Authors there would not have appeared *one hundredth* Part of the present Books, and yet every Subject had been better ascertained."<sup>44</sup>

These few examples indicate in a limited way how scientific hegemony during the eighteenth century modified perspectives about the act of writing poetry, about the

function of invention, about the function of genres, and about the value of the poetic tradition. Just as the experimental scientist was expected to make new discoveries, so too the poet was urged to strike out on his own, to study the ancients but not to subject his reason or his imagination to their authority; and just as Sprat argued that the phenomena should guide the experimenter--that method did not preclude his freedom to pursue a line of thought--the poet should not restrict his imagination by rules of composition based upon works and writers who lived in ages largely disconnected to the present. By analogy, the writing of poetry appeared to be an activity which could be modelled on that of experimental science, an investigative and communicative "science" founded on personal observation and experience. Thus Henry Baker explains, in his *Original Poems: Serious and Humorous* (1725), that he "scarce ever . . . intentionally sat down to write, but only copied the Ideas, I know not how arising, accidentally, in my own Mind."<sup>45</sup> Since these ideas arose naturally, as it were, he saw little reason to follow the rules of poetry set down by others or to study ideas already expressed by other writers on similar subjects; his poems, therefore, will exhibit "*less of Art, and more of Nature, than is usually found in Compositions of the like Sort.*" However, because all poetry "*is no more than a true Representation of Nature,*" those readers who possessed a "*just Taste of Poetry*" would hardly turn away in disgust from Baker's verse.<sup>46</sup> Indeed, while readers would not find old thoughts in a new dress to delight them, in recompense they would discover many novel thoughts and expressions of infinitely greater value. Significantly, Baker describes his poems as "*a natural History of my self, truly pointing out the Turn and Disposition of my Soul at the Time it gave them Birth.*"<sup>47</sup> In other words, the new science offered Baker a model of self-examination and behaviour. He testifies to the growing hegemonic influence of the new science: it was working on deeper levels of the poetic process.

*Section 2. Science and the Call for a New Poetic Ethos.*

As *Chapter Three* showed, the guidelines for scientific writings offered ideals for all types of writing, including poetry. In their theoretical arguments about the links of words to things and sounds to signs, the new scientists stimulated critical thinking about how poetic language mediated between mind and nature, about how the poet's special faculties enabled him to figure forth the beauty, truth, and distinctness of nature in images which both moved and instructed the reader--thus fulfilling a fundamental doctrine of neo-classical poetics.<sup>48</sup> In a limited way, then, the linguistic ethos for scientific writing also offered the poet a prescriptive model for choosing and evaluating the proper signification of words. We should not, however, immediately assume that this necessarily led to a reductive prescriptiveness; it would be more accurate to see this model as an economy of language which permitted, even encouraged, a highly complex philosophy of nature to evolve in which the movements of language and thought somehow "mirrored" the perceiver's experiences of nature. Morris, for instance, argued that accuracy of definition and careful description did not mean that writing would "be encumbered with Stiffness." On the contrary, "in *illustrating* the Truth of *Definitions*, there is a full Scope of the utmost Genius, Imagination, and Spirit of a Writer," and he accordingly declares that any work which followed such a method would be "adorned with the highest Charms appearing with *Propriety, Clearness, and Conviction*, as well as Beauty."<sup>49</sup> This perspective on poetic language emerges, not surprisingly, in critical analyses of the nature and function of descriptive language in achieving the overall aims of poetry and in observations of the effect or the appropriateness of digressions and transitions (often termed method or argument by eighteenth-century writers); more surprisingly, debates often focused on the importance of these two factors in the lyric genre. However, in view of the widely accepted conviction in the eighteenth century that the lyric genre was the "first" and most primitive type of poetry, and that the lyric poet thus possessed the original qualities of the

poetic "personality," it should seem a natural development that the lyric emerges as the exemplary poetic form for theoretical illustration: just as the new scientists went to the things themselves, so too did the genre theorists, but in terms of the more generalized debate about poetry and its continued validity as one of the human sciences writers saw the scientist's way as a means of rejuvenating popular perceptions of poetry and of poets. While a figure like Morrice implored writers to conduct themselves according to ancient rules, other voices advised the poet to behave in a manner more akin to that of the scientist. This becomes clear when we examine how writers defended poetry. Throughout the century prefaces, essays, and other forums often rehearsed a lengthy encomium upon poetry, praising its ancient lineage and emphasizing the benefits bestowed upon society by the poet's art: a striking number of these defences implore the poet to adopt the ethos of the experimental scientist as a means for securing poetry's future.

Leonard Welsted provides a good example of this process of argument in his Preface to *Epistles, Odes, &c. Written on Several Subjects* (1724). Starting from an evaluation of the "general Cause and Concerns" of contemporary poets--that is, in view of their aims and the subjects about which they usually wrote--he finds it difficult to "affirm, that they prosper exceedingly in this Age."<sup>50</sup> There may, of course, be perfectly valid reasons for this state of affairs: people may receive greater pleasures from other pursuits, from business or other forms of entertainment, or perhaps the general taste of the population at the present time serves to make poetry unpopular. In other words, Welsted sees that changes in the makeup of society, in levels of technological advancement, in the constitution of the classes, and so forth, can bring about transformations in cultural values. Whatever the extent or longevity of these changes, he does not expect the poor reputation of poetry to continue for much longer; while the present appears rather gloomy for "the Votaries of this Art" (*EOSS*, p. vi), he looks to the future with some confidence. In the first place, Welsted takes comfort that for at least the last hundred years or so the arts had continued to show a steady progression towards greater sophistication and refinement; next, the English language, through a process of refinement and



accumulation (brought about through learning, trade, and innovation), required "Little or nothing . . . in respect of Copiousness and Harmony" (*EOSS*, p. viii).<sup>51</sup> Third, and here Welsted appeals to a common theory of cultural progression, England seemed poised to benefit from God's providential design which determined that the "Arts and Sciences, with their Train of Blessings, shall visit, in their Turn, all Parts of the Globe" (*EOSS*, p. xi). The glorious time, moreover, seemed near at hand.

To advance successfully "towards . . . a *Classical Age*" (*EOSS*, p. xiv), however, would require some effort on the part of England's writers. Although Welsted finds little to complain of as regards the actual materials to hand, he finds a lack of true genius amongst the writing crowd. True, the state of the English language appeared "ripe" for the production of magnificent poetry, but only someone with "a fine Imagination and a skilful Hand to direct the Pencil" (*EOSS*, p. xiv) could harvest this to the full. Part of the problem derives from the complex and difficult art of composition itself, and part from the large-scale failure of readers or listeners to appreciate true poetry.<sup>52</sup> Greater damage to poetry's reputation came from other quarters, however, Welsted singling out the overly prescriptive temper of contemporary critics and other readers, a temper which drew upon a too strict adherence to the classical rules. Welsted comments that all these much vaunted rules "were primarily form'd upon and design'd to serve only as Comments to the Works of certain great Authors, who compos'd those Works without them" (*EOSS*, p. xvii). Applying these rules strictly and mechanically could not "contribute at all, towards the raising or finishing a good Genius" for the obvious reason, he argues, that any writer who busies himself with such rules will simply "play about the Surface of Poetry, but never dive into its Depths; the Secret, the Soul of good Writing is not to be come at thro' such mechanic Laws" (*EOSS*, p. xviii).<sup>53</sup> As we shall see, quite a few eighteenth-century critics adopt this line of thought about the rules of composition.

Welsted distinguishes, therefore, between two different types of poetry; one, which might be called the mere act of versifying, and the other true poetry. The first relies

heavily upon the thoughts, images, and forms found in established works: writers of this sort copy slavishly, and because they serve up the same hackneyed ideas and images over and over never really understand the nature of their stupidity. Writing of this type may serve a certain mundane purpose, but its practitioners lacked both taste and spirit.<sup>54</sup> On the other hand, writers of the second type “are born with the Talent of judging,” which Welsted defines as “a new Sense or Faculty superadded to the ordinary ones of the Soul, the Prerogative of fine Spirits” (*EOSS*, p. xix). In a typical appeal to the transcendent spirit which suffuses poetry, Welsted claims that “the main Graces, and the cardinal Beauties of this charming Art” escape coarser, blunter spirits because they lie deep “within the Bosom of Nature, and are of too fine and subtle an Essence” (*EOSS*, p. xviii). Welsted finds, as a direct consequence of this highly elevated spirituality, that access to the higher realm of beauty can only be gained through feeling and emotion. Not rules but feeling permits the writer “to think poetically, or to trace out, among the various Powers of Thought, that particular Vein or Feature of it, which Poetry loves,” and only feeling makes it possible “to distinguish between the good Sense, which may have its Weight and Justness in Prose, and that which is of the Nature of Verse” (*EOSS*, pp. xviii-xix). In short, Welsted's concept of poetry appears to make the poetic act into a mysterious, divinely inspired, eruption of passionate expression; at its basis his conception of the poetic act and the spiritual function of poetry does not lie far off from that of the Romantics.<sup>55</sup>

Yet Welsted shares the same convictions about the hierarchical constitution of the mind--how the differing faculties of mind stood in relation to one another in any act of thought--as did many of his commonsensical, prosy contemporaries.<sup>56</sup> If the fire of imagination was indispensable for igniting the language of poetry, then unless reason controlled the blaze all would simply disappear in a puff of smoke. As Welsted says, he would not “throw the Talent of writing in Verse into a lawless Mystery, and make it a wild ungovern'd Province, where Reason has nothing to do: It is certain, every Thing depends on Reason” (*EOSS*, pp. xxi-xxii). Bringing in reason to restrain the lawless imagination at this point would appear now to identify Welsted with the infamous band of neo-classical

critics who lacked a true poetic sensitivity; certainly Welsted possessed his quotient of neo-classical prejudices, but he proves himself a more subtle and discriminating critic than, say, Morrice, calling for a more sympathetic and comprehensive appraisal of how the mind in its imaginative fury functioned.

Firstly Welsted argues that every person would agree from experience that reason operates differently and in varying forms in different sciences, but always in line with the purpose of reason. All sciences aim at truth, and reason adapts according to its object or to its special subject matter. In each case, it reveals equally valid truths, even if the writer of poems goes about proving that truth through a process unlike that of the mathematician. Welsted declares that "there is in good Poetry as rigid Truth, and as essential to the Nature of it, as there is in a Question of *Algebra*" (*EOSS*, p. xxii). At this point, interestingly, he turns the argument round to judge the other sciences by the standard of the imagination, in part (and in common with the unifying, synthetic impulses of the period) because he wants to keep all of them linked together, an integral whole not a disjointed hierarchy. Rather than separate imaginative reasoning from that of mathematical or other types, Welsted suggests that all thinking requires some measure of imaginative engagement--poetry, naturally enough, relies upon the imagination more than other sciences, but reasoning in whatever form always makes some use of the imagination.

Finally, appealing to the classical verities of the time, he reminds critics that since poetry must not only instruct but please, and since it performed a more difficult intellectual task than other types of science, it ought not to suffer from judgments which do not take adequate account of its special nature. As Welsted puts it, the

Imagination is as much a Part of Reason, as is Memory or Judgement, or rather a more bright Emanation from it, as to paint and throw Light upon Ideas, is a finer Act of the Understanding, than simply to separate or compare them: The Plays, indeed, and the Flights of Fancy, do not submit to that sort of Discussion, which moral or physical Propositions are capable of, but must nevertheless, to please, have Justness and natural Truth: The Care to be had, in judging of Things of this Nature, is to try them by those Tests that are proper to themselves, and not by such as are proper only to other Knowledges. (*EOSS*, p. xxii)

If the critics of poetry could look with justice on the art, then they might acknowledge that in the commonwealth of learning poetry deserved the same esteem as any other form of knowledge, especially as “the Speculative Knowledge of Poetry [is not] less various or delightful than that of any other Art” (*EOSS*, p. xlili). Thus, demanding that poetry receive treatment commensurate with the importance of its function in all acts of the intelligence astutely draws attention to the links between imagination, reason, and writing already implicit (and often explicit) in new-science theorizing about how the mind made sense of reality.<sup>57</sup>

When Welsted proposes a programme which would help poets to train their minds, which would nurture their in-born genius, he appeals to the methods of the experimental scientists. Since he already had condemned the practice of trying to write according to critical rules as unlikely to nurture genius, this appeal might seem surprising, but Welsted likewise had rejected the notion that inspiration itself could produce great poetry. Indeed, when he explains *how* a poet should go about the business of storing his mind with materials for poetry, how the poet should discipline himself as he worked over that material, Welsted provides a blueprint for this aspect of the poetic character which comes straight out of Bacon or Sprat.<sup>58</sup> The one true way for the poet to nurture his genius involves the familiar pattern of examining “closely and carefully into Men, Manners, human Nature; by frequently viewing Things, as they are in themselves, and under their natural Images, and by growing intimate with them; by accustoming his Mind to look deeply into, and to judge accurately of all Objects” (*EOSS*, p. xxxi). Yet simply looking closely and carefully at objects will not suffice: the poet must also adhere to a strict pattern of interpretation and judgment, disciplining the whole mind (and not just the imagination) in the production of ideas. Welsted lays down what he calls “the first universal Rule” of all poetic behaviour--“*Never to give or deny one’s Assent to any Thing, till we evidently see the Truth or Falsehood of it*” (*EOSS*, p. xxxii). After this he provides several general rules for the conduct of the mind, all of which lean heavily on the behavioural maxims of the

new science, particularly Locke's: "*Never to reason of Things, that we have no clear Ideas of; to begin by the simplest and easiest Truths; and to dwell long upon them, before we proceed to those that are more difficult and compounded*" (EOSS, p. xxxii). Interestingly, Welsted feels that the objects of study for both poetry and logic "are infinite; they are not to be found any where altogether, and in part every where; we must gather 'em . . . out of all we read, all we see, all we hear, all we think of . . . we may go on for ever to improve our Reason." Not surprisingly, he censures the "common School Logic, or Syllogisms," which he equates with the rules of poetry: they are "wholly useless; they serve no purpose but to wrangle and dispute; they rather puzzle and embarrass the Understanding, than enlighten it" (EOSS, p. xxxii). In any case, Welsted feels that only after a poet stores his mind with solid materials for his imagination to work upon can he proceed to read the great poets in a frame of mind capable not only of "tracing their Beauties" but of "striking out of his own Reflections Improvements upon 'em" (EOSS, p. xxxi). If the poet can combine all of these qualities and virtues with a severe study of his language, "sifting all the Turns, Graces, and Refinements, it will admit of" (EOSS, p. xxxi), he may achieve something of greatness. More importantly, he would help set a better standard of poetic behaviour.

### *Section 3. James Thomson and the New Poetics*

Welsted's guidelines for disciplining the poet's mind thus provide a fairly clear sign of where poets could go to find materials for a "new" poetic identity, but on the whole his advice remains rather vague and abstract, a set of prescriptions about the means which a poet should adopt to discipline his mind but little in the way of practical illustration of how to apply the fruits of this discipline in the actual writing of poetry. His poems certainly offer little indication that he knew how to take his own counsel. In the work of James Thomson, however, we find a similar argument in favour of adopting the scientific attitude to nature

but with some important differences, and I want therefore to look at his ideas in some depth. Like almost every other writer of the first half of the century, he was much exercised by the problem of the poetic "personality," but unlike so many other writers he actually formulated a poetics based upon the model of the new science (and in a way as a response to the new science). Moreover, he put what he learned into practice, as will become clear when I illustrate the manner in which Thomson revised certain key passages in *The Seasons*. Next, however much modern critics may now disregard Thomson's contribution to eighteenth-century poetry, for some one hundred and fifty or more years he remained one of the most influential British poets. Highly regarded in his day, he inspired numerous poets and critics and laid the basis, I believe, of a new appreciation of the relationship between nature's ability to infuse the imagination and the function of descriptive writing, and in turn this reoriented perceptions of the lyric genre's potential for achieving elevated and sublime poetic effects.

In *Prophetic Strain*, Anne Williams regards Thomson as a poet possessed of a quintessentially lyric consciousness (which would, I suppose, make *The Seasons* into a kind of lyric epic), but it seems quite unnecessary to make such a claim for Thomson.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, if his usual poetic sympathies or instincts lay anywhere, they lay with pastoral, perhaps in some sort of feeling which might go by the name of the pastoral sublime. Of course pastoral and lyric--especially as the eighteenth century understood these genres--do overlap, as the myriad of pastoral songs and ballads produced during the century amply testify. In his *Essays on Song-Writing* (London: 1772), for example, John Aikin traces the development of the native ballad tradition, pointing out that during the century its appeal had grown extensively, partly because "a real or affected taste for beautiful simplicity has almost universally prevailed," and this new taste for ballad imitation, if "affected," nonetheless had transformed it into "a serious composition, turned however in its general subject from the story of martial adventure to the pathetic tale of the peaceful village. It is a just taste, founded upon real observation of nature, which enjoins simplicity of expressing in every attempt to engage the sympathetic emotions; we have many

delightful examples of its success."<sup>60</sup> Moreover, one of the main reasons for the pastoral song's success was its generic demand "to follow nature exactly and with a minute nicety" and particularly, says Aikin,

in the scenery and description. Natural objects are scarcely ever disgusting, and there is no country so unblessed as to be unprovided with an ample store of beauties, which must ever please in an accurate representation, independently of all fashion or peculiarity of taste. It is unpardonable in a poet to borrow these from any fountain but nature herself, and hereby he will most certainly avoid the mistakes and incongruity of imagery, which they are apt to fall into who describe from ideas gained by reading rather than observation.<sup>61</sup>

Thomson, of course, would have agreed wholeheartedly with Aikin's views about nature and poetry. That said, Thomson's value for this study derives from his perception of a crisis in poetry and the way in which he tried to resolve that crisis. He does so in part through a poetics which relies heavily upon pastoral conventions, not lyric ones, but in doing so he helps to illuminate a number of important poetical issues which brought the lyric genre to centre stage in eighteenth-century poetical debate. This digression into Thomson's poetry should on the whole prove worthwhile.

Just as many critics see little of poetical value in the eighteenth-century lyric, so they tend to undervalue the presence of pastoral imagery and conventions in the poetry.<sup>62</sup> Indeed, eighteenth-century poets retreat to pastoral groves with such regularity that modern readers, dulled by repetition, usually dismiss the image of the grove as conventional and meaningless. The literature of the period abounds with comments like the one in *Spectator* 15: "True Happiness is of a retired Nature, and an Enemy to Pomp and Noise; it arises, in the first place, from the Enjoyment of one's self; and, in the next, from the Friendship and Conversation of a few select Companions. It loves Shade and Solitude, and naturally haunts Groves and Fountains, Fields and Meadows."<sup>63</sup> It might seem likely that prosaic, eighteenth-century readers were similarly inured to the ubiquitous poetical representations of the pastoral grove. We might detect a hint of weariness, for instance, in Johnson's comment that "WHEN a poetical grove invites us to its covert, we know that we shall find what we have already seen . . . a natural grot shaded with myrtles." Yet even as Johnson acknowledges the conventionality of the pastoral grove he

considers pastoral imagery one of enduring sources of pleasure when reading poetry: “yet who can forbear to enter the pleasing gloom, to enjoy coolness and privacy, and gratify himself once more by scenes with which nature has formed him to be delighted.”<sup>64</sup> Since Johnson knows that this “entering” constitutes an act of imagination, not a real retreat to a grove, the force of the feeling cannot be underestimated. In fact, the prevalence of groves and other pastoral conventions in eighteenth-century poetry indicates a widespread appeal among poets and readers alike: in simple terms the “country” meant nature, a subject sure to touch a responsive chord. At an obvious level of appeal, the simple, if idealized pleasures of a pastoral life contrasted sharply with the complexity of a city existence, offering a welcome curative for the pollution and enervation of body and mind which accompanied urban living. Pastoral, says René Rapin in his influential essay, *De Carmine Pastoralis* (added to Thomas Creech's 1684 translation of Theocritus's *Idylliums*), never fails to move readers because it recalls for them the restorative powers of nature: “the Country is so ravishing and delightful, that twill raise Wit and Spirit even in the dullest Clod.” Moreover, that poet anxious to meet the demands of his sacred vocation will find the country, as opposed to the city, peculiarly well-suited for poetic inspiration: “in truth, amongst so many heats of Lust and Ambition which usually fire our Citys, I cannot see what comfort is left for a chaste and sober Muse.”<sup>65</sup> In addition Rapin notes that, unlike the city, the country makes one feel at home in the world, a vibrant and integral part of a larger, more comprehensible whole: that person lucky enough to escape the city “is much more happy in a Wood, that at ease contemplates this universe, as his own, and in it, the Sun and Stars, the pleasing Meadows, shady Groves, green Banks, stately Trees, flowing Springs, and the wanton windings of a River, fit objects for quiet innocence.”<sup>66</sup>

Such declarations occur regularly and testify to the appeal of this pastoral “feeling,” as in John Morfitt's poem *Philotoxi Ardenae; The Woodmen of Arden* (1788):

Farewell, hoarse Quarrels of the Bar!  
The Fraud of Courts, with ever-bending Knee, and all  
The dusty Cohort of the Great, farewell!



.....  
 Here Quiet reigns; who me, long lost in Grief,  
 Has to myself restor'd: here reigns secure.  
 Quiet! Sole Medicine to a Mind Diseases'd.<sup>67</sup>

Pastoral imagery, even in a poem of such limited merit as Morfitt's, could initiate a chain of associated ideas and feelings shared by most eighteenth-century readers. Not all writers, moreover, used pastoral conventions and imagery in jejune, artificial ways, as a careful analysis of Thomson's revisions to *The Seasons* indicates. Pastoral focused his creative energies, and his alterations to certain grove scenes specifically show that pastoral conventions were indispensable in the evolution of his ideas about nature, man, and poetry.

Critics from Johnson to his latest editor take note of Thomson's obsession with revision and accept that some rationale lay behind this obsession. Ralph Cohen, for example, observes that Thomson's "attitude to language and unity . . . is itself experimental and tentative, and the frequent revisions indicate that in *The Seasons* he was dissatisfied with and unable to withdraw from the published work," while James Sambrook labels him "an inveterate tinkerer."<sup>68</sup> Cohen finds that Thomson usually made the right choice when he altered his poem, that these decisions "had sound sensibility behind them if one grants the kind of poem he was writing." He remains uncertain, however, of the poetic principles which guided these choices, concluding that Thomson altered for "whatever reasons."<sup>69</sup> Presumably, Thomson's poetic was neither innate nor static but evolved under the pressure of various poetic influences, through reading, thinking, discussing, formed by and in reaction to numerous elements working in his culture. Admittedly, a lack of sufficiently detailed information about Thomson's critical ideals effectively limits speculation, yet it is possible to extract from the extant materials a set of principles which do guide his "sound sensibility."

That Thomson viewed a great deal of contemporary poetry with contempt seems clear from his *Letters* and the Preface to *Winter*: poets he could see needed to adopt new methods, new attitudes, to writing. His own early experimentation, however, met with

adverse criticism. Writing to Mallet (in August 1725), he refers to William Aikman's comments on his diction and asserts that "His Reflections on my Writings are very good; but He does not, in Them, regard the Turn of my Genius enough. Should I alter my Way, I would write poorly. I must chuse, what appears to me the most significant Epithet or I cannot, with any Heart, proceed."<sup>70</sup> Thomson, to his credit, continued to forge his own way, his stubbornness vindicating his intuitions. As a writer noted in the *London Journal*, 4 June 1726, Thomson's *Winter* displayed a "new and peculiar manner" of writing worthy of endorsement; he further assured readers that "the *new* and *masterly manner* in which [Thomson] has introduced his Reflections, and made them to succeed his several Descriptions throughout the whole Performance" would provide "a most entertaining, rational, instructive Delight and Satisfaction, to every one whose Mind is capable of receiving it."<sup>71</sup> This, certainly, offered better encouragement, but after the initial success of *Winter* Thomson clearly began to reflect more seriously upon his ideas about poetry. A Preface appeared with the second edition of *Winter* (June 1726) but never appeared after publication of the full *Seasons* of 1730. *Spring*, published in 1728, included *Proposals* for *An Essay on Descriptive Poetry*, which suggests that Thomson's reflections were concentrating on the role of description in contemporary poetry: unfortunately, he never published that essay. Interestingly, these *Proposals* emerged after publication of *A Poem Sacred to the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton* (May 1727). Thomson included *Newton* in most of the full editions of *The Seasons* published during his lifetime, and it seems plausible to conclude therefore that in *Newton* he first conceptualized the basic elements for a new poetic, and later decided that the essay on description was unnecessary.<sup>72</sup> I point out the number of these various printings to suggest their importance to Thomson's thinking, and to emphasize that the matter of his thinking, and the poetics which he develops, would have reached (and perhaps influenced) a fairly wide audience. The revisions to *The Seasons* do suggest that he found a way to select that "most significant

Epithet" and, as we will see, his difficulty provides a key to understanding the rise of the lyric.

Thomson, in common with many eighteenth-century writers, looked gloomily on poetry's future as one of the revered sciences. As early as 1725 he complains that "As for Poetry, she is now a very Strumpet and so has lost all her life, and Spirit, or rather a common Strumpet, passes herself upon the world for the chaste, Heaven-born Virgin."<sup>73</sup> Ten years later he identifies the popular press as a major factor leading to poetry's decline. The press unleashes a "Torrent of Barbarism," and he expects "to see all Poetry reduced to Magazine-Miscellanies, all Plays to Mummery Entertainments, and, in short, all Learning absorb'd into the Sink of hireling scurrulous News-Papers."<sup>74</sup> The Preface to *Winter* makes a spirited defence of poetry, echoing Sidney of course, and also bearing a strong resemblance to Joseph Trapp's 1718 Preface to *The Aeneis of Virgil*. Trapp says: "HOWEVER Poetry may have been dishonoured by the *Follies* of Some, and the *Vices* of Others; the Abuse, or Corruption of the best Things being always the worst: It will, notwithstanding, be ever regarded, as it ever has been, by the wisest, and the most judicious of Men, as the very *Flower* of human *Thinking*, the most *exquisite Spirit* that can be extracted from the *Wit*, and *Learning* of Mankind."<sup>75</sup> While Thomson admits that "there may seem to be some Appearance of Reason for the present Contempt of [poetry], as managed by the most part of our modern Writers," he hopes that readers with real learning and taste will recognize the injustice of such contempt: after all, "It is affronting the universal Taste of Mankind, and declaring against what has charmed the listening World from *Moses* down to *Milton*."<sup>76</sup> Discerning readers should distinguish good from bad poetry: good poetry "seems to be the peculiar Language of Heaven" (p. 303) and displays "the finer, and more amusing Scene of Things" (p. 304); bad poetry exhibits "forced, unaffected, Fancies; little glittering Prettinesses; mixed Turns of Wit, and Expression" (p. 303). Bad poetry appeals to "weak-sighted Gentlemen" who "cannot bear the strong Light of POETRY" (p. 304), whereas good poetry contains "the very Soul of all Learning, and

Politeness" (p. 303). Poetry, he affirms, stands between civilized society and the Winter which always surrounds and threatens it with, in Pope's terms, a "Universal Darkness" which "buries All" beneath it.<sup>77</sup>

Thomson, as we might expect, abides by Sidney's definition of the poet as a semi-divine figure essential for expressing spiritual and civilized values, who expounds either old or new knowledge to bridge the gulf between nature, thinker, and society: an intellectual leader. As Thomson sees it, however, most modern poets ignored the seriousness of their social role, using poetry to escape that responsibility, not fulfil it, and unless they gained some new sense of their poetic destiny, the danger existed that society could slide back into barbarity. Part of the solution to this dilemma would involve poetry's return "to her antient Truth, and Purity," a movement which would make it possible once more for poetry to "be inspired from Heaven" (p. 304). With such divine inspiration, poetry could then "exchange Her low, venal, trifling, Subjects for such as are fair, useful, and magnificent; and let Her execute these so as, at once, to please, instruct, surprize, and astonish: and then, of Necessity, the most inveterate Ignorance, and Prejudice, shall be struck Dumb; and POETS, yet, become the Delight and Wonder, of Mankind" (p. 304). To reassert poetry's importance in cultural life Thomson argues that poets must once more choose "great, and serious, Subjects; such as, at once, amuse the Fancy, enlighten the Head, and warm the Heart" (p. 304).<sup>78</sup> Not surprisingly, he finds "no Subject more elevating, more amusing; more ready to awake the poetical Enthusiasm, the philosophical Reflection, and the moral Sentiment, than the *Works of Nature*" (p. 305). In order to express this subject, however, he needed a form suitable to the purpose.

Pastoral, naturally enough, readily suited Thomson's needs. In an early letter he writes: "Happy he! who can comfort himself amidst the general night, and in some rural retirement, by his own intellectual fire and candle as well as natural, may cultivate the muses, inlarge his internal views, harmonize his passions, and let his heart hear the voice of peace and nature."<sup>79</sup> Loudly echoing Rapin, he notes that all the great poets devoted themselves to "Retirement, and Solitude. The wild romantic Country was their Delight.

And they seem never to have been more happy, than when lost in unfrequented Fields, far from the little, busy, World, they were at Leisure, to meditate, and sing the *Works of Nature*" (p. 305). The problem, of course, was that every poet could (and usually did) claim that *his* poetry sang nature's works. Thomson cannot reform poetry, therefore, simply by reproaching his fellow poets: he needs to show not tell.<sup>80</sup> He needed a great and serious subject, an event to concentrate his mind, so to speak, wonderfully.

On 20 March 1727, Sir Isaac Newton died. Thomson's *A Poem Sacred to the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton* appeared on 8 May 1727.<sup>81</sup> The elegy presents a panegyric which, in A. D. McKillop's words, "still convey[s] a fresh and authentic response to Newtonian science."<sup>82</sup> Douglas Grant claims that Thomson's "harmonious marriage of scientific accuracy and poetic imagination make the poem a remarkable achievement," which he rates "among the finest of its kind in our language."<sup>83</sup> Certainly the eighteenth-century reading public found it superior to other tributes: the poem went through four printings in one year.<sup>84</sup> Although good, even "a remarkable achievement," critics generally consider *Newton* of limited value: covering familiar ground, it does not appear significant to the evolution of *The Seasons*.<sup>85</sup>

In fact, the poem marks an important epoch in Thomson's poetic development. Ostensibly, it both praises Newton's greatness and laments his loss--a model elegy--but the formal conventions helped to clarify his understanding of the relations between nature and poet, poet and society, science and poetry. The poetical ideology which he announces in *Newton* provides a spur to his later writing and regulates the scores of revisions which he made to *The Seasons* over some twenty or more years. After he completes the work of writing *Newton*, Thomson understood better the grammar of nature, mind, and poetry than before it; after *Newton*, he knew how to wrest back poetry from the dilettantes, or at the least he could show an alternative poetry.

A warning to poets underlies the poem's obvious subject matter, Thomson seeing that when poets ignore scientific advances they leave the door open for the scientist to

subsume their traditional role as the mediating voice in man's relations with nature and God.<sup>86</sup> In so doing *Newton* provides, perhaps inadvertently, an epicedium for the Muses.

Confronted by the fact of Newton's death, Thomson asks:

SHALL the great soul of NEWTON quit this earth,  
To mingle with his stars; and every Muse,  
Astonish'd into silence, shun the weight  
Of honours due to his illustrious name?<sup>87</sup>

Surely an event as notable as Newton's death should call forth inspired and passionate verse from Britain's poets, yet the Muses find themselves "Astonish'd into silence." In fact, that Thomson begins by questioning the Muses here alerts the reader to the underlying critical function of the poem; instead of a conventional invocation, he will address a series of questions about Newton's career and achievements which will raise key issues about the poet's role in Newton's age: how and why, that is, could and should a poet write in such an age, especially since the poet must intend to "please, instruct, surprize, and astonish." In other words, he will need to try and appreciate a mind such as Newton's.<sup>88</sup> Thus, in the context of the poem's larger argument the invocation initiates an offensive in the struggle to defend poetry against the real enemies to poetry's good name: the dilettantes. When, therefore, Thomson innocently seems to ask the angelic "sons of light" (l. 5) if they had "listen'd while [Newton] bound the SUNS, / And PLANETS to their spheres!" (ll. 17-18), he may also be asking those other "sons of light"--the poets--if instead of chasing the rewards of vanity they had studied Newton's laws of universal motion.

Thomson does not need to look far for a good reason why the poet should study the new science: the laws which Newton discovered made redundant the intricate systems taught in the schools. Unlike the "hopeless gloomy-minded tribe" (l. 162) of Scholastic philosophers and rhetoricians, Newton "sat not down and dream'd / Romantic schemes" which he then defended "by the din / Of specious words, and tyranny of names" (ll. 23-25). On the contrary, he

bidding his amazing mind attend,  
And with heroic patience years on years  
Deep searching, saw at last the SYSTEM dawn,  
And shine, of all his race, on him alone.

(ll. 26-29)

Before Newton, understanding planetary motion remained "th'unequal task / Of humankind" (ll. 18-19); as the planets mysteriously "roll'd / O'er erring man the year," the secrets of their motions "disgrac'd / The pride of schools" (ll. 19-21). Newton's scientific method of inquiry, not the systemizing of the schools, proved "the secret hand of PROVIDENCE, / Wide-working thro' this universal frame" (ll. 15-18), and only his corrected the errors of past philosophies, including those of the ancient world: "And what the triumphs of old GREECE and ROME," writes Thomson, "but the pride of boys / In some small fray victorious!" (ll. 31-33). In short, Newton's reliance on observation and experiment revealed a realm of knowledge which left "The schools astonish'd"; indeed, they "found it vain / To keep at odds with demonstration" (ll. 85-86), the echoing of "astonish'd" reminding readers of the Muses' fate. Poets, the message rings clear, would suffer the same ignominious fate as the much ridiculed scholastics unless they changed their attitude to science.

Indeed, Thomson groups poets together with those thinkers who refused to accept the new scientific order, who "unawaken'd, dream beneath the blaze / Of truth" (ll. 87-88). Unwilling or unable to catch the fire of inspiration from this truth, the poet effectually gives up the right to sing nature's praises. As Thomson enjoys a sunset from Greenwich's "lovely heights," the scene impresses on him "how beauteous the REFRACTIVE LAW" (ll. 122-124), but he doubts that any poet could "image aught so fair, / Dreaming in whispering groves, by the hoarse brook" (119-120). The poet who allows his Fancy free play in a vague dream-world state differs markedly from a Newton directing an "ALL intellectual eye" (l. 39) upon nature, an eye "well-purg'd" and hence "penetrative" (l. 73). Thomson knows, too, that historically poets availed themselves of whatever the science of the day held true about the nature of the world: poet and scientist spoke differently, but they still spoke about the same world. Thomson thus fears a chasm opening up between new scientific conceptualizations of nature and poetic descriptions which ignore the new truths. If poets failed to create descriptions based upon a solid and accurate knowledge of

nature, then they could not properly convey the Newtonian universe: "in Fancy's lighter thought, / How shall the Muse then grasp the mighty theme?" (ll. 135-136). Shamefully, that task will fall to those "Of the deep-studying race" who "can stretch their minds / To what he knew" (ll. 133-135), that is, to experimental scientists, to prose writers.<sup>89</sup>

Yet Thomson did study Newton's works (he even taught them) and, reflecting upon those amazing accomplishments, he sees the "new way" for poetry; rather than dream "Romantic schemes" and pursue idle fancies, the poet must adopt the same type of discipline demanded by the scientific method. A new poetic ethos might then arise to counter the "Torrent of Barbarism" and bring about a "Revival of POETRY" which the Preface despaired was "not to be expected" (p. 304).<sup>90</sup> Precisely because the new science challenges modern poetic practice, Thomson sees that it can provide the strength of mind necessary to inspire those "fair, useful, and magnificent" (p. 306) works which might counter the trivial productions of his "tasteless Age." Therefore, he begs Newton to

look with pity down  
On humankind, a frail erroneous race!  
Exalt the spirit of a downward world!  
O'er thy dejected country chief preside,  
And be her GENIUS call'd! her studies raise,  
Correct her manners, and inspire her youth.  
(ll. 198-203)

The choice of the phrase, "And be her GENIUS call'd," makes it doubly clear that Thomson sees the scientific method as the only way for poets to regain the inspirational initiative. These lines, by the way, echo an original passage in *Winter* in which Thomson writes that, despite the confusions inherent in mortal life,

*Providence*, that ever-waking Eye  
Looks down, with Pity, on the fruitless Toil  
Of Mortals, lost to Hope, and *lights* them safe,  
Thro' all this dreary Labyrinth of Fate.<sup>91</sup>

Significantly, in 1744 Thomson altered "fruitless" to "feeble," a change emphasizing that knowledge of the world comes slowly and not through blinding flashes of revelation or in flights of fancy. Such a revision draws upon Christian orthodoxy--in a Christian cosmos



toil cannot be fruitless--and it also suggests the new-science perspective that knowledge could only be gained through slow, painful, limited, and humble steps.

With the publication of *Newton* completed, Thomson returned to work on *The Seasons*, publishing all four in 1730: many editions, many alterations followed. An examination of several grove passages in the poem shows convincingly how the scientific ethos as defined in *Newton* guided revisions of epithets, images, ideas. Generally, these alterations entailed an intense and sensitive focus upon the Fancy's role in poetic representation, its relationship to the senses, to inspiration, and to the poet's identity. Analysis of these passages will, in particular, help to illuminate later discussion of the development of critical thinking about description and digression. These two areas of concern proved the value of the lyric genre and showed that it could produce the highest poetical effects.

In the first version of *Winter* (April 1726), a five line passage presented a common image of escape from the city to a quiet rural grove:

OH! bear me then to high, embowering, Shades;  
To twilight Groves, and visionary Vales;  
To weeping Grottos, and to hoary Caves;  
Where Angel-Forms are seen, and Voices heard,  
Sigh'd in low Whispers, that abstract the Soul,  
From outward Sense, far into Worlds remote.

(Wi.26f ll. 74-79)

Even at this early stage in the poem's development, Thomson sensed that the image required the proper context in which to work both poetically and rhetorically. Before introducing this passage, he describes himself walking the countryside just before winter's stormy arrival. The scene induces a state in which

Soft, o'er the secret Soul, in gentle Gales,  
A Philosophic Melancholly breathes,  
And bears the swelling Thought aloft to Heaven.  
Then forming *Fancy* rouses to conceive,  
What never mingled with the Vulgar's Dream:  
Then wake the tender *Pang*, the pitying *Tear*,  
The *Sigh* for suffering Worth, the *Wish* prefer'd  
For Humankind, the *Joy* to see them bless'd,  
And all the *Social Off-spring* of the heart!

(Wi.26f ll. 65-73)

The sequence of mental and emotional states presented here indicates the causal chain which Thomson believed necessary to bring about the final moral vision: nature first inspires "Philosophic Melancholly" to swell "Thought aloft to Heaven," and then "forming *Fancy*" awakens sympathy from "all the *Social Off-spring* of the heart." Line eighty returns to a description of Winter's progress over the landscape.

Yet (and despite praise of the poem's order by the reviewer in the *London Journal*) the transitions from scene to scene do lack integrity, the passage as a whole begging direction; the original five lines in particular present an indistinct, conventional image of dubious poetical or intellectual merit. Thomson saw the root of the problem in a clearer light after the experience of writing his elegy, deleting lines forty to seventy-nine from the 1730 version. He transferred the passage to *Autumn 30q*, starting at line 963 and greatly expanded. Numerous changes in diction radically alter the rhetorical force of the imagery:

OH bear me then to vast embowering Shades!  
 To twilight Groves, and visionary Vales!  
 To weeping Grottoes, and prophetic Glooms!  
 Where Angel-Forms athwart the solemn Dusk,  
 Tremendous sweep, or seem to sweep along;  
 And Voices more than human, thro' the Void  
 Deep-sounding, seize th'enthusiastic Ear.  
 (*Au. 30q* ll. 1030-1036)

Thomson actually transforms the familiar pastoral grove into a site of sublimity, and his characterization of what occurs there reveals a notable shift in outlook since 1726. Originally he described the "Angel-Forms" as definite objects of sense, while the whispering voices abstracted him "From outward Sense, far into Worlds remote." The passivity of the senses--indeed the lack of connection (or response) between imagination, body, and the external world--minimalised the human dimension of the experience, emptying it of any reality which it might feasibly convey. The revision presents an entirely different conception: the Angel-Forms now only "seem to sweep along," occurring because the influence of the "solemn Dusk" (external nature), sparked his imagination. The voices become "Deep-sounding" and, instead of abstracting him, "seize th'enthusiastic Ear." The whole experience impresses upon him the immensity of the

universal scheme. In short, rather than fancying himself removed beyond the world of sense "far into Worlds remote," the universe surrounds him, to use Rapin's words, "as his own."<sup>92</sup>

In 1730, a passage similar to *Wi.26f* quoted earlier follows and again the transition appears weak. The 1744 revision, however, interjects some forty-five lines after line 1036 which Thomson addresses to Pitt as they wander the gardens of Stowe, a landscape which "Genius tam'd / By cool judicious Art" (*Au. ll. 1045-1046*). Thomson exhorts Pitt to support policies which promote civilized values, drawing an analogy between Stowe, a "regulated Wild" (*Au. l. 1055*), and man's position between rough and civilized nature to remind Pitt that his political responsibilities encompass society as a whole. In a complex allusion to ancient Greece, Thomson urges Pitt to consider that politicians, like poets, must control their Fancy when they address the public. In order to learn the virtues that made Greece great, Pitt must exercise "gay Fancy" and "tread in Thought the Groves of *Attic Land*" (*Au. ll. 1055-1056*). As an orator, however, he must control his Fancy because it can either promote a rhetoric of "purest Truth" (*Au. l. 1057*) or carry the day through linguistic subterfuge. A true patriot appeals to

What every decent Character requires,  
And every Passion speaks: O thro' [Fancy's] Strain  
Breathe thy pathetic Eloquence! that moulds  
Th'attentive Senate, charms, persuades, exalts,  
Of honest Zeal th'indignant Lightning throws,  
And shakes Corruption on her venal Throne.  
*(Au. ll. 1062-1069)*

Thomson's exhortation to Pitt indicates that his vision of nature, man, and society evolved over the period from 1726 to 1744 not just from generalized considerations of nature but from particular and immediate social and political experiences as well. Interestingly, the anxiety which he expresses here as a dissident Whig shares similarities to those Tory poets who worried that by adopting Whig methods to gain power and wealth their side was deserting moral positions long and passionately argued.<sup>93</sup>

In any case, the transitions from passage to passage now make better sense: Thomson describes a natural setting which leads to powerful feelings, philosophical reverie, and retreat to a grove; in the grove he disciplines his Fancy in order to describe his experience faithfully; then he switches to a scene more suitable for moral exhortation (usually structured like a dialogue, though only the poet speaks), after which he returns once again to the landscape and to descriptive matter. The relevant lines of *Autumn* now fulfil related philosophic, poetic, and rhetorical functions, a pattern which occurs repeatedly in *The Seasons*.<sup>94</sup> Analysis of revisions to other grove passages reveals similar shifts in emphasis and argument.

A passage in *Summer*, for example, describes Thomson retreating in "haste into the mid-wood Shade, / Where scarce a Sun-beam wanders thro' the Gloom" (*Su.* II. 9-10). Once there he will sit "on the dark-green Grass" (*Su.* I. 11) and "sing the Glories of the circling Year" (*Su.* I. 14). The passage remains virtually untouched between 1727 and 1746, but lines fifteen to twenty undergo important alterations. Although in *Newton* he berated poets for "dreaming in whispering groves," Thomson never dismissed the grove as the site where poet and muse meet. Originally he called to Inspiration and politely asked: "may I presume / From thy fix'd, serious Muse" (II. 16-17).<sup>95</sup> In 1730 the question becomes "may Fancy dare," and in 1744 "Muse" becomes "Eye." The final version reads:

COME, *Inspiration!* from thy Hermit-Seat,  
By Mortal seldom found: may Fancy dare,  
From thy fix'd serious Eye, and raptur'd Glance,  
Shot on surrounding Heaven, to steal one Look  
Creative of the Poet, every Power  
Exalting to an Ecstasy of Soul.

(*Su.* II. 15-20)

In terms of the poetic outlined in *Newton*, replacing "Fancy" for "I" in line sixteen and "Eye" for "Muse" in line seventeen becomes, as it were, necessary: the changes fall into line with Thomson's arguments about how the poet should approach the writing of poetry. The language and imagery not only become concrete, directed, dramatic, but causal relationships become clearer and the conventions serve specific artistic purposes. The

poet, for instance, first seeks Inspiration in the grove because it, not Fancy, shows him those “great, and serious, Subjects” which animate true poetry. Inspiration’s eye, though “raptur’d,” remains a “fix’d serious” one, an image which recalls Newton’s “ALL intellectual,” “well-purg’d,” and “penetrative” eye. Again, Fancy forms but a small part of the “Power” necessary for writing inspired and relevant poetry; a controlled Fancy only dares “to steal one Look,” a theft which the true poet fashions into instructive *and* delightful poetry.<sup>96</sup> In this revision, as in the one discussed earlier, Thomson shifts the emphasis, qualifying Fancy’s role in the poetic process by distinguishing the play of nature, mind, and creativity. In 1730 he added a passage addressed to Dodington, again introducing the themes of social harmony and public zeal.

A similar transformation occurs to another grove scene in *Summer*. The changes affect seven lines deleted from *Su.27* and several alterations in diction. In *Su.27*, a man suffering the “Prevailing Heat” (ll. 331) (“ALL-CONQUERING HEAT,” *Su.* l. 451) searches wildly for relief from “The too resplendent Scene” which “Already darkens on the dizzy Eye” (*Su.27* ll. 338-339). The heat induces a chaotic state in which “double Objects dance; unreal Sounds / Sing round the Ears” (*Su.27* ll. 340-341). Significantly, as his perceptions become disordered he feels alienated, the world fearful: as “a Weight of sultry Dew / Hangs, deathful, on the Limbs,” it “shiver[s] the Nerves” and makes the “Sinews sink; and on the Heart, / Misgiving, *Horror* lays his heavy Hand” (*Su.27* ll. 341-344). Thus enervated the man can neither judge accurately nor act morally. Thomson removed these lines and the passage now reads:

Night is far off; and hotter Hours approach.  
 [seven lines omitted]  
 Thrice happy he! who on the sunless Side  
 Of a romantic Mountain, forest-crown’d,  
 Beneath the whole collected Shade reclines:  
 Or in the gelid Caverns, woodbine-wrought,  
 And fresh bedew’d with ever-sprouting Streams,  
 Sits coolly calm; while all the World without,  
 Unsatisfy’d, and sick, tosses in Noon.  
 Emblem instructive of the virtuous Man,  
 Who keeps his temper’d Mind serene, and pure,  
 And every Passion aptly harmoniz’d,

Amid a jarring World with Vice inflam'd.  
(*Su.* ll. 457-568)

At first glance the omission seems an error. However, the dramatic effectiveness of the original lines overshadowed the moral force of the "virtuous Man" who, avoiding the danger, "Sits coolly calm." The passage which follows it, moreover, merges the literal and imagistic into a striking poetic argument about why the poet should take the grove seriously:

Cool, thro' the Nerves, your pleasing Comfort glides;  
The Heart beats glad; the fresh-expanded Eye  
And Ear resume their Watch; the Sinews knit,  
And Life shoots swift thro' all the lighten'd Limbs.  
(*Su.* ll. 476-479)

The picture of the poet with senses alert and a heart that "beats glad" contrasts nicely with a world "Unsatisfy'd, and sick," a reasonable substitute for the "sultry Dew" hanging "deathful." The correlation of alienated, directionless passion with physical, mental, and moral laxity strengthens Thomson's argument about the benefits of a "temper'd Mind serene."<sup>97</sup>

Thomson's revisions emphasize that a pastoral grove, either literally or figuratively experienced, remained a primary site of inspiration, though "By Mortal seldom found," and in the care which Thomson took over the descriptive details of external and internal worlds he provides a model of poetic practice. Further, he shows that the manner in which a poet approaches his use of conventions will determine whether or not he makes a true poet or a poor versifier. In other words, the experience of the grove teaches the poet how to pursue his high vocation, how to discipline his fancy. At the end of *Autumn*, Thomson explains this ethical command in an intricate and forceful way. Significantly, his choice of imagery mirrors the conventional out-of-body lyric vision, but he modifies and "corrects" that vision.

First Thomson calls upon Nature to "Light [his] blind Way" (*Au.* l. 1359) and "open to [his] ravish'd Eye / A Search, the Flight of Time can n'er exhaust" (*Au.* ll. 1365-1366). The desire to write about such an experience he calls "That *best* Ambition" (*Au.* ll. 1369);

skilfully re-working of a passage from Virgil's *Georgics*, he establishes the appropriate model of behaviour for the serious poet. He accepts that he could prove "unequal" to the visionary experience, that "the Blood, / In sluggish Streams about my Heart" (*Au.* II. 1367-1368) could repress the inspirational juices. In that case, he wants Nature to lay him "under closing Shades, / Inglorious . . . by the lowly Brook, / And whisper to my Dreams" (*Au.* II. 1367-1371). The analysis of scenes discussed earlier helps to illuminate the nuances of this passage. Unlike a poet who sits in a grove and spins fanciful dreams and who unthinkingly imitates poetic conventions, Thomson wants Nature's "whisper" to "Inrich [him] with the Knowledge of [its] Works" (*Au.* I. 1353). The conventional out-of-body voyage to some "World beyond World" (*Au.* I. 1355) (that is, a flight of fancy) which he describes shortly thereafter expresses his desire to see into the heavens and to understand, like Newton, "their Motions, Periods, and their Laws" (*Au.* I. 1357). The request parallels his earlier hope that Newton's works would "guide," "exalt," "correct," and "inspire" Britain's youth. Yet, realistically, Thomson knows that few ever achieve a Newton's greatness--his talents could prove "unequal" to the task of singing Nature's glory. From the grove scenes in *Summer* discussed earlier, we know why the opposition of blood flowing "swift" or "sluggish" can determine success or failure of "That best Ambition."

After 1730, Thomson omits a grove passage from *Winter*--it would hardly suit a winter environment--but he employs a complementary scene which parallels as it were the grove scenes elsewhere in the poem. It might seem, because Thomson concludes *The Seasons* during winter, that he intends a final pessimistic vision similar to the apocalyptic final lines of Pope's *Dunciad*. On the contrary, *Winter* directs the reader to contemplate the purpose and value of natural and moral knowledge, which for Thomson means comprehending the hierarchical structure of a universe divinely created. By adhering to this hierarchy, he skirts a number of pitfalls, most notably that he worships a de-deified

Nature on which man, a social animal, solely depends.<sup>98</sup> *Winter*, in fact, asserts a realistic, optimistic vision of mortal life and fills out Thomson's vision of the poet's identity.

During winter Thomson finds a rural retreat "Where ruddy Fire and beaming Tapers join, / To cheer the Gloom" (*Wi.* ll. 430-431), an image which suggests that during winter the poet needs society (just as society needs the poet at this time), not the solitude of a grove: winter teaches him the essential value of human closeness and the necessity of social structures which promote such closeness. Hence, as he sits "studious" (*Wi.* l. 431) by the fire discussing the rise of arts, arms, empires, and the fall of all these, his imagination rises above the natural to look into "the *moral World*" (*Wi.* l. 583), a difficult but more important order to comprehend:

Which, tho' to us it seems embroil'd, moves on  
In higher Order; fitted, and impell'd,  
By WISDOM's finest Hand, and issuing all  
In *general Good*.

(*Wi.* ll. 584-587)

Reflection on this higher moral world teaches Thomson that society flourishes when patriots (like Pitt and Dodington) act according to "that Ray / Of purest Heaven, which lights the public Soul" (*Wi.* ll. 595-596). Again, just as few will attain Newton's fame, few possess the stuff of true patriots, a commonplace argument, but Thomson's real point is that even one "doom'd, / In powerless humble Fortune" (*Wi.* ll. 597-598) should "learn the private Virtues" (*Wi.* l. 601) that promote the "*general Good*." Surrounded by darkness and overcome by these social feelings, Thomson enthuses that the poet must lead others "where the Mind, / In endless Growth and infinite Ascent / Rises from State to State, and World to World" (*Wi.* ll. 606-608).

Thomson, true to his philosophical and religious convictions, modifies this outburst, refusing to claim that man (or science) or poetical creation could ever transcend the boundaries placed between man, nature, and God, and repeatedly reminding his reader that behind nature lies "TH'ALL-PERFECT HAND, / That pois'd, impels, and rules the steady Whole" (*Su.* ll. 41-42).<sup>99</sup> Indeed, the more Thomson contemplates nature's grandeur, the



more he realizes that "This Infancy of Being, cannot prove / The final Issue of the Works of GOD" (*Su.* II. 1802-1803) which "ever rising with the rising Mind" (*Su.* I. 1805) declare a universe "By boundless LOVE and perfect WISDOM form'd" (*Su.* I. 1804), a point which Bacon argued so strenuously in *The Advancement of Learning*. As Thomson sits by the fire he wonders about "those veering Thoughts, / Lost between Good and Ill, that shar'd thy Life" (*Wi.* II. 1037-1038). If death means that all ideas "now are vanish'd," that genius does not guarantee immortality, then only "VIRTUE sole survives" (*Wi.* I. 1039).

*Winter*, like the other *Seasons*, applies the poetic standards which Thomson called for in the Preface and adumbrated in *Newton*. In order to forge a new poetic way he looked to experimental science as a means for clarifying experience, for disciplining his Fancy, for choosing "the most significant Epithet." By using pastoral conventions with a sensitivity to their expressive potential--conventions "with which nature has formed [man] to be delighted," as Johnson's *Adventurer* 108 said--Thomson gained a fair degree of flexibility: they permitted, without stretching his reader's credulity, discussions about the Fancy, poetic method, science, morality, and the divine plan. The careful revisions, especially those concerning how the senses and the imagination relate and combine in the poetic process, were rooted in Thomson's sense of scientific accuracy and poetry's representational virtues. Thus, while acknowledging philosophy's place as the "Effusive Source of Evidence, and Truth" (*Su.* I. 1732), he can still argue that poetry performs a more important task. Poetry, to be sure, needs to be "TUTOR'D" (*Su.* I. 1753) by philosophy, but in return poetry "exalts / [philosophy's] Voice to Ages" (*Su.* II. 1753-1754). Although science discovers and confirms the divine laws, by itself it cannot dispel the winter or give the universe a human aspect: it remains the poet's task to communicate "Whate'er the humanizing Muses teach" (*Su.* I. 876). As Thomson said in *Newton*, the poet, not the scientist, appears "to guide" the man "wilder'd on his darksome way" (*Newton*, II. 130-131).

Before ending this section, a few words about assessing the impact of Thomson's "new" approach to descriptive poetry: it remains, of course, a difficult proposition. In the first place, we cannot tell if a poet working in the same vein as Thomson would have produced worse poetry without Thomson's example and, second, whether a poet really grasped the fundamental seriousness of Thomson's writing or the complexity of his descriptive procedures. Finally, we cannot judge with any accuracy whether or not a poet's specific aims in any poem were meant to duplicate or parallel Thomson's--after all, *The Seasons* stands rather apart from the hundreds (perhaps thousands) of poems which utilize the convention of the pastoral grove and include references to science. For example, in "The *RETREAT*: or Contemplative Solitude. Inscribed to the Right Honourable the Countess of *HERTFORD*," Samuel Bowden not surprisingly evokes the pastoral grove and treats it in a way similar to Thomson. Though not particularly exciting poetry, some of Bowden's verse merits citing:

Welcome, blest Grove! and no less sacred Shade,  
 By Silence hallow'd, and for Sages made.  
 Welcome, blest *Freedom!* here the Goddess dwells,  
 With simple Majesty, in peaceful Cells.  
 Oft banish'd from the Plains by barbarous Sports,  
 And tir'd with tinsel Pomp, and guilty Courts,  
 Affrighted, here she quietly resorts.<sup>100</sup>

The scene seems set for a revelatory experience. The poem then goes on to provide a conventional paean to rustic simplicity, focusing on ancient examples, and so forth, ending with a statement of nature's superiority over art. However, the use of rhyme tends to conventionalize the poem, while Bowden's descriptions lack Thomson's subtlety. The title of Bowden's work, moreover, suggests that he meant the poems as vehicles to function primarily as vehicles for a certain type of instruction. Two of his poems, however, follow Thomson in taking the same view of the benefits of experimental science, opposing science to the undisciplined use of the imagination. "*On the New Method of treating Physic, inscribed to Dr. Morgan, on his Philosophical Principles of Medicine*" observes that

Sages now trust to Fairy Scenes no more,  
 Nor venture farther, than they see the Shore:  
 They build on Sense, then reason from th' Effect,  
 On well establish'd Truths their Schemes erect;  
 By these some new *Phaenomena* explain;  
 And Light divine in ev'ry Process gain.

Similarly, "A POEM Sacred to the Memory of Sir *ISAAC NEWTON*" gives a resounding affirmation of the new science. Bowden calls out to "blest *Experiment*, whose grateful Light, / Dispels the Gloom of Sophistry and Night," and accompanying Experiment he finds that "*Discov'ry* sits, close waiting, at thy side, / And Paths of Evidence thy Foot-steps guide." Discovery and invention, of course, were concerns of poets as well as scientists. Best of all, the power of experiment lies in its ability to produce solid knowledge: "Error from thee, as from the Morning, flies, / And Bigots half awake, see Light, and close their eyes."<sup>101</sup>

#### *Section 4. Description and the Recognition of Lyric Values*

Thomson's poetics, as the previous section makes clear, developed out of his concern to rehabilitate the reputation of contemporary poetry. Whereas most writers simply complained about the sorry state of affairs, Thomson actually tried to confront the dilemma head-on, believing that poetry's prestige as one of the human sciences would continue to decline unless poets carried out a comprehensive evaluation of all the elements of their vocation: they needed to reassess the fundamental principles of poetic identity and to reorient their treatment of poetry's subject matter. To make poetry coequal with, if not superior to, the other sciences, Thomson begins to establish a new ethos of writing which consciously exploits poetry's exceptional ability to represent (or imitate) nature in a way that met the changing epistemological temper of the times. The revisions to *The Seasons* show that description formed the basis of Thomson's poetics--his proposed essay on description suggests the increasing importance of description in critical thinking--and they indicate that he wanted to make description the poetic vehicle

for transporting the listener to emotional heights which forged a bond between God and the votaries of nature. Not surprisingly, the issue of the role of description in poetry occupied many writers both before and after Thomson published his landmark poem, and it seems plausible that this specific focus upon the appeal of poetic description--an appeal which critics invariably connected with the basic role that sense impressions play in the formation of imagery--as well as the determination to distinguish the mental pathways which produced vital, living description, derived in part from a general sense of what constituted appropriate representational criteria. Addison, of course, provides perhaps the most famous instance of a critic who focused on the role of the senses in the power of the imagination to produce vivid descriptions, his papers on the pleasures of the imagination constantly drawing upon the new science, but a few of Thomas Gray's criticisms of William Mason's odes seem particularly instructive in this regard. Gray shows a critical sense of the way in which illogical terms, trite diction, and poorly observed description marred a lyric. Writing to Mason he censures many of Mason's attempts to describe various natural phenomena: "A rill has no tide of waters to 'tumble down amain'; "I like the opening as it was originally better than I do now, though I never thoroughly understood 'how blank he frowns'; "And as to 'black stream', it gives me the idea of a river of mud"; "You have introduced no new image in your new beginning but one, 'utters deep wailings', which is very well: but as to a 'trickling runlet', I never heard of such a thing, unless it were a runlet of brandy."<sup>102</sup> Gray reminds Mason that "Extreme conciseness of expression, yet pure, perspicuous, and musical, is one of the grand beauties of lyric poetry."<sup>103</sup> Mason did not always appreciate Gray's advice, nor did he want to apply the discipline that Gray felt the ode required. Indeed, Mason would appear to be exactly the type of lyric writer who so worried poets like Young and Coward. Mason states: "I do wish that these Odes were all of them finished; and yet, by what you talk of 'measure, and rhythm, and expression', I think I shall never be able to finish them,--never certainly at all if I am not to throw out my ideas at large; so, whether I am right or wrong, I must have my way in that: therefore talk no more about it."<sup>104</sup>

Gray, of course, took a more serious view of the problems of poetic language, and it seems worth noting that his interest in natural philosophy and science was wide-ranging and keen. Given the steadfast conviction of the new scientists about the primacy of sense impressions in all facets of intellection, given their belief that careful observations were necessary for building up a body of solid knowledge, and given their suspicions about using words without thinking about their proper significations, it only seems logical that poets (or at least serious poets) writing at this time would subject representational doctrines and conventional ideas about how to depict higher states of mind to some re-analysis. As Thomson's careful alterations to his grove scenes show, to create a scene which could elicit ecstatic responses from his readers required strict control over the language of the poem, descriptions of events, mental processes, and emotional states never deviating from plausible experiences, never abandoning a poetic rooted in the conscious knowledge of causes and effects.<sup>105</sup> Such representational criteria, as I have argued, took shape and drew their authority from the principles of the new science.<sup>106</sup>

Of course, from the perspective of the modern literary historian or critic working within one of the normative eighteenth-century critical paradigms these debates have amounted to a field of scattered, blurred, and inconsistent statements lacking any clear organizing or evaluative principles: side issues seemingly disconnected from the concerns of the major writers, the nature or reason for which remained obscure and unimportant. In fact, many of these controversies involved critical problems of fundamental interest to the period, and they provided an important vehicle for establishing cultural priorities, cultural standards of taste. Obviously, confusions must arise for any scholar trying to interpret data from a period undergoing a particularly dynamic and fertile conflation of varying hegemonic doctrines, some of which concerned the relationship of the sense impression to the linguistic sign; some the opposition between classical and Christian concepts of the social value of the artist; and some the demands of a swelling, loosely connected literary community paying less deference to ancient authority and more to contemporary tastes. Yet, as we have seen in numerous examples, when eighteenth-century writers

approached critical issues they typically carried with them a set of assumptions about the appropriate way to examine and evaluate phenomena, be it natural or psychic: even if they did not explicitly state their methods or their standards of judgment, they everywhere confess their implicit acceptance of the new science. In short, in the critical treatment of poetic description we can see how the rise of new science generated a new seriousness and complexity towards the art of poetry; further, we can see how, as poets became more conscious of the need to create images which would achieve powerful emotional experiences, the lyric genre could satisfy this demand.<sup>107</sup>

A number of these points are touched on in an issue of *The Lay-Monastery* for 1714, a magazine edited by Richard Blackmore. The essay notes that "THERE are no Parts in a Poem which strike the Generality of Readers with so much Pleasure as Descriptions." The author does not go looking for esoteric reasons for this preference but simply relies upon his culture's epistemological convictions: "Descriptions make livelier Impressions on common Readers than any other Parts of a Poem . . . because they are form'd of Ideas drawn from the Senses, which is sometime too call'd *Imaging*, and are thus, in a manner, like Pictures, made Objects of the Sight." The writer contrasts this type of immediate and powerful reflex with that of more serious ideas and concepts, like moral or abstract thoughts which, because removed somewhat from the immediate sense perception (already, as Hobbes said, in decay), "operate slower, and with less Vivacity."<sup>108</sup> The writer clearly feels that a great poet will somehow solve the dilemma of how to present moral or abstract ideas in poetic form, but in a way this task remains a separate issue, and he emphasizes that before a poet tackles such problems he must lay down a foundation of good descriptions. Poor, weak, or inaccurate descriptions will subvert a potentially good work: "A judicious Description is like a Face which is beautiful without Art; an injudicious one is like a painted Complexion, which often discovers it self, by affecting more Gayety of Colour than is natural." Yet any mere catalogue of prescriptions or rules for writing descriptions cannot easily resolve a writer's immediate problems. In the first place, every one equally shares in the process which forms impressions and experiences

into words, and recovering them from memory and turning them into poetry presents the poet with a monumental difficulty. Indeed, Hume would argue that even if our “faculties may mimic or copy the perceptions of the senses,” in the final analysis it must be admitted that “they never can entirely reach the force and vivacity of the original sentiment . . . All the colours of poetry, however splendid, can never paint natural objects in such a manner as to make the description be taken for a real landskip. The most lively thought is still inferior to the dullest sensation.” Whatever poets may claim about their ability to imitate, to be philosophically accurate, says Hume, the most we can admit, “even when they operate with greatest vigour, is, that they represent their object in so lively a manner, that we could *almost* say we feel or see it.”<sup>109</sup> A writer like John Gilbert Cooper would disagree with Hume, declaring that the great advantage that poetry retained over all the other arts stemmed from its ability to describe objects: an object “transferred by the irresistible Magic of Poetry, to the before lifeless Objects of the Creation, animates the whole Scene, and conveys an instantaneous Idea to the Imagination.”<sup>110</sup> William Jackson, however, reiterates Hume's point, arguing that all attempts to describe a visible object must “come so short of a representation, and are so imperfect, that if ten painters were to read Mr. Kalm's account of this amazing fall [Niagara Falls], and to draw it from his description, we should have as many different draughts as painters.”<sup>111</sup> Neither Hume nor Jackson, we note, declares that poets should not make the attempt to imitate or represent objects or experiences; rather, they want to remind writers of the great difficulties they face, and to point out the physical limitations of the medium. Both writers appear to enjoy representations when they are carried out in a certain fashion.

Francis Webb, in the Preface to his *Poems* (1790), offers a more complex view. Working towards a modified idealism, he contends that the mind “first considers the whole, then the Genus and Species, descending from these to lowest and minutest parts, or first principles of things.”<sup>112</sup> The mind then reasons upwards, putting all of its impressions, sensations, and ideas back together again through the power of genius, “forming an ideal whole of concentrated Excellencies, superior to what exists in any

Individual, Class, or Species." Genius accomplishes this task, says Webb, through a progressive and complex string of analogies which bring unity to apparent disparity. However, genius also discovers differences in familiar resemblances, which leads to the creation of new and striking metaphors. Thus artistic genius functions to combine the "distinct separate excellence" of individual objects and idea into "a beautiful whole." This produces "forms of ideal excellence," but Webb hastens to add that these "forms or ideas were first obtain'd by attentive observation, and discovery of those scatter'd beauties and excellences which Nature hath dispers'd through the mighty whole"<sup>113</sup>

In other words, the writer needs some special talent to turn these words into moving pictures, a point in which Jackson and Webb agree: "draughts made without genius, or by genius without practice, can never give such resemblances as to convey a proper idea of objects."<sup>114</sup> Genius appears indispensable at this level of the poetic performance because both writer and reader rely upon their senses--or more accurately upon their storehouse of memories--to recognise and appreciate poetic descriptions, which on the one hand means that "the Likeness or Unlikeness of them are easily perceiv'd," and on the other that "there is a general Similitude in all true Descriptions of the same Object drawn by several Hands, like that in a Picture of the same Person done by several Artists."<sup>115</sup> Hence, of the many potentially disastrous pitfalls set before a poet "there are none in which Poets of an ordinary Rank are more frequently betray'd into Faults" than that of description.<sup>116</sup> Webb sees a similar problem, and his explanation of it indicates the way in which hegemonic influences forced upon critics new formulations of the forces at work in the writing process. In the following observations, Webb works with a number of recognisable critical commonplaces, all in order to give validity to the poetic power of description. He begins with a typical appeal to universal experience:

ON the attentive perusal of the works of the Wise Men in all Ages of the World, we shall evidently perceive, that on all great and interesting subjects, their opinions and sentiments have been nearly the same: and also, that sublime subjects have begotten sublime speculations and descriptions. And as the Supream Being, and Divine Wisdom, are the most sublime objects of Contemplation, on these exalted subjects have the most exalted and sublime things been said.<sup>117</sup>



In other words, “the sublimest Description may consist of the greatest sublimity” may attain the highest poetical affects.<sup>118</sup> Obviously, then, a poet who wished to achieve truly vivid and powerful representations would need to chose a genre which encouraged or even demanded immediate or spontaneous impressions or experiences of nature. The genre itself would need to encompass both the descriptive ideals of the new science and the higher ideals of poetry set by the hegemonies of Christian and classical poetics. Webb's three poems in his collection are, not surprisingly, all odes.

William Coward's *Licentia Poetica Discuss'd: Or, the True Test of Poetry* (1709) approaches the issue of description in a rather oblique fashion and, instructively, he uses the lyric to exemplify his arguments. Coward begins with the point that criticism may abound with “many *Artes Poeticae*, wrote by much better hands” than his, but most of these works did not treat English poetry in particular but poetry in general.<sup>119</sup> Worse, since the rules and the prescriptions were predicated on ancient models, Coward reiterates Cobb's arguments that the modern English poet could benefit little from such critical counsels. In the first place, the English poet usually worked in rhyme, whereas the ancients organized their verse according to other principles. In trying to adhere to the prescribed guidelines, therefore, the modern must write poorly: not only did these rules exhort writers to “add new Trimming to an old Garment,” a frustrating, hackneyed procedure, but this could hardly help a modern burdened by the need to make his poetry “suitable to the present Age” (*LPD*, sig. A2<sup>v</sup>).<sup>120</sup> Accordingly, Coward resolves to make a thorough search of both English poetry and the English language for whatever special qualities these might possess, and which might regularly “make [English poetry] *please*” (*LPD*, sig. A3).

The first problem, as always, is where to begin. Since Coward noted earlier that most critics designated rhyme as the natural organizational principle of all English verse, and because he wants to base his prescriptions on those qualities which English readers habitually enjoy, he logically wants to illuminate that poetry “in relation to its *Rhyme* . . . its

*Expressions after the English Mode, its regularity, or irregularity of Feet*" (*LPD*, sig. A3). Moreover, if a study such as his cannot ignore the historical evolution of English poetry, then it must also pay some regard to examples drawn from actual poetic practice. Appropriately, Coward intends his analysis to overlap with various disciplines, drawing upon and synthesizing historical, critical, and linguistic materials: he will look, he declares, "into the *Original of Poetry*, and the *Poetic License* assum'd by *Ancient and Modern Poets*, and, as well as we can, to state the Difference between that of other Languages, and our own, in order to find out the Defects, if any such be, in either" (*LPD*, sig. A3). Once these relationships are revealed in their proper lights, the modern could set about applying this knowledge to his own practice, using Coward's insights into poetry and language to achieve new levels of poetic beauty of a distinctly English kind.

Coward's views about the origins of poetry take a familiar form. Songs and lyrics were the original mould for all later types of poetry, the Bible providing sufficient evidence for this conclusion.<sup>121</sup> Significantly, by appealing to the lyric's ancient and sacred genealogy, Coward infers that reviving the language of English poetry will demand that poets take the writing of lyrics seriously: the genre deserved better treatment than the usual hackneyed panegyric or loosely-developed, conventional depictions of unhappy love. A first step towards understanding the genre's capacity for serious subjects would involve careful study of the basic elements of lyric verse, a point with which Isaac Watts was in complete agreement. In the Preface to his *Horae Lyricae* (1706), after complaining that too few writers treated religious subjects in a manner even remotely similar to that evinced by the poets of the Bible, opting for dry and prudent expressions when emotional and sublime language would better move listeners, Watts contends that "IF shorter Sonnets were composed on sublime Subjects, such as the *Psalms* of DAVID, and the holy Transports interspersed in the other Sacred Writings, or such as the moral Odes of HORACE, and the ancient *Lyricks*; I persuade myself, that the *Christian Preacher* would find abundant Aid from the Poet, in his Design to diffuse Virtue, and allure Souls to

GOD." After equating preacher and poet, he adds that in those poems which intend to lift the reader to some high level of religious fervour, "the free and unconfined Numbers of PINDAR, or the noble Measures of MILTON without Rhime, would best maintain the Dignity of the Theme, as well as give a Loose to the devout Soul, nor check the Raptures of her Faith and Love," Watts confessing that in the past his use of rhyme both "fettered" his ideas and "contracted and cramped the Sense."<sup>122</sup> Coward, with reservations about measure similar to Watts's, therefore carries out a long argument about the many different measures found in ancient lyric poetry, evaluating each to see which might prove acceptable in the English language. He puts his findings in rather picturesque terms:

Now when words either *Originally English*, or *Angliciz'd*, are requisite to be inserted in Verse, *Our own National Use*, by long Custom, give us Power to cover our Feet with Leather, more pliable to Service, than wear Wooden-shoes according to the stated Customs of Foreign Nations. I mean, we may be justly said to *Imitate Them* in the *General Modes*, tho' not in the *particular Measures of Verses*.

(LPD, sig. B5<sup>v</sup>).

Here Coward clearly feels that practical considerations must rule the poet's choice of measure; indeed, since the ancients (both Greek and Latin) made use of so many different metrical feet in their verse, choosing on the basis of such factors as the particular subject matter of a poem, the occasion, the specific kind or mode, and the like, Coward concludes that contemporary lyric poets could make use of whatever measure they liked.

Of course, Coward knows that to advance such a doctrine of freedom could open the door wide to exactly the sort of abuses of language and form about which the sterner neo-classicists fretted so noisily.<sup>123</sup> He protects himself from any such charges--the narrow focus on measure was merely a vehicle for tackling a more complex topic. Coward's analysis grants the poet greater freedom to structure the verse line and to choose a word according to English usage, which gives the poet an opportunity to impress his style (or wit) upon a work; however, the work as a whole involves the writer in a complex series of other choices. The poet must not only constantly keep in mind the poem's overall thematic aims but its aesthetic impact as well, Coward taking a

conventional line about this issue. If the verse measure helps to maintain the rhythm or smooth out the sound, or if a poet can employ it to imitate certain types of emotion, all well and good, yet the language of the entire poem must aim at a higher and more intellectual (or, we might say, imaginative) perception of beauty. While wanting to free the English poet from useless prescriptions about measure, he still remains convinced that the poet must choose words and images which convey a just and natural sense of beauty. As with the writer in *The Lay-Monastery*, Coward feels that decisions which affect the descriptive ingredients of a poem will make or break it:

Among the *Graces*, which the Muses boast,  
And without which, *Poetic Beauty's* lost,  
Is *choice of proper Epithets*, t'express  
The *Poet's Mind* in Ornamental Dress;  
Such as, *if possible*, in one sole Word,  
May the full Sense of a *whole Line* afford.  
(*LPD*, p. 32)

Here he follows the new scientist's linguistic code in demanding that a word should express a thing or feeling as closely as possible. Coward of course translates this linguistic code into the conventional language of criticism, noting that "The Beauty of a Poem being good Descriptions, and fine Similes, particular Regard ought to be had of them; but so that a Decorum must be observed in both" (*LPD*, p. 31).<sup>124</sup> Later he claims that a poet must put as much of his imaginative effort into making "Descriptions exact, and *Naturally* correspondent to the Thing" as into any other element of the poem, a type of linguistic decorum which, if followed, leads to "the greatest Grace and perfection in Poetry" (*LPD*, p. 60).<sup>125</sup>

Coward's stipulation that a poet should use words which are "*Naturally* correspondent to the Thing" not only parallels the new scientist's demands for greater accuracy in the use of words but it fits into a wider debate about the aesthetic potential of words, particularly their ability to forge a meaningful bond between the perceiver, the perceived object, and the creator of that object. Hume and Jackson, of course, doubted that words could actually represent reality truthfully, but John Gilbert Cooper, in his

*Letters Concerning Taste* (1757), sets out to prove “that TRUTH and BEAUTY are coincident” (*LCT*, p. 3), with the additional claim that the ability to recognise this coincidence marks off the man of taste from lesser beings. Much of what he says echoes or develops Shaftesbury’s arguments in Section III of his “An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour” but not entirely, and Cooper, in common with many of his contemporaries, begins his proof, so to speak, at ground level and works upwards, his investigation taking in the role of the senses in the production of pleasure and leading him to a revelation of God’s universal plan<sup>126</sup>. The process, while predictable, shows how the train of reasoning by which nature, as the visible form of God, and thus the perception of its materials or objects, could come to be equated with both truth and beauty, and how the emphasis of the new scientists on correct and accurate perceptions of things set a standard for determining beauty. Cooper observes that

There is no Study so improving and entertaining to the Human Mind, as an Enquiry into the final Cause of all rational Pleasure; to trace to its Source the Reason why Matter acts in such various Ways thro’ the Inlets of the Senses upon the *Understanding*, and affords such infinite Delight to the intermediate Powers of *Imagination*. By reasoning thus from the Effect to the Efficient, we naturally become acquainted with the Conceptions of the great AUTHOR of all Things; we transfer as it were the Excellence of his Works into our Manners, and grow imperceptibly Good and Vertuous (which is moral Comeliness) by being familiarized to the Beauty of external Objects. *Nature*, the substitute of Heaven, agreeable to the divine Attributes, has calculated all Things for universal Convenience.<sup>127</sup>

(*LCT*, pp. 160-161)

In this schema it follows that in any investigation into the correlation between truth and beauty “*Nature* . . . must be the Criterion to go by” (*LCT*, p. 161); since this point seems irrefutable, it means that standards for judging representations of nature (or objects) in the imitative arts must be predicated on the relationship between these arts and their subject matter.

Cooper argues, therefore, that beauty in painting or sculpture does not reside in the production but in the object represented by the work of art: “a Statue or Picture has no intrinsic Beauty in itself, but is relative to another Object, the Similitude to which is made the *Venus* of the *Art*; the Thing therefore represented regulates our Esteem” (*LCT*, p.

161). However, Cooper does not believe that any individual object in itself possesses that excellence which draws from us a sense of esteem: an object strikes us with its beauty *because* it belongs to a mass of objects, a connected series of objects which make up a whole. The whole--which is nature-- possesses intrinsic excellence. Moreover, once we see that beauty resides in a finely-tuned system, we come to appreciate that truth and beauty are the same. Cooper states:

Every Object round has a Share, and *it* is more or less *Good* and *Beautiful*, as it corresponds to them, and they to others to Infinity. Whatever then is proportionable and harmonious, is good; every thing that is so, is *natural*; we judge of *Beauty* by *Nature*, consequently *Good* and *Beauty* are the same. Thus we form our Opinion of an Image. Every Limb and Feature ought to agree with the whole in Size, Age, Sex, &c. and this is called *Symmetry*; this *Symmetry* is most perfect when made for the Use and Strength of the Species, and that Use produces Beauty.

(LCT, pp. 161-162)

Predictably, Cooper cannot offer terrestrial reasons why objects affect the mind in this way, so he appeals to celestial factors: God "has in this, as well as in all his other Works, out of his abundant Goodness and Love to his Creatures, so *attuned* our Minds to Truth, that all Beauty from without should make a responsive Harmony vibrate within" (LCT, p. 6). Since God is truth, and since God created nature, which is beautiful, then truth and beauty must be the same. Keats, of course, put the matter much more hauntingly.

Cooper's cerebral account would strike many as a rather plodding method for appreciating beauty, giving the whole process over to the control of reason. Indeed, it seems to grant research into natural philosophy a certain aesthetic credit, a point which most eighteenth-century writers would find acceptable, but Cooper actually wants to keep the scientist's mode of perception apart from that of the man of taste. Therefore, he refuses reason complete domination and outlines the way that taste responds to natural and to imitated objects. The man of taste possesses a truly elevated soul which perceives nature with finer and more spontaneous faculties than those of other people: he gains an immediate sense of pleasure at sight of natural objects (wholly, of course, because it grasps the object's relation to the whole creation). Thus, an educated taste passes judgment before reason "can descend from the Throne of the Mind to ratify it's

Approbation" (*LCT*, p. 3). When this elevated soul observes an imitation--a painting or sculpture, for example--Cooper claims that an "*internal Sense we call TASTE*" (*LCT*, p. 6) virtually supersedes both the normal operations of sense and reason, which now simply act "in Conjunction [to] *prove this Beauty by collating the Imitations with their Originals*" (*LCT*, p. 7). The same process occurs with words. In short, then, Cooper's analysis of how taste functions leans on the same desire of the new scientists to capture as quickly as possible the full panoply of perception, though he grants a higher status to the more feeling man of taste.

Coward finds himself facing a similar problem. As he pushes into other areas of concern, he begins to suggest ways that a poet (and in this case that means a lyric poet) should discipline his use of language, revealing at each step both his reliance upon the linguistic ethos of the new science and his appreciation of the demands of poetry. He argues, for instance, that "'Tis a certain Rule in *Imitation*, that those who would do it *well*, must endeavour to make the *Passion*, he designs to *Imitate*, his Own; Like the Philosopher, who said no Man could better describe a Storm, than he that had been in it" (*LPD*, p. 60). The same principle of selection should apply, of course, to any other object of imitation, but choosing the correct epithet while keeping in mind the need to create poetic beauty leads him into a quandary about the accurateness or propriety of image, thing, or event:

But, as *fit Epithets* you should select,  
 Drawn from the *Genuine Cause*, or *near Effect*.  
 They must be as *compatibly* apply'd,  
 As *without Fault*, the Subject will abide.  
 The *Stones Inanimate* must not declaim,  
 Nor *Trees th'inconstant Amaryllis* blame.  
 Unless some *list'ning Eccho's* feign'd to make  
 Those *Trees*, and hollow *Caves*, and *Mountains* speak.  
 Because from them *reverberates* a Noise,  
 That seems *articulate*, like *human Voice*.

(*LPD*, p. 34)

Some twenty or more years before Thomson put his poetics into practice, Coward hit upon a similar resolution to the problem of using "fanciful" imagery. In other words, for all

forms of imitation to possess spirit and force the writer must employ a figurative language which knowingly distinguishes fact from fiction. Coward warns against using metaphors and images "o'er-charg'd with *Copiousness of Wit*" (*LPD*, p. 27), that is, producing images which distort natural relationships or contradict the evidence of the senses.

Nevertheless, the poet must be wary of trying to write a type of poetry in which "the Subject should be *naked stript*, / And with no *beauteous Ornaments* equipt" (*LPD*, p. 31).<sup>128</sup> Indeed, Coward doubts whether a group of verses "without *Similes* compos'd, / And without *Painting*, in plain Forms, enclos'd" (*LPD*, p. 29) deserved the name of poetry. On the one hand, serious readers will read poems lacking such graces "*without Relish*," while on the other such poems simply "*an insipid Taste* the Fancy feed" (*LPD*, p. 29). A poet shines at his best, therefore, when he uses language and creates images and figures with tact, art, and good sense, when his wit works to adorn and grace both things and thoughts.

When Coward turns to discuss issues relating to choice of form--to those structures into which the poet puts his choice epithets--he applies the same standards as those which he employed in his analysis of language. Form and content "should be weigh'd by All" and "Each kind of Verse pois'd in the proper Scale" (*LPD*, p. 64), an evaluative process which would allow the poet to impress upon the ancient form his particular English stamp. Coward argues that constraining English poets to imitate classical forms usually resulted in basic confusions about the nature of the genre, which in turn led to terrible stylistic errors: this commonly produced further misunderstanding about the choice of verse line and metre. As proof Coward points to contemporary lyrics, where he finds misapplications of the genre by poets transfixed by ancient rules responsible for the genre's secondary status.<sup>129</sup>

In the first place, poets who think that they can reach lyric heights simply by trying to imitate ancient measures invariably produce hotch-potch poems of little value and less beauty. With one eye fixed on the past and the other half-blind to the poetical tastes of the



present, their misuse of ancient verse measures militates against any expression of the beautiful. Cowards states:

Most *English Lyrics* incompletely write,  
 As their wild Fancy springs with different Flight,  
 Here *Anapests* with odd *Iambics* join,  
 And there *Anacreontics* crowd the Line.  
 Then *Sapphics* mix'd the Composition fill,  
 To make a Medly *eminently ill*;  
 Yet these pretend a Right to claim the Bays,  
 Altho' *elaborately Dull* in Lays.  
 Seek for their Muse a Tutelary Guard,  
 Under some *Grecian*, or a *Latin Bard*.  
 But to what end? Their Umbrage can't excuse,  
 Nor yet support an *English Lyric Muse*.  
 (LPD, p. 80)

In the second place, confusion about the purpose and the function of the many different types of lyric leads to a discordant clash of subjects and styles, and it leaves many writers free to produce works which lack formal unity and a sense of purpose. Echoing Sidney, Coward complains that

LYRIC with us is nothing but a Song,  
 Wrote with what Numbers we imagine fit,  
 With the TUNE only makes ingrate, or sweet.  
 (LPD, p. 80)

Moreover, like Sidney, he looks to the classical tradition for a means of strengthening the English lyric at the level of language and at that of content.<sup>130</sup>

As with Hawkins before him, Coward argues that in order to determine the *proper* subject matter of a lyric the modern poet should simply compare contemporary attempts with Horace's. This comparison would reveal not only that Horace covered a wide range of material but that he treated his various subjects in poetry equal to that of his more famous works. In short, because Horace paid close attention to both matter and style he achieved a "*Majesty of Style / . . . Worthy the Praises of the Delian God*" (LPD, p. 81). After taking stock of the sublimity and beauty of Horace's lyric poetry, the English would be unable to "presume to call our Common Songs, *Lyric Poetry*, as some do, when as many times, poor, low and mean Expressions, are cloath'd in the Garb of a Good Tune, to make 'em *tolerably* pass the Reader's Approbation" (LPD, p. 81).

This conflict between content and style appears no where more obvious than in the modern poet's attempts to imitate Pindar's various odes, attempts which Congreve called "a *Bundle of rambling incoherent Thoughts, express'd in a like parcel of irregular Stanza's, which also consist of such another Complication of disproportion'd, uncertain and perplex'd Verses and Rhimes.*"<sup>131</sup> Coward agrees, modern poets consistently mistaking the difference between the heroic and the noble styles. To imitate Pindar's style, he points out, a poet cannot simply try to copy the measure or use artificially abrupt breaks in the development of an idea:

'Tis not uneven Lines *Pindarics* make,  
Where Rhymes with frequent Interruptions break.  
But 'tis the Noble Style which PINDAR wrote,  
Expressive of as excellent a Thought  
That makes Him justly valu'd and admir'd,  
In Imitators th' *Only Thing* Desir'd.<sup>132</sup>

(*LPD*, p. 64)

Of course, the noble style arose out of the nature of the subject under discussion, and the poet needed to undergo an experience which would inspire noble thoughts. Samuel Bowden was on the right track when he wrote that his feelings while roving the countryside reached a high pitch of intensity:

Sometimes, more studious, with attentive Ears,  
I catch the tuneful Rhetoric of the Spheres,  
Which, o'er the still Expanse, incessant speaks,  
And from the vocal Hills *Pindaric* breaks.<sup>133</sup>

Considering that most poets failed, like Bowden, to achieve a noble style, Coward seems on solid enough ground when he declares that "it is strange to me, That the Notion amongst *some* should run so high as to commend Lyrics above all other Poetry. The Great *Scaliger* is said to be so enamour'd with the 9th Ode of *Horace* . . . That He is reported to have wish'd Himself the Author of it, rather than be made a Prince, or to that Effect" (*LPD*, p. 80).<sup>134</sup> In other words, the modern lyric for Coward still needed development before he would consider it a major genre, its primary weakness or inferiority stemming from the fact that English poets paid too little attention to fitting subject matter to measure and diction. Although Horace and Pindar offered models of how to accomplish

the job, and he wishes to “see some bold Imitator endeavour the like in *English*,” he believes that even if a bold writer attempted this feat and wrote without regard for “the Ornament of *Rhyme*,” he would encounter difficulty in convincing “the World that Any such composition will be a *True Lyric Poem*, or indeed deserve to be call'd Verse” (*LPD*, p. 81).<sup>135</sup>

Like so many eighteenth-century critical essays, the preface to *A Miscellany of Poems by Several Hands* (1731) by the publisher John Husbands begins with a familiar complaint about the poor reception received by poetry amongst the general population of readers. He highlights two reasons for this state of affairs. First, unlike writers in the other arts and sciences who “are not asham'd to confess their Ignorance” and willingly follow the guidance of experts in the field, “every Blockhead, that can read his Primmer, sets up for a Judge in Poetry, and the Poor Author's Genius often is condemn'd, for Want of Taste or Understanding in the Reader.”<sup>136</sup> Second, and more importantly, there persisted amongst the “*Beaux Esprits*,” the makers of modern fashion, a marked distaste for moral and religious ideas in poetry. With them, every serious writer deserved the satiric lash, and their continuous attacks upon all that was good and great built “the Foundation of Wit upon the Ruins of good Manners and Decency” (*PSH*, sig. A4<sup>v</sup>). Of course, such irreverent attitudes to poetry scorned a venerable tradition spanning both classical and Christian literatures which laid down the rightful purpose of all poetic thought--to praise divinity. Husbands offers a panegyric on the Bible as source of sublime imagery, and he outlines a typical history of poetic development, from a primitive, natural type of expressive urge to that of a more sophisticated but artificial, rule-bound poetry. Again, just as the new scientists availed themselves of a theory of an originally primal or primitive experience of nature, when the senses gave an immediate impression of things, resulting in words capable of expressing solid knowledge, Husbands declares that “the Writers of the first Ages had no other Guide than Nature” (*PSH*, sig. C2<sup>v</sup>).

This equation, that a primitive, unsophisticated mode of existence generated a passionate, powerfully descriptive poetry, appealed to many eighteenth-century critics; its general acceptance as a principle of poetic maturation cannot be underestimated because it accounted for differences in genre and for differences in individual styles.

Pinkerton, working with this principle of intellectual development, argues that

in youth most people have felt an inclination to write verses, tho in a more mature age they have lost that desire; so it is in the youth of society . . . that poetry has most flourished. Now this youth of society is commonly, like that of man, lost in tempestuous passions, which call forth extraordinary exertions of mind. Such exertions form the very life and soul of poetry . . . Violent actions, and sudden calamities of all kinds, are the certain concomitants of uncivilized life: to these we owe a poetry warm, rapid, and impetuous, that . . . carries the reader along in the barge of fancy, now by vales fragrant with wild flowers, now thro woods resounding with untaught melody, but most generally thro deserts replete with romantic and dreadful prospects. (*LL*, p. 4)

John Dart, writing about the type of language permitted in elegy, makes a similar point.

Because the elegiast must write about affairs of the heart, disappointments and successes, Dart cannot "suppose these Poets sate down to study fine Things, like our *Cowley*; but that they writ from the Heart, and if so, their Pens must be under the Guidance of their Passions, not of their Wit."<sup>137</sup> These same concepts underlie Sir William Jones's defence of Arabic poetry in his famous translations.<sup>138</sup> In short, a poet would naturally express certain states of mind and emotion if unconstrained by a false or misleading doctrine of imitation.

Husbands draws the obvious conclusion: "The Essence of Poetry consists in a just and natural Imitation and Illustration of Things by Words" (*PSH*, sig. C2<sup>v</sup>). Because these poets enjoyed such an immediate experience of the world, they produced "a lively and affecting Manner of Writing, adorn'd with Figures, varying according to the Greatness, Nature, and Quality of the Subject." (*PSH*, sig. C2<sup>v</sup>). In this way, primitive poetry naturally fulfilled Sidney's dictum that all writing should instruct and delight, and such powerful and instructive poetry abounds in the scriptures, Husbands says, because sacred writers "imitated Nature without Art, and without Study describ'd agreeably Things, Sentiments, and Affections" (*PSH*, sig. C2<sup>v</sup>-C3). Furthermore, rather than devoting themselves to the

superficial and the artificial, the biblical writers wrote about subjects and issues in which they were emotionally involved, with the wholly expected result that their poetry possessed great spirit and sublimity: "For the Strength and Energy of the Figures, and the true Sublimity of Style, are a natural Effect of the passions. No wonder therefore that their Diction is something more flourish'd and ornamental, more vigorous and elevated, more proper to paint and set Things before our Eyes, than plain and ordinary Recitals" (*PSH*, sig. C2<sup>v</sup>-C3). Significantly, given the degree of attention which it receives later in the century, Husbands judges that "PINDAR perhaps, in his Enthusiastick Manner, comes as near as any to the Spirit of the SCRIPTURES" (*PSH*, sig. F1). The linkage of Pindaric and other types of lyric with scriptural sublimity proved a common critical strategy throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>139</sup>

Husbands would appear to yearn for that primitivistic type of poetry often noted by those critics looking for a sure sign of nascent romanticism, but this interpretation would misread his philosophical or critical or even religious intentions. He wants the poet to look upon nature as the original and pure source, the never uncorrupted source of poetic language. In other words, he inherits the same anxieties as the seventeenth-century scientists who worried about the ease with which the immediacy of experience faded; like Locke, Husbands appeals to the incorruptibility of nature as the only means for renewing the sources of language. The following long quotation exhibits this desire in expressive fashion:

Wherever We turn our Eyes so many Arguments of the Goodness of the Deity offer themselves to our View, as are sufficient to make the most Insensible break forth into Poetry. What reasonable Creature can forbear thinking of him? And who can think of him without Gratitude? Who can speak of him without Transport? The pious and contemplative Man meets him in his morning Walk, and converses with him in his evening Meditation. He makes his Closet God's Altar, and his Breast his Temple. Every Leaf and Herb, the Birds of the Air, the Flowers of the Field, and even the Clods of the Valley, bring his Creator to his Remembrance. His Heart over-flows with Love towards the Author of his Being and Happiness, and he feels a kind of Inspiration, which tunes his Soul for Harmony and Thanksgiving. One Advantage He is sure of, that He has a Subject infinitely superior to all others; a Subject that can never satiate, that can never be exhausted; a Subject which is worthy to employ the Thoughts of all created Beings to Eternity. Nor need He be ashamed to own, that He falls greatly below the Dignity and Majesty of his Theme.

(*PSH*, sig. B1)

Thus, in a process which we saw occurring in Wesley, Husbands' conception of poetry brings together classical doctrine with his Christianity, and both merge into the scientific assumptions of his culture.

The full coherence of this merger of hegemonic precepts becomes clearer when Husbands discusses the different epistemological values of fiction and truth. Like Coward, he identifies beauty as one of the chief means by which poetry achieves its complex aims. He says that "the Foundation of all Beauty in Composition is *Truth*" (*PSH*, sig. G1), and this applies equally in theology, philosophy, or poetry. Truth, then, suffuses all writing, or should, but an area of difficulty lies in the nature of human desire and human intellectual capabilities. The mind, he says, "naturally delights in what is great and unbounded," but when it looks beyond the narrow range of its perceptions to try and comprehend the divinity the "*Imagination* is forc'd to put itself on the Stretch to comprehend him who fills Infinitude; in vain! It soon arrives at the utmost Limits of its Apprehensions" (*PSH*, sig. B2). When the mind can go no farther, it usually resorts to such linguistic strategies as fable and allegory; however, by availing himself of these two fictionalizing modes of language, the poet can fall into a common error.<sup>140</sup> Seduced by the delights of the imagination, by a fairy-world inhabited by delightful figures, the poet can quickly lose sight of the true aim of poetry, opting for the fantastic over the real: "the nearer *Fable* approaches to *Truth*, the more beautiful it is," says Husbands, but at all times the poet must remember that "an *Appearance of Reality* is necessary even in *Fiction* itself. In a Word, the Use of *Fiction* is to serve as a Veil to *Instruction*; to animate the Thoughts and Affections, and to make them (as it were) breathe and live; to engage the Attention, and amuse the Mind of the Reader in order to improve it" (*PSH*, sig. G1). Husbands then observes the many instances where writers made use of allegory, simile, and metaphor, concluding from their prevalence in all forms of writing that there "seems to be a Proneness in the Mind to compare the several Objects that occur to its notice, and the Resemblance, either real, or imaginary, which one Thing bears to another" (*PSH*, sig.

G1). Somehow this ability of the mind to abstract experience and then figure it forth in language, an ability which Locke so forcefully analysed as *the* distinguishing feature of the human mind, means that poetic language fulfils an important function of learning, that “one Thing is represented, and another understood” (*PSH*, sig. G1), and it does so in an agreeable manner.

Robert Potter, in his *An Inquiry into some Passages in Dr. Johnson's Lives of the Poets: Particularly his Observations on Lyric Poetry, and the Odes of Gray* (London: 1783), pp. 13-14, makes the same point. The desire by some critics to see the lyric genre as a product of more refined and civilized social structures indicates, in a minor way, that the lyric genre had reached major genre status. Husbands here broaches the same issue of the fictionalizing urge of poetic language taken up by Thomson and Coward, an issue which came to exercise numerous writers throughout the eighteenth century, Richard Hurd's *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (1762) probably being the most famous remarks.<sup>141</sup> Clearly, this problem required a satisfactory resolution, and an instructive case of how poets worked to integrate the poetic resources of language with the descriptive ideals of the new science occurs in Robert Andrews's analysis and clarification of the function of description in his Preface to *Eidyllia: Or, Miscellaneous Poems* (1757). Andrews shows a nice ability to make clear critical distinctions and classifications, arguing that poetic language can involve the use of three separate types of description. The first kind of description simply involves “objects as they appear to exist in fact.” The second, a more complicated type, describes those “objects that were never known to exist, but similar to those that we see do exist.” Andrews defines this second type as “imaginary description.” While he considers these imaginary things permissible in poetry, in the final analysis any judgment of their poetic value, their “excellence” as he calls it, must rest upon an “appeal . . . to nature, experience, fact, and the common notions of consistency, propriety, truth,” that is, upon the first type.<sup>142</sup> The second descriptive type obviously refers to “things” like unicorns or other such fabulous beasts--

composite images based on a knowledge of actual creatures. Of course, in making this special distinction Andrews simply appealed to conventional wisdom about the permissibility of such imagery in poetry. Dryden, in his *The Author's Apology for Heroic Poetry and Poetic Licence*, argued convincingly that all such fictions were allowable: both the Christian and the classical traditions abounded with legendary creatures, personifications, abstractions, and the like. Furthermore, the popular imagination took great delight in them, and they thus provided an important tool for teaching society's less educated members moral truths.<sup>143</sup> Logically, Dryden noted, as an art of imitation poetry legitimately covered all facets of human existence, so to use such fictions merely amounted to an imitation of another aspect of life, "though of other men's fancies."<sup>144</sup>

The third type of description Andrews defines as those objects "that never at all exist but in the poet's imagination, as HOMER'S Gods and Goddesses, the Muses, Fairies, Genii of places, the Virtues and Vices personified, and all the other branches of the poetical machinery" (*EMP*, p. 3). He would call these images the product of "creative description," noting that "If a poet chooses to adopt a machinery already established, it stands in the place of nature; and to it the appeal lies for the justness of his descriptions" (*EMP*, p. 3). Just as the most primitive poets peopled their environment, so too would a modern writer who experienced the same immediacy of nature. Thomson, we recall, felt that such imagery "personalized" the relationship of human to landscape. Andrews contends that description of this last sort always occurs under the influence of the various actions of the heart. And while the perceiver may know that no such creatures "ever fall under human observation," yet because they seem to "bear a near analogy to human things" we suspend a certain portion of our disbelief and "never cease to admire" (*EMP*, p. 4) and take delight in them. They convey the essential majesty and the power of nature and divinity.

After Andrews has defined his three types of description, he undergoes a change of heart: methodologically, this conversion does not lack significance. Since all descriptions



must at some level rely upon human perceptions, whether those derive from some immediate, sensual perception or from mental and emotional conceptions--that is, from ideas in the mind--he surmises that the distinction between imaginary and creative description does not hold. Instead of complicating the whole business with a series of needless classifications, he thinks that it makes sense to rank all descriptions as imaginary. As Locke pointed out, all word-use relies upon the ability of the mind to imagine, abstract, and synthesize experience and ideas into words, and Andrews astutely follows Locke's lead here: since words signify our grasp of objective and subjective reality, all writing amounts to some form of description.

This verdict leads Andrews to articulate a basic principle of poetic descriptions. If all description falls into the class of the imaginary, he argues, then it follows that imagery or description does not, as he earlier suggested, simply supplement or ornament poetry but forms "its essence, its soul and body: so that the more or less any composition has of it, it has the more or less of poetry" (*EMP*, p. 4). Thus, depending upon the *type* and the purposes to which a poet puts it, description determines the real (and lasting) excellency of the poem. Inasmuch as Andrews believes that description or "Imagery be both the soul and body of Poetry," he nevertheless hesitates to claim that by itself it can make sublime poetry. Description must assist the "sense and spirit" of the poem, by which he means that it must express "the divine and proper sentiments of Poetry" (*EMP*, p. 8).

In short, only a writer with genius, wit, judgment, and the like could turn experience and learning into great poetry. In the first place (and in line with what most eighteenth-century readers thought about the poetic function of harmony and measure), Andrews observes that measure must supplement description; following Coward, he stresses that without measure "Poetry generally loses the very name" (*EMP*, p. 5). Whereas Andrews permitted a degree of latitude to the imagination or fancy in the creation of descriptions, he attributes to measure an aspect of poetry which "is founded upon this certain principle of human nature, the sense of harmony" (*EMP*, p. 5), an ornament of poetry susceptible to

some degree of objective or rational control. He seems to conceive of measure as a sort of limiting or controlling force, as if the judgment working through measure effectively stabilizes an all-too-human proclivity for descriptive extravagance. Indeed, as Andrews explains it, this particular imitative facet of poetry leads to better imitations because it relates directly to the impression of sound: "the tone of the voice being expressive of the passions, or correspondent to the velocity, slowness, delicacy, &c. of the things described" (*EMP*, p. 5), it follows that the faculty of judgment must come into force to make the job a success. For Andrews, the cooperation of these elements usually satisfies his expressive demands: "If this correspondence and expression be preserved, together with that harmony, which gives a certain freedom, agility, and voluntary motion to the thoughts, whatever the language be, my fancy is fully satisfied" (*EMP*, pp. 5-6).

Accordingly, and like Coward, Andrews does not want to restrict a writer's choice of measure, doubting that any composition absolutely requires the same measure throughout. Since it imitates speech, he distinguishes between two different types of pleasure which measure might convey: "the abstract uniformity and variety of sounds," in which "only the ear is tickled," and that which is independent of sound, "the sense and spirit" of a poem which touches "the imagination" and "the heart" (*EMP*, p. 7).<sup>145</sup> A principal business of the poet, then, consists of choosing words which both produce harmony *and* correspond to the poem's sense and spirit. For these reasons, Andrews remains sceptical that harmony necessarily requires the use of rhyme. The only criterion which should govern the adoption of a formal, abstract ornament like rhyme should relate to whether or not it added to the poems's sense and spirit--if not, a poet ought to apply some other organizing principle.

Andrews concludes his Preface to the *Eidyllia* in the spirit of one living in the ascendancy of new-science hegemony. He says that British poets--and any youth wishing to follow that career--should learn to "practice [sic] temperance and due industry," a

conventional enough demand, but this discipline would require them to attain not only “a brave indifference to the world” but

an honest self-dependence: and, far from affecting popularity, be fired into a nobler ambition by studying day and night the best transcripts of Nature ancient and modern, but especially their common Model herself, whose scenes are infinitely various, and can never be exhausted by the human pencil. So may they, (for thus only can they,) arrive to that full perception of Truth and Beauty, which is necessary to those, who would excel in any of the ingenious arts. (*EMP*, p. 19)

The poet who undertakes to study the “transcripts” of nature need only follow the model provided by the new science, and in his poem, “Philocles: A Monody,” Andrews gives energetic expression to his conviction that only the emergence of a “better science and free thought” which had been for so long “unknown”—and for its discovery he says, “God be thank'd”—was able to break through a superstitious and ignorant view of nature to reveal the “sure attendant Gospel-Light / Unclouded” (*EMP*, p. 30). The lessons of that past seem obvious to Andrews, and he pleads with his contemporaries to

be ever learning, tho' employ'd  
In busy scenes to study less benign!  
For Science, like the Soul, is ever free,  
Not bound by charters, nor to place confin'd.  
(*EMP*, p. 33)

Science here means knowledge in a general sense, of course, but in these last two lines Andrews gives an indication about the direction in which thinking about the lyric genre would go; throughout his *Eidyllia*, he uses lyric kinds because they allowed him to express the sense of intellectual freedom inherent in the practice of the new science, a freedom he considered essential to the health of poetry. Others would declare similar things about the lyric, and they would especially see its facility in description as key to its poetic power.

Husbands, even if he did not push the debate about allegorical and fictional figures as far as Andrews, still contributed some valuable observations to the debate. More pertinent to our concerns, he argues that if poets hoped to sing God's and nature's praises they must find for themselves a spirited and vital poetic language which rang with truth and sincerity. Echoing Blackmore's *The Lay-Monastery*, Husbands asserts that

effective poetic imagery always derives from the senses, while images copied from books soon reveal their author's lack of experience: "The more sensible any Impression is, the more strongly it affects Us. The Sagest Writers therefore often make their Address to the Senses, and describe the Majesty of God in all the Pomp and Magnificence of Language" (*PSH*, sig. N1-N1<sup>v</sup>). Thus, the novice (or even the experienced) poet must learn from other writers and from his precursors that nature provides the only real and perfect source of beauty; keeping the subjects which occupied the *beaux esprits* in mind, Husbands (like Thomson) points to nature as the only truly sublime subject matter for poetry. Unlike the petty satires which relate the vanities of the town, nature provides "a more spacious Field for a true Poet to exercise his Talent in," as well as impressing upon the mind the need for continual "Contemplation of Him, from whom proceeds every Thing that is excellent, perfect, and harmonious" (*PSH*, sig. P3-P4). In light of the basic principles of Husbands' poetic, it seems quite natural for him to conclude that "No part of Poetry is more pleasing than the Descriptive, no Descriptions charm more than those taken from rural Life" (*PSH*, sig. L2<sup>v</sup>). A conventional point, no doubt, but illuminating when put into its cultural context, especially as the demand for a more accurate and philosophic (as in natural philosophy) poetic language grows stronger as the century progresses.

That same demand finds clear and logical articulation in John Aikin's *An Essay on the Application of Natural History to Poetry* (1778). Clearly possessing a knowledge of the relevant issues, Aikin situates his *Essay* at the centre of debate about the decline of poetry. He expresses his weariness with familiar complaints which heap together and condemn the "insipidity of Modern Poetry" when any truly educated observer would acknowledge the intellectual superiority of poetry.<sup>146</sup> Aikin notes that explanations for this "insipidity" usually point to "a real deficiency of poetical genius in the present age," adding that "such causes are assigned for it as leave us little room to hope for any favourable change" (*EANHP*, p. 2). Moreover, this explanation does not take into account many of the finer performances of the time, nor does it really fit in with the general improvement in

all "the elegant arts, which must be allowed to characterise our own times" (*EANHP*, p. 2), nor does it make sense given the appetite for poetry exhibited by the reading public. The real problem with modern poetry, says Aikin, is that "It comes down to us, worn down, enfeebled, and fettered" (*EANHP*, p. 3), that is, through a long process of servile imitation and senseless copying of imagery and figures the language of poetry no longer possesses any life of its own.

Novelty, decides Aikin, provides the only antidote to such enfeebled, decaying language since only novelty can introduce new materials into the stock of poetry; indeed, given the sorry state of poetic language, he considers novelty even more important than genius. Genius will usually make language suit its needs and capacities, will usually vivify tradition and convention through an almost alchemical process of transformation, but genius often cannot offer much to other writers precisely because it transcends the normal run: to try and follow genius is to fall into the same old trap of imitation. Aikin therefore argues that writers must resist the urge to copy the language of the truly sublime poets. Rather, they must "enquire what source is capable of affording" (*EANHP*, p. 4) novelty. Like Thomson and the other writers who we have discussed, he looks to nature as the most obvious source for new ideas and images, to "the grand and beautiful objects which nature every where profusely throws around us" (*EANHP*, p. 4). The immensity and the complexity of nature should provide an endless source of new and intriguing ideas, but Aikin remarks that "it is the store which of all others [the poet] has most sparingly touched," a claim which admittedly sounds "extraordinary" (*EANHP*, p. 4) but evidence for it lays open to anyone who pays the merest attention to the modern poet's use of descriptive poetry.

Aikin, in fact, feels "certain that supineness and servile imitation have prevailed to a greater degree in the description of nature, than in any other part of poetry" because he finds that descriptive poetry "has degenerated into a kind of phraseology, consisting of combinations of words which have so long been coupled together, that . . . they are

become inseparable companions" (*EANHP*, p. 5).<sup>147</sup> Clearly, this hackneyed use of descriptive language would persist as long as the modern poet continued to ignore nature, continued to draw upon other writers for his material instead of upon his own impressions.<sup>148</sup> However, while servile imitation leads to a lack of various and dynamic imagery, modern writers fall into other habits of mind which detract from the force of description. Even when modern poets introduce natural objects into their poetry, "It is no less common to find their descriptions faint, ill characterized; the properties of things mistaken, and incongruous parts employed in the composition of the same picture. This is owing to a too cursory and general survey of objects, without exploring their minuter distinctions and mutual relations" (*EANHP*, pp. 9-10). If a writer fails to "habituate himself to view the several objects of nature minutely," to search for similarities, differences, uniqueness, then he will fail to produce description and imagery which possess both vividness and accuracy, the lack of which "constantly attend every writer of inferior rank" (*EANHP*, p. 11). Just as the artist must study anatomy and proportion to "produce a just and harmonious representation of the human frame," so too must the descriptive poet first "habituate himself to view the several objects of nature minutely, and in comparison with each other"; otherwise, he "must ever fail in giving his pictures the congruity and animation of real life" (*EANHP*, pp. 10-11). Aikin not surprisingly can see no other way of rectifying weak descriptions and improving the overall vitality of poetry than for poets to undertake "accurate and attentive observation, conducted upon somewhat of a scientific plan" (*EANHP*, p. 10).<sup>149</sup>

How, though, would this scientific plan of study lead to inspired poetry, or to lyric poetry? The suppression of emotion which such a method entails would seem quite inimical to the pursuit of poetry. Eighteenth-century writers were, however, capable of making the necessary synthesis--at least in their prefatory arguments and in their poetical statements regarding the process of inspiration. Husbands includes in his *Miscellany* a long poem with the simple title of "The Country." The poem, in almost all respects entirely

conventional, expatiates at large on the joys of country life, on the moral purity of heart generally found among the inhabitants of the country, and on the freedom to meditate when nurtured by the peaceful surroundings, as compared to the city where "Scenes of Pageantry / Deceive" and "cringing Parasites salute / The Thresholds of the falsely Great" (*PSH*, p. 198). Whereas the city constantly tempts us with its bustle and business and superficial pleasures, all of which deadens our passions and our intellects, in the country "We talk / With Nature, and her wondrous Footsteps trace / Thro' all Creation," a freedom which opens up the mind to grasp "the bounteous Source of All" (*PSH*, p. 205). The writer begins his poem with an apostrophe to Urania, the Muse of Astronomy, calling her to carry him to her "sacred Haunts," in which, "smit with the love immense / Of Song celestial," he can "indulge the Vision of the sacred Maid" (*PSH*, p. 197). Once the mind achieves openness and visionary power, a mysterious state of excitement follows: the writer feels as if "ev'ry Sense / Is sweetly snatch'd away, transported, lost," that is, this experience takes him into a realm wherein he feels "sacred Extasies" (*PSH*, p. 205).<sup>150</sup> The poet should, moreover, consider this his penultimate happiness. The highest happiness is reserved for him who learns

From an attentive View of Nature's works  
Their bounteous, great, and wise Original!  
Who soars, upon Devotion's wings up-born,  
To Heav'n.

(*PSH*, p. 205)

Interestingly, at least in light of the earlier discussion about the fictionalizing urge of poetry, the anonymous author of "The Country" claims that in this heightened state the perceiver easily imagines the countryside populated by "Seraphs, Genii, all th'immortal Sons / Of Heav'n" (*PSH*, p. 206).

This whole transformative experience occurs precisely because the country frees the mind and imagination: the poet "enjoys the sacred Muse" (*PSH*, p. 205), an enjoyment which erupts in praise of God, in the desire to sing "thy Praise . . . / Great Being" (*PSH*, p. 206). Importantly, while the opening apostrophe suggests a conventional epic movement,

the writer steers away from an epic sensibility into a lyric one: the poem details the writer's experience of feelings produced from solitary experience of a natural setting. Clearly, as the feelings expressed here suggest, and as do, say, Bowden's claim noted earlier that a "*Pindaric* breaks" from him when he contemplates nature, the observation of natural objects initiated a movement in the poet's imagination which parallels that which takes place, or was thought to take place, in a typical lyric experience. In other words, we can discern in the various and varying debates about description, rhyme, measure, and so forth, steady progress towards an eighteenth-century lyric ethos.

Although Edward Young's two companion odes, "To the King" and "Ocean. An Ode," published in 1728, offer little more than nationalistic panegyrics on Britain's status as a sea-power ("A truly-*British* Theme I sing") and familiar didactic exhortation ("The publick scene / Of harden'd men / Teach me, O teach me to despise!"), his accompanying *Discourse on Ode* makes a number of observations about the poetic ethos of the lyric writer which deserve notice.<sup>151</sup> Like Congreve and others, Young noticed that a large, eclectic tribe of writers were penning lyric poems, and he worries about their lackadaisical attitude to the form. Of this kind of poetry Young would not think himself "*Poet* enough intirely to rely on *Inspiration* for [his] Success in it" (*OO*, p. 14), but far too many writers misjudged the nature of the form, deluded into thinking that inspiration unfettered could somehow generate a sublime ode. On the contrary, the poet must pay careful attention to the type of poem meant to provide the vehicle for his inspired state; doing justice to the uniqueness of his heightened impressions means scrupulously weighing up the many factors which constitute perfection in his choice of poetic kind. On this rests any hope of success: "He that has an *Idea of Perfection* in the Work he undertakes *may* fail in it," says Young, but "he that has not, *must*" (*OO*, p. 15). Inspiration, then, may power a poem, but writing it demands method and discipline, Young regarding a general disregard for method as a primary reason why poetry's reputation as both an art of language and as one of the human sciences continued to deteriorate. What too many modern writers



lacked was an ethos, a vocational ideal which would regulate and discipline their poetic behaviour: lack of vision about their visionary vocation lay at the heart of the contemporary ridicule of poetry. Without a sense of generic perfection a vain poet will continue to pride himself on trivial effusions when, in fact, he evoked nothing but scorn and laughter from proper judges of the poetic art. Accordingly, Young resolves to set down rules of conduct for any writer so bold as to undertake an ode. His guidelines share the behavioural ethos which Bacon, Sprat, Locke, and others prescribed as the norm for an experimental scientist, and which writers like Welsted, Thomson, Husbands, Aikin, and others all saw as necessary for the health of poetry.

Whereas the ancient poet enjoyed (supposedly) a high reputation within his society because he performed a valuable social role and wrote poems which respected the integrity of the genres, Young claims that the modern poet remained in woeful ignorance of his social responsibility and lacked any appreciation of the forms in which he chose to write. This not only makes “the Poetick Clan . . . more *obnoxious to vanity* than Others” (OO, p. 16), but it nurtured a personality which could not accept criticism, could not learn from its errors or improve on its weaknesses:

from Vanity consequentially flows that great sensibility of disrespect, that *quick resentment*, that tinder of the Mind that kindles at every spark, and justly marks them out for the *Genus Irritabile* among mankind. And from this combustible temper, this serious anger for no very serious Things, Things look'd on by most as foreign to the Important Points of Life, as consequentially flows that Inheritance of *Ridicule*, which devolves on them, from Generation to Generation. (OO, p. 16)

To speak plainly, people do not treat poets with disdain because they do not fully comprehend their vital contributions to culture, but the poets themselves who do not understand their responsibility to society: scribbling away in vain ignorance, they reap the predictable rewards of self-delusion. Gaining a proper perspective of their vocation, therefore, would go some way towards recovering their rightful reputation. The first step, naturally, involves a serious study and contemplation of the poetic genres, for “To our having, or not having this *Idea of Perfection* in the Poem we undertake, is chiefly owing the Merit, or Demerit of our Performances” (OO, p. 14). When a poet fully comprehends

the formal attributes of a poem--and can thereby appreciate its full imaginative potential--he will simultaneously obtain a correct judgment of his language rooted in the soil of sense, which sounds like a contradiction in terms. However, as with most eighteenth-century commentators on the lyric Young begins from a definition which relies upon the lyric's ancient heritage and takes seriously the neo-classical conviction about literature's aims. As an ancient type of poetry--if not *the* original genre itself--which arose during a period when language necessarily lacked complex and abstract terms, the lyric utilized a type of primitive but spontaneously vital and pure form of representational speech.

Because Young accepts that antiquity of the lyric, he believes that

so is it more Spiritous, and more remote from Prose than any other, in *Sense, Sound, Expression, and Conduct*. It's thought should be uncommon, sublime, and moral; Its numbers full, easy, and most harmonious; Its expression pure, strong, delicate, yet unaffected; and a *curious felicity* beyond other Poems; Its conduct should be rapturous, somewhat abrupt, and immethodical to a vulgar Eye. That apparent order, and connection, which gives form and life to *some* compositions, takes away the very Soul of *this*. Fire, elevation, and select thought, are indispensable; an humble, tame, and vulgar Ode is the most pityful error a pen can commit. (*OO*, pp. 18-19)

By counterpoising lyric expression ("pure, strong, delicate, yet unaffected") to that of prose, Young implicitly accepts that the clear, concise, and simple prose style of the new scientists effectively set the agenda for all representations of natural phenomena. Moreover, he appears to recognise that this style presented the poet with a competing style of representation which threatened to efface the poet's historical role as mediator between scientist, society, and nature which Sidney stressed, putting his function as the praiser of nature in danger. Young carefully scouts a way out of this morass, holding firm to the view that the lyric style of language could both satisfy new-science demands about language and representation and complement it: lyric language could--just as Sidney said it should--move those who might resist the language of science. The underlying aim of the lyric's expressive ardour, he explains, was first and foremost to "a little startle some apprehensions" by showing "objects in their natural lustre"; whatever else one might think about the lyric, this capacity to reveal objects constituted "the genuine character, and true

merit of the *Ode*" (OO, pp. 19-20). The real value of the ode--its ability to break through the encrusted shell of custom to awaken the deadened senses--lies in its ability to disturb those "Men of cold Complexions" whose eyes can no longer bear the sight of nature's brightness. Thus the dual process of startling the mind and raising emotions to a sublime level helps to fulfil the main purpose of all poetry--to instruct and delight.

However, it would be wrong to assume that inspired expression alone will necessarily produce a great or sublime ode. As in other types of poetry, where judgment must hold the reins of the imagination, so too in the ode; since all "the fairest Offspring of the human mind" (OO, p. 21) share this tutelage, so with the ode. Nevertheless, Young feels that lyric poetry differs from other types of composition, and in this difference lies its superiority as a poetic genre: in the ode "the *Imagination*, like a very beautiful Mistress, is indulged in the appearance of domineering; tho the *Judgment*, like an Artful Lover, in reality, carries its point; and the less it is suspected of it, It shews the more masterly conduct, and deserves the greater commendation" (OO, p. 21). To support this view, he affirms that Pindar displayed "as much Logick at the bottom, as *Aristotle*, or *Euclid*" (OO, p. 20). Of course, Young does not mean to suggest here that the lyric would benefit from a too logical use of language, especially as most commentators stressed that the delight afforded by the lyric lay in its peculiar use of a wild figurative language. He therefore enumerates the various types of diction which the lyric accommodated: pure, sweet, solid, graceful, natural, and so forth. Equally important, its images were bold, sublime, shocking, striking, and the like; its subjects manifold, involving a full range of emotions and moods. This range and combination of elements made the lyric superbly suited to meet the expressive tastes of eighteenth-century readers.

Indeed, like Coward and other lyric analysts, Young emphasizes that the "Spiritous" and emotional features of lyric language permitted a wide variety of measures, a freedom which opened up great possibilities for the poet to shape his diction to his thoughts. Although accepting, like Sheffield, that neither ancient nor modern practice made rhyme a

necessary feature of a poem, Young saw no reason to exclude rhyme from lyric poetry. The poet must choose what best fits the subject of the poem and treat it accordingly, always making "Rhyme consistent with as perfect *Sense*, and *Expression*, as could be expected" (OO, p. 26). The aim, above all, was to write a poem which achieved an overall affect of harmony but "without the least sacrifice of expression, or of sense" (OO, p. 26). In other words, Young wants to define carefully the nature and purpose of lyric freedom, bringing under control the instinct for poetic excess in order that writers served their vocation with appropriate seriousness. Young's programme suggests a parallel with the new scientists' doctrine of intellectual freedom: just as they constrained their freedom with specific intellectual, linguistic, and behavioural ideals which directed research to higher social purposes, so Young (along with most other lyric theorists) effectively delimits the lyric poet's freedom.

In fact, just as Sprat warned scientists to regulate their research by the limitations of the phenomena, generating conclusions based solely on testable experiments, Young asserts that poets who understood the lyric genre would see that their subject matter should govern any and all tendencies to excessive imagery, diction, conceptualization, and so forth. In keeping with a man who would later write an essay on original composition, he sees that in order to discover the limits of the genre the poet should strive after "somewhat of an Original Spirit" (OO, p. 27), even if true originality might prove impossible. If, unlike a bookish imitation, a work of original poetry would exude an aura of "true Life" (OO, p. 27), it would, after all, need to draw upon the writer's real experiences and feelings. As with other contemporary theorists, Young accents the poet's need to reflect carefully upon the type and extent of imitation required in the lyric: while other species of poetry might dictate an exact imitation of ancient models to meet with success, the case with the lyric was otherwise. The lyric poet, says Young, must regard imitation of the ancients in light of a simple but by no means easy rule. He must "imitate their example in the general *motives*, and fundamental *methods* of their working," but he must not follow

them "in their *works* themselves" (OO, p. 27). In other words, the modern lyric poet should attempt similar subject matter in his poems, he should study the formal organizational principles of ancient lyrics, but he should invent his own images, use his own language, and express his own thoughts and feelings. The ancient models might show how to organize certain kinds of emotional experience, they might suggest the types of figures which were most effective in certain moods, and they might even indicate how to catch the lyric fire, but they did not dictate the poet's imaginative engagement with the subject of his poetry. To exercise lyric freedom and perhaps win success in this form, Young argues, needed "a due *deference* for the great Standards of Antiquity" (OO, p. 27) but not subjection to their achievements. Doubtless, Bacon and all the experimental scientists who followed in his steps would have agreed with Young.

The observations of Coward, Andrews, and Young indicate an important element in early eighteenth-century theorizing about the lyric genre. Its rootedness in the experience of nature, its use of a simple, yet dignified and elevated (even sublime) language, its descriptive and imagistic licence, and its capacity to function as a vehicle for religious praise--these aspects proved valuable for conflating the hegemonic ideals of the new science with the lyric genre's expressive potential, and without undermining either the classical or Christian hegemonies. In the face of competition from science poets could use the lyric genre to satisfy the representational demands of science and still make use of the poetic resources of language; moreover, decorum could be maintained because the classical heritage of the lyric sanctioned bold imagery, nervous metaphors, abrupt transitions, and so forth. If, for instance, the descriptions or images built logically towards it, that is, they were appropriate to the spirit or sense of the poem, the poet could pursue a sequence of imaginative visions based upon the experience of nature and invoke the use of non-human forms: genii, seraphs, and so forth. Likewise, the rapturous episode could induce a state of mind in which allegorical figures would appear: nature, beauty, pity, fear, and so forth. The allegory or personification would then convey the moral or didactic meaning of the experience. The ancients, however, furnished no examples of

how to write a poem such as a descriptive and allegorical ode, and this raised important generic issues which needed resolving, particularly for those poets who took seriously the command that imitation of the ancients constituted their primary poetic task.

Richard Shepherd provides a good example of a poet who sees when and how the past can offer help, but also when it cannot, especially when it seems clear that the old form is being made to carry the freight of a new mode of experience. Just as Campion went back to ancient writers to sanction his choice of subject matter in his *Ayres*, so too does Shepherd. His Preface to *Odes, Descriptive and Allegorical* (1761) points out that Horace's *Art of Poetry* stipulated that "THE *proper Subjects of Lyrick Poetry are . . . the Exploits and Triumphs of Heroes, Love's Cares, and the free Joys of Wine.*"<sup>152</sup> Yet this narrowly prescribed range of subject matter conflicted with Horace's actual practice in his poems, which often treated moral and sentimental issues (as did other classical authors), and Shepherd takes this as sufficient authority for the range and content of his poems.

However, the discovery that Horace's practice differed from his critical decrees could permit the modern poet some leeway in treating various types of subject matter does not by itself solve all Shepherd's problems. When he turns from Horace to Pindar's example Shepherd finds that, unlike the Pindaric ode which "*has its foundation in Fact and Reality, that Fact worked up and heightened by a studied Pomp and Grandeur of Expression,*" a descriptive and allegorical lyric "*is built intirely upon Fancy*" (*ODA*, p. iv). Whereas a Pindaric ode would employ some historical or ritual event as a focal point, Shepherd correctly sees that the type of ode emerging in the eighteenth century put a high premium on the poet's visionary experience of nature. Yet by taking the advice of critical wisdom to lean upon ancient models, the modern subjected himself to a labyrinth of constraints: not only can the poem at hand differ in many ways from the ancient model, but ancient and modern worldviews--their respective imaginative tempers, one might say--were premised upon radically contrasting experiences of nature, on a differing set of epistemological assumptions. Thus, if the type of subject-matter which informs Pindaric

poetry “*not only admits of, but requires bold digressions, abrupt and hasty Transitions*” (*ODA*, p. iii), that of the newly-emerging descriptive and allegorical ode did not necessarily rely upon them to the same extent, and certainly not for the same reasons. True, the modern poet’s vision supposedly resulted from the powerful and sublime force of nature-- and it might therefore be expected to employ similar heightened language and abrupt transitions as the Pindaric--but Shepherd finds it difficult to smooth over the contradictions between ancient and modern views about poetry and language: notably, the modern demand that language correspond to or imitate the subject-matter of a poem. On the one hand, because the modern lyric focuses on natural imagery, “*Ease and Simplicity of Diction are its peculiar Characteristics*” (*ODA*, p. iv). On the other hand, eighteenth-century theory valued the capacity of a lyric fancy to create allegorical creatures (so important for instructing and delighting). How, then, could the poet maintain a language rooted in the experience of nature? How could the language of the descriptive and allegorical ode, however fanciful, attain sublimity and still make sense? Shepherd offers no answers.

The problem does not disappear; rather, it becomes both more confused and more sharply delineated. Shepherd’s dilemma draws attention to a growing awareness of the demands which the linguistic code of the new science made upon representational values, and many writers opted for a rigorous application of this code to poetic language. Their reasons for doing so remain complex and often obscure, though in most cases a desire to rehabilitate the language of poetry lies at the heart of their rigour. Where a cold, straitlaced temper (a proof of prosiness some might say) seems to condition a critic’s observations about allegories, fictions, and so forth, a closer look reveals a deep concern to rescue poetry from the scribblers and return it to the serious votaries of poetry.

Both John Scott and John Aikin, for instance, take a hard line on the use of allegorical or mythical figures, especially when used without clear thought or careful development. Scott censures both Denham and Pope for their use of pagan deities, or as

he calls it, for making any "Comparison with a non-entity."<sup>153</sup> To introduce such deities by way of comparison, he argues, "surely cannot elevate a real object," and in true patriot fashion adding that "The mythological fables of Atlas, and the towery crown of Cybele, bear no relation, and add no dignity, to an English hill or palace" (*CESP*, p. 12). Indeed, Scott upbraids Denham especially for presenting "a tedious enumeration of supposed qualities, illustrated by a string of far fetched and unnatural comparisons" which in no way come "as nearly as possible" (*CESP*, p. 19) to an accurate description of Cooper's Hill.

Such literalness doubtless sounds rather too obtuse, too unpoetic, missing the spirit and aim of poetic representation, and committing all the worst errors of a Lockean-inspired evaluation of poetic language, but Scott's indignation deserves more of a hearing. When he turns to Pope's *Windsor Forest*, Scott lays his cards out on the table and they amount to more than mere bluff. He notes that for a poet "To describe graphically and poetically the discriminating peculiarities of any particular situation, requires superior abilities" (*CESP*, p. 72), and he willingly allows Pope a huge fund of such ability. However, when he analyses the literal purpose of Pope's description, its logical and strictly communicative role, he finds that it fails to achieve these ends: "To compare it [Windsor] to a number of other places, of different character, is certainly no very difficult business. Windsor was before compared to Eden, it is now compared to Olympus; but the man who has never seen Windsor, can receive no idea of its appearance from these comparisons" (*CESP*, p. 72). For Scott, in other words, the apparent poetical beauty of Pope's substitutions cannot overrule his demand that poetry fulfil certain basic criteria of sense, and he not insensibly sees these criteria as ones set by poetry itself. In the same vein, he criticizes the use of similes and metaphors. Similes "are sometimes employed to great advantage" (*CESP*, p. 282) but not always, especially when writers draw too many easy and inconsistent resemblances between things; metaphors add much beauty to poetry but he regards metaphor as "an *ignis fatuus*, that leads many a poet into the bog of nonsense" (*CESP*, p. 284). Similarly, Scott accepts that



"The prosopopoeia is a figure less liable to abuse than the metaphor, but it is frequently abused" (*CESP*, p. 355). Examples of good usage Scott finds in Gray, Collins, and Thomson: these writers show great skill and acuity in the ways that they forge sense and poetic language. They rarely make the mistake of being "defective in correctness" (*CESP*, p. 356). Again, Scott's demand for correctness does not mean that he could not read sensitively or with imagination. Praising Gray's *Elegy*, for instance, he finds "Poetical boldness, carried to its utmost classical limit . . . Some of the images are so uncertainly marked, that we scarcely know whether they were intended for natural objects or allegorical personages" (*CESP*, p. 216), a feat of representational writing which he considers of the highest merit.

Aikin, a writer who wanted the poet to undertake scientific training as a means of rescuing descriptive poetry from its boring sameness, shares Scott's anxieties about the excessive and unthinking use of allegory, mythic figures, and compound images. Aikin accepts that "fictions of some kind have been justly accounted the very soul of poetry, and cannot be rejected without depriving it of its choicest ornaments" (*EANHP*, p. 31), but he also feels that the rationale for this type of poetic language requires clarification at the bar of criticism. He asks, therefore, what gives rise to this type of imagery and what could be done to ensure that it does not subvert the high expressive aims of poetry.

Drawing (it would seem) upon Sir William Jones's ideas about the nature of Arabian and Indian poetry, Aikin puts forward the argument that "THE genius of eastern poets, bold, ardent, and precipitate, was peculiarly averse to precision and accuracy" (*EANHP*, p. 11). Motivated by a strong emotional response to some sublime natural object, these poets "often seem entirely to lose sight of the train of thought which the proposed subject would seem naturally to suggest" (*EANHP*, p. 12). Like Scott, Aikin sees that emotional outpourings such as those exhibited in these poets shares directly in the poetical spirit, "an exuberance of that fire which constitutes the very essence of poetry" (*EANHP*, p. 16). Indeed, says Aikin, when we understand how the fictions and the beautiful images of

poetry take life and force from the real objects of nature, how the language of poetry itself depends upon the fictionalizing and imaging of nature, then it seems only reasonable that we should indulge and venerate them. Thus, the poet should remain free to nurture his emotions and present them in a language which truly represents their full power.

A lack of emotional restraint, however, does not constitute a problem for modern poets, Aikin finds, but rather a "Want of knowledge, attention, or discernment" (*EANHP*, p. 16). Modern poets do not suffer from any lack of emotional motivation in their poetry: rather, they require greater rigour and a more disciplined application to principles of composition. Worse, as long as poets continued to imitate or copy fictions and allegorical figures from outmoded systems of mythology and so on, trading on the inventions of others, they would fail to win renown or respect for their poetry. Thus, while Aikin can appreciate that careful and tasteful imitation forms an important, even elegant, element of the poet's art, he refuses to countenance that poetical beauty in itself can derive from any source other than nature; until poets governed their use of fictions and imagery by principles of truth, there remained little hope that poetry could take its rightful place amongst the other sciences. If, says Aikin, writers could adopt "this unquestionable principle, that nothing can be really beautiful which has not truth for its basis" (*EANHP*, pp. 24-25), if they could rely on nature for their images and ideas, and if they could

reflect on the danger of suffering falsehood and error habitually to intrude even in matters of the slightest importance; we shall scarcely give our assent to a licence, as unnecessary as it is hazardous. A modern writer can lose nothing by this rigour; for since both true and false wit have so long been employed upon these topics, every thing brilliant or ingenious which they can suggest, must have long since been exhausted; and the revival of them at present is as much a proof of barren invention as of false taste. (*EANHP*, p. 25)

In keeping with this principle of truth and beauty in composition (a principle which, given Aikin's thorough grounding in experimental science, likely owes something to the new science), Aikin would compel the modern writer to pay greater attention to the actual aim of a particular poem. An awareness of precisely what any particular part of a poem should accomplish would go far to bringing a justness and accuracy to imagery. Thus, "WHERE the professed intention of the poet is the description of natural objects, it cannot be

doubted that every fabulous idea should be religiously avoided" (*EANHP*, p. 26), especially since "it is the business of every figure of comparison either to illustrate or to enforce the simple idea, it is certainly requisite that they should be founded upon circumstances to which the mind of the reader can assent; otherwise it can produce little effect" (*EANHP*, p. 28). Indeed, Aikin feels so strongly about the need for poets to show greater accuracy in the description of natural objects that he suggests that "Perhaps, in a modern writer we should require an adherence to truth, even in the representation of those higher and less obvious parts of the economy of nature which come under the survey of philosophy" (*EANHP*, p. 29). After all, he adds, because "The Copernican theory of the solar system has been now long enough established to take place of the Ptolemaic even in poetical allusion," it does not seem too much to ask that "the sun, tranquilly seated in the centre of its vast dependencies, cheering, invigorating, and animating the whole, may on every occasion of sublime imagery, supercede the chariot of Phoebus, for ever painfully dragged round the globe we inhabit" (*EANHP*, pp. 29-30). Not every poet, of course, would care to follow Aikin's advice. Christopher Smart, for example, refused to take new scientific discoveries into account if they disagreed with his religious beliefs. Karina Williamson points out that an acquaintance with empirical science and its achievements did not guarantee acceptance of it as a mode of truth-finding: "Smart's habit of mind, in fact, was *fundamentally* unscientific. In so far as scientific evidence supported his metaphysical preconceptions he was happy to accept it; where evidence conflicted with his preconceptions he dismissed it with cavalier disdain."<sup>154</sup> In any case, no number of writers who shared Smart's position should obscure Aikin's basic concerns, which remain firmly on the side of a more vital poetry--Aikin wants the poet to convince and to move his reader, wants the poet to integrate emotion, mind, and imagination into a language capable of achieving the greatest possible effects. As Aikin says elsewhere, "*It is not enough that poetry does not disgust, it ought to give raptures.*"<sup>155</sup>

Indeed, some six years prior to the publication of his *An Essay on the Application of Natural History to Poetry* Aikin published *Essays on Song-Writing* (1772), a work which probably motivated the sentiments of the later essay. The analysis which Aikin carries out in his *Essays on Song-Writing* indicate that he considered the lyric a major genre with wide appeal, and four more editions of the work provide more confirmation of the growing interest in the form. Aikin observes that because the song itself belongs to a minor mode a great deal of confusion surrounded its nature as a composition, obscuring the functions of its various generic elements and hindering a full appreciation of its poetical potential. Like many other writers, he hopes to gain his bearings by looking at the roots of poetry, at its bare elements in their most primitive states. Not surprisingly, then, he notes that "THE original poetry of all nations must have been very much confined to the description of external objects, and the narration of events. This is a necessary consequence of the barrenness of infant language with regard to abstract ideas, and is confirmed by the remains of antiquity which have reached us" (*ESS*, pp. 3-4). Unlike the many critics who wanted to define the lyric as the original of all poetry, however, he does not want to ascribe to the song a lineage more ancient than that of epic or drama: he simply makes use of this point to establish the descriptive bedrock of all poetry.

Aikin contends that the really best examples of epic and drama, as well as pastoral, "have been the spontaneous growth of a rude and uncultivated soil," whereas the various modes of lyric "have never flourished without the acquired richness in the soil and the fostering hand of art" (*ESS*, pp. 1-2).<sup>156</sup> Such poetry concerns heroic events, pastoral matters, or the effects of passion in human acts, and it focuses on descriptions and beautiful images. As far as Aikin can tell, in such a plain and linguistically barren state "all is simple and natural, and poetry so far from being the art of fiction, is the faithful copyist of external objects and real emotions" (*ESS*, p. 6). In short, since almost every critic persistently accepted that the lyric genre evolved to fulfil the highest moral and intellectual purposes--to sing the praises of nature and God--Aikin merely makes the theory more

conducive to his sense of the natural growth of the mind and of civilization. Indeed, in pushing the accepted theory of the lyric genre in this direction he manages to show that precisely those imaginative parts of poetry which many saw as its soul--fictions and figures--evolved as part of the lyric response to nature.

Aikin makes a distinction, therefore, between a type of poetry like epic or pastoral which more or less faithfully represent objects and events, and that of the lyric, a type of poetry which makes greater use of the imagination. This more imaginative application of the mind he considers entirely natural and necessary, a factor in the development of higher states of intellection:

the mind of man cannot long be confined within prescribed limits; there is an internal eye constantly stretching its view beyond the bounds of natural vision, and something new, something greater, more beautiful, more excellent, is required to gratify its noble longing. This eye of the mind is the imagination--it peoples the world with new beings, it embodies abstract ideas, it suggests unexpected resemblances, it creates first, and then presides over its creation with absolute sway.

(*ESS*, pp. 6-7)

This distinction, that the lyric impulse introduces the use of fiction into poetry, paves the way for Aikin to make a further and more striking partition of the poetic processes.

Aikin notes that the two different forms of representation, the natural and the fictional, will determine the type of effects which a poem or a part of a poem can produce, and this applicability extends to the two primary aims of poetry, to instruct and to delight. He conceives of these two terms in a specific way, ascribing elements to both which relate to the general matter of the genre and to the more specific function of the poem's language. For Aikin, instruction always includes the notion of moving the reader to some practical end, while delight always includes the concepts of beauty and surprise, of raising the reader to a higher intellectual state of apprehension. Thus, says Aikin, when a poet works in, say, epic or drama, both forms in which education constitutes the primary aim of the matter, "whatever is designed to move the passions cannot be too natural and simple," and similarly, "when the professed design of the poet is to paint the beauties of nature and the rural landscape of pastoral life, he must give as great an air of reality as possible to his piece, since an ill imitation necessarily produces disgust" (*ESS*, pp. 7-8).

Thus, in compositions where fidelity to experience and to history automatically set representational standards, and whenever a form guides the listener to a specific type of pleasure, the poet cannot make much use of the full poetic resources of language, of elevated figures, metaphors, allegories.

When, however, the poet wants to elicit a response to nature that raises the thoughts of the listener to a transcendental realm beyond immediate sense, then must he exploit poetic language to the full. As Aikin puts it, "when the aim is to elevate and surprise, to gratify a love of novelty and the pleasing luxury of indulging the fancy, all the powers of fiction must be set at work, and the imagination employed without controul to create new images and discover uncommon resemblances and connexions" (*ESS*, p. 8). This process of poetic creation, activated by the specific aims of the poem, constitutes the lyric's claim to major genre status. Strongly rooted in the soil of sense, sharing the descriptive virtues of a primitive expressionism, and permitted the freedom to expatiate on the sublime and transcendent relationships of human, nature, and God, the lyric required a high degree of both art and imagination. Thus, the writer who wishes

rather to please and surprise than to move, will ransack heaven and earth for objects of brilliant and unusual comparison with every circumstance relating to the passion itself or its object. He will not value sentiment as the real offspring of an emotion, but as susceptible of ingenious turns, striking contrasts and pleasing allusions. He will not compose from the heart but the head, and will consult his imagination rather than his sensations. This quality is peculiarly termed wit, and a just taste for it is never acquired without a considerable degree of national refinement. (*ESS*, pp. 8-9)

In this one dense statement Aikin brings together various threads of critical thinking about the relationships between sense experience, imagination, and wit (judgment), and he rounds it off with a quite typical expression of pro-modernism. Later in his *Essays* Aikin makes the observation cited in the first chapter of this study that "The graver and sublimer strains of the Lyric muse are exemplified in the modern ode," and he supplements this remark by noting that modern poets had developed "a species of composition which admits of the boldest flights of poetical enthusiasm, and the wildest creations of the imagination, and requires the assistance of every figure that can adorn language, and

raise it above its ordinary pitch" (*ESS*, p. 20). When Aikin several years later publishes his *An Essay on the Application of Natural History to Poetry*, he had already developed his ideas about what constituted the basic elements of good poetry, and what of great, and the lyric comprised all of them.

Like Aikin, John Pinkerton finds the lyric genre a model genre, and what he says about it makes some significant modifications to eighteenth-century lyric theory. What he succeeds in doing merits some praise since he formulates one of the better arguments in favour of careful study of the ancient forms, showing that many of the confusions about what elements belong in a lyric arise because theorists fail to distinguish the different gradations of lyric experience. Pinkerton, moreover, clearly considers the lyric a major genre. Of all the contemporary literary subjects deserving of critical attention, he feels that surely an inquiry into the lyric ranked uppermost. Criticism needed to establish just what exactly constituted "the spirit of lyric poetry," and when it managed to do that it could more rationally determine "its discriminations from other kinds of poetry" (*LL*, p. 33). The need for this analysis strikes him as absolutely vital because of the importance of this type of poetry and because "Those who have even pretended to write in this style have often betrayed perfect ignorance of the very principles of so exquisite a mode of composition" (*LL*, p. 33). He goes on to define two distinct types of lyric.

The ancient Greek lyric provides the only source for reflection upon the genre, so far as Pinkerton can see, since they "alone . . . are the masters, and their works the models of this kind of poetry" (*LL*, p. 33). Looking carefully at the structure and content of the ancient Greek lyric, Pinkerton notes that it "divides itself, in resemblance to nature, into two kinds, the sublime, and the beautiful" (*LL*, p. 33); each of these two kinds makes particular demands upon language; and each allows the poet to organize that language in a peculiar fashion, which then constitutes its fundamental appeal.<sup>157</sup> The subject matter of the sublime lyric, for instance, permits "sudden transitions, bold and abrupt metaphors, a regular cadence, and a warm impetuous glow of thoughts and language" (*LL*, p. 34), and

much of the poem's sublimity derived from the movement of emotion and thought as mirrored in its transitions. Coward certainly reacted strongly to such transitions, stating that of all the rules which he knew that cultivated better poetry "I do affirm among the rest, *Digressions*, to be the Life and greatest Beauty of Poetry" (*LPD*, p. 49). In the type of lyric which he terms the beautiful, Pinkerton finds that "Harmony of cadence, and beauty and warmth of expression, seem the principal. Above all, uncommon elegance in terms of language, and in transition, are so vital to this kind of lyric poetry . . . that I will venture to say they constitute its very soul" (*LL*, pp. 34-35). Philip Francis, in his *A Poetical Translation of the Works of Horace* (1753), offers similar arguments as Pinkerton. Francis observes that the lyric permits "a pleasing Variety, to which no other Poetry can pretend," and it ranges over "a Variety of Subjects" in which "is agreeably maintained a Variety of Numbers, and they have both contributed to that free, unbounded Spirit, which forms the peculiar Character of Lyric Poetry." For Francis, the lyric's peculiar generic heritage sanctions its "Freedom of Spirit [which] disdains to mark the Transitions."<sup>158</sup> Andrews, we recall, likewise focused on harmony as a particular beauty of lyric poetry. With some justification, then, Pinkerton can assert that before Gray no other English poet paid any attention to either of these aspects of the genre; in fact, in Pinkerton's eyes no poet before Gray, ancient or modern, English or otherwise, managed to surpass or even match Pindar.

Pinkerton seems almost at times to conceive and define poetry in terms of lyric poetry, although it would be risky to say anything determinate about his views--his *Letters on Literature* bristle with contradictions and eccentric proclamations. Certainly he agreed with Gray's feeling that "The true lyric style, with all its flights of fancy, ornaments, and heightening of expression, and harmony of sound, is in its nature superior to every other style."<sup>159</sup> Gray likewise stressed the natural felicity of lyric descriptions and the peculiar beauty of the genre's varying structures, defining expression not as "the mere choice of words, but the whole dress, fashion, and arrangement of the thought" and noting that "it is



the brokenness, the ungrammatical position, the total subversion of the period, that charms me . . . for this is pure poetry, as it ought to be, forming the proper transition, and leading on the mind."<sup>160</sup> Typically, Gray employs a perspective analogy to illustrate that the lyric's form aptly suits its range of content, and particularly its usually short length. The lyric poem can lift the writer to such heights that extended productions become impossible--just as the eye cannot "bear to see all this scene that we constantly gaze upon,--the verdure of the fields and woods, the azure of the sea and skies, turned into one dazzling expanse of gems."<sup>161</sup> For a critic of Pinkerton's complexion, the subject matter of the lyric sanctions a "want of connection" in its development and, indeed, he feels that much of the beauty of the lyric resides in its generic warrant to make connections where none appear to exist. Unfortunately, other than a few positive remarks about the quality of much contemporary lyric poetry, Pinkerton says little more of a critical nature on the topic.

Gilbert West takes up the issue of regularity and the use of transitions in the Pindaric ode in his translation of the *Odes of Pindar* (1749). Following Congreve, he sets out to counter the view that Pindar wrote in irregular numbers and paid little or no attention to the connections between stanzas. Those poets pretending to write a Pindaric imitation actually produced something quite different, or at least a poem which, says West, might at best be termed a "*Caricatura*."<sup>162</sup> The problem according to West goes back to Cowley, whose translations of Pindar, though demonstrating both "Wit and Fire" and written by a man whose "Genius, perhaps . . . was not inferior to that of *Pindar* himself," did not give a true representation of Pindar's poetry; further, all those who proclaimed obedience to the Pindaric muse did not imitate Pindar but simply "mimick'd" (*OP*, sig. A3<sup>v</sup>) Cowley, and they did that poorly. Francis follows West's lead. Cowley's "too great Success," he says, "first gave Pindar's Name to a wild irregular Kind of Versification, of which there is not one Instance in Pindar. All his Numbers are exact, and all his Strophes regular." However, whenever some poet manages to pull off a success, others

quickly run down the same path, trying to imitate the same form and manner but a weak writer: "hath not Strength or Industry sufficient to confine his Rhimes and Numbers to some constant Form, (which alone can give them real Harmony) makes an Art of wandering, and then calls his Work a Pindaric Ode; in which, by the same Justness of Criticism, his Imagination is as wild and licentious, as his Numbers are loose and irregular."<sup>163</sup> West and Francis may have had Sheffield in mind. He describes the ode in terms of abandon and imaginative freedom:

A higher Flight, and of a happier Force  
 Are ODES, the Muses most unruly Horse;  
 That bounds so fierce, the Rider has no rest,  
 But foams at the Mouth, and moves like one *possest*.  
 The Poet here must be indeed inspired,  
 With *Fury* too, as well as Fancy fired.<sup>164</sup>

If, therefore, either a reader or a writer of Pindaric wanted to catch its original flame, they needed to treasure the logical beauty of its structural movement, that form into which the beautiful words went; they ought to study the original and derive their understanding from thence, putting little (or no faith) in the authority of those who lacked any knowledge of Greek history or literature. West, for his part, confesses that he sought information about Pindar and about the nature of Greek poetry from "a learned and ingenious Friend" (*OP*, sig. A4<sup>v</sup>). This learned, historically-grounded account stressed the ordered, ritual function of the ancient ode, defining it as a performance art which involved both singing and dancing: however transcendental the lyric, its basis lay in powerful physical actions.

Drawing upon his friend's historical information West highlights the ancient ode's structural organization: two major stanzas--the strophe and the antistrophe--and a lesser stanza, the epode. Clearly, then, each stanza performed a specific function and each symbolised some aspect of the ancient cosmology. Lyric performance involved singing the strophe at the altars of the gods according to a certain dance step; the antistrophe inverted the dance; the epode was sung standing still. Spectators were expected to equate the strophe with the motions of the higher spheres, the antistrophe with that of the planets, while the epode signified the "*fixed Station and Repose of the Earth*" (*OP*, sig.

A4<sup>v</sup>). West reasons that since dancing and singing accompanied both the strophe and the antistrophe, these stanzas probably resembled church recitative; therefore, both probably involved parallel or counterbalanced structures and verse lines of equal measure. The epode could then be compared to a complete air (a conclusion which supports Champion's views about the ancient lyric). In any case, both the first and second stanzas of the strophe and antistrophe "contained always the same Number and the same kind of Verses. The *Epode* was of a different Length and Measure" (*OP*, sig. B2). Obviously, different occasions would call for odes of differing length, in which case says West the ode "was always divided into *Triplets* or Stanzas, the two first being constantly of the same Length and Measure, and all the *Epodes* in like manner corresponding exactly with each other" (*OP*, sig. B2). In short, the structure of a Pindaric ode should follow a regular and consistent design; even those few which do not employ an epode, or contain just a strophe, use different measures, and run to varying lengths display a high degree of control and regularity.<sup>165</sup>

If the original ode maintained such structural regularity in so many areas, West thinks it unlikely--popular notions to the contrary--that Pindarics employed transitions illogically, a practice which supposedly resulted from the "Wildness of [Pindar's] Imagination" (*OP*, sig. B2<sup>v</sup>). While West does not dispute that Pindar often uses abrupt transitions, he sees them as formal features dictated by the subject matter of the odes. On the one hand, many of the odes celebrate Olympic heroes, conquerors, or warriors: logically, a poet would rarely possess a complete knowledge about the lives of these individuals. He would therefore fill out his poem with other matter related to the subject--family history, the hero's country of birth, a story about the games in which the winning athlete emerged victorious. None of this would appear wild or extravagant either to the subject of the poem or to Pindar's listeners: they would follow the movement of the ode without feeling that Pindar had transgressed the bounds of logic or narrative decorum. Furthermore, whenever the subject dictated a style of expression more elevated

in nature than a run-of-the-mill ode--praise of the gods, for instance--rapid, abrupt transitions would correlate with the movements of passion described in the poem--the natural and deep passions of praise and admiration, of love and devotion--and this would burst forth in a declamatory, elated manner. In either instance, whether as a celebratory ode or as an ode of praise, and whether the lyric utterance conveyed immediate responses and deep emotions extempore, the form followed highly conventionalized and structurally sophisticated patterns. As West puts it:

whoever will consider the Odes of *Pindar* with regard to the Manners and Customs of the Age in which they were written, the Occasions which gave Birth to them, and the Places in which they were intended to be recited, will find little Reason to censure *Pindar* for want of Order and Regularity in the Plans of his Compositions. On the contrary, he will perhaps be inclined to admire him for raising so many Beauties from such trivial Hints, and for kindling, as he sometimes does, so great a Flame from a single Spark, and with so little Fuel. (*OP*, sig. B3-B3')

Properly understood, then, Pindar's poetry exemplified a controlled, methodical technique of composition: its effects unfolded from both experience and art, to which Pindar added "a great deal of Good-sense, many wise Reflections, and many moral Sentences, together with a due Regard to Religion" (*OP*, sig. C). West pointedly remarks that inasmuch as Pindar's character could be drawn from his poetry, it was hardly one that a lazy contemporary poet would wish to emulate.<sup>166</sup>

West's analysis of the ode's formal conventions and its elevated language belongs to a long line of argumentation which, as we have seen, both sanctions the lyric genre as a form which permits latitude and scope for the poet's imaginative rendering of experience but compelled a hard discipline upon that freedom.<sup>167</sup> The critics of the genre were groping towards an awareness of the way that a primitive form rooted in immediate experience could also fulfil the highest claims of poetry and thereby compete seriously as an explainer of science with that contemporary upstart, modern science. In particular, the sense of religious awe excited by nature, the revelation of God's great love and care for humankind as displayed through the workings of nature, demanded a form that licenced a certain type of ecstatic praise. The form needed to follow the contours of an emotional response to an awe-inspiring nature newly revealed by the eye of the new science.<sup>168</sup>

Obviously, this asked poets to walk a critical or theoretical tightrope which balanced both emotion and judgment. Significantly, the poet could walk this tightrope only if the subject or content of the poem represented or imitated real experiences, not just book-learning or copying of the ancients.

The anonymous Preface to Smollett's *Ode to Independence* (1773), for example, focuses on the lyric genre's ability to imitate states of mind and body rather than on its use as a form for explaining philosophical doctrines, although ultimately poetic representation of heightened states of being were expected to point the reader towards some higher moral revelation. In any case, the doctrine of dynamic imitation which we see emerging in the eighteenth century demanded that all poetry have a basis in real experience. The anonymous preface-writer, however, restricts the focus of the lyric more than most of his contemporaries, seeing its main poetic virtue as a vehicle for imitating "violent and ardent passions."<sup>169</sup> Since this aim constituted the special quality of this type of poetry, it followed that each of its major generic elements developed in order to accommodate this ardency. Insofar as it imitated violent passions, poets needed to employ a "bold, various, and impetuous" language, a lyric poem always succeeding best when it displayed "animated sentiments, glowing images, and forms of speech often unusual, but commonly expressive." Thus, if readers found the structure of the lyric somewhat perplexing--it might "appear disordered, and the transitions sudden and obscure"--they should simply accept these as formal features integral to the experience of the genre: if the transitions seemed to lack connection, in reality they were "always natural" because they were always "governed by the movements and variations of the imitated passions." To an audience familiar with Locke's ideas about associationism such an argument would seem neither illogical nor sophistical.

Indeed, the preface-writer pushes this point even farther. The poet who sets about his business by first "preparing the mind by a cool artificial introduction," employing logical arguments or statements of moral principles as a prelude to a more passionate expression, obviously differed noticeably from the lyric writer. Eschewing this practice, the

lyric poet makes his appeal directly through the medium of imagery. Images, metaphors, and associated figures of speech "assail the imagination by an abrupt and sudden impulse; they vibrate through the soul, and fire us instantaneously." In other words, the lyric poet relies upon well-drawn descriptions, and he blends these with finely perceived delineations of the emotional responses which these descriptions excite. Moreover, he does not need to use many of these images because they are "in themselves great and magnificent." Although the writer says little else about the lyric, he emphasises those features which would appeal to his readers: poetry imitates real experience; nature provides the poet with the greatest of all sources of imaginative experience; poetry therefore derives its power from a close, lively, and accurate imitation of real things. Such imitation raises in the reader a strong and pleasurable feeling of the beauty and sublimity of existence, and it thus teaches him to revere the God of all creation.

A final example of an eighteenth-century critic's (and a working lyric poet's) evaluation of the lyric should sufficiently supplement the arguments put forward in this chapter about the lyric's rise to major genre status as part of the hegemonic ascendancy of the new science. John Ogilvie's astute analysis in "An Essay on the Lyric Poetry of the Ancients" (1762) merits reflection not so much for any clear statements which he makes about the relationship between the various ideals of experimental science and the lyric but for the virtually seamless way in which he assimilates into his discussion the epistemological assumptions and standards of his culture. Indeed, he falls into line with the many other critics of the eighteenth century who wanted, first, "to rescue Lyric Poetry from the contempt in which it has been unjustly held by Authors of unquestioned penetration" and, second, who wanted to prove that the genre "is naturally susceptible of the highest poetic Beauty; and that, under proper regulations, it may be made subservient to purposes as beneficial as any other branch of the Art."<sup>170</sup>

Ogilvie's rescue plan begins with an assertion which immediately brings the lyric genre into the fold of the greater genres. Neither form nor specific content give rise to great poetry but the operation of genius, that power which "is the offspring of Reason and

Imagination, properly moderated, and co-operating with united influence, to promote the discovery or the illustration of truth" (*PSS*, p. xxi). What therefore governs a poem's ultimate claim to greatness depends upon the alignment of all these faculties within an individual mind; while they constitute separate and particular forces at work, in the act of creation "it often becomes a matter of the greatest difficulty to prevent them from making mutual encroachments, and from leading to extremes, which are the more dangerous, because they are brought on by an imperceptible progression" (*PSS*, pp. xxi-xxii). Initially, Ogilvie takes care not to overrate any of these powers of mind or to make a blanket judgment about which should lead, which follow. Instead, he notes that different literary forms and different purposes will regulate the structure and the language of a poem. However, the poet's attitude towards these faculties can affect whether or not a poem attains greatness. A poem in which the author allows reason to predominate will exhibit certain features: "sentiments will follow each other in connected succession; the arguments employed to prove any point will be just and forcible; the stability of a work will be principally considered, and little regard will be paid to its exterior ornament" (*PSS*, p. xxii). Certain readers will rank the poem a fine performance based on its orderliness. Yet, says Ogilvie, few will value it beyond that: such a work will not fulfil the great aims of literature because it will "never be productive of general improvement, as attention can only be fixed by entertainment, and entertainment is incompatible with unvaried uniformity" (*PSS*, p. xxii). So, like Aikin and other critics, Ogilvie accepts that a writer must strive for some degree of novelty in language, imagery, and so forth, in those aspects of writing which rely upon the imagination. Yet if a poet wantonly applies imagination to "bestow the graces of ornament indiscriminately, we either find in the general that sentiments are superficial, and thinly scattered through a work, or we are obliged to search for them beneath a load of superfluous colouring" (*PSS*, p. xxii). Somehow, the poet must find a way between the extremes.

Working from a psychological insight into the operations of the mind, Ogilvie argues that most of us come into the world with a strong inclination to one or other tendency, either to favour reason or imagination, and that many writers, fearful of committing the vice of either of these excesses, often end up embracing the other side. Predictably, most writers fail to reach "that perfect poise, which is necessary to constitute consummate excellence" (*PSS*, p. xxiv). That failure, however, does not inhibit writers from claiming that *their* approach alone satisfies the demands of great poetry. No writer can really claim the accolades of correct taste, though Ogilvie observes that the poet "who attempts to combine distant ideas, to catch remote allusions, to form vivid and agreeable pictures, is more apt, from the very nature of his profession, to set up a false Standard of Excellence, than the cool and dispassionate Philosopher" (*PSS*, p. xxiv). At least the philosopher "who proceeds deliberately from position to argument, and who employs Imagination only as the Handmaid of a superior faculty" (*PSS*, pp. xxiv-xxv) will produce a composition which avoids a false taste. Poets can, of course, avoid falling into similar difficulties, but of all the different types of poet, says Ogilvie, "the Lyric Poet is exposed to this hazard more nearly than any other; and that to prevent him from falling into the extreme . . . will require the exercise of the closest attention" (*PSS*, p. xxv).

In order to offer a programme which would help the lyric poet avoid the type of overly excessive imaginative language and imagery which leads to false taste, Ogilvie thinks it necessary "to enquire into the end which Lyric Poetry proposeth to obtain, and to examine the original standards, from which the rules of this art are deduced" (*PSS*, p. xxv)--in other words, he intends to study the classical forms. First, however, he looks to classical criticism to determine what the ancients considered the basic elements of poetry. Following Aristotle, Ogilvie accepts that poetry originates in the combination of "Imitation and Harmony; both of which are natural to the human mind" (*PSS*, p. xxv). Seemingly innate or "originally stamped on the mind" (*PSS*, p. xxvi), both of these give pleasure: this combination of active (imitation) and passive (harmony) governs all poetic



relations. Ogilvie cites Aristotle's definitions of imitation and harmony, and his point of reference here seems significant. He highlights Aristotle's argument that poetic imitation was meant "to represent any subject in a natural manner, whether it hath a real or imaginary existence" (*PSS*, p. xxv). The phrase, "in a natural manner," lays down a primary standard for all forms of imitation. Equally important, Ogilvie focuses on Aristotle's distinction that harmony does not only involve metre and rhythm but embraces "that music of language, which, when it is justly adapted to variety of sentiment or description, contributes most effectually to unite the pleasing with the instructive" (*PSS*, p. xxvi). Any poetics worth its name, then, must attribute to all the various parts of the poetic act a pragmatic end, as well as showing how imitation and harmony contributed to the enduring appeal of poetic language. For the eighteenth century, this matrix was comprehensible in terms of an anthropological analogy.

The conventional anthropology of the time theorized that poetry arose earlier than philosophy based on the analogy of the child of passion and the adult of reason. It was easy enough to conceive of the growth of society by analogy with the growth of each individual of the species; equally convincing, the mind should grow like the body. In the earliest stages of human development, poetry arrives at a degree of perfection as a species before philosophy emerges to bring order, accuracy, and sophistication to expression. Like Cobb before him, Ogilvie remarks that "Experience informs us on every occasion, that Imagination shoots forward to its full growth, and even becomes wild and luxuriant, when the reasoning Faculty is only beginning to open, and is wholly unfit to connect the series of accurate deduction" (*PSS*, p. xxvii). Ogilvie does not condemn this imaginative excess altogether nor its basis in a more primitive response to nature than that of the reasoning mind. He says:

The information of the senses (from which Fancy generally borrows her images) always obtain the earliest credit, and makes for that reason the most lasting impressions. The sallies of this irregular Faculty are likewise abrupt and instantaneous, as they are generally the effects of sudden impulse, *which reason is not permitted to restrain.* (*PSS*, p. xxvii; my emphasis).

This immediacy of response Ogilvie links to our natural, spontaneous love of imitation, and in keeping with the common anthropological theories of the time he concludes that, since imitation constituted an innate quality of the mind, "and as the first inhabitants of the world were employed in the culture of the field, and in surveying the scenery of external Nature, it is probable, that the first rude draughts of Poetry were extemporary effusions, either descriptive of the scenes of pastoral life, or extolling the attributes of the Supreme Being" (*PSS*, p. xxvii). Ogilvie here connects desire and action to show how they form the two poles as it were of the poetic impulse: when experience (sense impressions) excite the fancy, it immediately transforms these into natural description or into praise of the divinity. Accordingly, Ogilvie draws the conclusion that in terms of the development of the respective poetic genres, pastoral largely served as a vehicle for description, lyric for praise of the deity. Thus, as we saw with Thomson, the anthropological theory which Ogilvie follows means that pastoral experience gives way to the lyric desire to praise.

Ogilvie, however, finds it necessary to offer a further explanation for the distinctive evolution of pastoral and lyric. He argues that before the rise of philosophy or science, pastoral reached a state of perfection which science could not improve upon. Because pastoral mainly served to exhibit "simple and lively pictures of common objects and common characters" (*PSS*, p. xxxi), it did not require the services of science to help refine its concepts or images. Not so with the lyric. While the primitive, pre-scientific period of development nurtured the emotional basis of the lyric, its expressive aims were always more abstract than those of pastoral: "The Poet in this branch of his Art proposed as his principal aim to excite Admiration; and his mind, without the assistance of critical skill, was left to the unequal task of presenting succeeding ages with the rudiments of Science" (*PSS*, p. xxxi). Science here means, of course, natural, moral, and metaphysical knowledge and not experimental science--and herein lies the significance of Ogilvie's point. Sidney had argued that the poet needed knowledge of all the sciences: his vocation demanded it. Yet, while the lyric poet in this early stage allowed his fancy to range without restraint throughout both the material and immaterial dimensions, his mind "proceeded

without a guide; and his imagination, like the fiery courser with loose reins, was left to pursue that path into which it deviated by accident, or was enticed by temptation" (*PSS*, p. xxxi). In other words, the lawlessness of lyric praised by so many writers perpetrated a false standard of excellence. The lyric, because it pursued a higher, more complex artistic end--to excite admiration for the deity--required the rein of reason, required a form of discipline. As evidence for this claim, Ogilvie draws upon the classical myth of Orpheus, the poet/philosopher "who taught the knowledge of God, and laid down the rudiments of Science" (*PSS*, p. xxxvi). The poetic powers controlled by Orpheus, says Ogilvie, "leads us naturally to suppose, that his own mind must have not only received from Nature an higher share of intellectual qualities than others, but that these must likewise have been improved by experience and study" (*PSS*, p. xxxvii).

For Ogilvie, Orpheus offers a handy classical paradigm of the first true lyric poet. The figure of Orpheus embodies those qualities of mind and spirit which Sidney considered singularly unique to the poet, and which were essential for him to fulfil his primary task, to teach and delight:

When the Reformer of mankind turned his Lyre, and raised the mind to the contemplation of these sublime objects; accompanying the researches of Philosophy with the irresistible charms of melodious versification; his hearers grew insensibly mild as they listened; their thoughts were exalted by the greatness of his subjects; their ferocity subdued by the sweetness and harmony of his numbers.  
(*PSS*, p. xxxix)

Yet after he establishes this classical precedence for the poet's role as the mediator between man, nature, science, and God, the force behind the growth of civilization, Ogilvie performs a typical eighteenth-century critical manoeuvre, making the classical tradition subservient to the Christian.

Ogilvie argues that Orpheus actually learned his lyric art from the Jewish lyricists, Ogilvie instancing the sublime and inspired poetry of the Old Testament as evidence for his claim. While allowing that the Greek writers produced some striking lyrics, he declares that the bible contains songs of praise which outstrip any classical lyrics. The older historical records of the Jewish people, he notes, indicates that they had brought the song

of praise to a degree of perfection which the Greek simply copied; the Jewish lyricists not only produced lyrics which praised their creator, but they developed the literary form in the direction to which it attained most value. Under their influence the lyric functioned as a means for teaching about God; Ogilvie in fact considers this teaching to constitute the basis of science--the biblical lyrics were "a vehicle to convey the principles of Science" (*PSS*, p. xlvi), that is, they conveyed the principles of order and causation in the universe to a culture in clear and vivid language. As we have seen with other critics in this chapter, the lyric's ability to transform the truths of science into praise of God was one of its prime excellencies, and lyric poets would, we might suppose, be expected to do the same for their contemporary culture.

A catalogue of ancient lyric poets with accompanying illustration helps Ogilvie to distinguish the different forms and uses of language which mark the various lyric types. In the course of a lengthy discussion of these matters, he emphasizes over and over that the emotional basis of the lyric sanctions the use of abrupt transitions, bold digressions, and nervous and sublime descriptions: passion and description go hand in hand. However, the poet should always remember the basic and highest purpose of the lyric--to raise admiration in the listener and lead him to praise the deity. Attending to this purpose required a judicious application of reason. As with so many other eighteenth-century writers, it would be wrong to assume that Ogilvie's conception of reason was simplistic or that he saw its application as always and everywhere the same, an undeviatingly systematic approach to all issues.

After carrying out his historical assessment of the lyric in which he revealed the abuses of ancient poets, Ogilvie turns to the matter of how modern writers should proceed if they hoped to achieve success in this genre. He sets about advising writers about how they could improve their attempts to render lyric experience. In other words, in keeping with the critical predilections of his times, he feels it a necessary part of his job as a critic to offer a few prescriptive remarks. He does not, however, want his reader to think that he wishes to stifle the imagination through rules, and he prefaces his examination of

the possible rules of lyric poetry with the remark that he would not want it thought that he “would wholly repress the excursions of this noble Faculty, or that I would confine its exercise within narrow limits” (*PSS*, p. lxxvi). Indeed, to any one who feels that he does not have a proper grasp of the true nature of the poetic art, Ogilvie adds the rejoinder that “It must be obvious to every person who reflects on this subject, that Imagination presides over every branch of the Poetic Art, and that a certain infusion of her peculiar beauties is necessary to constitute its real and essential character” (*PSS*, p. lxxvi). In light of the primary importance of the imagination in all artistic acts, he goes on to delineate clearly the way that reason functions when the mind is engaged in creating poetry, arguing that whatever

degree of superiority the reasoning Faculty ought ultimately to possess in the sphere of Composition, we are not to consider this power as acting the same part in the work of a Poet, which it should always act in that of a Philosopher. In the performance of the latter, an appeal to reason is formally stated, and is carried on by the process of connected argumentation; whereas, in that of the former, the Judgment is principally employed in the disposition of materials. Thus the Philosopher and the Poet are equally entitled to the character of judicious, when the arguments of the one are just and conclusive, and when the images of the other are apposite and natural. (*PSS*, pp. lxxvii-lxxviii)

In the case of the lyric--always keeping in mind its primary end, to excite admiration--Ogilvie accepts that the imagination or fancy must predominate. Since the lyric poet's subject demands the most exalted feelings and ideas, and since he must try to describe sublime and beautiful objects, “it is the business of Fancy to enliven the whole piece with those natural and animating graces which lead us to survey it with admiration” (*PSS*, p. lxxviii). Thus, rather than a prescriptive catalogue of rules, Ogilvie finds himself offering advice about language and imagery appropriate to lyric poetry.

The lyric poet needs to possess a genius which can create an extensive variety of images and bold transitions which display a “picturesque vivacity” (*PSS*, p. lxxxix). Ogilvie argues that in every case the poet needs to restrain the urge to excessive and illogical usage: he persistently pulls the poet back to what would be accurate, natural, and comprehensible to the reader:

It is therefore the business of the Lyric Poet, who would avoid the censure of composing with inequality, to consider the colouring of which particular ideas are naturally susceptible, and to discriminate properly betwixt sentiments, whose native sublimity requires but little assistance from the pencil of art, and a train of thought, which (that it may correspond to the former) demands the heightening of poetic painting. (*PSS*, p. xcii)

The great danger lies in losing sight of the aim of the poem and taking pleasure in the flight of fancy excited by the poem's object. What the lyric poet needs to avoid at all costs is a forced, derivative, uncontrolled use of language: the expression should need "but little assistance from the pencil of art," a sentiment which the new scientists reiterated time after time. Of course, where the scientist wanted to persuade with clear, naked language, the poet aimed at a different kind of persuasion, though still a version of truth. The scientist and lyric poet shared the same dilemma--how to avoid using the ornaments of language inappropriately. Thus, says Ogilvie, when "a metaphor is hunted down . . . and a description overwrought, its force and energy are gradually lessened, the object which was originally new becomes familiar, and the mind is satiated, instead of being inflamed" (*PSS*, p. xciii). Both scientist and lyricist needed constantly to make language new.

Ogilvie's views about how to sustain a fresh, vibrant, and accurate lyric language, a language initiated by real impressions and responses to nature, views which he held in common with almost all the other writers discussed in this chapter, can be helpfully understood in terms of the linguistic and epistemological ideals of the new science. Much of what critics and other readers saw as valuable and exciting in the lyric genre--aspects such as its capacity for free thought and expression united to discipline and order, its function as a medium of immediately lived experience, its use of both concrete and figurative language to evoke accurate descriptions of natural imagery, its ability to lead the reader to praise of nature and of God, and its function as a vehicle for teaching truth and beauty--the ideals of the new science, now an important force in their culture, would already have predisposed them to value and expect. While other forces working themselves out in eighteenth-century culture effected attitudes to the lyric, we might not be too off-key to say that, thanks to Bacon, Sidney's hopes for the English lyric were

realized--at least, eighteenth-century writers and readers testify that the lyric had come of age.

## ***Chapter Five - Concluding Remarks***

The various critical positions explored in the previous chapter illustrated a variety of ways in which the epistemological and linguistic ideals and values of new-science hegemony might have helped to initiate a new awareness and appreciation of the lyric's expressive potential. Whether they were trying to settle such issues as the appropriate structure of the ode, the types of imagery and figures of speech most natural to lyric experience, the effect of nature on the poet, or the typical pattern of lyric inspiration, most eighteenth-century writers (such as Welsted and Aikin) either appealed directly to the standards of the new science to justify their critical reasoning, or they coded their arguments in terms which made it plausible to argue that their evaluative perspective was informed by the ethos of the new science (Ogilvie and Husbands, for instance). The interpretive and critical benefits of situating the development of the lyric genre in an eighteenth-century culture which valued highly the ideals of the new science would thus appear obvious enough; it may still remain somewhat arguable that the hegemony of science effectively helped to transform attitudes to the lyric genre's potential, lifting it from a minor to a major genre. It did so because the relationship between the new science and lyric experience conflated on yet another plane from those explored earlier: when they figured the scientist's experience of nature, eighteenth-century writers commonly used the same imagery as that for lyric experience. At a primary, formative stage of mental development--that of inspiration--the poet's and the scientist's experience of nature were undifferentiated, taking the same emotional and spatial pattern. This identification of the scientist and the lyric poet may still strike the reader as incongruous--after all, one supposedly aims for objective knowledge, the other for imaginative vision--but it fits easily into an eighteenth-century sensibility which appreciated the pursuit of science as intrinsically aesthetic and implicitly religious. In the final analysis, as I confessed in *Chapter Two*, it would be impossible to prove absolutely that the new science influenced attitudes to the lyric genre, but there seem to me sufficient similarities in many aspects of



the ways in which eighteenth-century writers viewed the experience of science and that of lyric to suggest a plausible relationship.

Henry Pemberton's 1728 work, *A View of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy*, published shortly after Newton's death and including "A Poem on Sir Isaac Newton" by the sixteen-year-old Richard Glover, provides a perfect illustration of this sensibility. The volume attracted an extensive subscription list which included many poets, among them Pope, Watts, and Young, many women, and a great number of clergy. In his introductory remarks to this audience, Pemberton observes that

IT is a just remark, which has been made upon the human mind, that nothing is more suitable to it, than the contemplation of truth; and that all men are moved with a strong desire after knowledge; esteeming it honourable to excel therein; and holding it, on the contrary, disgraceful to err, or be in any way deceived. And this sentiment is by nothing more fully illustrated, than by the inclination of men to gain an acquaintance with the operations of nature; which disposition to enquire after the causes of things is so general, that all men of letters . . . find themselves influenced by it.<sup>1</sup>

Pemberton's point about the mind's natural bent for rational inquiry and the high social value put upon the results of its discoveries sounds much like the rationalist cant which supposedly defines the attitude of all eighteenth-century writers. However, he goes on to offer a view which should, I believe, be considered typical of the whole period, a view which commonly integrates the mind's function with a variety of human values which rely upon a right relation to knowledge. Critically, Pemberton attributes the mind's unceasing interest in the workings of nature--"our desire after knowledge"--as "an effect of that taste for the sublime and the beautiful in things, which chiefly constitutes the difference between the human life, and the life of brutes."<sup>2</sup> In other words, the search for and accumulation of knowledge, however rational, builds towards an aesthetic (and, equally, religious) appreciation of the world, nature, life, God.

Indeed, Pemberton goes on to argue that the reason why the human mind achieved superiority over that of a brute's resided not so much in our rational abilities as in the mind's capacity for "receiving various degrees of delight, where the creatures below us perceive no difference. Hence arises that pursuit of grace and elegance in our thoughts

and actions, and in all things belonging to us, which principally creates employment for the active mind of man."<sup>3</sup> Significantly, in the same type of argument about human nature which the Romantic writers would use as justification for their artistic distinction from their precursors, Pemberton invokes an image of human uniqueness which emphasizes the mind's or soul's desire for beauty and truth:

The thoughts of the human mind are too extensive to be confined only to the providing and enjoying of what is necessary for the support of our being. It is this taste, which has given rise to poetry, oratory, and every branch of literature and science. From hence we feel great pleasure in conceiving strongly, and in apprehending clearly, even where the passions are concerned. Perspicuous reasoning appears not only beautiful; but, when set forth in its full strength and dignity, it partakes of the sublime, and not only pleases, but warms and elevates the soul.<sup>4</sup>

This view of the elevating process of mental activity has strong echoes of Thomson's defence of poetry, and the similarity of Pemberton's aesthetic theory of the mind with Thomson's emerges even more clearly in Pemberton's observation that "the same taste for the sublime and the beautiful directs us to chuse particularly the productions of nature for the subject of our contemplation: our creator having so adapted our minds to the condition, wherein he has placed us, that all his visible works, *before we inquire into their make*, strike us with the most lively ideas of beauty and magnificence."<sup>5</sup> I emphasise the phrase, "before we inquire into their make," because it demonstrates Pemberton's recognition that the search for scientific knowledge, like that for poetic knowledge, amounts to an attempt to recapture through language impressions and emotions generated through a complex interrelationship of body, mind, soul, nature, and God's eternal providence. This process, which "warms and elevates," is initiated and driven by passion, pleasure, and the desire to praise--before speech, then, the scientist and the lyric poet meet.

Eighteenth-century writers understood and articulated this inspirational process in spatial terms. Soame Jenyns explains in "The ART of DANCING," for example, that

Each cautious bard, ere he attempts to sing,  
First gently flutt'ring tries his tender wing,  
And if he finds that with uncommon fire

The Muses all his raptur'd soul inspire,  
 At once to heav'n he soars in lofty odes,  
 And sings alone of heroes and of gods.<sup>6</sup> (my emphasis)

Jenyns' description focuses on the initiatory emotional experience which inspires the "raptur'd soul" to fly up to heaven where it can *then* find expression in a lyric poem.

Michael Wodhull relates the same generative pattern of poetical development in his **A Poetical Epistle to [John Cleaver], M. A.** (1762), but he provides a more detailed history of the experience. After relating how as a child he often strayed along the banks of the river Ouse, and how this filled his memory with a "bright ideal Train," Wodhull says that here "Full to my View . . . / Coy Science thence disclos'd her kindling Beams."<sup>7</sup> Science here means the knowledge acquired through his first impressions, that knowledge revealed to his mind through his senses, and this process of impression and memory generated "a Heat unfelt before" and which, subsequently, "In wild Career spontaneous Numbers flow'd" (p. 6). As a novice poet writing with unchecked fervour, Wodhull "Struck the harsh Lyre, and tun'd th'unmeaning String," that is, he wrote without skill, his "flattering Landshape" growing "Ere Judgment check's the Strokes which Fancy drew" (p. 6). If he would translate these emotions into true lyric poetry, then he needed to begin the "steep Ascent which Scales the Hill of Truth, / With Learning pure Morality impart," combining his love of nature and his impulse to write so that he can perform the poet's real task, to "Strengthen the Head, and humanize the Heart" (p. 5). Thomas Mercer's "Of Poetry: An Epistolary Essay" works over similar materials to those of Wodhull and in much the same temper of mind, and he concludes that he would only give the name of poet to that writer

to whom Invention brings  
 The unessential, fleeting forms of things;  
 And Judgement comes, of piercing look, his guide;  
 And Taste, coy maiden, blushing at his side;  
 While kindling Genius, eager for the sky,  
 His flaming pinions spreads, in act to fly;  
 To whose audacious flight alone 'tis given  
 To snatch, Prometheus-like, the fire from heav'n.

Here genius puts all the powers, qualities, and functions of the other faculties to work by launching an almost guerilla-like raid on the heavens to bring back truth and knowledge and a vision of God's providence.

This spatial pattern for figuring inspiration was conventional enough, but it could, as we saw in Thomson's *A Poem Sacred to the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton*, apply to the scientist's mental processes just as much as to that of the poet's. Isaac Watts, in "To John Locke, Esq; Retir'd from Business," makes use of the pattern to praise Locke, noting that

ANGELS are made of Heavenly Things,  
And Light and Love our Souls compose,  
Their Bliss within their Bosom springs,  
Within their Bosom flows.<sup>8</sup>

This angelic composition of the soul means that each, despite the limitations of a fleshly existence, possesses the capacity to ponder the mysteries of being, can "leave the Cottage or the Throne, / May quit the Globe," that is, each can "dwell alone / With his spacious Mind." Such a man was Locke, who "hath a Soul wide as the Sea, / Calm as the Night, bright as the Day." Because Locke's capacious mind gives "his vast Ideas play," he never "feel[s] a Thought confin'd."<sup>9</sup> Watts repeats this image of the free mind and its impulse to inspired thoughts beyond the bounds of earth in his poem, "To the much Honour'd Mr. Thomas Rowe, The Director of my Youthful Studies. Free Philosophy." Arguing that "Knowledge invites us each alone" to pursue the mysteries of the universe, Watts declares that

Thoughts should be free as Fire or Wind;  
The Pinions of a single Mind  
Will thro' all Nature fly:

. . . . .  
A Genius which no Chain controuls  
Roves with Delight.<sup>10</sup>

Here, as with Pemberton, Watts stresses the experience of pleasure which accompanies the thinker's search for knowledge.

Examples of this eighteenth-century aesthetic sensibility could be adduced again and again from a wide variety of discourses, but particularly when we find writers

embarking on a discussion of the role of science in the pursuit of truth. These examples, moreover, could be drawn from works published at the beginning or end of the century. Alexander Campbell's "Ode XII," for instance, published in 1796, begins with the conventional apostrophe to

AWAKE, my lyre, awake, my song!  
My soul, enraptur'd with the lofty theme  
Through space, darts as the morning's beam.--  
I'll tell the countless orbs that roll along,  
The glories of this nether sphere.--  
While soaring in the vast career.<sup>11</sup>

The rest of the poem provides an enthusiastic account of the new universe revealed by Newton's laws, while "Ode XIV. To Chemistry" offers up similar imagery. Equally, both poems offer enthusiastic praise to the creator who fashioned the miraculous universe revealed by science.

The eighteenth-century lyric, especially as it develops after mid century, can rightly take its place alongside those other great literary achievements of the period--the novel, the long poem, the satires, the translations. The critical explorations into its expressive potentialities and into the nature of its structure paved the way for the poets who followed after--most of the Romantics poets, after all, began their careers by first working in lyric forms, drawn to poetry as Coleridge recalled by a language "so natural and real, and yet so dignified, and harmonious." As Thomas McFarland argues, whatever the Romantics' yearning to write in longer forms, whatever the cultural gestalt which prompted them to attempt longer works, in point of fact the form in which they achieved most success--he calls it their favourite form--was the ode; arguably, most lay readers and general students remember most and remain most familiar with the great odes.<sup>12</sup> Despite the oft-noted and oft-praised Romantic reaction to science, it is the hegemony of science, modifying and qualifying the classical impulse, which opens up and releases critical and imaginative energies throughout the century. The on-going debates over fancy, imagination, judgment, wit, the role of emotion, the discussions of rhyme and harmony, the stress on the lyric's expressive function--all these topics and issues received critical attention during

a period of history in which most areas of thought were affected by the methods and temper of the new science. In Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, and throughout his work, Wordsworth's Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, in his critical formula to speak the language of men, in Coleridge's stress on Bowles' natural way of speaking, moreover, the ideals and values of the new science played a positive part.<sup>13</sup> Most obviously, the image of the scientist and that of the poet as similarly inspired seekers after truth initiated a tension, a fruitful tension--intellectual war, even--which released further imaginative energies.

Many issues, of course, remain unresolved or not explored in sufficient detail: that is as it should be. A great deal of work remains to be done towards situating the lyric genre in its eighteenth-century context. The persistence, for instance, of adamic philosophies of language in eighteenth-century debate, and the problem of the role of wit in the creation of poetic language; the values of description and the poetic devices and figures of speech as employed to articulate lyric experience likewise deserve close examination; the impact of the image of the lyric poet on society as a whole might also prove an interesting window on eighteenth-century cultural ideals. Doubtless, other paths could be followed which would open up new and valuable vistas on the relations between science and poetry. Such investigations would require, of course, a persistent refusal to take critical paradigms as forms of gospel, especially as regards mid- and late-eighteenth century literature, and a willingness to withhold the evaluative impulse, perhaps forever, when we read and think about these writings, these records of human minds trying to imagine their place in a changing and complicated "universal scheme."

## Notes

The following abbreviations have been employed in this thesis:

<b>ARS</b>	<b>Augustan Reprint Society</b>
<b>CQ</b>	<b>Critical Quarterly</b>
<b>CUP</b>	<b>Cambridge University Press</b>
<b>ECS</b>	<b>Eighteenth-Century Studies</b>
<b>ELH</b>	<b>English Literary History</b>
<b>JEGP</b>	<b>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</b>
<b>JHI</b>	<b>Journal of the History of Ideas</b>
<b>MLQ</b>	<b>Modern Language Quarterly</b>
<b>MP</b>	<b>Modern Philology</b>
<b>OUP</b>	<b>Oxford University Press</b>
<b>PMLA</b>	<b>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</b>
<b>PQ</b>	<b>Philological Quarterly</b>
<b>RES</b>	<b>The Review of English Studies</b>
<b>SEL</b>	<b>Studies in English Literature</b>
<b>SiR</b>	<b>Studies in Romanticism</b>

## Preamble

<sup>1</sup> *The Gentleman's Magazine* (London), 1786, Vol. LVI, September, p. 757.

<sup>2</sup> Coleridge, *The Collected Works*, eds. James Engell and Walter Jackson Bate (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), 7:1, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Coleridge, *The Collected Works*, 7:1, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> See Bowles's account of his poems in his *Poetical Works*, ed. George Gilfillan (Edinburgh: 1855), I, pp. 1-3. Years later Coleridge rationalized the strength of his reaction to a poet of such transitory reputation as Bowles: "it is peculiar to original genius to become less and less *striking*, in proportion to its success in improving the taste and judgement of its contemporaries" (*The Collected Works*, 7:1, p. 24). His rationalization, we note in passing, serves well to explain the Romantic's unresponsiveness to the poetry of Pope and his peers.

<sup>5</sup> Aikin, *Essays on Song-Writing: With a Collection of such ENGLISH SONGS as are most eminent for POETICAL MERIT. To which are added SOME ORIGINAL PIECES* (London: 1772), pp. 20-21.

<sup>6</sup> Potter, *An Inquiry Into Some Passages in Dr. Johnson's Lives of the Poets: Particularly His Observations on LYRIC POETRY, and the Odes of Gray* (London: 1783), p. 15.

<sup>7</sup> Cooper, *Letters Concerning Taste* (London: 1757), p. 47.

<sup>8</sup> *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. LV, p. 839; Pinkerton, *Letters on Literature* (London: 1785), p. 131. Pinkerton's *Letters* instigated a series of arguments and counter-arguments in *The Gentleman's Magazine* (see, for example, Vol LVI, March, 1786, p. 252; April, p. 280, 284; July, p. 588): a review in Vol. LV, July, 1785, notes Pinkerton's remarks about Gray and, although it does not reiterate his enthusiasm, does not dispute his evaluation. The representation of Collins as a profoundly sensitive, divinely-inspired poet was well established in the latter decades of the century. See, for instance, Robert

Merry, *Diversity. A Poem* (London: 1788), who in a roll-call of British poets notes that "sainted COLLINS came in meekness due" (p. 21); and, for a similar catalogue of British poetical greatness, Anonymous, *The Grove of Fancy. A Poem* (London: 1789): "Hark! COLLINS strikes the potent shell; / The Passions throng the magick cell! / And, as Madness rul'd the hour, / On the strings their soul they pour. / . . . Ah! see, the glorious Maniack dies! / Each heav'nly Muse, affrighted, flies!" (p. 37).

<sup>9</sup> Aikin, *Essays on Song-Writing*, p. 20.

<sup>10</sup> Sidney, *Selected Writings*, ed. Richard Dutton (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1987), p. 143.

<sup>11</sup> Maclean, "Theory of Lyric Poetry in England from the Renaissance to Coleridge," Ph. D. Diss. Univ. of Chicago, 1940, p. 35. Also, p. 36.

<sup>12</sup> Dryden, *An Essay of Dramatick Poesie*, in *The Works*, eds. Samuel Holt Monk et al (London: Univ. of California Press, 1971), Vol XVII, pp. 13-14.

<sup>13</sup> Norris, *A Collection of Miscellanies: Consisting of Poems, Essays, Discourses, and Letters, Occasionally Written* (Oxford: 1687). In their prefatory remarks on seventeenth-century poetry, Alexander M. Witherspoon and Frank J. Warnke observe that, while the poetry of the period encompasses a variety of kinds, "The dominant genre of the entire period . . . is certainly the personal lyric, either amorous or devotional." *Seventeenth-Century Prose and Poetry*, 2nd ed., eds. Witherspoon and Warnke (1929; rpt. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963), p. 710. Maclean feels that critics came to see the English lyric as a major type sometime in the late seventeenth or possibly early in the eighteenth century ("Theory of Lyric Poetry in England from the Renaissance to Coleridge," p. 44). Obviously, although the lyric was rapidly approaching major genre status, I disagree with Maclean. My reasons for dissenting will become clear as my argument progresses. Simply put, it is not until after the middle of the eighteenth century that many writers, critics, and readers clearly share a similar experience and view of the lyric genre's function and expressive potential; as late as the last decade of the seventeenth century, most observers still equated lyric kinds with lowly subject matter. Timothy J. Reiss, in *Tragedy and Truth* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1980), argues that "By the late seventeenth century tragedy has become the ideal ordered and instructive model, the highest of the literary genres" (p. 9).

<sup>14</sup> Prior, "A Simile," in *The Literary Works*, 2nd ed., ed. H. Bunker Wright and Monroe K. Spears (1959; Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), I, p. 245.

<sup>15</sup> Johnson's careful evaluation in his *Lives of the English Poets* of the positive influence of writers like Cowley and Waller on English poetry offers an instructive instance of the eighteenth-century reader's ability to appreciate the way in which his poetic tradition evolved.

<sup>16</sup> Congreve, *A Pindarique Ode, Humbly Offer'd to the Queen* (London: 1706), sig. A.

<sup>17</sup> Prior, *The Literary Works*, I, p. 232.

<sup>18</sup> Boswell's father, for example, "collated manuscripts and different editions of Anacreon, and others of the Greek lyric poets, with great care," work which, fortunately, provided Johnson and him with "much matter for conversation, without touching on the fatal topics of difference." Boswell also relates Johnson's joy at finding William Baxter's edition of *Anacreon* in the elder Boswell's library. Boswell and Johnson considered



reprinting the edition. *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*, eds. Frederick A. Pottle and Charles H. Bennett (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1963), pp. 370-371.

<sup>19</sup> *The Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, for the Year 1788*, 2nd ed. (London: 1790) contains at least thirteen lyrics out of twenty-six poems. *The Poetical Preceptor; Or, A Collection of Select Pieces of Poetry; Extracted from the Works of the most eminent English Poets* (London: 1777) includes numerous lyrics, as does *Poetical Beauties*, 2nd ed., comp. by S. J. (London: 1803). See, also, Charles Ryskamp, "Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* in Their Time," in *From Sensibility to Romanticism: Essays Presented to Frederick A. Pottle*, eds. Frederick W. Hilles and Harold Bloom (New York: OUP, 1965), pp. 357-372, for an account of the popularity and influence of ballads and songs on Wordsworth and Coleridge.

<sup>20</sup> *The Correspondence of Thomas Gray and William Mason, with Letters to the Rev. James Brown, D.D.*, 2nd ed., ed. John Mitford (London: 1855), p. 125.

<sup>21</sup> Doughty, *Forgotten Lyrics of the Eighteenth Century* (1924; rpt. n. p.: Folcroft Library Editions, 1972), p. 9; Grierson, *Lyrical Poetry from Blake to Hardy* (London: Hogarth Press, 1928), p. 19; Davie, Introduction, *Augustan Lyric* (London: Heinemann, 1974), p. 5; Rogers, "Introduction: the Writer and Society," in *The Eighteenth Century*, ed. Rogers (London: Methuen, 1978), p. 59.

<sup>22</sup> Hutchings, "To Tempt Creative Praise: New Styles in Eighteenth-Century Poetry," *CQ*, 27, No. 3 (1985), p. 73. Ryskamp shows that Wordsworth's choice of title would not have appeared surprising or radical to contemporary readers, who would have commonly made lyric forms a part of their poetry reading. See "Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* in Their Time," pp. 357-359.

<sup>23</sup> Coleridge, *The Collected Works*, 7:1, p. 19.

<sup>24</sup> Poole, *The English Parnassus: Or, A Helpe to English Poesie* (London: 1657), sig. A4. Edward Bysshe offered a similar catalogue in *The Art of Poetry*, (London: 1725), I, p. 38: "This sort of Poetry is employ'd in all Manner of Subjects; in Pleasant, in Grave, in Amorous, in Heroick, in Philosophical, in Moral, and in Divine."

<sup>25</sup> See, for instance, *Trifler* No. XI (1786): "Satire seems to be now considerably on her decline. She has long since passed her zenith, and the few votaries that remain of her are only the outcasts and reptiles of genius. The popularity of writings of this nature, and the repute they are held in, make us lament that they should be so much neglected." Reprinted in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, LVI (1786), p. 960. William Coombes, in the Preface to *The Justification: A Poem* (London: 1777), argues that "THERE is no species of Writing which Mankind abuse with so much virulence in the world, and so eagerly attend to in the closet, as that of Satire. The Author who possesses a genius for this species of composition is certain of success; and while almost every one discovers an outward displeasure at his Works, a rapid and extensive sale generally marks the real opinion of the World concerning them" (p. i). Collins, we might note, employed lyric forms as a means of imagining the "higher" form of tragic experience.

<sup>26</sup> Maclean, "Personification But Not Poetry," *ELH*, Vol. 23 (1956), p. 163.

<sup>27</sup> See Williams, *Keywords* (1976; rpt. London: Fontana, 1984), pp. 313-315.

<sup>28</sup> Christie and Shuttleworth, "Introduction: Between Literature and Science," in *Nature Transfigured*, eds. Christie and Shuttleworth (Manchester and New York: Manchester Univ. Press, 1989), p. 4.

<sup>29</sup> I will define more precisely my use of the term "hegemonic" and its applicability to understanding the development of experimental science in *Chapter Three*.

<sup>30</sup> For a discussion of the various historical meanings and ways in which the term empirical was understood, see Williams, *Keywords*, pp. 115-117. Many discussions of the meanings of science and empiricism in the period could be cited; readers might usefully consult James Sambrook, *The Eighteenth Century* (London and New York: Longman, 1986), p. 1; for an excellent treatment of how eighteenth-century thinkers generally understood the relations between observations, theories, hypothesis, and scientific knowledge, see, T. D. Campbell, *Adam Smith's Science of Morals* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1971), pp. 25-45; and Thomas L. Hankins, *Science and the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), pp. 1-16, gives a good account of the problems of assigning twentieth-century categories of science to the understanding of scientific categories in the seventeenth and eighteenth century.

<sup>31</sup> Jordanova, "Introduction," *Languages of Nature*, ed. Jordanova (London: Free Association Books, 1986), p. 15.

<sup>32</sup> Eco, *The Open Work*, trans. Anna Cancogni and introd. David Robey (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1989), p. 132.

<sup>33</sup> Charles Gildon and John Brightland, *A Grammar of the English Tongue, with NOTES, Giving the Grounds and Reasons of Grammar in General*, 2nd ed. (London: 1712), p. 145.

### Chapter One - The Critical Background

<sup>1</sup> Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed., in *International Encyclopedia of Science*, Vol. II, No. 2 (1962; rpt. Chicago and London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1971), p. 15. See, especially pp. 1-34. All further references to this work are given after quotations in the text as **SSR**.

<sup>2</sup> Hartman, *Criticism in the Wilderness* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1980) p. 3. For Hartman, because "the interpretative event cannot be predicted, literary studies are bound to remain in flux: disconcerting, disputatious, disorderly" (p. 5). For an extended exploration of the theme of critical intentions, see Edward W. Said, *Beginnings: Intention and Method* (1975; rpt. New York: Columbian Univ. press, 1985), chapters I and II, with special attention to his remarks about Erich Auerbach's critical method, pp. 68-69, and 72.

<sup>3</sup> True, Kuhn acknowledges that a scientist's personal beliefs and convictions--his subjectivity--affects the course of scientific work, yet no scientific paradigm can survive with the same persistence as a critical paradigm. The controversy over "cold fusion" throughout 1990 provides an apt demonstration of this element of scientific endeavour: the "proofs" were immediately subjected to rigorous testing by various scientific teams and the original experiment debunked.

<sup>4</sup> Davie, *Augustan Lyric* (London: Heinemann, 1974), p. 3. Paul Oskar Kristeller offers a perfect example of this tendency in historical and literary scholarship. He notes that, although a great deal of new evidence had disproved a number of nineteenth-century

notions about Aristotelianism and Averroes, the old views remained authoritative. See, *Renaissance Thought II* (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1965), pp. 112-113, and, particularly, p. 118.

<sup>5</sup> Nichol Smith, *Some Observations on Eighteenth Century Poetry* (Toronto: 1937; rpt. London: OUP, 1964), p. 10. Also see his Preface to *The Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1926), pp. vi-ix.

<sup>6</sup> Tillotson, "Eighteenth-Century Poetic Diction," *Eighteenth Century English Literature: Modern Essays in Criticism*, ed. James L. Clifford (1959; rpt. New York: OUP, 1969), p. 212.

<sup>7</sup> Bateson, *English Poetry: A Critical Introduction*, 2nd ed. (London: Longmans Green, 1966), p. ix.

<sup>8</sup> Greene, "'Dramatic Texture' in Pope," in *From Sensibility to Romanticism*, eds., Frederick W. Hilles and Harold Bloom (New York: OUP, 1965), p. 37; Whiteley, "The Age of Diversity," *CQ*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (1987), p. 88. Whiteley's review argues that recent critics such as James Sambrook, Pat Rogers, Claude Rawson, Margaret Ann Doody, Brean Hammond, and Maynard Mack rightly bend much of their labours toward exposing old fallacies about the period and offering cogent reasons for celebrating the diversity of eighteenth-century literature.

<sup>9</sup> Lennox, *The Female Quixote or, the Adventures of Arabella*, Introd. by Sandra Shulman (London: Pandora Press, 1986). Glanville, refuting Sir George's flippant attitude to writing, states: "Nay, then . . . you are qualified for a critic at the Bedford Coffee-house; where, with the rest of your brothers, demi-wits, you may sit in judgement upon the productions of a Young, a Richardson, or a Johnson; rail with premeditated malice at the Rambler; and, for the want of faults, turn even its inimitable beauties into ridicule. The language, because it reaches to perfection, may be called stiff, laboured, and pedantic, the criticisms, when they let in more light than your weak judgment can bear, superficial and ostentatious glitter: and because those papers contain the finest system of ethics yet extant, damn the queer fellow, for over propping virtue" (pp. 280-281). Dobson, Introd. *Eighteenth Century Essays* (London: 1889), pp. xi. Also, see the satiric sketch of Johnson in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Cranford*, introd. Frank Swinnerton and foreword J. M. Dent (1906; rpt. London: Dent; New York: Dutton), pp. 12-14.

<sup>10</sup> Dobson, Introd., *Eighteenth Century Essays*, p. xii.

<sup>11</sup> Jeffrey, rev. of Walter Scott's edition of the *Works of Jonathan Swift*, in *The Edinburgh Review, or Critical Journal*, XXVII, No. LIII (September 1816), p. 1. All further references to this essay appear in the text.

<sup>12</sup> Byron, of course, maintained a vitriolic opposition to Jeffrey, holding Jeffrey's ideas about poetic taste in total disdain. In his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" (1809), Byron declared that he would become like Jeffrey, the "Self-constituted judge of poesy," and amongst the poets whom he satirized for their versification, poets like Bowles, Coleridge, and Southey, he addressed some lines to "That mild apostate from poetic rule, / The simple Wordsworth," who "warns his friend 'to shake off toil and trouble, / And quit his books, for fear of growing double;' / Who, both by precept and example, shows / That prose is verse, and verse is merely prose; / Convincing all, by demonstration plain, / Poetic souls delight in prose insane." *Poetical Works*, ed. Frederick Page (1904; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1975), pp. 114 and 116.

<sup>13</sup> Arnold, *Complete Prose Works*, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1973), IX, p. 179. All further references to this edition appear in the text as *CPW*.

<sup>14</sup> Arnold's essay on Gray makes a serious attempt to judge Gray's accomplishments and popularity, but he considers Gray's poetry to suffer from lack of ambition--Gray competes with his contemporaries, not with the greats--and his admiration for Dryden. Arnold says that Gray, "a born poet, fell upon an age of prose" (*CPW*, p. 200).

<sup>15</sup> Gilfillan, Introd., *The Poetical Works of William Shenstone* (London: 1854), p. v.

<sup>16</sup> See Hazlitt, *Collected Works*, eds. A. R. Waller and Arnold Glover (London: 1902), V, p. 69; Stopford A. Brooke, *Naturalism in English Poetry* (London and Toronto: J. M. Dent; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1920), pp. 1-43.

<sup>17</sup> Pollard, Introd., *Silver Poets of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Dent, 1976), p. ix.

<sup>18</sup> Eliot, "Poetry in the Eighteenth Century," in *From Dryden to Johnson*, ed. Boris Ford (1957; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), IV, pp. 272 and 273. Eliot's essay first appeared in 1930 and has been reprinted in various publications. Greene finds that Eliot's emphasis on the whole context of a poetic utterance for assessing its beauty "disqualifies once for all Arnold's 'touchstone' method of judging poetry" See "'Dramatic Texture' in Pope," in *From Sensibility to Romanticism*, p. 31.

<sup>19</sup> Mack, "'Wit and Poetry and Pope': Some Observations on his Imagery," in *Eighteenth Century English Literature*, ed. Clifford, p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> Nichol Smith recognised this problem long ago, noting that "Of the friendly critics, the most judicial find some misunderstanding to correct, or some prejudice to combat; all tend to assume an attitude of defence." Preface, *The Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse*, p. viii.

<sup>21</sup> Sutherland, *A Preface to Eighteenth Century Poetry* (1948; rpt. London: OUP, 1963), p. iii.

<sup>22</sup> McKillop, *Poetry and Prose*, 3rd ed., eds. Louis I. Bredvold et al (1939; rpt. New York: Ronald Press, 1973), pp. xxvi-xxvii. Nalini Jain and John Richardson make a similar point, arguing that the eighteenth century has gone unheard because the critical atmosphere was pervaded by a kind of noise: "It is the task of the reader to put aside twentieth-century conceptions about the nature of poetry, and to find a quiet place away from their noise. Once that is achieved, the poets of this anthology can speak to us on their own terms and in their own way--directly, seriously, sanely and engagingly" (Introd., *Eighteenth Century English Poetry* [London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994], p. 18). See, also, Dennis Davison, ed. and introd., *The Penguin Book of Eighteenth-Century English Verse* (1973; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975).

<sup>23</sup> Nichol Smith, Preface, *The Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse*, p. xi. See, also, George Saintsbury, *The Peace of the Augustans* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1916), pp. vi, vii, 391; *A Short History of English Literature* (1898; rpt. London: Macmillan, 1966), pp. 477, 564, 565; and F. R. Leavis, "The Augustan Tradition," in *Revaluation* (1936; rpt. Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1978), pp. 97-144.

<sup>24</sup> Documenting these successes would involve an immense outlay of time and energy: the literature on Pope alone is, naturally, large. Readers could consult the

following able defences: F. R. Leavis, "Pope," in *Revaluation* (1936; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), pp. 68-89; G. S. Rousseau, "On Reading Pope," in *Writers and their Backgrounds. Alexander Pope*, ed. Peter Dixon (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1972), pp. 1-59; Ian Donaldson, "Pope and Feeling," in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, V, pp. 33-50, especially p. 34; Susan Staves, "Pope's Refinement," *The Eighteenth Century, Theory and Interpretation*, 29, 2 (1988), pp. 145-163. For an incisive appraisal of the problems of Swift and his critics, see Edward W. Said's chapters, "Swift's Tory Anarchy" and "Swift as Intellectual," pp. 54-89, in *The World, The Text, The Critic* (1983; rpt. London: Vintage, 1991). Critics have also mounted a long-term effort to rescue Johnson's reputation from that of an irascible, moralistic, rule-bound pedant to that of a complex, highly sensitive personality. An early attempt, Thomas Pyles' "The Romantic Side of Dr. Johnson," *ELH*, 11 (1944), pp. 192-212, argues that Johnson was no strict neo-classicist and often attacked the doctrine of rules, amongst other rejections, showing himself sympathetic to the claims of the imagination; however, Donald Greene felt, in 1965, that "time and the accumulation of evidence have had little noticeable effect on the durability of 'Doctor Johnson,'" though he absolved professional critics of their responsibility for Johnson's peculiar reputation by placing it squarely on "the psychopathology of the victims of literary 'education.'" Greene, *Samuel Johnson* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 1 and 2 respectively; also in the same volume, Stuart Gerry Brown, "Dr. Johnson and the Old Order," pp. 158-171. For confirmation of Greene's and Brown's remarks, readers could consult J. H. Plumb's short character sketch of Johnson in his *England in the Eighteenth Century (1714-1815)* (1950; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1956), pp. 98-99; Walter Jackson Bate, *The Achievement of Samuel Johnson* (1955; rpt. Chicago and London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1978), provides an able defence. Besides works cited earlier and elsewhere, readers should consult Greene, *The Age of Exuberance* (New York: Random House, 1970); James L. Clifford, Preface, *Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (Oxford: OUP, 1959); Frederick W. Hilles, "Johnson's Poetic Fire," in *From Sensibility to Romanticism*, pp. 67-77. Of course, well-intentioned revisionism can lead to equally questionable portraits of a writer: Anne McDermott notes, for instance, that "If the nineteenth-century myth of Johnson pictures him as a dogmatist, violently prejudiced and an arch-Tory, our century has engendered another myth, reflecting its own obsessions--that of a man in psychological rags, guilt-ridden and hopelessly at the mercy of his emotional yearnings. Both myths contain some truth, but they ignore large parts of the evidence." Rev. of James Engell (ed.), *Johnson and his Age*, *Harvard English Studies* 12, in *CQ*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (1985), p. 86.

<sup>25</sup> Courthope, *A History of English Poetry* (London: Macmillan, 1905), Vol. V, p. v.

<sup>26</sup> McKillop, *Eighteenth Century Poetry and Prose*, p. xv. R. F. Brissenden, in his Preface to *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, studies presented at the David Nichol Smith Memorial Seminar in 1968, remarks that Nichol Smith's Preface to the *Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse* complained that views of the period remained in flux, waiting for some authoritative verdict: "That was in 1926. Forty years later we can say with confidence that the new verdict, if not finally delivered, is at least beginning to take shape. It is a verdict which embraces, of course, not merely the poetry but the general cultural achievements of the eighteenth century" (p. ix).

<sup>27</sup> Ford, "The Enlightenment: Towards a Useful Redefinition," in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Brissenden, p. 17. Peter Gay also worries over the perils of Enlightenment inconsistency. If close reading of the major Enlightenment figures reveals contradictions, ambiguities, and inconsistencies, and if disclosing of such differences helps to redress distorted notions about the meaning of the Enlightenment, he recoils from a historiography dedicated to diversity. To "sacrifice unity to variety" would "reduce

history to biography," which would eventually tempt many historians "to abandon the search for a single Enlightenment" and lead to "a despairing nominalism." His solution, to "respect the differences among the philosophes," makes for informative reading, but *his* Enlightenment draws on a few writers--Diderot, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Hume particularly. In *The Enlightenment*, I, p. x.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, Arthur O. Lovejoy's essay "The Parallel of Deism and Classicism." While he argues that the intellectual and aesthetic sensibilities of the early eighteenth century derive from that philosophy termed "the rationalism of the Enlightenment," he thinks it unwise to link individual theorists and the rest of society together in one seamless fabric. Rationalism "is not a system which you will find connectedly set forth by any one philosopher; it is rather a set of *preconceptions* which you will find taken for granted by most philosophers, and determining the opinions, on all manner of subjects, of the majority of the educated men," and this holds true only "insofar as they were emancipated from the dominance of tradition and authority." In *MP*, 29 (1931-32), p. 281. See, also, Gay, *The Enlightenment*, I, p. x: "the men of the Enlightenment were divided by doctrine, temperament, environment, and generations." Bertrand Bronson draws similar conclusions: "The age was, as we now recognize, extraordinarily complex; far from monolithic; and full of self-contradictions, change, and violent contrast. Its spokesmen were notably individuated, often sharply antagonistic, endowed with a high degree of articulate energy, which they cultivated assiduously in many directions, with abundant variety." Preface, *Facets of the Enlightenment* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1968). And see Norman Hampson, *The Enlightenment* (1968; rpt. London: Penguin, 1987), p. 9 especially; Clifford, *Introduct.*, *Eighteenth-Century English Literature*, pp. vii-ix.

<sup>29</sup> Nichol Smith, Preface, *The Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse*, p. ix.

<sup>30</sup> McIntosh, "The Age of Johnson in 1975," *PQ*, Vol. 55 (1976), p. 567.

<sup>31</sup> Rothstein, *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Poetry, 1660 - 1780* (Boston and London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), p. xi. See, also, Maximillian E. Novak, *Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (n. p.: Macmillan Press, 1983), for a similar attempt to revise attitudes to eighteenth-century literature.

<sup>32</sup> Doody, *The Daring Muse* (Cambridge: CUP), p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> Sambrook, *The Eighteenth Century* (London and New York: Longman, 1986), p. xii.

<sup>34</sup> Hunter, *Before Novels* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1990), p. xv; see pp. xii-xvi especially.

<sup>35</sup> Hunter, *Before Novels*, p. xiv.

<sup>36</sup> Rawson, "Order and Misrule: Eighteenth-Century Literature in the 1970's," *ELH*, 42 (1975), p. 481. As Renè Wellek and Austin Warren astutely point out, "Within the history of imaginative literature, limitation to the great books makes incomprehensible the continuity of literary tradition, the development of literary genres, and indeed the very nature of the literary process, besides obscuring the process of social, linguistic, ideological, and other conditioning circumstances." *Theory of Literature*, 3rd ed. (1949; rpt. London: Penguin Books, 1982), pp. 21-22.

<sup>37</sup> Spate, "The Muse of Mercantilism: Jago, Grainger, and Dyer," in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Brissenden, I, p. 120. See, also, Charles Peake, "Poetry 1700-

1740," in *Dryden to Johnson*, ed. Roger Lonsdale (London: Sphere Books, 1971), p. 165, who notes that, while the "desire for stability was a factor in most of the activities of the early eighteenth century," it would be wrong to conclude that this entailed "hostility to anything new or original. If people feared revolution, they had no wish to repeat the mistakes of their fathers: if the writers admired what they took to be the establishment of polite literature in seventeenth-century England, they admiration was not uncritical."

<sup>38</sup> Rawson, "Order and Misrule," p. 472. See, also, Lovejoy, "The Parallel of Deism and Classicism": Enlightenment rationalism produces "numerous contrary tendencies, not a few of them springing from latent implications of one or another of the same group of assumptions which they [the rationalists] were to oppose or undermine; and the system in question was perhaps consistently and undeviatingly held by no one writer" (p. 281). Also, Karl S. Guthke, "Poetry in an Age of Science: Albrecht von Haller and the Crisis of the Enlightenment," in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, eds. J. P. Hardy and J. C. Eade (Oxford: Alden Press, 1983), V, pp. 157-171.

<sup>39</sup> John Sitter notes that "Most commentary on eighteenth-century English literature and most teaching of it splits the century into an 'Age of Pope and Swift' and an 'Age of Johnson', the first ending about 1740, the second beginning in earnest somewhere in the 1750s." *Literary Loneliness in Mid-Eighteenth Century England* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1982), p. 9. John Butt makes a similar distinction, and while he offers good reasons for doing so, admits its "arbitrary and artificial" nature. *The Mid-Eighteenth Century*, ed. and comp. Geoffrey Carnall (1979; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1980), p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> Humphreys, "Johnson," in *From Dryden to Johnson*, p. 339. One might note how, when a new study issues forth likely to fall dead born, publisher and critic try to pique interest by including a reference to Pope or Johnson somewhere in the title.

<sup>41</sup> Harvey, *English Poetry in a Changing Society 1780-1825* (London: Allison & Busby, 1984), pp. 1 and 2 respectively. Spate, with perhaps a hint of irony, argues that "our vision of the past has always the risk of serious distortion if we confine our view, as all but dedicated professional scholars do, to the great figures that have survived. Because they stood, and stand, above their age, they did not necessarily stand outside it—indeed, that sort of genius usually looks a little, or more than a little, mad to his contemporaries." In *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Brissenden, I, (p. 119).

<sup>42</sup> *Ranelagh: A Poem*, 2nd ed., By the Author of some late PUBLICATIONS (London: 1777), p. iii.

<sup>43</sup> Bronson, *Facets of the Enlightenment*, p. 3. Yet Bronson, whose anger at the critical tradition permeates much of his writing, admires most in the Augustans those values which Arnold considered necessary to an age of prose. See, pp. 5, 24, 25 respectively. Also, McKillop, Introd., *Eighteenth Century Poetry and Prose*, pp. xix, xxvii.

<sup>44</sup> Lonsdale, Introd., *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth-Century Verse* (1984; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1987), pp. xxxvi, xxxiii respectively.

<sup>45</sup> Lonsdale, Introd., *Eighteenth-Century Women Poets* (Oxford and New York: OUP, 1990), p. xlili.

<sup>46</sup> Sir Paul Harvey, ed. and comp., *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 4th ed., rev. by Dorothy Eagle (1932; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 264. See, also, Northrop Frye et al, eds., *The Harper Handbook to Literature* (New York: Harper &

Row, 1985), pp. 309-310; and M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 4th ed., (1941; rpt. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981), pp. 113-114. Abrams does note that the normal categorization of the period does not adequately cover all of the literature, though he then offers up a list of qualities which rely heavily on the old paradigms.

<sup>47</sup> Davison, *Intro.*, *The Penguin Book of Eighteenth-Century English Verse*. 1973; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975, p. 2.

<sup>48</sup> Jain and Richardson, *Intro.*, *Eighteenth Century English Poetry*, p. 2.

<sup>49</sup> Jain and Richardson, *Intro.*, *Eighteenth Century English Poetry*, p.4. The anthology, we are told, is meant for "'A' level students and for undergraduates" (p. ix).

<sup>50</sup> Auden, *Letter to Lord Byron*, in *Collected Longer Poems* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), p. 59. Although my intention in this chapter is not to provide a full account of the vagaries of eighteenth-century criticism but only to show how the development of the prose paradigm has obscured appreciation of the lyric genre's place in the cultural dynamics of the time, I have tried nonetheless to indicate that revisionist efforts to change perspectives on the period continue, with critics pushing outwards the boundaries of knowledge and thinking. Much of this work, of course, does not often reach the general reader or student since debate tends largely to take place in specialist journals or at conferences. For example, reporting in the *British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Bulletin* (No. 38, March 1995) on a 1994 conference called *The Colonial Horizon in the Eighteenth Century*, Antony Strugnell praises the work which emerged at the conference. Such gatherings, he notes, indicate that (once again?) "Eighteenth-century studies have entered a period of radical change, not to say crisis. Gone is the sense of security provided in the past by authors, genres and the history of ideas; gone too the ideological reassurance provided by the values of the Enlightenment." Yet if such work sends nervous tremors through much of the critical community, Strugnell argues that conferences such as this one are "facing that change squarely and demonstrating that the period offers as much to its students in the way of new and as yet ill-charted modes and avenues of exploration as it previously provided intellectual challenge within well-defined and perhaps rather too comfortable parameters." At the end of his report Strugnell notes that 1996 will see a colloquium on gardens, and he wryly states: "A return to old certainties? There are things, at the bottom of even eighteenth-century gardens, which are less reassuring than at first they might appear" (p. 4).

<sup>51</sup> Davie, *Intro.*, *The Late Augustans* (1958; rpt. London: Heinemann, 1977), p. vii.

<sup>52</sup> Ryskamp, "Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* in Their Time," in *From Sensibility to Romanticism*, p. 357.

<sup>53</sup> Hutchings, "To Tempt Creative Praise: New Styles in Eighteenth-Century Poetry," *CQ*, 27, No. 3 (1985), p. 73.

<sup>54</sup> If anyone doubts the difficulty of the task facing revisionist critics of mid- and late-eighteenth century poetry, the MLA Bibliography from 1981 through to 1994 suggests the imbalance in eighteenth-century poetry research, confirming too that research still tends to follow the major author model. A simple subject search of authors, for example, yields the following data:

Blake - 965  
Pope - 607  
Thomson - 88

Swift - 783  
Goldsmith - 135  
Gay - 75

Johnson - 665  
Behn - 94  
Gray - 73



Young - 69	Addison - 69	Cowper - 62
Smart - 40	Katherine Philips - 31	Crabbe - 27
John Wesley - 27	Collins - 25	Prior - 18
Finch - 17	Thomas Warton - 15	Joseph Warton - 13
Darwin - 13	Akenside - 13	Shenstone - 10
Watts - 9	Bowles - 9	Yearsley - 7
Charles Wesley - 5	Duck - 4	Leapor - 2

In many cases, of course, cross-referencing shows that these search figures exaggerate the focus on writers such as Swift and Pope: they often show up in the same book or article titles. Still, the data give a fair indication of the relative lack of visibility of mid- and late-eighteenth century poets.

<sup>55</sup> Millar, *The Mid-Eighteenth Century* (Edinburgh and London: 1902), pp. 175, vi and 2 respectively.

<sup>56</sup> Eliot, "Poetry in the Eighteenth Century," p. 274. Certainly Horace Walpole's fellow-antiquarian, William Cole, fits Eliot's description, but he did not write poetry. See, Walpole, *Correspondence*, eds. W. S. Lewis and A. Doyle Wallace (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press; London: OUP, 1937), I, p. 86; (Cole to Walpole, 3 March 1765): "you judge very right concerning my indifference about what is going forward in the world, where I live in it as though I was no way concerned about it except in paying, with my contemporaries, the usual taxes and impositions. In good truth I am very indifferent about my Lord Bute or Mr Pitt, as I have long been convinced and satisfied in my own mind that all oppositions are from the ins and outs, and that power and wealth and dignity are the things struggled for, not the good of the whole."

<sup>57</sup> Davie, *The Late Augustans*, p. xxi. For a spirited defence of the emotional content of Augustan verse, see G. S. Rousseau, "On Reading Pope," pp. 1-59. Also, Ian Donaldson, "Pope and Feeling," in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, eds. J. P. Hardy and J. C. Eade, pp. 33-50.

<sup>58</sup> McKillop, Introd., *Eighteenth Century Poetry and Prose*, p. xxv. Although McKillop enlists Johnson to support his claim, he avoids direct citation. Johnson certainly disliked aspects of contemporary writing, but he by no means dismissed it all: *Rambler* 154 complains, for instance, about "the mental disease of this generation of writers," but then refers specifically to their lack of patience and their ignorance of the ancients in favour of "unassisted genius and natural sagacity." In *Works*, eds. W. J. Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss (New Haven and Yale: Yale Univ. Press, 1968), V, p. 55. In the same essay Johnson moderates his harangue, accepting that "No man ever yet became great by imitation" (p. 59). Generally, he viewed the state of contemporary writing with equanimity, often praising what modern critics now scorn. Since a great deal of poetry before and during Pope's heyday fits McKillop's "silly" category, his statement simply distracts the reader. Quintana and Whitley, Introd., *English Poetry of the Mid and Late Eighteenth Century* (1979; rpt. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1979), p. 3.

<sup>59</sup> Jackson, *The Probable and the Marvelous* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1978), p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> Frye, we note in passing, states that he "realized early in [his] critical life that evaluation was a minor and subordinate function of the critical process, at best an incidental by-product, which should never be allowed to take priority over scholarship. . . . [value judgments] are not the beginning of the critical operation properly speaking." In *The Great Code* (Toronto: 1981; rpt. New York: First Harvest/HBJ Edition, 1983), p. xvi.

<sup>61</sup> Eliot, "Poetry in the Eighteenth Century," pp. 275 and 271 respectively.

<sup>62</sup> Quintana and Whitley, *English Poetry of the Mid and late Eighteenth Century*, p. 3.

<sup>63</sup> Young, *The Works* (London: 1774), IV, p. 296.

<sup>64</sup> *Trifler*, No. IX. Reprinted in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. LVI (September 1786), p. 758.

<sup>65</sup> *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. LIV (1784), p. iv.

<sup>66</sup> Reprinted in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. LVI (July 1786), p. 758.

<sup>67</sup> Bate, *The Burden of the Past and the English Poet* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1970), p. 9.

<sup>68</sup> Johnson, *The Works*, eds. Walter Jackson Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1969), IV, pp. 87-88.

<sup>69</sup> For a well-argued, suggestive reappraisal of the significance of the battle of the books, see Joseph M. Levine, "Ancients and Moderns Reconsidered," *ECS*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (1981), pp. 72-89. Levine contends that "There is a point of view from which the whole history of ideas can appear to be a struggle between old and new, between ancients and moderns . . . Strangely enough, the battle of the books has never really been recounted in detail and it badly requires a new perspective. Above all, it needs to be set into a framework of intellectual history as an episode in the age-old dispute between the ancients and the moderns" (p. 72).

<sup>70</sup> Young, *Works*, IV, p. 282.

<sup>71</sup> Sayers, *Miscellanies, Antiquarian and Historical* (Norwich: 1805), p. 1.

<sup>72</sup> Young, *Works*, IV, p. 283. A handful of essays in Hawkesworth's *The Adventurer*, (London: 1753-1754), also tackle this issue. No. 63 notes that "THE number of original writers, of writers who discover any traces of original thought, or veins or new expression, is found to be extremely small, in every branch of literature. Few possess ability or courage to think for themselves, to trust to their own powers, to rely on their own stock; and, therefore, the generality creeps tamely and cautiously in the track of their predecessors" (Vol. I, p. 373). The problem for the poet, however, does not simply concern his lack of courage or self-confidence: "IT happens unfortunately in poetry, which principally claims the merit of novelty and invention, that this want of originality arises frequently, not from a barrenness and timidity of genius, but from invincible necessity and the nature of things. The works of those who profess an art whose essence is imitation, must needs be stamped with a close resemblance to each other; since the objects material or animate, extraneous or internal, which they all imitate, lie equally open to the observation of all, and are perfectly similar. . . . I am inclined to think, that notwithstanding the manifold alterations diffused in modern times over the face of nature, by the invention of arts and manufactures, by the extent of commerce, by the improvements in philosophy and mathematics, by the manner of fortifying and fighting, by the important discovery of both the Indies, and above all by the total change of religion; yet an epic or dramatic writer, though surrounded with such a multitude of novelties, would find it difficult or impossible to be totally original, and essentially different from HOMER and SOPHOCLES. The causes that excite and the operations that exemplify the greater passions, will always have an exact coincidence, though perhaps a little diversified by climate or custom: every

exasperated hero must rage like ACHILLES" (p. 374).

<sup>73</sup> Bate, *The Burden of the Past and the English Poet*, pp. 131 and 95 respectively. See, also, Martha Collins, "The Self-Conscious Poet: the Case of William Collins," *ELH*, Vol. 42 (1975), pp. 362-377, especially p. 362.

<sup>74</sup> Bloom, *A Map of Misreading* (New York: OUP, 1973), p. 10. Bloom argues that "poetic incarnation results from poetic influence" (p. 12).

<sup>75</sup> Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence* (New York: OUP, 1973), p. 5.

<sup>76</sup> Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, p. 7. While Bloom relies heavily upon Freudian analogues in establishing the ground of his theories, much of his argument seems to me to lose rhetorical force when he actually defines his notion of influence: "poetic influence, by which I continue *not* to mean the passing-on of images and ideas from earlier to later poets. Influence, as I conceive it, means that there are *no* texts, but only relationships *between* texts" (*A Map of Misreading*, p. 3). This definition would appear to subvert the emotional and psychological role of the writer in this process. For an interesting critique of the notion of anxiety and influence, see Geoffrey Hartman, "War in Heaven: A Review of Harold Bloom's 'The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry,'" in *The Fate of Reading and Other Essays* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 41-56. See, also, Daniel Kaiser, rev. of *A Map of Misreading*, by Harold Bloom, *SiR*, 15, No. 2 (1976), pp. 320-326, for a useful overview of Bloom's development of the notion of influence and misreading. For an interesting and stimulating account of Collins's *Odes* and his relationship to the past, see Paul H. Fry, *The Poet's Calling in the English Ode* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1980), pp. 97-132. Fry offers a sympathetic treatment of the eighteenth-century ode, but his critical concerns do not cross my own: his work attempts to provide an almost existential construction of odic experience. Also, see A. S. P. Woodhouse, "The Poetry of Collins Reconsidered," in *From Sensibility to Romanticism*, eds. Frederick W. Hilles and Harold Bloom, who shows the breadth of influences on Collins, p. 99; and Earl R. Wasserman, "Collins' 'Ode On the Poetical Character,'" *ELH*, 34 (1967), pp. 92-115, who argues that Collins was as much concerned with different types of poetry and poetic creation, the ideal of which he usually identified with a figure like Spenser or Milton, as with the poetic forefather.

<sup>77</sup> It seems worth reminding readers that Collins's negative remarks about the *Eclogues*, made years after their publication during his illness, refer not to the quality of the poem per se but to his unease that he borrowed much of the imagery in the poem, rather than presenting first-hand description: they were "not sufficiently expressive of Asiatic manners." In Johnson, "Life of Collins," in *Lives of the English Poets*, ed. George Birkbeck Hill (Oxford: Clarendon, 1905), III, p. 460.

<sup>78</sup> Wendorf, *William Collins and Eighteenth-Century English Poetry* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1981), p. 183.

<sup>79</sup> For a suggestive discussion about the issue of eighteenth-century borrowing, see Lonsdale, "Gray and 'Allusion': The Poet as Debtor," in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. R. F. Brissenden and J. C. Eade (Canberra: Australian National Univ. Press, 1979), IV, pp. 31-55. Butt argues that, while it appears obvious that Collins "was a devoted disciple" of Milton, his poetry "shows a large measure of independence . . . what he learned, he made his own." In *The Mid-Eighteenth Century*, p. 68.

<sup>80</sup> The anxiety of influence approach seems even more problematical when dealing with a poet like Coleridge. As noted in my introduction, Coleridge identified Bowles, hardly

a strong precursor, as a major influence on his poetic development. In a letter to John Thelwall, Coleridge called Bowles "the bard of my idolatry." *Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. Earl Leslie Griggs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), I, p. 156. Numerous references to Bowles in Coleridge's correspondence make it clear that Coleridge held Bowles's work in high esteem. For a brief but to the point critique of the problem of influence in the writing of literary history, see Marion Campbell, "Unending Desire: Sidney's Reinvention of Petrarchan Form in *Astrophil and Stella*," in *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture*, eds. Gary F. Waller and Michael D. Moore (London: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 84-85. Campbell states: "'Influence' must be recognised not as an objective fact, nor an authoritative source of meaning, but as a critical method--and a contentious one at that" (p. 85).

<sup>81</sup> Nichol Smith, Preface, *The Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse*, p. ix.

<sup>82</sup> Bronson, *Facets of the Enlightenment*, p. 3. See, for instance, Pollard's introduction to *Silver Poets of the Eighteenth Century*: he prompts the reader constantly to look for the beginnings of romanticism, while excusing the public voice of early eighteenth-century poetry.

<sup>83</sup> Bosker, *Literary Criticism in the Age of Johnson*, 2nd ed., rev. (1953; rpt. New York: Gordian Press, 1970), p. v.

<sup>84</sup> Frye, "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility," p. 311. Frye makes the same point in *Fearful Symmetry* (1947; rpt. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1969), pp. 167-168: the period "has been unfairly treated by the critics, who have tended to see in it nothing but a 'transition' with all its poets either reacting against Pope or anticipating Wordsworth. The period is unhappy and tormented enough, however, and it seems doubly unfair to reduce its most positive achievements to potential Romanticism. It is true that the poets of this age were reacting against the Augustans, but in view of the fact they did not know that the Romantic movement was to succeed them, it seems better to look at them rather as attempting to put English poetry back on Renaissance rails." For a brief account of the critical and philosophical background to Frye's definition, see Novak, *Eighteenth-Century English Literature*, pp. 140-153.

<sup>85</sup> Bronson sees the period as a time "when the spirit of Classicism steadily *refined* its values, grew increasingly *assured* in its declaration of them, and never knew better their true and vital meaning and importance than when on the verge of losing them." In *Facets of the Enlightenment*, p. 24. See, also, Clifford Siskin, "Personification and Community: Literary Change in the Mid and Late Eighteenth Century," *ECS*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (1982). For Siskin, the poetry after Pope does not reveal a new period but "increasing experimentation within the Augustan mode" (p. 373). Quintana and Whitley observe "no revolutionary break with the traditional line," and so "it is in reference to that [Pope's] tradition, not to romantic art, that they are best understood." In *English Poetry of the Mid and Late Eighteenth Century*, p. 5. For a brief but sensible discussion of these issues, see Sambrook, *The Eighteenth Century*, pp. 206-210. I would concur with his suggestion that "We might better avoid prejudgement of the complicated, varied, and eclectic literary and intellectual life of the eighteenth century if we habitually referred to the period as just that--the eighteenth century" (p. 210).

<sup>86</sup> Sutherland, *Preface to the Eighteenth Century*, pp. iii-iv. Rothstein provides a cogent discussion of this particular issue in his introductory remarks to his *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Poetry*, pp. x-xiii. Also, see Novak, *Eighteenth-Century English Literature*, pp. 1-15.

<sup>87</sup> Dryden, *Poems*, ed. James Kinsley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), IV, p. 1765. Dryden also says, in his *Defence of the Epilogue; or, An Essay on the Dramatic Poetry of the Last Age*, that he wants "to make it clear, that the language, wit, and conversation of our age, are improved and refined above the last." *Essays of John Dryden*, ed. W. P. Ker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900), p. 163. Highlighting a remark such as Dryden's in order to use a brief couplet to make a general point about a literary period calls for careful consideration of the remark in terms of context, literary tradition, change in opinion and taste, and so on: it would, for example, make sense to ask if the thought expressed in Dryden's couplet from *The Secular Masque* was distinct from other similar thoughts in other poems. The idea belongs, I would argue, to a familiar seventeenth-century topos dealing with time and natural process. See, for instance, Robert Herrick's "Ceremonies for Candlemas Eve": "Thus times do shift, each thing his turne do's hold; / *New things succeed, as former things grow old.*" In *The Poetical Works*, ed. L. C. Martin (1956; rpt. London: OUP, 1968), p. 285, ll. 21-22. Here, too, the general, even trite, philosophical maxim masks a more pertinent political point.

<sup>88</sup> Goldsmith, *Collected Works*, ed. Arthur Friedman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), I, pp. 258 and 337 respectively. Goldsmith, it seems worth noting, puts negative remarks about the state of culture down to psychological motives: "To deplore the prostitution of learning, and despise contemporary merit, it must be owned, have too often been the resource of the envious or disappointed, the dictates of resentment not impartiality. The writer, possessed of fame, is willing to enjoy it without a rival, by lessening every competitor; the unsuccessful author is desirous to turn upon others the contempt which is levelled at himself, and being convicted at the bar of literary justice, vainly hopes for pardon by accusing every brother of the same profession" (p. 257). Such "invective," he adds, "conveys no instruction; all it teaches is, that the writer dislikes an age by which he is probably disregarded" (p. 258).

<sup>89</sup> *The Monthly Magazine, or Gentleman and Ladys complete Magazine*, Vol. I, (London: 1774), p. 65. The essay was reprinted from the *Universal Magazine*. See, also, Joseph Warton's remarks on ancient and modern literature in *The Adventurer* (London: 1753), II, Numbers 127 and 133.

<sup>90</sup> Reprinted in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. LVI (July 1786), p. 758.

<sup>91</sup> Sayers, *Miscellanies, Antiquarian and Historical*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>92</sup> Berkeley, "On the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America," in *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth-Century Verse*, p. 175.

<sup>93</sup> John Butt confirms that "in the later 1730's there is not that sense of an epoch ending," nor does that sense appear with much strength later in the century. *The Mid-Eighteenth Century*, p. 1.

<sup>94</sup> Brown, *Preromanticism* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1991), p. 1.

<sup>95</sup> Brown, *Preromanticism*, p. 3.

<sup>96</sup> Wimsatt, "Imitation as Freedom: 1717-1798," in *Forms of Lyric*, ed. Reuben A. Brower (New York and London: Columbia Univ. Press, 1970), p. 47.

<sup>97</sup> Enright, "William Cowper," in *From Dryden to Johnson*, IV, p. 387. Also, T. E. Blom, "Eighteenth-Century Reflexive Poetry," *ECS*, 10, No. 1 (1976): "these poets typically depict themselves as aliens whose existence in a world of confusing and contradictory

values motivates a fond, backward glance to a never-to-be-recovered yesteryear of simplicity, order, health, and prosperity; or as irreverent, rebellious youths, testing their strength against the conventions of a past age" (p. 54).

<sup>98</sup> Jackson, *The Probable and the Marvelous*, p. 80.

<sup>99</sup> Wesling, "The Inevitable Ear: Freedom and Necessity in Lyric Form, Wordsworth and After," in *Forms of Lyric*, p. 104. For a judicious and suggestive discussion of poetry and eighteenth-century associationist theory, readers should consult Ralph Cohen, "Association of Ideas and Poetic Unity," *PQ*, XXXVI, No. 4 (October 1957), pp. 465-74, especially pp. 465, 468, 471. See also Paul K. Alkon, "Critical and Logical Concepts of Method from Addison to Coleridge," *ECS*, 5, (1971-72), pp. 97-121. Alkon argues that the concept of method lost much of its technical, logical sense when used by critics after mid century: "the key term is *connection* not *order* or *method*, and the central issue--relevant alike to epic, georgic, ode, mock-epic and prose preface--is the adequacy of explicit transitions, not the sequence of those parts that are well or poorly joined" (p. 101). If a poem works, then it must contain some method, though hidden, and associationist theory allowed a certain natural logic. See pp. 103-105. James Engell provides a stimulating discussion of the importance of associationist ideas to the debate about the powers of the imagination and the function of creativity in critical debate after 1750: see pp. 65-88, in *The Creative Imagination* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard Univ. Press, 1981).

<sup>100</sup> For a suggestive analysis of the type of movement which Wesling finds so disconcerting, see Marshall Brown, "The Urbane Sublime," *ELH*, 45 (1978), pp. 236-254. Brown argues that "The apparent inconsistencies of eighteenth-century poetry are not contingent facts of an inconsistent style, but constitutive structures of a particular form of experience" (p. 251). That experience, he notes, remains "conscious of the variability and relativity of values," that "everything is intermediate, nothing absolute; everything is in flux, nothing fixed" (p. 248). Two other works which offer important observations on the way that changed conceptions of the productive relations between nature, perception, emotion, and idea were altering thinking about the the structure of poetry are Oscar Kenshur's *Open Form and the Shape of Ideas* (London and Toronto: Associated Univ. Presses, 1986), pp. 69-100 in particular, and Jonathan Lamb, "Hartley and Wordsworth: Philosophical Language and Figures of the Sublime," *MLN*, Vol. 97 (1982), pp. 1064-1085. Lamb's discussion of association shows just how central theories about how ideas develop were to poetic thinking about order and structure.

<sup>101</sup> Boyce, "Sounding Shells and Little Prattlers in the Mid-Eighteenth-Century English Ode," *ECS*, Vol. 8, 3 (1975), p. 245. Also, T. E. Blom, "Eighteenth-Century Reflexive Poetry": "one might wonder whether the lack of commitment, the hesitancy, and the indecision attributed to the poets of the mid and late eighteenth century are not projected upon them by critics who are themselves confused by and hesitant about a poetry which differs radically from the expectations they bring to it" (p. 53).

<sup>102</sup> Maclean, "Personification But Not Poetry," *ELH*, Vol. 23 (1956), p. 164. Maclean, like some others who have dirtied their hands with eighteenth-century lyrics, find them too mechanical, too prosaic.

<sup>103</sup> The remark is an eighteenth-century one: see George Colman, *Modern Novels*. (Inscribed to the Author of the Monk), in *Annual Register* (London: 1797), p. 448.

<sup>104</sup> Mallet, *Amyntor and Theodora: Or, The Hermit* (London: 1747), p. viii. Lonsdale, Introd., *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth-Century Verse*, p. xxxiv. Readers should not interpret the conventional preference for the country over the city as a

lack of concern about "the world," quite the opposite, while figures like Charles Hanbury Williams, Robert Merry, and John Byrom could never, despite the quality of their verse, be categorised as "retired" types. Boswell, for instance, defined Williams as "our lively and elegant, though too licentious, lyric bard." This remark is not found in the Yale edition but in Peter Levi's combined *Samuel Johnson and James Boswell: A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland and The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* (London: Penguin, 1984), p. 322. William Shenstone's despair that his income and educational background trapped him at The Leasowes provides another side to the issue, one which would seem to call for a less condescending judgment. For Shenstone, "to be alone, or in the country . . . is nearly the same," and he writes elsewhere that "The man is curst who writes verses, and lives in the country.--If his *celestial* part inspires him to converse with Juno, his *terrestrial* one necessitates him to stoop to his landlady; so that he is in as disagreeable a situation, as if one person were to pull him upwards by the *head*, and another downwards by the *tail*." *The Letters*, ed. Marjorie Williams (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939), pp. 39 and 28 respectively.

<sup>105</sup> Lonsdale, *Intro.*, *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth-Century Verse*, p. xxxiv. Bronson states: "Merely to call the role is to advertise the difficulty of finding common denominators for talents so divergent in aim, so various in style, so unequal in attainment" (*Facets of the Enlightenment*, p. 161).

<sup>106</sup> Day, *The Dying Negro, A Poetical Epistle* (London: 1773), sig. A2. Readers should consult *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth-Century Verse* for the other poems mentioned in this paragraph; as well, they should take the time to read his explanation of how the "unconcerned" characterization of the eighteenth century came about. In his review of Lonsdale's edition, Howard D. Weinbrot sees the anthology as "an education concerning the eighteenth century," one which suggests "the vast scope of eighteenth-century genres, subjects, styles and wit as the century's varied voices comment upon literary, political, and commercial trends." In "Recent Studies in the Restoration and Eighteenth Century," *SEL*, Vol. 25, 3 (1985), p. 672.

<sup>107</sup> Butt states that though "it seems to have been felt that the epic was no longer entirely suited to the age--only one was written (Wilkie's *Epigoniad*)--it could be adapted, as Fielding was to show in his novels, and Gibbon in the *Decline and Fall*. Other adaptations scarcely less ingenious gave new life to the pastoral, the georgic, the satire, and the ode." In *The Mid-Eighteenth Century*, p. 7. Davie agrees: "this is a period when many poets believe that no subjects are outside the scope of poetry if only the poet is skilful enough." In *The Late Augustans*, p. ix. See, also, Szedegy-Maszak, in "English Poetry in the Age of Sensibility. A Typological Approach," in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Literature*, eds. Miklos J. Szenci and Laszlo Ferenci (Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1974): "the Age of Sensibility was much fuller of contradictions and daring experiments than either the preceding or the next period. It was an age which saw many tentative advances and recoils" (p. 119).

<sup>108</sup> Callan, "Augustan Reflective Poetry," in *From Dryden to Johnson*, ed. Ford, IV, p. 348. Quintana and Whitley justify their study of the period with the remark that "It is of some importance that we understand the age . . . in order to clarify our understanding both of neoclassicism and romanticism as concepts and as styles" (*English Poetry of the Mid and Late Eighteenth Century*, p. 3). For a collection of essays which show little concern for to map the eighteenth century according to old paradigms, see *The New Eighteenth Century*, eds. Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (New York and London: Methuen, 1987). In their Introduction (pp. 1-22), the editors outline the urgent need to bring both more history and interdisciplinary materials to bear on the period, and for critics to become more aware of the consequence of their political, critical, theoretical and

methodological practices. Their discussion of the battles for the hearts and minds of professional critics makes interesting reading, though I do not entirely support their programme of renewal, finding the grail of theory and political self-confession likely to yield less miraculous benefits than supposed. The resulting practice may prove more specialist and forbidding than previous scholarship, and it may produce equally reductive paradigms.

<sup>109</sup> Norman Maclean's fine and stimulating essay, "From Image to Action: Theories of the Lyric in the Eighteenth Century," in *Critics and Criticism: Ancient and Modern*, ed. Ronald S. Crane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press; London: CUP, 1952), pp. 408-460, deserves to be singled out as a notable exception to the general run of opinion about the importance of the eighteenth-century lyric. His study of changing tastes as regards the lyric shows the significant role that the lyric played in aesthetic theory during the century. He locates much of the impetus for generic change in attitudes to the sublime and to the move towards primitivist poetry. While Maclean's work goes far towards providing a cogent history of theory about the lyric in the eighteenth century, he does not look towards the epistemological and linguistic ideals of the new science to explain the changing valorizations of lyric experience registered by these eighteenth-century theorists.

<sup>110</sup> Doughty, *Forgotten Lyrics of the Eighteenth Century* (1924; rpt. n. p.: Folcroft Library Editions, 1972), pp. 9 and 13.

<sup>111</sup> Grierson, *Lyrical Poetry from Blake to Hardy*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>112</sup> Davie defines an eighteenth-century lyric as "a poem composed either to match an existing piece of music, or in the expectation and hope of a musical setting being contrived for it," and he finds that "once the words are abstracted from the catchy tune that comes to mind along with each [hymn]" the effect could only be termed prosy. *Augustan Lyric*, pp. 5 and 6 respectively.

<sup>113</sup> Humphreys, "The Literary Scene," in *From Dryden to Johnson*, p. 82.

<sup>114</sup> Harvey, *English Poetry in a Changing Society*, p. 120.

<sup>115</sup> Lindsay, *English Poetry 1700-1780, Contemporaries of Swift and Johnson* (London: Dent, 1974), p. xxii.

<sup>116</sup> Jain and Richardson, *Eighteenth Century English Poetry*, p. 6.

<sup>117</sup> McKillop, *Eighteenth Century Poetry and Prose*, p. xxi. See, also, George N. Shuster, *The English Ode from Milton to Keats* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1946): "what best characterizes the lyric utterance of the Eighteenth century is its failure to reconcile conflicting objectives. The dominant concern was submission of a poetic impulse grown riotous to classical, even neoclassical, discipline. But there were many who, though they venerated the authors of antiquity, looked askance at a prosodic legalism which they believed was stifling the 'enthusiastic feelings' they identified with the creative impulse" (p. 222). Shuster's approach to the eighteenth-century lyric involves a great deal of looking back and looking forward, but not much looking at.

<sup>118</sup> F. W. Bateson, for one, contemptuously rejects such condescension as an unacceptable by-product of the "Romantic way of reading," that is, as a result of imagining that poetry only expresses the feelings of the heart (*English Poetry*, p. 3). Ironically, at least in terms of the main arguments of this thesis, this nubiferous notion about poetry's real essence solecistically (if not solipsistically) equates it with the lyric, or with a sort of lyric "feeling" or "cry." As we saw, Arnold considered Gray the only "poetical classic"



(*CPW*, p. 181) of the eighteenth century. Clearly stepping in Arnold's footprints, Arthur Quiller-Couch defines great poetry, in his introduction to *The Oxford Book of English Verse* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1918), as that which displays a lyrical or epigrammatical flavour but adds: "I am mistaken if a single epigram included fails to preserve at least some faint thrill of the emotion through which it had to pass before the Muse's lips let it fall, with however exquisite deliberation" (p. ix). He chose Gray as the eighteenth-century poet meriting the most space.

<sup>119</sup> Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, translated by J. Sibree, Preface by Charles Hegel; new introduction by C. J. Friedrich (1899; rpt. New York: Dover Publications, 1956), p. 267. As M. H. Abrams notes, in *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 4th ed. (1957; rpt. London: Holt, Rinehart and Wilson), "The term is now used for any fairly short, nonnarrative poem presenting a single speaker who expresses a state of mind or a process of thought and feeling" (p. 99). See, also, Andrew Welsh, *Roots of Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978): almost all theories about poetic language "lead us to lyric for poetic language with the deepest roots" (p. 20). Although *The Harper Handbook to Literature*, eds. Northrop Frye et al (London: Harper & Row, 1985), tries to stem this type of thinking, remarking that "the lyrical cannot be identified with the subjective" (p. 269), Janice Louise Haney provides the more typical view when she points out that "literary history teaches us to link the lyric with Romanticism. Furthermore, we are also told that Romanticism is Neo-classicism's opposite. Consequently, we rarely think of beginning our reading of the lyric in the eighteenth century, even though it is in the eighteenth century that a theory, if not a poetics, is written for the lyric." "Eighteenth-Century Lyrical Models and Lyrical Languages: Essays Towards a Theoretical History of the Lyric," Diss. Stanford Univ. 1978, pp. 35-36. Haney's thesis provides an interesting perspective on the development of eighteenth-century lyrics, but as she sees eighteenth-century lyrics as part of a "*project of determining being as presence and presence as being*" (p. 35), which indicates her debt to the romantic paradigm, and as she rejects the view that "the Restoration should be viewed as an extension of the Renaissance nor . . . that Locke and modern science can be interpreted as in accordance with Neo-classical ideals" (p. 119. fn. 8), her ideas and conclusions offer no support for my line of thinking.

<sup>120</sup> Peltz, "The Neo-Classical Lyric, 1660-1725," *ELH*, 11 (1944), p. 92.

<sup>121</sup> Collins, "The Self Conscious Poet: the Case of William Collins," p. 362. Engell, in *The Creative Imagination*, sees the critical spirit of the period as an essential element of its understanding of creativity, led to its exploration of the imagination, and hence to the emergence of Romanticism (p. 78); he adds that "the Enlightenment view of the imagination had one immense advantage that the later nineteenth century failed to recapture: it focused on the source of creative power, on what permits the unified operation of all faculties, and at its highest pitch, on what constitutes genius and creativity in art" (p. 79).

<sup>122</sup> Jeffreys, "Ideologies of Lyric: A Problem of Genre in Contemporary Anglophone Poetics," *PMLA*, Vol. 110, No 2 (March 1995), p. 197. Jeffreys' article argues persuasively that modern perceptions of the lyric genre generally do not consider its status pre-nineteenth century and that contestations over lyric expression often fail to distinguish the Romantic lyric from other forms and uses (pp. 197-198). Jeffreys errs slightly in his claim that the mythology of the lyric genre and the oldest and purest occurred during the nineteenth century. In *Chapter Four* I will show that many eighteenth-century writers about the lyric took the position that the lyric was the first poetic genre.

<sup>123</sup> Williams, *Prophetic Strain* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 15.

<sup>124</sup> Weinbrot, *Studies in English Literature*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (1985), p. 677.

<sup>125</sup> Shenstone, *The Letters*, ed. Marjorie Williams (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 433.

<sup>126</sup> Weinbrot, *Studies in English Literature*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (1985), p. 677.

<sup>127</sup> Hutchings, "To Tempt Creative Praise: New Styles in Eighteenth-Century Poetry," *CQ*, 27, No. 3 (1985), p. 77.

<sup>128</sup> Brown, *Preromanticism*, p. 49. Brown's obsessively abstract and theoretically mindful approach to the poem as a whole, combined with his strangely literalist reading of single words and brief phrases, seems to me to miss the simple point of the poem and its function in terms of Collins's obvious aims in the *Odes* as a whole. The personification of evening, like the many other personifications in these poems, provides Collins with a simple strategy for addressing a feature or quality of poetry which he believes he must understand if, as a poet, he is ever to attain the ability to represent it in his work in a powerful way. As he says: "Now teach me, maid composed, / To breathe some softened strain, / Whose numbers stealing through thy darkening vale / May not unseemly with its stillness suit." In Roger Lonsdale, ed., *The Poems of Gray, Collins and Goldsmith* (1969; rpt. London: Longman, 1980), p. 464, ll. 15-18. The personification makes concrete the experience of a certain type of poetic mood which, because it encourages reflection on the relationship and value of "Fancy, Friendship, Science, rose-lipped Health" (p. 467, l. 50)--all important elements of social harmony--he designates it evening's "gentlest influence" (p. 467, l. 51). The poem does not chart a retreat from the social to the individual, as Brown declares (p. 51). Brown may not have been able to see Richard Warren Clark's "Collins's 'Odes' and the Political Crises of the 1740s," Ph. D. Diss. University of Oregon, 1989, pp. 1-29 especially. Clark's arguments might have modified Brown's reading. For an account of Collins's *Odes* which relies heavily on post-structuralist theories of presence and mediation, and which similarly finds Collins's "aims" unfulfilled, see Casey Finch, "Immediacy in the *Odes* of William Collins," *ECS*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (1978), pp. 275-295; similarly, Janice Haney-Peritz, "'In Quest of Mistaken Beauties': Allegorical Indeterminacy in Collins' Poetry," *ELH*, Vol. 48 (1981): "the odes also invite a . . . deconstructive reading of the faith in ideal causation and the belief that rhetorical figures can be properly constantive"; "we might read the odes as a series of rhetorical performances based on nothing more substantial than the word" (p. 735). A rather weak reading which side-steps the odes by appealing to the grammatical illusions of language.

<sup>129</sup> Eco, *The Open Work*, translated by Anna Cancogni and introduction by David Robey (U.K.: Hutchinson Radius, 1989), p. 170. See, also, pp. 169, 171. For similar remarks about the unsuitability of reading pre-nineteenth century poetry through Romantic or modern eyes, see Rosemond Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery* (London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1947), pp. 3-26 especially; Germaine Warkentin, "The Meeting of the Muses: Sidney and the Mid-Tudor Poets," in *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture*: "The romantic and modern concentration on the single poem does not serve us well as a way of looking at poems produced by rhetorical methods of composition . . . In such poems the exploitation of established *topoi*--as well as their persistent inversion--produces a dense network of common allusions which links together poems good and bad from many languages and from two millennia" (p. 18). P. W. K. Stone, for one, champions the clear line between the Romantics and the poetry which came before them. Pre-Romantic literature, or so he argues, dispenses with Neo-Classical poetic theories which employ rhetorical ideas. He disagrees with the idea that Romanticism constitutes the culmination of eighteenth-century poetic evolution because "there is one department of poetic theory, a fundamentally important one, in which the

Romantics did produce a radically new set of ideas. Their notions about the writing of poetry are indeed so much at variance with any hitherto entertained that they might almost be said to have invented a new conception of art." In *The Art of Poetry 1750-1820* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 2. Jeffreys, in "Ideologies of Lyric," remarks that Saiz (and by implication many others) "simplifies the history of *lyric* as a generic term, presenting it as a facet of a monolithic, uniquely Western tradition of vatic authority, conveniently sweeping away all considerations of lyric between Aristotle and Hegel, as if the bonds linking these two theorists transcended history . . . The most important transformations of the usage of the term *lyric* occurred during the Renaissance, long after Aristotle and well before Hegel" (p. 197).

<sup>130</sup> Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1974). See pp. 3-99 especially. Frye works a variant of the radical break theory in his *A Study of English Romanticism* (New York: Random House, 1968): see pp. 3-23.

<sup>131</sup> Jackson, *The Probable and the Marvelous*, pp. 5 and 4 respectively. See, also, Casey Finch, "Immediacy in the *Odes* of William Collins," *ECS*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (1987): "Collins' *Odes* concern primarily the problem of immediacy, the process of attaining an unmediated experience in which votary becomes one with the invoked . . . the very condition of Collins' project to broach immediate experience renders the enterprise impossible from the start" (p. 278).

<sup>132</sup> Grierson, *Lyrical Poetry from Blake to Hardy*, p. 21; Frye, "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility," p. 312.

<sup>133</sup> Wimsatt, "Imitation as Freedom," pp. 47-48.

<sup>134</sup> Boyce, "Sounding Shells and Little Prattlers in the Mid-Eighteenth-Century English Ode," p. 245.

<sup>135</sup> Sutherland, *A Preface to Eighteenth Century Poetry*, p. iii. Frye, for one, feels that the period "has always suffered from not having a clear historical or functional label applied to it." In "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility," *Eighteenth-Century English Literature*, p. 311. Jackson feels unhappy with Frye's suggestion for calling it the "Age of Sensibility" and concludes that, as yet, "we have no generally satisfactory name." In *The Probable and the Marvelous*, p. 1. Quintana and Whitley state: "English poetry from 1740 - 1800 constitutes what is properly to be regarded as a definite era" displaying "qualities of thought, sensibility, and style that are distinctive" to itself. *English Poetry of the Mid and late Eighteenth Century*, p. 3. See, also, M. Szegedy-Maszak, "English Poetry in the Age of Sensibility. A Typological Approach": "After about 1740 a new kind of style emerged which essentially was neither post-Classical nor pre-Romantic, but had a relative dependence of its own" (pp. 119 and 118 respectively). I disagree with attempts to label the period. Critics may feel safe in the presence of a literary name, but naming invariably proves imaginatively reductive and critically restrictive. For re-examinations of the concept of Augustanism, see Howard Erskine-Hill, "Dryden and the Augustan Idea," in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, eds. J. P. Hardy and J. C. Eade (Oxford: Alden Press, 1983), V: "Nomenclature is not an entirely trivial matter; often it quietly biases our thinking; and it is right clearly to distinguish 'Augustan' as a label for the period 1660-1780 from the ways in which 'Augustan' and 'Augustus' were used within that period" (p. 3); Ian Watt, "Two Historical Aspects of the Augustan Tradition," in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. R. F. Brissenden (Canberra: Australian National Univ. Press, 1968), I, pp. 67-88.

<sup>136</sup> See, Harvey, *English Poetry in a Changing Society*, pp. 120-131. He accounts for the increase in lyric production as part of "the turn away from Augustanism" (p. 120), although he points out that the growth of popular magazines extended the market for shorter poems. Generally, most critics see the conventionality of the eighteenth-century lyric as indicative of its superficiality as an expressive form. Perhaps we could all benefit from Ralph W. Rader's essay, "The Dramatic Monologue and Related Lyric Forms," in *Critical Inquiry*, 3, No. 1 (1976), pp. 131-151. Although Rader steers clear of the eighteenth century, he does place a great deal of emphasis on the reality of lyric experiences, on the urge to concreteness in lyric expression, and on its articulation of comprehensible literary and social values. See, also, William Elford Rogers, *The Three Genres and the Interpretation of Lyric*, (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1983). Rogers argues, pp. 9-76, that we ought to see lyrics as interpretive models which formulate experiences into ordered structures of understanding. Unfortunately, Rogers does not deal with eighteenth-century lyrics.

<sup>137</sup> Sutherland, *A Preface to Eighteenth Century Poetry*, p. iii.

## Chapter Two - Experimental Science, Authority, Language

<sup>1</sup> Berkeley, *Of the Principles of Human Knowledge*, in *Berkeley's Philosophical Writings*, ed. David M. Armstrong (1965; rpt. London: Collier Books, 1980), p. 61. For an account of Berkeley's arguments with Locke and his reasons for taking an immaterialist position, see Stephen K. Land, *The Philosophy of Language in Britain* (New York: AMS Press, 1986), pp. 79-130.

<sup>2</sup> Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ed. R. W. Chapman and introd. Pat Rogers (1953; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1991), p. 333. Elsewhere Johnson writes: "I know not any thing more pleasant or more instructive than to compare experience with expectation, or to register from time to time the difference between Idea and Reality. It is by this kind of observation that we grow daily less liable to be disappointed." In *Letters*, ed. R. W. Chapman (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1952), I, p. 110.

<sup>3</sup> See Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, p. 1029, especially note 2: "I shaved my right arm next the wrist, and the skin round the right nipple, to discover how soon the hair would grow again." As Ian Donaldson notes, Johnson "was an admirer of Baconian methods of induction and experimental philosophy, and was often vigorous in his praise of scientific and literary writers who used their own eyes rather than relying on the authority of books." "Samuel Johnson and the Art of Observation," *ELH*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (1986), p. 781. Hoyt Trowbridge, in "Scattered Atoms of Probability," *ECS*, Vol. 5 (1971-1972), notes that Johnson's writing simply "takes for granted a certain attitude of mind, an understanding of his way of reasoning sympathetic enough to assure his readers' acceptance of his refusal as reasonable--neither lazy nor ungracious, but fully warranted by the methodological complexities involved in proving such a proposition. A branch of logic, particularly concerned with a kind of empirical reasoning which gropes toward truth, sometimes attaining a fair approximation to it but never full intellectual clarity and certainty, must have been quite well known to the educated reading public of Johnson's day" (p. 1). For a discussion of Johnson's attitude to science, see Richard B. Schwartz, *Samuel Johnson and The New Science* (Madison and London: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1971), pp. 3-10, 30-58.

<sup>4</sup> G. S. Rousseau argues that "scientific thought and the 'paradigms' [that is, the books] that are its results are largely responsible for creating the worldview of a given

age." "Science," in *The Eighteenth Century*, ed. Pat Rogers (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1978), p. 154.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Berkeley, *An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision*, in *Philosophical Writings*, pp. 285-291. Richard B. Schwartz, in "Berkeley, Newtonian Space, and the Question of Evidence," in *Probability, Time, and Space in Eighteenth-Century Literature*, ed., Paula R. Backscheider (New York: AMS Press, 1979), shows just how deeply schooled in the experimental methods was Berkeley, noting that Berkeley's objections to Newton's abstract conceptions of space and time "are based, to an important extent, on standard scientific ideology and point up divisions within Newton's own methodology. In a sense Berkeley is reminding Newton rather than attacking him" (p. 262).

<sup>6</sup> John Price has noted how the eighteenth-century reader "was increasingly being conditioned to expect a philosophical book to be one based on observation, documentation, and induction." See, "The Reading of Philosophical Literature," in *Books and Their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. Isabel Rivers (Leicester: Leicester Univ. Press, 1982), p. 166.

<sup>7</sup> Osler, "Certainty, Scepticism, and Scientific Optimism: The Roots of Eighteenth-Century Attitudes Toward Scientific Knowledge," in *Probability, Time, And Space in Eighteenth-Century Literature*, pp. 3-6 especially.

<sup>8</sup> Schwartz, *Samuel Johnson and The New Science*, p. 14. The distribution of scientific reading--indeed, reading and discussing scientific books were serious, common, and fashionable pursuits--in the eighteenth century has been well documented and needs no duplication here. See, for example, William Powell Jones, *The Rhetoric of Science* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), especially pp. 1-32. Jones provides a suggestive overview of the extent to which science literature contributed to cultural experience.

<sup>9</sup> Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (1957; rpt. Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1957), p. 14. Watt goes on to say that the emphasis on personal perspective typified in Locke's method produces "a tendency for individual experience to replace collective tradition as the ultimate arbiter of reality" (p. 14). Although a full examination of the interrelationship of the new science and the rise of the novel lies outside the domain of this essay, a couple of points seem worth making here. First, Watt's argument that early eighteenth-century novelists rejected universals does not wholly agree with their conception of their own practice, as Henry Fielding makes clear in his introduction to *Jonathan Wild*, ed. David Nokes (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982), p. 29. Although too complex for discussion here, Wolfgang Iser, in *The Act of Reading* (German ed. 1976; translated London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), makes some interesting remarks about narrative development in *Tom Jones* which help clarify the role of experience in Tom's evolution: see, pp. 198-205 in particular. Moreover, while Lockean psychology clearly influenced the development of character and narration, these owed an equal debt to the issues of probability, certainty, and credibility raised by scientific discourse in general. See, in particular, Paul J. Korshin, "Probability and Character in the Eighteenth Century," in *Probability, Time, and Space in Eighteenth-Century Literature*, pp. 63-77. For an extensive, if annoying evaluation of Locke's influence on eighteenth-century literature, see Kenneth MacLean, *John Locke and English Literature in the Eighteenth Century* (1936; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, 1962), pp. 12-17 in particular. For a more balanced and modern account of the problems and complexities of Locke and the history of criticism, see William Walker, *Locke, Literary Criticism, and Philosophy* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994), pp. 3-28.

<sup>10</sup> Tavor, *Scepticism, Society and the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (London: Macmillan Press, 1987), pp. 1-2.

<sup>11</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things* (1966; English edn., London: Tavistock Publications, 1970), p. xi.

<sup>12</sup> Rousseau and Porter, eds. and Introd., *The Ferment of Knowledge* (Cambridge: CUP, 1980), p. 1. See, also, Colin A. Russell, *Science and Social Change, 1700-1900* (n.p.: Macmillan Press, 1983), pp. 1-12. Russell raises some interesting questions, particularly about how cultural and political forces affect scientific events and whether, given the nature of science's social context, objective can claim objectivity. He also argues that a distinction must be made about the difference between scientific theories which receive support from a social structure and scientific knowledge of facts which may have been affected by social forces but remain true regardless of cultural beliefs (pp. 7-8); Barry Barnes and Steven Shapin, eds. and Introd., *Natural Order* (Beverly Hills and London: Sage Publications, 1979), pp. 9-13, who note that "Perhaps the most significant change in the history of science, and indeed in the study of science generally, over the last decade is that it has become more relaxed and naturalistic. Increasingly, we have become prepared to treat science as an aspect of our culture like any other. The intense concern of earlier generations with the special status of science and its allegedly distinctive characteristics has begun to ebb away" (p. 9); David C. Lindberg and Robert S. Westman, eds. and Introd., *Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution* (1990; rpt. Cambridge: CUP, 1991), pp. xvii-xxvii, who note particularly the problem of writing history of science in terms of periodization and whether we can discuss a scientific revolution at all when so many of the old perspectives no longer seem so clear and obvious. See, also, Peter W. G. Wright, "On the Boundaries of Science in Seventeenth-Century England," in *Sciences and Cultures*, eds. Everett Mendelshon and Yehuda Elkana (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Pub., 1981), pp. 77-82, for a succinct discussion of the similar issues. Also, Stuart Peterfreund's Introduction to *Literature and Science* (Boston: Northeastern Univ. Press, 1990), pp. 3-13, for a succinct account of new trends in this field and an assessment of some of the historical problems of reading the relations between science and literature.

<sup>13</sup> Osler and Farber, Preface, *Religion, Science, and Worldview* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), p. xi. Although the essays in this volume do not abut directly on my concerns, they give a good impression of the complications involved in trying to root scientific events in culture, society, and history.

<sup>14</sup> For brief but helpful statements of the problems involved in this type of analysis, see Patrick Grant, *Images and Ideas in Literature of the English Renaissance* (London: Macmillan, 1979), pp. xii and 3; Schwartz, "Berkeley, Newtonian Space, and the Question of Evidence," pp. 266-269.; Murray Cohen, *Sensible Words* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1977), pp. xi-xvii.

<sup>15</sup> Nicolson, *Science and Imagination* (New York: Great Seal Books, 1956), p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> See Jones, *The Rhetoric of Science*, pp. 33-54, 106-137, for a good example of the descriptive and evaluative nature of his critical project. His primary interest lies in showing how poetic imagery and metaphors borrowed from scientific writings and in detailing how scientific and theological connotations provide the philosophical key to understanding the poems.

<sup>17</sup> Svendsen, *Milton and Science* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1956), p. 6.

<sup>18</sup> See Duncan, *The New Science and English Literature in the Classical Period* (1913; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, 1972), pp. 35-45 especially. *The Correspondence of John Locke and Edward Clarke*, ed. Benjamin Rand (1927; rpt. New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1975), p. 142; see, also, p. 270.

<sup>19</sup> Nicolson, *Newton Demands the Muse* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1946), pp. 43, 44, and 46 respectively.

<sup>20</sup> G. C. Macaulay, *James Thomson* (London: Macmillan, 1908), and Douglas Grant, *James Thomson, Poet of 'The Seasons'* (London: Cresset Press, 1951). Macaulay notes Thomson's "enthusiasm and intelligent appreciation" (p. 189) of Newton, while Grant sees Thomson's "ready response to Newtonianism" (p. 109) as "firmly uniting science to humanity" (p. 72). See, also, Duncan, *The New Science and English Literature*: "He was familiar with the recent scientific activities" (p. 136), and "In the *Seasons* imagination and reason meet on terms of amity, and merely wait the greater genius of Wordsworth to wed them" (p. 137). A helpful analysis of the role of science in Thomson's poetry can be found in James Sambrook's introduction to Thomson's *The Seasons and The Castle of Indolence* (1972; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), pp. xii-xv.

<sup>21</sup> It would be impossible to list the works which adopt these various perspectives. Jones, *The Rhetoric of Science* (pp. 54-65), highlights a number of works which voice sentiments in seeming opposition to science (though most, he concludes, focus more on the ultimate limitations of science rather than on any negative cultural influences).

<sup>22</sup> Docherty, *John Donne, Undone* (London & New York: Methuen, 1986), pp. 17-18; for the full discussion, see pp. 17-47; Waller, "The Rewriting of Petrarch: Sidney and the Languages of Sixteenth-Century Poetry," in *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture*, eds. Waller and Michael D. Moore (London: Croom Helm, 1984), p. 78, and pp. 69-83. In the same volume, see Marion Campbell, "Unending Desire: Sidney's Reinvention of Petrarchan Form in *Astrophil and Stella*," pp. 86-88, for a concise analysis of fragmentation of identity in Petrarch's lyrics.

<sup>23</sup> Milic, "The Metaphor of Time as Space," in *Probability, Time, and Space in Eighteenth-Century Literature*, pp. 249-258. For an account of some of the complexities of changing conceptions of time and space on problems of identity and self-knowledge, see in the same volume Hopewell Selby, "'Never Finding Full Repast': Satire and Self-Extension in the Early Eighteenth Century," pp. 217-247. Selby shows how satire, the art of ironic exaggeration, leads to the most horrific visions of the human predicament, and in Swift and Pope, but in other writers before and after, these visions derive less from worry about the effects of scientific discoveries and theories on our place in the world but more on their observations of human behaviour: folly, megalomania, greed, delusion, the denial of flesh and reality, and so forth. Selby points out that, in Swift and Pope at least, the visions serve as means to the middle way. He confirms my position that we must take great care in drawing psychological profiles from the events of science.

<sup>24</sup> Moxon, *A Tutor to Astronomy and Geography* (London: 1670), p. 23. See, also, John Trenchard, *The Natural History of Superstition* (London: 1709), pp. 5-8. Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought II* (New York, Harper Torchbook, 1965), particularly the chapter, "Ficino and Pomponazzi on the Place of Man in the Universe," pp. 102-110, where he argues that the notion of a hierarchical cosmology, with man the privileged center, was already wearing thin as the humanist writers explored the problem of free-will. Russell, *Science and Social Change*, pp. 14-15, holds to the opposite viewpoint.

<sup>25</sup> *The Royal Magazine*, pp. 1-4. As Earl Miner observes, too many critics fail to appreciate "the emotional fervor that was genuinely felt for Nature by the eighteenth century." See, "From Narrative to 'Description' and 'Sense' in Eighteenth-century Poetry," *SEL*, Vol. 9 (1967), p. 480. More recently, Edward Craig has argued that the "speck of dust" perspective was in itself often an important cog in the "image of God" wheel. See his discussion of Galileo's *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*, in *The Mind of God and the Works of Man* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 18-21.

<sup>26</sup> Rousseau and Porter, Introd., *The Ferment of Knowledge*, pp. 2 and 3.

<sup>27</sup> See Schwartz, *Samuel Johnson and The New Science*, pp. 19-21.

<sup>28</sup> Bush, *Science and English Poetry* (New York: OUP, 1950), p. 78. Evans, *Literature and Science* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1954), pp. 17, 12, and 13 respectively. Not surprisingly, perhaps, he pays Bush a debt of obligation. Similar notions inform C. M. Bowra's *The Romantic Imagination* (1950; rpt. London: OUP, 1961), pp. 1-24, 271-292. Although I have not kept track, it is surprising how many critics refer to Alfred North Whitehead to validate their attacks on science, although usually passing by his observations in the final chapter on the role of science in the modern world. See *Science and the Modern World* (1926; rpt. London: Free Association Books, 1985), pp. 258-260. For a well-researched rebuttal of Bush's views about seventeenth-century attitudes to poetic language, see William H. Youngren, "Generality, Science and Poetic Language in the Restoration," *ELH*, Vol. 35 (1968), especially pp. 160-166.

<sup>29</sup> Horne, "Literature and Science," in *Pelican Guide to English Literature*, ed. Boris Ford (1957; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), p. 188.

<sup>30</sup> Willey, *The Eighteenth-Century Background* (1940; rpt. London: Peregrine, 1967), p. 9.

<sup>31</sup> Bush, *Science and English Poetry*, p. 3. Duncan makes a similar point: "The new science, or the new experimental philosophy, arose in England as a fresh intellectual impulse, too subtle and too penetrating to be readily confined within the bonds of a definition. Its manifestations may be observed, its more obvious qualities may be studied, yet back of all these there is an elusive psychological problem that fairly challenges solution" (*The New Science and English Literature*, p. 1). He, too, never goes into the "elusive psychological problem."

<sup>32</sup> Bush, *Science and English Poetry*, p. 78.

<sup>33</sup> Bush, *Science and English Poetry*, p. 79.

<sup>34</sup> Rousseau, "The Debate About Historical Culture and the Status of the History of Science," *Literature and History*, Vol. 11:2 (1985), p. 160. See, also, Edward Davenport, "The Devils of Positivism," in *Literature and Science*, pp. 17-31, especially pp. 25-27.

<sup>35</sup> Jones, "Science and Language in England of the Mid-Seventeenth Century," *JEGP*, Vol. 31 (1932), p. 318; see, also, Robert Beum, "The Scientific Affinities of English Baroque Prose," *English Miscellany*, 13 (1962): "the shift from the utility of oration to the utility of essay and report is a consequence of the increasing sceptical and empirical tone of the times, fostered by the increasing currency of science and of philosophy with an inductive bias. . . . [the writer] was interested a good deal more in matter than in manner; his main business, as he began to conceive it, was to record data and communicate clearly and quickly, persuading through logic and through abundance and accuracy of detailed observation, rather than through sentiment and imagination" ( pp. 68-69); Walter



J. Ong, "Psyche and the Geometers: Aspects of Associationist Critical Theory," *MP*, 49 (1951-52), pp. 16-27. For Ong, the appropriation of metaphors and images from geometry was "symptomatic" (p. 27) of the mechanistic disease which ran through the eighteenth century.

<sup>36</sup> Rousseau, "The Debate About Historical Culture and the Status of the History of Science," p. 170. For confirmation of Rousseau's point, see Norman Hampson, *The Enlightenment*, Chapter IV, pp. 128-161; Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove from first German ed. (1951; rpt. Boston: Beacon, 1955), pp. 134-182. For a full treatment of the issues and problems inherent in approaches to religion and science, see John Hedley Brooke, *Science and Religion* (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), especially pp. 16-51, 52-81, and 152-191.

<sup>37</sup> Watts, in *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth-Century Verse*, p. 72. In the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. LVII (London, 1787), a correspondent notes that one sure method of curing young scholars who are "bird-witted" is to make them read, amongst writers such as Bacon, Boyle, Euclid, and Locke, "Watts's Logick, and his Improvement of the Mind" (p. 22). For a suggestive analysis of the influence of the experimental method on the development of religious ideas during the eighteenth century, see John V. Price, "Religion and Ideas," in *The Eighteenth Century*, pp. 120-152.

<sup>38</sup> Josipovici, *The World and the Book* (1971; rpt. Herts: Paladin Press, 1973), pp. 293-315. Umberto Eco follows a similar train of thought in his *Travels in Hyperreality*, trans. William Weaver (1986; rpt. London: Pan Books, 1987), pp. 59-85. Although this form of yearning for a Golden Age may seem harmless enough, it deserves no place in critical thinking. As Eco argues elsewhere, post-Romantic criticism, that is, modern criticism, often fails to appreciate the aims of pre-Romantic art precisely because the pre-Romantic artist or writer does not articulate the basic concerns of Romantic poetics. Those concerns, he says, revolve around the problems of art and artistic production, what Bate called "the artist's relation to his own art," modern critics tending to evaluate a work in terms of its declaration or statement of its poetic. This means that the criteria for failure is the reverse for that of success: "the success of the work will have to do solely with whether or not the artist has been able to express the problem of poetics he wanted to resolve." *The Open Work*, trans. Anna Cancogni and introd. David Robey (U.K.: Hutchinson Radius, 1989), p. 170. See, also, pp. 169 and 171.

<sup>39</sup> Rousseau, "Science," p. 154. Rousseau goes on to say: "Probably no single transition has been discussed more often than the so-called shift from neoclassicism to Romanticism: in schools, colleges and universities, all around the world, as well as in countless books . . . any account of this development is incomplete without the inclusion of science. No, this is not going far enough: more urgently, science . . . permits us to make sense of the other factors--politics, economics, philosophy, literature and the arts" (p. 154). For similar arguments, see Hans Eichner, "The Rise of Modern Science and the Genesis of Romanticism," *PMLA*, Vol. 97, No. 1-6 (1982), pp. 8-30. Although the evidence largely supports the main thrust of Rousseau's and Eichner's positions, helpful assessments, however brief, do occur. See, for example, Donald Greene's *The Age of Exuberance* (New York: Random House, 1970), pp. 100-110. Greene voices some of the same anxieties as Rousseau about treatment of science by literary critics.

<sup>40</sup> Rousseau, "The Debate About Historical Culture and the Status of the History of Science," p. 164. See, also, Gabriele Bernhard Jackson, in "From Essence to Accident: Locke and the Language of Poetry in the Eighteenth Century," *Criticism*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (1987), who argues that "A poet's turn of mind and phrase is not set by the dicta of

discursive writers, but it is bound to its informing culture. Assumptions constitutive of belief will also be constitutive in some ways of form and style, though form and style have other constituents as well" (p. 29); in the Introduction to *Poems of Science*, eds. John Heath-Stubbs and Philip Salman (London: Penguin, 1984), the editors state: "In all periods, in responding to the natural world, poets have employed an intellectual framework derived from the science of their day and expressed in characteristic sets of images" (p. 18).

<sup>41</sup> As will become clear, I share Tzvetan Todorov's sense "that literature is an exploration--the most intense exploration we know--of the powers of language," and that genre theory must take as its "starting point the rejection of a certain idea of interiority, even a rejection of the inside/outside dichotomy." *Genres in Discourse*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), p. vii.

<sup>42</sup> Christie and Shuttleworth, "Introduction: Between Literature and Science," in *Nature Transfigured*, eds. Christie and Shuttleworth (Manchester and New York: Manchester Univ. Press, 1989), p. 1. They go on to argue that, given the need for transgression of disciplinary boundaries, the essays in their volume eschew the older methodologies of science and literature and "Instead, with a variety of aims and strategies . . . operate across and between literature and science. They do not do so, it is important to realise, with a reductionist ground of insight which simply conflates literature and science. To reduce science to literature by insisting that science is a kind of writing, or to reduce literature to science by insisting that its codes also give a higher or privileged access to the real, are simplifications offering only the most banal of realisations. To operate across and between a primary cultural differentiation is by no means to abolish it, even wishfully. Rather, these essays wish to recognise the potential complexity of the terrain of literature and science once the strict and definitive boundary between them is not taken for a feature of a natural landscape, but recognised as a cultural artefact" (p. 3).

<sup>43</sup> For an interesting and suggestive discussion of issues raised in this paragraph, see Ludmilla J. Jordanova, Introd., *Languages of Nature*, ed. Jordanova (London: Free Association Books, 1986), pp. 15-47. I wholly concur with her argument that we should "see the study of science and literature as offering important insights into cultural history" (p. 46).

<sup>44</sup> Williams's full discussion of this concept, see the chapter "Hegemony" in *Marxism and Literature* (1977; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1978), pp. 108-114. All further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text as *ML*. I believe the concept particularly apt to my discussion since it becomes clear within the limits of Williams's argument that he saw the concept as a means for understanding cultural influences which were not identifiably bound to any one ideology but crossed class, social, and intellectual boundaries. Although the term itself sounds heavy-handed, in practice Williams saw hegemony as a dynamic force working flexibly throughout culture. Obviously, other theories of cultural dynamics could, and in some ways do, inform my arguments: I am thinking of Michel Foucault's concepts of discourse and the *epistémè*--see his *The Order of Things*, pp. ix-xxiv--and Fredric Jameson's reflections in his *The Political Unconscious* (1981; rpt. London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 17-102. However, as will become obvious, neither of these two theorists' concerns really suits my purposes. Both are concerned with a type of unconscious which does not really accord with my methodology or theoretical aims. Foucault, for instance, wants "to reveal a *positive unconscious* of knowledge: a level that eludes the consciousness of the scientist and yet is part of scientific discourse" (p. xi). To try and integrate their work into this particular study would, I believe, lead to less not greater illumination of the issues.

<sup>45</sup> For a stimulating account of the way in which competing ideas continue to condition and modify attitudes and behaviour, see Edward Craig, *The Mind of God and the Works of Man* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), pp. 13-68, and especially pp. 37-38.

<sup>46</sup> Given this facet of hegemony, we can see why both Johnson and Berkeley understood and applied the experimental method in personal ways.

<sup>47</sup> The essay originally appeared in the *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure* and was reprinted in *The Monthly Miscellany, or Gentleman and Ladys Complete Magazine* (London, 1774), p. 65. Of course, the view expressed throughout the eighteenth century that Bacon founded the new science bears little reality to the actual state of affairs, as Bacon himself would probably have noted. As Ernst Cassirer shows, various medieval thinkers were formulating ideas similar to Bacon's. Even so, in terms of its cultural approbation, that conviction cannot be ignored when we try to grasp how eighteenth-century thinkers responded to the new science. As Kristeller points out, though in regards to a different historical problem--that of labelling an age--it pays to keep in mind the perception which those living through any historical period maintained about themselves or about other periods (see, *Renaissance Thought II*, p. 2). Marie Boas argues that "in many ways, Bacon was the real progenitor of the eighteenth-century enlightenment." *The Scientific Renaissance 1450 - 1630* (London: Collins, 1962), p. 250. For a discussion of eighteenth-century attitudes to Bacon, see Schwartz, *Samuel Johnson and The New Science*, pp. 59-93.

<sup>48</sup> Williams, *Letters Concerning Education: Addressed to a Gentleman entering at the University* (London: 1785), p. 140.

<sup>49</sup> Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning and New Atlantis*, ed. Arthur Johnson (1974; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 199. All further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>50</sup> To say that Bacon deserves credit for first articulating the ideals of the new science does not mean, of course, that others who came before him did not feel as he did about scholastic excess, the primacy of nature, or other such issues. Sidney's *The Defence of Poesy*, published in 1595, seems to share some of the same spirit as Bacon's *The Advancement of Learning*; certainly, Sidney disparages scholastic methods of philosophizing and rhetorical debate; he also argues that man must study nature if he would hope to gain any knowledge of God. See, Sidney, *Selected Writings*, pp. 106-108 (nature), pp. 111-112 (scholastic philosophy). For a brief but illuminating appraisal of the importance of new thinking about nature, see D. J. Palmer, "Marlowe's Naturalism," in *Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Brian Morris (London: Ernest Benn, 1968), pp. 155-157.

<sup>51</sup> For a brief discussion of the immediate political and cultural background to Bacon's defence, see Geoffrey Bullough, "Bacon and the Defence of Learning," in *Essential Articles for the Study of Francis Bacon*, ed. Brian Vickers (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1968), pp. 93-113. As Bullough points out, p. 93, Bacon undertook *The Advancement of Learning* for personal reasons as well as to defend humanism. For a further discussion of this issue, see Julian Martin, "Natural Philosophy and Its Public Concerns," in *Science, Culture and Popular Belief in Renaissance Europe*, eds. Stephen Pumfrey et al (Manchester and New York: Manchester Univ. Press, 1991), pp. 104-113.

<sup>52</sup> R. F. Jones contends that "it is hard to overemphasize the fact that science in its youth considered the linguistic problem as important as the problem of the true scientific method." "Science and Language in England of the Mid-Seventeenth Century,"

p. 328. For a succinct examination of the alteration between Medieval and seventeenth-century valuations of the sign, see Patrick Grant, *Images and Ideas in Literature of the English Renaissance*, pp. 1-26. As Grant puts it: "For Augustine the knowledge of things [as essences] has served to clarify signs; for Locke the knowledge of signs serves to clarify things" (p. 21). A recent and suggestive study of the varying medieval and early Renaissance attitudes to rhetoric can be found in Martin Elsky, *Authorizing Words* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989), pp. 8-69.

<sup>53</sup> Appreciation of the image of the mind used by Bacon and later empiricists has suffered from a lack of understanding of just how the metaphor was put to use: for example, see, M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1974), pp. 30-42. Abrams' notion that the classical and neo-classical metaphor of the mind as a mirror was displaced by the Romantic one of the lamp needs qualification: for most eighteenth-century observers, the two images were interchangeable: "An ESSAY on THOUGHT" (*The Monthly Miscellany*, Vol. I, 1774) uses this image of mental operations: "THOUGHT is a general name for all ideas consequent on the operations of the mind, and it is also given to the operations themselves: thinking is that act of the soul whereby it turns inwards, and surveys those images reflected by the mind which we call ideas: the learned differ much in their opinions concerning the nature and origin of ideas; but, I think, the most rational one is that which supposes them to be formed by the impression external objects make on our senses, and the reflection our minds make of those images which our senses first furnished us with; from whence it appears, that it must be absolutely impossible for a person who had been all his life destitute of any particular sense, to have any idea belonging to that sense; for as the mind operates as a mirror, and reflects those objects that are presented to it by the senses, if any of them are incapacitated for receiving an impression from external objects, it is impossible for the mind to reflect an idea" (p. 24). Also, Abrams argues that the metaphor of the mind as a lamp was used specifically in opposition to Locke (p. 58); this seems strange as, besides picturing the mind as a blank sheet, a reflector, and a camera obscura, Locke calls it "The Candle, that is set up in us, shines bright enough for all our Purposes." *An Essay on Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Nidditch (1975; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1985), p. 46; and p. 45. Stephen M. Straker argues similarly that Locke did not conceive of the mind as a mirror of nature: see, "What Is the History of Theories of Perception the History Of?" in *Religion, Science, and Worldview*, eds. Margaret J. Osler and Paul Lawrence Farber (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), pp. 270-271.

<sup>54</sup> The debate over words and things, *res et verba*, was not new, but Bacon's insistence on *res* as things *qua* things, and not in its older rhetorical sense as subject-matter, was new and came to be the accepted usage in the seventeenth century. See, A. C. Howell, "Res et Verba: Words and Things," in *Seventeenth-Century Prose*, ed. Stanley E. Fish (New York: OUP, 1971), pp. 187-199.

<sup>55</sup> Whitney, "Cupid Hatched by Night: The 'Mysteries of Faith' and Bacon's Art of Discovery," in *Ineffability*, eds. Peter S. Hawkins and Anne Howland Schotter (New York, AMS Press, 1984), pp. 51-64. John L. Harrison offers a cogent and suggestive analysis of Bacon's views about poetry and language in "Bacon's View of Rhetoric, Poetry, and the Imagination," in *Essential Articles for the Study of Francis Bacon*, pp. 253-271, especially pp. 253-254. For an extended, and stimulating, study of Bacon's views about these issues, see Brian Vickers, *Francis Bacon and Renaissance Prose* (Cambridge: CUP, 1968), pp. 1-95 especially.

<sup>56</sup> Descartes, *Philosophical Works*, trans. Elizabeth S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross (1911; rpt. Cambridge: CUP, 1979), I, p. 84. Later (p. 120) he puts similar weight upon the need for careful experimentation as Bacon did.

<sup>57</sup> Elsewhere, Bacon cites Ecclesiastes 7:8 ("Better is the end of a speech than the beginning") and Proverbs 14:23 ("In every good work there is abundance; but where there are many words there is commonly penury") to support his position on rhetorical abuses, asserting that scripture "taxed the vanity of formal speakers, that study more about prefaces and inducements, than upon the conclusion and issues of speech" (*AL*, pp. 175-176).

<sup>58</sup> Incidentally, Swift's spider, the representative of the moderns in *The Battle of the Books*, shares the same traits as Bacon's; the choice seems significant because Swift's spider possesses the same characteristics as Bacon's early Renaissance rhetoricians. The spider "swelled himself into the Size and Posture of a Disputant, began his Argument in the true Spirit of Controversy, with a Resolution to be heartily scurrilous and angry, to urge on his own Reasons, without the least Regard to the Answers or Objections of his Opposite; and fully predetermined in his Mind against all Conviction." *A Tale of A Tub and Other Satires*, ed. Kathleen Williams (1975; rpt. Dent: London, 1982), p. 149. By the way, the bee, that representative of the ancients, comes close to Bacon's ideal modern thinker: unlike the spider whose "*materials be nothing but Dirt, spun out of [its] own Entrails,*" the bee pretends to nothing more than its "Flights" and its "Language." Yet a further description qualifies the bee's intellectual attainments: besides its language, its matter has been attained "*by infinite Labor, and search, and ranging thro' every Corner of Nature*" (p. 151). Swift's attitude towards the new science was, of course, complex and problematical, as indeed we might expect from a writer who worked predominantly in satiric mode. For an interesting analysis of Swift's analysis of scientific utopianism, see John Christie, "Laputa Revisted," in *Nature Transfigured*, eds. Christie and Sally Shuttleworth (Manchester and New York: Manchester Univ. Press, 1989), pp. 45-60. While an admirable effort to redirect thinking about Swift's view of science and its cultural implications, it seems to me that Christie might well have pushed more the ramifications of the satiric exaggeration implicit in Swift's depictions of experimenters by looking more directly at Gulliver's psychic divagations from book to book: Gulliver's facility to mimic and identify with his captors foregrounds our tendency to pretend that we think rationally when usually we behave according to a dangerous mix of prejudice, custom, and teaching, compounded by a yearning for certainty and security.

<sup>59</sup> *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. LVI (September, 1786), p. 755.

<sup>60</sup> *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, Vol. L (June, 1772), p. 287.

<sup>61</sup> In her analysis of Bacon's estimate of the limits of man's reasoning powers, Boas charges Bacon with divine presumption, claiming that Bacon "had a Faustian belief that knowledge was power." *The Scientific Renaissance*, p. 247. Given that Bacon carefully circumscribed his concept of mind and of the uses to which reason ought to be employed, the analogy seems rather inapt. Bacon's emphasis throughout the *Advancement of Learning* is on freedom and responsibility.

<sup>62</sup> Pico, "Of the Dignity of Man," translated by Elizabeth Livermore Forbes, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. III (Jan-Oct 1942), pp. 348-349. The difference between Bacon's concept of the philosopher and Pico's becomes clearer when Pico defines true philosophic activity: "If you see a philosopher determining all things by means of right reason, him you shall reverence: he is heavenly and not an earthly being. If you see a pure contemplator, one unaware of the body and given over to the inward parts of the mind, he is neither an earthly nor a heavenly being: he is a more reverential divinity vested with human flesh" (p. 349).

<sup>63</sup> See Craig, *The Mind of God and the Works of Man*, pp. 18-20. Galileo argues, says Craig, that "God . . . sees all truths instantaneously," while our "mathematical knowledge does not always fall too far short of that mark" (p. 21), but at the same time the human mind must study nature to gain any understanding of God's laws (p. 22).

<sup>64</sup> Milton, *Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (1957; rpt. Indianapolis: Odyssey Press, 1980), p. 454, Book XII, ll. 9-10. Bacon was familiar with the notion that the study of nature inevitably led to atheism and counters the charge, stating that while "it is an assured truth, and a conclusion of experience, that a little or superficial knowledge of philosophy may incline the mind of man to atheism, but a further proceeding therein doth bring the mind back again to religion. For in the entrance to philosophy, when the second causes, which are next unto the senses, do offer themselves to the mind of man, if it dwell and stay there it may induce some oblivion of the highest cause; but when a man passeth on further, and seeth the dependence of causes, and the works of Providence, he will easily believe that the highest link of nature's chain must needs be tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair" (*AL*, p. 9). Of course, the idea of a chain of being remained popular well into the eighteenth century, Pope making good use of it in *An Essay on Man*, where he reduces Bacon's admonitions about insufficient learning to a pithy aphorism: "A little Learning is a dang'rous Thing; / Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian Spring." *The Poems of Alexander Pope*, ed. John Butt (1963; rpt. Bungay: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press), 1985), p. 151, ll. 215-216.

<sup>65</sup> It is interesting to observe the debate about this same issue which surfaced after the publication of Stephen Hawkins's *A Brief History of Time*, and after the excitement caused by the discovery of "wobbles" at the edge of the universe. See, for instance, Peter Atkins, "Will Science Ever Fail," in *New Scientist* (8 August 1992), No 1833, pp. 32-35, and Mary Midgley, "Can Science Save Its Soul," *New Scientist* (1 August 1992), pp. 24-27. What strikes me as significant in these modern debates about the limitations of scientific investigation and its role in determining the spiritual meaning of existence is the lack of knowledge which most of these debaters actually possess regarding the history of western science, or of the feelings expressed by those who lived during a time when the debate about science and religion, though no less lively, took a different tone: Johnson's eighteenth-century attitude to science, expressed in *The Adventurer* No. 107, bears repeating: "Life is not the object of science: we see a little, very little; and what is beyond we only can conjecture. If we enquire of those who have gone before us, we receive small satisfaction; some have travelled life without observation, and some willingly mislead us. The only thought, therefore, on which we can repose with comfort, is that which presents to us the care of Providence, whose eye takes in the whole of things, and under whose direction all involuntary errors will terminate in happiness." *The Works*, eds. Walter Jackson Bate et al (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1963), II, p. 445.

<sup>66</sup> Milton, *Complete Poems and Major Prose*, p. 348, VII, ll. 90-93 and pp. 348-349, ll. 119-123.

<sup>67</sup> Johnson, *Diaries, Prayers, and Annals*, eds. E. L. McAdam, Jr. et al. (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press; London: OUP, 1958), I, pp. 383-384.

<sup>68</sup> Milton, *Complete Poems and Major Prose*, p. 467, XI, ll. 566-567, 575-576, 588-589. For an interesting account of science on Milton's poetry, see Svendsen, *Milton and Science*.

<sup>69</sup> Again, the Angel Michael's advice to Adam parallels that which Bacon gives in *The Advancement of Learning*. The Angel tells Adam that his felicity and duty require

that he "Solicit not [his] thought with matters hid, / Leave them to God above, him serve and fear; / Of other Creatures, as him pleases best, / Whatever plac't, let him dispose: joy Thou / In what he gives to thee, this Paradise / And thy fair Eve: Heav'n is for thee too high / To know what passes there; be lowly wise: / Think only what concerns thee and thy being" (*Complete Poetry and Major Prose*, pp. 366-367, ll. 167-174).

<sup>70</sup> *The Adventurer* No. 63, Vol. I, p. 373.

<sup>71</sup> Blake, *Jerusalem, Selected Poems and Prose*, ed. Hazard Adams (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 127.

<sup>72</sup> Bacon's view of scholastic philosophy retained its currency well into the eighteenth century. The writer of "*An Essay on the STATE of LITERATURE in Great Britain*" confidently asserts that "Scholastic learning and polemical divinity retarded the growth of true knowledge," and that Locke's psychology attained "the depths of metaphysics, and banished for ever the absurd abstractions of the schools, which has so long obstructed the path of knowledge." In *The Monthly Miscellany*, Vol. I, p. 65.

<sup>73</sup> For confirmation of Bacon's point about the hierarchy between disciplines considered intellectual and mechanical, see Mario Biagioli, "Scientific Revolution, Social Bricolage, and Etiquette," in *The Scientific Revolution in National Context*, eds. Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich (Cambridge: CUP, 1992), pp. 16-17.

<sup>74</sup> Boas recounts a story about Bacon which testifies to his convictions about the value of making experiments: he caught pneumonia after stuffing a hen with snow in order to test the possibility of using cold to preserve food. *The Scientific Renaissance*, p. 248. In this light, we should also see why Bacon did not criticize the alchemists too severely: they at least carried out experiments. For a suggestive analysis of the continuing importance of alchemical experimentation in the seventeenth century, see John Henry, "The Scientific Revolution in England," in *The Scientific Revolution in National Context*, p. 185.

<sup>75</sup> Hesse, "Francis Bacon's Philosophy of Science," in *Essential Articles for the Study of Francis Bacon*, p. 115.

<sup>76</sup> The argument about modern science's relations to metaphysics, of course, was not put to rest by Bacon. See, for instance, Edward Davenport, "The Devils of Positivism," in *Literature and Science*, pp. 17-31.

<sup>77</sup> See Moody E. Prior for a discussion of Bacon's arguments about the scientist's social and moral function: "Bacon's Man of Science," in *Essential Articles for the Study of Francis Bacon*, pp. 140-163, especially pp. 140-141.

<sup>78</sup> Quoted by L. A. Selby-Biggs, *Introd.*, Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. Selby-Biggs, revised by P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986), p. viii. For a brief but illuminating assessment of Bacon's influence on seventeenth-century thought, see Richard F. Jones, "The Bacon of the Seventeenth Century," in *Essential Articles for the Study of Francis Bacon*, pp. 3-27. Jones notes that Bacon "did more than anyone else to break the fetters which bound his age to servile submission to the authority of the ancients, and he inspired his followers to face the future rather than the past. His repeated insistence upon experiment and observation as indispensable for the discovery of scientific truth, his reiterated injunction to learn the appearance of things and find out what really is in nature called men from mind to matter, and from universities to laboratories" (p. 22).

<sup>79</sup> McMullin, "Conceptions of Science in the Scientific Revolution," in *Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution*, eds. David C. Lindberg and Robert S. Westman (1990; rpt. Cambridge: CUP, 1991), p. 29.

<sup>80</sup> Wilkins, *The Discovery of a World in the Moone. Or, A Discourse Tending To Prove, that 'tis probable there may be another habitable World in that Planet* (London: 1638), sig. A3<sup>r</sup>. See, also, Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. John Plamentz (1962; rpt. Glasgow: Collins / Fontana, 1974), p. 87: "they that trusting only to the authority of books, follow the blind blindly, are like him that trusting to the false rules of a master of fence, ventures presumptuously upon an adversary, that either kills or disgraces him."

<sup>81</sup> Wilkins, *The Discovery of a World in the Moone*, pp. 32 and 30 respectively. Hobbes likewise takes issue with the way in which the "philosophy-schools" follow Aristotle in every question of science: see, *Leviathan*, p. 62.

<sup>82</sup> Wilkins, *The Discovery of a World in the Moone*, p. 75. Bacon noted: "So in natural history, we see there hath not been that choice and judgement used as ought to have been . . . being fraught with much fabulous matter, a great part not only untried, but notoriously untrue, to the great derogation of the credit of natural philosophy with the grave and sober kind of wits" (*AL*, p. 30). See Hobbes, *Leviathan*, pp. 127-132, for a similar discussion about the ill-effects which the "ignorance of remote causes" (p. 127) fosters.

<sup>83</sup> See Duncan, "The New Science and Comedy," in *The New Science and English Literature*, pp. 66-110, for a discussion of the scientist as satiric character. Also, and in contrast, for the importance to the new science of the much ridiculed *virtuosi*, see Richard B. Schwartz, *Samuel Johnson and The New Science*, pp. 11-12. That the whole debate about science and satire in the period forms a complex cultural phenomenon, see David Shuttleton, "'A Modest Examination': John Arbuthnot and the Scottish Newtonians," *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 18, No. 1 (1995), pp. 47-62. Shuttleton shows, for instance, that different scientific sects generated a good deal of satire against each other.

<sup>84</sup> Wilkins, *The Discovery of a World in the Moone*, sig. A3.

<sup>85</sup> Wilkins, *A Discourse Concerning A New Planet Tending to prove, That 'tis probable our Earth is one of the Planets* (London: 1640), p. 4.

<sup>86</sup> Norris, "Of the Advantages of Thinking," in *A Collection of Miscellanies* (Oxford: 1687), pp. 149-150.

<sup>87</sup> Wilkins, *A Discourse Concerning A New Planet*, p. 2.

<sup>88</sup> Wilkins, *A Discourse Concerning A New Planet*, pp. 4-5. Norris makes a similar remark later in the century: "no sooner does a man give himself leave to think, but he perceives how absurd and unreasonable 'tis, that one man should prescribe to all Posterity: that men, like beasts, should follow the foremost of the Herd; and that venerable *non-sense* should be prefer'd before *new-sense*: He considers, that which we call *Antiquity*, is properly among the nonage of the world; that the sagest of his Authoritys were once new; and that there is no other difference between an antient Author and himself, but only that of time . . . And thus having cast off this *Intellectual* slavery . . . he addicts himself to no Author, Sect, or Party; but freely picks up Truth where-ever he can find it." *A Collection of Miscellanies*, p. 150.



<sup>89</sup> Wilkins, *A Discourse Concerning A New Planet*, p. 2.

<sup>90</sup> See, Duncan, *The New Science and English Literature*, pp. 30-34. By 1645, Browne's philosophical standpoint indicated "a mental attitude in perfect accord with the founder of the new experimental philosophy" (p. 32).

<sup>91</sup> Cowley, *The Essays and Other Prose Writings*, ed. Alfred B. Gough (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1915), pp. 26, 27, and 26 respectively.

<sup>92</sup> Patrick, *A Brief Account of the New Sect of Latitude-Men, Together with some reflections upon the New Philosophy*, *ARS*, No. 100 (1963), p. 19.

<sup>93</sup> Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, p. 101.

<sup>94</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 85.

<sup>95</sup> *Logic; Or, The Art of Thinking: Containing (Besides the Common Rules) Many New Observations, That are of great Use in forming an Exactness of Judgment*, translated by John Ozell (London: 1717), pp. 1-2. Clearly, the anti-scholastic mood was still prevalent in the early part of the eighteenth century: Ozell notes that "*The Book I present you with is so full of fine Reflections for the Common Use of Life, and so differently handled from the Scholastical Manner, that it has been every where well received, and translated into all Languages*" (sig. A3).

<sup>96</sup> Ozell, *Logic; Or, The Art of Thinking*, p. 30.

<sup>97</sup> Ozell, *Logic; Or, The Art of Thinking*, p. 28. The authors add: "This is the Rule we have followed in speaking of the Opinion of Philosophers, both ancient and modern. We have both looked only for the Truth, without espousing the Sentiments of either in general, and without declaring ourselves an Enemy to one more than to another" (p. 29).

<sup>98</sup> Ozell, *Logic; Or, The Art of Thinking*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>99</sup> Birrell, Introd., *A Brief Account of the New Sect of Latitude-Men, Together with some reflection upon the New Philosophy*, by Simon Patrick, *ARS*, No. 100 (1963), p. iv.

<sup>100</sup> A discussion of the religious influence on the development of the new science lies outside the boundaries of this work--such an exploration would lead into matters which, however interesting, do not bear directly enough on the main aims of my argument. For a stimulating discussion of the competing views about which form of Protestantism proved most conducive to the new science--puritanism, Anglicanism, or Latitudinarianism--see John Henry, "The Scientific Revolution in England," in *The Scientific Revolution in National Context*, pp. 178-209. My discussion of Patrick's arguments would support Henry's suggestion that Latitudinarian principles dovetailed with those of the experimental scientists. Henry does not mention Patrick. See also Perry Miller, "The Plain Style," in *Seventeenth-Century Prose*, pp. 147-186. This article was excerpted from Miller's *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Press, 1939), pp. 331-361.

<sup>101</sup> Patrick, *A Brief Account of the New Sect of Latitude-Men*, p. 10. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text and abbreviated as *BA*. Patrick's account of reason concurs with Hobbes's: see *Leviathan*, pp. 81-82.

<sup>102</sup> As Henry points out, this argument about the consanguinity of natural philosophy and theology went back to at least the thirteenth century: see "The Scientific Revolution in England," p. 194.

<sup>103</sup> The geographical analogy goes back to Bacon: "And this proficience in navigation and discoveries may plant also an expectation of the further proficience and augmentation of all sciences; because it may seem that they are ordained by God to be coevals, that is, to meet in one age. . . . as if the openness and through-passage of the world and the increase of knowledge were appointed to be in the same ages" (*AL*, p. 78). Also, see Boas, *The Scientific Renaissance 1450 - 1630*, pp. 30-39, for a brief discussion of the popular excitement generated by geographical discoveries; and Daniel J. Boorstein, *The Discoverers* (1983; rpt. New York: Vintage Books, 1985), especially Book II: "The Earth and the Skies," pp. 256-289.

<sup>104</sup> The importance of external factors in the development of science cannot be underestimated, and I have no wish to do so. In a different context, I would in fact wish to give greater space to this issue. Theorists and historians of science are now taking the connections between science and its cultural contexts more seriously. See, for instance, Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich, eds. and introduction, *The Scientific Revolution in National Context* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992), pp. 1-10; Peter W. G. Wright, "On the Boundaries of Science in Seventeenth-Century England," in *Sciences and Cultures*, eds. Everett Mendelshon and Yehuda Elkana (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Pub., 1981), pp. 82-100; and James J. Bono, "Science, Discourse, and Literature: Role/Rule of Metaphor in Science," in *Literature and Science*, pp. 59-89. Bono's analysis yields suggestive reflections on the issue of scientific language and its supposed attempt to effect a separation from other forms of discourse. I feel, however, that he paints a picture too coloured with the language of subterfuge: Sprat, after all, makes no bones about the historical and social pressures which bore on the minds of the first members of the Royal Society and that their project took force as a reaction to that history.

<sup>105</sup> Sprat, *The History of the Royal-Society of London, For the Improving of Natural Knowledge*, eds. Jackson I. Cope and Harold Whitmore Jones (1958; rpt. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 53. All further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text as *HRS*. Sprat reiterates this point elsewhere, linking the early success of the new science to the political and religious controversies of the mid century: "For such a candid, and unpassionate company, as that was, and for such a gloomy season, what could have been a fitter Subject to pitch upon, then *Natural Philosophy*? To have been always tossing about some *Theological question*, would have been, to have made that their private diversion, the excess of which they themselves dislik'd in publick: To have been eternally musing on *Civil business*, and the distresses of the Country, was too melancholy a reflexion: It was *Nature* alone, which could pleasantly entertain them, in that estate. The contemplation of that, draws our minds off from past, or present misfortunes, and makes them conquerors over things" (*HRS*, pp. 54-56).

<sup>106</sup> Sprat, *HRS*, n. pag. The first page of the *History*, by the way, gives an additional title: *The History of the Institution, Design, and Progress, of the Royal Society of London. For the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy*.

<sup>107</sup> Hobbes comes to similar conclusions in *Leviathan*, pp. 66-68

<sup>108</sup> Cowley, *The Essays and Other Prose Writings*, p. 38. Incidentally, Sprat's contention that a training in experimental science taught one to avoid enthusiasm and heated debate parallels the anti-authoritarianism of the Port-Royal logicians. Logic, they say, "is so much the more necessary, as it is exceeding rare to meet with one endued with an Exactness of Judgment. The World is throng'd with false Thinkers, who are

uncapable of discerning Truth; who take every Thing by the wrong Handle; who acquiesce to the most insufficient Arguments, and wou'd impose the same upon others; who are carried away with the slightest Appearances; who are always in Excess and in Extremities; who have no Hold-fast to keep themselves firm to the Truths they do know, because they at first embraced them rather by Chance than by clear Conviction; or who, on the contrary, adhere to their Opinions with so much Obstinacy, that they will not so much as give ear to the Reasons which might undeceive them; who boldly give their Decisions upon Things in which they are utterly ignorant, and which, perhaps, neither they nor any Body else ever understood; who make no Difference between Discourse and Discourse, or who judge of the Truth of what is said by the Tone of Voice it is said in: He who speaks with Ease and Gravity is in the right; he who explains himself less readily, or seems to be in a Heat, is in the wrong. These are all the rules they judge by" (Ozell, *Logic*, p. 3).

<sup>109</sup> Biagioli makes the cogent point that the social and class appeal of the Royal Society was not conditional upon royal or aristocratic patronage but on a sense of gentlemanly pursuit: "the need of major leaps in social status in order to overcome received disciplinary hierarchies was not felt as acutely in England as elsewhere on the continent. Moreover, the king was not the crucial source of legitimation as he was in the rest of Europe. Although the monarch played an important role in legitimizing the Royal Society by granting it a royal charter, his financial support and input into the Society's programme was minimal [unlike the situation on the continent, where monarchs determined the course of research]. The status and image of the gentleman rather than the absolute monarch was the source of socio-cognitive legitimation sought by the practitioners of the Royal Society." In "Scientific Revolution, Social Bricolage, and Etiquette," p. 33.

<sup>110</sup> Cowley's *Proposition* explains that at his college his professor of experimental philosophy does not, on Sundays, "trouble himself and his Auditors with the Controversies of Divinity, but only teach God in his just Commandments, and in his wonderful Works." *Essays and Other Prose Writings*, p. 38.

<sup>111</sup> Wilkins, *Of the Principles and Duties of Natural Religion* (London: 1675), p. 5; Boyle, *The Sceptical Chemist* (1661), Introd. M. M Pattison Muir (London: J. M. Dent; New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., nd), pp. 3-4.

<sup>112</sup> Cowley, *Essays and Other Prose Writings*, p. 34. This curiosity about natural phenomena combined with the demand for accurate observations of natural phenomena becomes an important element of the eighteenth-century intellectual character. For example, in a letter to George Staunton, a man sailing to Guadaloupe, Johnson notes that in "America there is little to be observed except natural curiosities. The new world must have many vegetables and animals with which philosophers are but little acquainted. I hope you will furnish yourself with some books of natural history, and some glasses and other instruments of observation. Trust as little as you can to report; examine all you can by your own senses. I do not doubt but you will be able to add much to knowledge." In *Letters*, pp. 136-137. In *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. XX (November, 1750), p. 493, a letter signed A.B.C.D. states: "HAVING a little taste for natural history, I am particularly entertained by those books of travels or geography, which are large and accurate in their accounts of the natural history of the places and countries they describe. Under the term *Natural History*, I include a history of the seasons, as well as a detail of the animal, vegetable and mineral productions of countries, and descriptions of their face." Remarks extolling the pleasure and benefit received from reading natural history form a fairly regular submission to *The Gentleman's Magazine*, as well as other eighteenth-century magazines.

<sup>113</sup> Boyle, *The Sceptical Chymist*, p. 11.

<sup>114</sup> Like Johnson after him, Cowley makes a similar point in the *Proposition*, arguing that, as a methodology, experimental science does not "check or interfere with any parties in State or Religion, but is indifferently to be embraced by all Differences in opinion, and can hardly be conceived capable (as many good Institutions have done) even of Degeneration into any thing harmful" (*Essays and other Writings*, p. 43).

<sup>115</sup> Wotton, *Reflections Upon Ancient and Modern Learning*, 2nd ed., *With a Dissertation Upon the Epistles of Phalaris, Themistocles, Socrates, Euripides; &c.* by Dr. Bentley (London: 1697), p. 365. Wotton provides a succinct review of the basic principles of the experimental scientists: see pp. 364-365. Likewise Boyle in *The Sceptical Chymist*, p. 5, takes it as axiomatic that constant questioning and doubt forms an integral part of the process of experiments.

<sup>116</sup> Cowley, *Essays and Other Writings*, p. 39.

<sup>117</sup> As I noted in my section on Bacon, we must take care when we define the nature of the new scientists' attitude to language. Bacon wanted writers to make use of eloquence, just as Sprat here reiterates, seeing it as essential to the fulfilment of the scientific project. I cannot agree, then, with Richard Foster Jones' condemnation of the effect of the linguistic ideals of the new science on the development of language in his "Science and English Prose Style in the Third Quarter of the Seventeenth Century," *PMLA*, XLV (1930), pp. 977-1009, and "Science and Language in England of the Mid-Seventeenth Century," *JEGP*, Vol. 31 (1932), p. 315-331, nor do I accept Christie and Shuttleworth's claim that as "a writing practice, science would now forego the whole realm of rhetorical persuasion and of figuration" (Introduction, *Nature Transfigured*, p. 2). Similarly, Bono's facile gloss on the attitude of language of such figures as Hobbes, Locke, and Sprat indicates a blindness to these writers' stated positions: see his "Science, Discourse, and Literature: Role/Rule of Metaphor in Science," p. 62. Ronald S. Crane's review of Jones's position strikes me as cogent and valid: see, "English Literature, 1660-1800: A Current Bibliography," *PQ*, X (April 1930), pp. 185-186, where he argues that the prescriptive views of the Royal Society about figurative language did not extend to other literature; in the same article, see Morris W. Croll's objections to Jones' interpretation, pp. 184-185. Croll's remarks on this issue at the end of his "The Baroque Style in Prose," in *Seventeenth-Century Prose*, ed Stanley E. Fish (New York: OUP, 1971), are also cogent.

<sup>118</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, pp. 84-85.

<sup>119</sup> Dryden, *Notes and Observations on the Empress of Morocco*, in *The Works*, eds. Samuel Holt Monk et al (London: Univ. of California Press, 1971), XVII, p. 183.

<sup>120</sup> Dryden, *Notes and Observations*, in *The Works*, Vol XVII, p. 182. Dryden, of course, was a member of the Royal Society in 1644 and remained one, though not a paid up member, for a little over three years. During this time he was a member of a committee for collecting and registering phenomena and experiments, as well as serving on the committee to improve the language. See, Claude Lloyd, "John Dryden and the Royal Society," *PMLA*, XLV (1930), pp. 967-976. Lloyd doubts that Dryden remained committed to the Society's doctrines, though it seems unlikely that he would not have followed developments or felt its influence.

<sup>121</sup> Boyle, *The Sceptical Chymist*, p. 7.

<sup>122</sup> Wilkins, *An Essay Towards a Philosophical Grammar, Real Character, and a Philosophical Language* (London: 1668), p. 20. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text and abbreviated as *ETRC*. For a fascinating account of the tradition in which Wilkins's text took shape, see James Knowlson, *Universal Language Schemes in England and France, 1600-1800* (Toronto and Buffalo: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1975). Equally interesting is M. M. Slaughter's *Universal Languages and Scientific Taxonomy in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 1982). Both of these works show just how central to thinking about language were the linguistic ideals of the new science. For a brief but illustrative account of Wilkins's career and some of the political and religious background to his work, see Hans Aarsleff, "John Wilkins," in *From Locke to Saussure* (London: Athlone, 1982), pp. 239-277.

<sup>123</sup> Richard F. Jones makes the point that "The vividness with which material reality was conceived filled the scientists with alarm lest that reality should be lost through a faulty medium of communication and lest the manner of expression should usurp an importance belonging to the thing described. The result was a linguistic ideal which reduced language to its simplest terms, a single word, being exactly equivalent to a single thing." In "Science and Language in England of the Mid-Seventeenth Century," *JEGP*, Vol. 31 (1932), p. 321.

<sup>124</sup> Anonymous. The work was appended to *The History of Hai Ebn Yockdan, an Indian Prince; or, the Self-Taught Philosopher . . . Set Forth not long ago in the Original Arabick, with the Latin Version*, by Edward Pocock (London: 1686). In *ARS*, No. 56 (1956), pp. 199, 207, 197, and 213 respectively.

<sup>125</sup> For a consideration of the religious motivation behind the Royal Society's and Wilkins's view of language usage, see Francis Christensen, "John Wilkins and the Royal Society's Reform of Prose Style," *MLQ*, 7 (1946), pp. 179-187, 279-290. Christensen notes that Wilkins's thoughts about language develop from a desire "to clarify his own mind about his duty as a preacher. The motive springs from the same apprehension of the danger of extravagance of speech, and the remedy for correcting it is the same" (p. 289). For a similar argument, see Richard F. Jones, "The Attack on Pulpit Eloquence in the Restoration: An Episode in the Development of the Neo-Classical Standard for Prose," *JEGP*, 30 (1931), pp. 188-217. Readers should also consult William H. Youngren's fine article, "Generality, Science and Poetic Language in the Restoration," *ELH*, Vol. 35 (1968), pp. 158-187. Youngren argues, as I do, that the desire to purify scientific language did not extend to that of poetic discourse.

<sup>126</sup> Dryden, *Poems 1681-1684*, in *The Works*, eds. H. T. Swedenberg, Jr., and Vinton A. Dearing (Los Angeles and London: Univ. of California Press, 1972), II, p. 122, ll. 446-450.

<sup>127</sup> Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Nidditch (1975; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), p. 6. All further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text as *ECHU*. For Locke, "'tis Ambition enough to be employed as an Under-Labourer in clearing Ground a little, and removing some of the Rubbish, that lies in the way of Knowledge" (*ECHU*, p. 10).

<sup>128</sup> For an account of Locke's theory of language which looks carefully at the way in which Locke's ideas belong to a tradition of language debate, see Land, *The Philosophy of Language in Britain*, pp. 31-77.

<sup>129</sup> Aarsleff, *From Locke to Saussure*, p. 57. Aarsleff's chapter on the dispute between Leibniz and Locke on the purpose and function of words provides a succinct and

stimulating analysis of the conflicting nature of philosophical thinking at this time. The nature and reason for the controversies and disputes, as Craig reminds us in his *The Mind of God and the Works of Man*, make sense when we see them as the inevitable consequence of hegemonic conflict and conflation.

<sup>130</sup> Reresby, *A Miscellany of Ingenious Thoughts and Reflections* (London: 1721), pp. 3-4. See Hobbes, *Leviathan*, pp. 73-74.

<sup>131</sup> Locke reiterates this same idea at various times in the *Essay*, pushing home the argument that "the Foundation of all *our Knowledge of corporeal Things, lies in our Senses*. . . . The whole extent of our Knowledge, or Imagination, reaches not beyond our own *Ideas*, limited to our ways of Perception" (p. 520). See, also, *The Correspondence of John Locke and Edward Clarke*, ed. Benjamin Rand (1927; rpt. New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1975), p. 147.

<sup>132</sup> For an interesting and suggestive discussion of the metaphysical importance of names and arbitrary words during the Renaissance, see Anne Barton, *The Names of Comedy* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), pp. 3-15.

<sup>133</sup> Locke repeats this point on various occasions: however much speakers may agree arbitrarily to annex or attach sounds to ideas, in the final analysis only the individual mind can perceive, comprehend, formulate, and determine meaning: "*Words in their primary or immediate Signification, stand for nothing, but the Ideas in the Mind of him that uses them, how imperfectly soever, or carelessly those Ideas are collected from the Things, which they are supposed to represent*"; "common Use, being but a very uncertain Rule, which reduces it self at last to the *Ideas* of particular Men, proves often but a very variable Standard" (*ECHU*, pp. 405, 522). Land's discussion of this issue in his *The Philosophy of Language in Britain*, pp. 40-42, does not to me seem to take into account the way in which Locke tries to solve the dilemma. Land offers a reasonably sound analysis and critique of Locke's difficulties, but I feel that my approach and discussion of the problem shows that Locke does offer a valid and credible way out of the dilemma.

<sup>134</sup> Elsewhere Locke states: "The knowing precisely what our Words stand for, would, I imagine . . . quickly end the dispute. For I am apt to think, that Men, when they come to examine them, find their simple *Ideas* all generally to agree, though in discourse with one another, they perhaps confound one another with different Names. I imagine, that *Men* who abstract their Thoughts, and do well examine the *Ideas* of their own Minds, *cannot much differ in thinking*; however, they may perplex themselves with words, according to the way of speaking of the several Schools, or Sects, they have been bred up in: Though amongst unthinking Men, who examine not scrupulously and carefully their own *Ideas*, and strip them not from the marks Men use for them, but confound them with words, there must be endless dispute, wrangling, and jargon" (*ECHU*, p. 180).

<sup>135</sup> In his letters to Clarke about how Clarke might educate his son, Locke consistently stipulates the need to teach the child according to the child's experiences. In particular, Locke considered the usual method of teaching the child to read and write in Latin at a young age to be quite wrong, largely because the child was given exercises from works which lay well beyond his ability to conceptualize--a method which gives the child "scraps of authors got by heart; which when a man's head is stuffed with he has got the just furniture of a pedant." See *The Correspondence of John Locke and Edward Clarke*, pp. 148-151.

<sup>136</sup> Hobbes and Locke take similar views about language, but they differ in one important respect. Although Hobbes does emphasize the role of experience in

determining the truth of a fact, when it comes to examining whether or not an argument holds water he does not refer back to the things themselves, or at least not directly, but to the definitions of the words, which should be "rightly joined together into syllogisms." *Leviathan*, p. 98 (see pp. 71, 77, and 85). Locke saw little value in using a syllogism to determine the truth of a word or a proposition, and in formulating his ideas about education he saw that "the abstract notions of logic and metaphysics . . . are fitter to amaze than inform the understanding, in its first setting out towards knowledge." The best way to teach a child how to reason was to teach him the relationship between sense experience and words. See, *The Correspondence of John Locke and Edward Clarke*, pp. 146-148. For a discussion of Hobbes's view of language, see John Watkins, *Hobbes's System of Ideas* (1965; rpt. Aldershot, England: Gower Publishing, 1989), pp. 99-118.

<sup>137</sup> Of course, Locke's views on education, developed during much the same period in which he was working on the *Essay*, stipulate that the amount of effort required to fulfil a learning task can reach a point of diminishing return, after which further application simply works against success. Children, he argued, would only apply themselves as long as they continued to enjoy the task or subject at hand.

<sup>138</sup> Of course, throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries various individuals and groups expended a great deal of energy on just the sort of works Locke wanted: Boyle's *Philosophical Transactions*, Chambers's *Cyclopaedia*, Buffon's *Histoire Naturelle*, and Voltaire's *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, to name a few. Wilkins's attempt to establish a philosophical character and grammar clearly shares the same desire.

<sup>139</sup> *Correspondence of John Locke and Edward Clarke*, p. 156. Locke argues that children rarely receive any benefit from learning the rules and laws of rhetoric and logic: see, pp. 155-156.

<sup>140</sup> Locke's analysis of the abuse of philosophical language echoes Sprat's demand that scientists should try to speak in plain, everyday language, avoiding obscure or specialist terms: "In the Names of *Substances*, for a right use of them, something more is required than barely *determined Ideas*: In these *the Names must also be conformable to Things*, as they exist . . . This exactness is absolutely necessary in Enquiries after philosophical Knowledge, and in Controversies about Truth. And though it would be well too, if it extended it self to common Conversation, and the ordinary Affairs of Life; yet I think, that is scarce to be expected" (*ECHU*, pp. 513- 514).

<sup>141</sup> Elsewhere Locke opines about "how little the preservation and improvement of Truth and Knowledge, is the Care and Concern of Mankind; since the Arts of Fallacy are endow'd and preferred. 'Tis evident how much Men love to deceive, and be deceived, since Rhetorick, that powerful instrument of Error and Deceit, has its established Professors, is publicly taught, and has always been had in great Reputation" (*ECHU*, p. 508).

<sup>142</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 74.

<sup>143</sup> Locke, *The Correspondence of John Locke and Edward Clarke*, p. 148.

<sup>144</sup> Defoe, *An Essay Upon Projects* (London: 1697), p. 229. All further references to this edition will appear in the text after the quotation as *EUP*.

<sup>145</sup> Norris, *A Collection of Miscellanies*, pp. 146, 147, 148-149.

<sup>146</sup> Rymer, *An Essay, Concerning Critical and Curious Learning: in which are contained Some Short Reflections on the Controversie betwixt Sir William Temple and Mr. Wotton; and that betwixt Dr. Bentley and Mr. Boyle* (London: 1698), pp. 3, 8, and 9 respectively. All further references to this edition will appear in the text after the quotation as *ECCL*. By the way, as if to provide ample evidence of the justness of Rymer's criticism of modern dilettantism, the anonymous author of *An Answer to a Late Pamphlet, called An Essay Concerning Critical and Curious Learning* (London: 1698) attacks Rymer, not so much for what Rymer says about the ancients or moderns dispute or much else of import that Rymer discusses but for some disparaging remarks dropped about Christ-Church College. Rymer's fame, or infamy, rests of course on his apparently wrong-headed defence of ancient authority in the drama over the modern; as Curt A. Zimansky points out, Rymer's was not an anti-rationalist spirit at odds with his times, though most modern critics still consider Rymer a perfect case of the rule-bound pedant. Zimansky does not believe that Rymer wrote the *Essay*, though he can offer no evidence against ascribing it to Rymer. Moreover, he feels that the *Essay's* "importance . . . in the history of criticism is slight, though it is an interesting commentary on the battle of the books." *The Critical Works of Thomas Rymer*, ed. and introd. by Zimansky (1956; rpt. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1971), p. 284; for his remarks on Rymer's rationalism, see pp. xx-xxxiii. As will become clear through my discussion, I feel that this appraisal requires some radical modifications: Rymer's views and understanding of literature and the writing process deserve greater attention. As Earl Miner points out in "Mr. Dryden and Mr. Rymer," *PQ*, 54 (1975), Rymer belonged to the venerable tradition of Renaissance humanism; he knew that Europe's "progress" for several hundred years rested on discovery of ancient writers, and he accordingly felt that "the ancients must be imitated, followed, because (and this is the essential thing) such emulation will produce a *revival* of learning, a rebirth or reformation of literature" (p. 148). For Rymer, whose primary concern was for the health of his culture, achieving the purity and fire of literature meant going "back to primitive truth, for by doing so reform and human progress are possible" (p. 148).

<sup>147</sup> Wotton makes virtually the same points in favour of experimental science as Rymer in his *Reflections Upon Ancient and Modern Learning*, p. 169. He says, for instance, that a fair judgment of a modern writer's accomplishments compared to an ancient's does not involve arguing about "*Whether they were Great Men*," since that stands beside the point, but "*Whether the Moderns have said anything upon these Matters, without Copying out of other Men's Writings*." The answer--"unless we will do them Wrong"--seems beyond debate.

<sup>148</sup> Rymer, it must be said, also derided those scientists who speculated about visits to the moon, building planes, submarines, and other mechanical contraptions, considering such ideas absurdities. He viewed these as "Contradictions to Nature," but he adds that "These, I must confess, are Projections that turn upon too subtle and deep Reasons for my comprehension" (p. 11). Rymer, of course, was not alone in taking issue with such manner of speculation. See, Thomas Baker, *Reflections Upon Learning*, 5th ed. (London: 1714). It ought to be noted, however, *why* these two writers took issue: Baker, for instance, distinguishes between "The Genuine Members" of the Royal Society from those who "over-rate their own Performances" and "who have been so *Planet-struck*, as to dream of the Possibility of a Voyage to the Moon, and talk of making Wings to fly thither," and "nothing," he says, "has done them more injury" (p. 99) than such rash speculations.

<sup>149</sup> Rymer distinguishes between etymological criticism and textual criticism; he sees the latter as vital to the progress of learning: "had not the Criticks of latter Ages, when Learning after a long and dark Interval began to dawn and revive again in *Europe*,



been very industrious in Publishing correct Editions of antient Books, and putting Modern Authors upon great Care and exactness in their Writings, that they might at last restore Letters to the World, we had not at this day seen Learning in so flourishing a Condition, nor so many Academies, and places of Polite Literature, where Men are wholly set apart for the cultivation of Knowledge” (pp. 4-5). Given the stress that Rymer puts on the recovery of correct texts—that textual criticism constituted the most important labours of a critic—it is hardly surprising to see eighteenth-century writers making the same point. In *Poems On Several Occasions* (London: 1727), for example, William Broome offers “a few things upon *Criticism* in general, a Study very necessary, but fal'n into contempt through the abuse of it. At the restoration of Learning, it was particularly necessary; Authors had been long buried in obscurity, and consequently had contracted some rust through the Ignorance and Barbarism of preceding Ages; it was therefore very requisite that they should be polish'd by a Critical Hand, and restor'd to their original Purity: In this consists the Office of Critics; but instead of making Copies agreeable to the Manuscripts, they have long inserted their own conjectures; and from this licence arise most of the various readings, the burthens of modern Editions” (pp. 3-4). Books, he says, “are like Pictures, they may be new varnish'd, but not a feature is to be alter'd, and every Stroke that is thus added, destroys in some degree the resemblance . . . Whoever deviates from this Rule, does not correct, but corrupt his Author” (pp. 4-5). Broome concludes that “it is ridiculous to make it the supreme business of Life to repair the ruins of a decay'd Word, to trouble the World with vain niceties about a Letter, or a Syllable, or the transposition of a Phrase, when the present reading is sufficiently intelligible” (p. 5).

<sup>150</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 64. Hobbes equates imagination and memory, considering them one and the same aspect of mind.

<sup>151</sup> In part, Rymer's meditation about memory and invention seems to draw upon Sidney's argument in *The Defence of Poesy* that “memory being the only treasurer of knowledge, those words which are fittest for memory are likewise most convenient for knowledge.” Sidney then goes on to demonstrate that poetry and its ornaments provide the best tools for improving and exercising the memory. See, *Selected Writings*, pp. 128-129.

<sup>152</sup> Baker, *Reflections Upon Learning*, 5th ed. (London: 1714), sig. A3. All further references to this edition will appear in the text after the quotation as *RUL*.

<sup>153</sup> Baker, *Reflections Upon Learning*, p. 4. Baker goes on to say: “The Moderns were now wise enough to set up for themselves, and were more pleas'd with their own Inventions, than with the dry Systems of the Old Philosophers. Several Attempts were made unsuccessfully, nor had they set out long or done much, till they had run themselves into such a Maze, That *M. Des Cartes* thought it necessary to sit down and doubt, whether they were not all out of the way: His doubts increased upon him by doubting, and he must have continu'd under them, had he not by a strange turn of Thought struck Evidence out of Uncertainty; for he found such strength and conviction in doubting, that he brings an Argument from it to prove a first Truth, The reality of his own Existence” (pp. 4-5).

<sup>154</sup> In censuring Descartes, it seems clear that Baker ignored Descartes' *Discourse on the Method*. There Descartes asserts that “respecting experiments . . . they become so much the more necessary the more one is advanced in knowledge, for to begin with it is better to make use simply of those which present themselves spontaneously to our senses, and of which we could not be ignorant provided that we reflected ever so little, rather than to seek out those which are more rare and recondite; the reason for this is that those which are more rare often mislead us so long as we do not know the causes of the more common, and the fact that the circumstances on which

they depend are almost always so particular and so minute that it is very difficult to observe them." Descartes says near the end of his essay that "those who avail themselves only of their natural reason in its purity may be better judges of my opinions than those who believe only in the writings of the ancients," and he concludes with the remark that he has "resolved not to employ the time which remains . . . in any other matter than in endeavouring to acquire some knowledge of nature, which shall be of such kind that it will enable us to arrive at rules for Medicine more assured than those which have as yet been attained." See *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, trans. Elizabeth S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross (1911; rpt. London: CUP, 1979), pp. 120 and 130 respectively.

### Chapter Three - Science and Lyric in the Seventeenth Century

<sup>1</sup> Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (1977; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1978), p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> Waller, *English Poetry of the Sixteenth Century* (London: Longman, 1986), p. 259 and 260.

<sup>3</sup> James Engell draws attention to the change between pre-Renaissance poetics, which did not look deeply into the psychological nature of creativity, and the type of critical thinking which develops with the advent of empirical psychology. See his *The Creative Imagination* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard Univ. Press, 1981), pp. 11-21.

<sup>4</sup> Dutton, Introd., Sidney, *Selected Writings*, ed. Dutton (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1987), p. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Warkentin, "The Meeting of the Muses: Sidney and the Mid-Tudor Poets," in *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture*, eds. Gary F. Waller and Michael D. Moore (London: Croom Helm, 1984), p. 18.

<sup>6</sup> Waller remarks on this pervasive didactic function in his *English Poetry of the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 37-44 especially. A. V. C. Schmidt points out that medieval and middle-English lyrics often employed Latin words and phrases to enrich their word-play, and that Latin hymns influenced tone and argument. These could be used to provide theological resonances in a basically simple format. See the introduction to his edition of William Langland's *The Vision of Piers Plowman* (1978; rpt. London: Dent, 1984), pp. xxx-xxxii. For a brief discussion of the influence of Latin on English poetry of the fourteenth century, see Kenneth Sisam, Introd., *Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose*, ed. Sisam (1921; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), pp. xiii-xxix.

<sup>7</sup> See, for instance, Schmidt's introduction to his edition of Langland's *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, pp. xii-xxxiv, and the short account in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 3rd ed., eds. M. H. Abrams et al (1962; rpt. New York: Norton, 1974), pp. 365-366.

<sup>8</sup> For a brief account of the distinguishing features of pre-Renaissance lyrics, see *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 3rd ed., pp. 365-366. For a rather idiosyncratic view, see Frederic Ives Carpenter, Introd., *English Lyric Poetry 1500-1700* (London: Blackie, nd.), pp. xix-xxvii. The revisionist or new historicist thrust of sixteenth-century criticism in the 1980s has brought about a more complex view of pre-Renaissance lyrics: see, Waller, *English Poetry of the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 13-31.

<sup>9</sup> Southwell, *Complete Poems*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (np. 1872), p. 4. The view expressed by Southwell continues well into the seventeenth century (and beyond), as the remark of Joshua Poole's, cited in *Chapter One*, makes plain.

<sup>10</sup> One of the most important reasons for studying the Renaissance, says Paul Oskar Kristeller in his *Renaissance Thought II* (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1965), is that "Under the influence of classical models, Renaissance humanism brought about a profound transformation of literature, first of neo-Latin literature, and second of the various vernacular or national literatures, affecting their content as well as their literary form and style" (p. 1).

<sup>11</sup> *The Odes of Horace, The Best of Lyrick Poets, Contayning much morallity, and sweetnesse*, trans., Hawkins (London: 1631), (sig. A2<sup>r</sup>). The moral tone of Horace's writing, combined with his ability to wed nature and art, provided a common exemplar of lyric potential. See, for instance, Ralph Schomberg, trans., *A Critical Dissertation on the Character and Writings of Pindar and Horace*, by Francois Blondel (London: ?1769), pp. 22-24.

<sup>12</sup> Maclean, "Theory of Lyric Poetry in England From the Renaissance to Coleridge," Ph.D. Diss. Univ. of Chicago, 1940, p. 35.

<sup>13</sup> Waller, *English Poetry of the Sixteenth Century*, p. 10.

<sup>14</sup> See Emrys Jones, Introd., *Henry Howard Earl of Surrey, Poems* (1964; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), pp. xi-xxv, for a discussion of Surrey's experiments with lyric verse. For a succinct account of the influence of classical rhetoric on the development of Metaphysical lyrics, see Helen Gardner, Introd., *The Metaphysical Poets* (1957; rpt. London: Penguin, 1985) pp. 15-29.

<sup>15</sup> Googe, *Eglogs, Epytaphes, and Sonettes* (1563) introd. by Frank B. Fieler (Gainesville: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1968), p. xix.

<sup>16</sup> Googe, *Eglogs, Epytaphes, and Sonettes*, p. xix.

<sup>17</sup> Googe, *Eglogs, Epytaphes, and Sonettes*, pp. xviii and xv respectively. Fieler adds: "In Googe we find one of the earliest practitioners of a consciously plain style in English Renaissance poetry." The "consciously plain style," however, seems a particular feature of early English lyric poetry, as Sisam points out: Introd. to *Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose*, p. x.

<sup>18</sup> As a confessed non-specialist in sixteenth and seventeenth-century literature, I make no claims for originality regarding my interpretation of Sidney's text, or any of the other sixteenth and seventeenth-century texts studied in the course of this chapter; my interpretive line derives from my own response to sixteenth and seventeenth-century texts as seen through the lens of my research into experimental science. That said, I do not think that my approach to Sidney's *Defence* runs too wide of the mark.

<sup>19</sup> Heninger, "Speaking Pictures: Sidney's Rapprochement Between Poetry and Painting," in *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture*, pp. 3-16.

<sup>20</sup> Sidney, *Selected Writings*, p. 105. All further references are to this edition and will appear in the text as *SW*.

<sup>21</sup> See, Sidney, *Selected Writings*, pp. 105-106, where he links the Welsh *bard*, the Latin *vates*, the Greek *poiēten*, and the English *maker*. Heninger provides a brief but

helpful synopsis of the neoplatonic theory of poetic enthusiasm in his "Speaking Pictures: Sidney's Rapprochement Between Poetry and Painting," pp. 5-6. See, also, Grant, *Images and Ideas in Literature of the English Renaissance*, pp. 9-11, on the Augustinian and early Renaissance view of poetic inspiration.

<sup>22</sup> In Plato's *The Republic*, translated by Desmond Lee (1955; rpt. London: Penguin, 1975), Socrates attacks the poetic representations of the sciences and the mechanical arts precisely because the poet (or the painter) "is by nature at third remove from the throne of truth" (p. 425), and he concludes that "all the poets from Homer downwards have no grasp of truth but merely produce a superficial likeness of any subject they treat, including human excellence" (p. 429). Socrates's basic distrust of poets stemmed from his suspicion that "the artist knows little or nothing about the subjects he represents and that the art of representation is something that has no serious value" (p. 431).

<sup>23</sup> Moxon, *A Tutor to Astronomy and Geography* (London: 1670), pp 18-19.

<sup>24</sup> Heninger, "Speaking Pictures: Sidney's Rapprochement Between Poetry and Painting," p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> Alan Sinfield makes this a central point of his article "The Cultural Politics of the *Defence of Poetry*," in *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture*, pp. 124 and 134-137.

<sup>26</sup> Besides the works cited in this chapter, see, for instance, the *Preface* to Thomson's *Seasons* (1726), Wordsworth's *Preface to the Lyrical Ballads*, and Shelley's *A Defence of Poetry*--these defences or "explanations" of the poet's value do not depart significantly from Sidney's *Defence* but rework and reinforce his image of the poet.

<sup>27</sup> Jonson, *Volpone Or, The Fox*, ed. R. B. Parker (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 1983), pp. 69-70.

<sup>28</sup> See, Fletcher, Giles and Phineas, *Poetical Works*, ed. Frederick S. Boas (Cambridge: CUP, 1908), I., pp. 10-13. These same arguments about the poet's value as intermediary between the sciences and the rest of society, by the way, remain popular with defenders of poetry in the eighteenth century. Joseph Trapp begins his *Preface to the Æneis* by denouncing the lack of appreciation for poetry among his contemporaries but reminds his readers that "HOWEVER Poetry may have been dishonoured by the *Follies* of Some, and the *vices* of others; the Abuse, or Corruption, of the best Things beings always the worst: It will, notwithstanding, be ever regarded, as it ever has been, by the wisest and most judicious of Men, as the very *Flower* of human *Thinking*, the most *exquisite Spirit* that can be extracted from the *Wit*, and *Learning* of Mankind." He adds that "This Divine Art" has suffered "from many groundless *Aspersions* which have been cast upon it by Ignorance, and Ill-nature," by those that is who cannot appreciate "it's Usefulness both in Philosophy, and Religion; or the delightful *Elegancy* of it's refined Ideas, and harmonious Expressions." *The Works of Virgil*, 1731, I, p. xv.

<sup>29</sup> Dryden, *An Essay of Dramatick Poesie*, in *The Works*, eds. Samuel Holt Monk et al (London: Univ. of California Press, 1971), XVII, p. 15.

<sup>30</sup> Dryden, *An Essay of Dramatick Poesie*, in *The Works*, XVII, p. 22.

<sup>31</sup> In Charles Gildon, *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays, On Several Subjects . . . By several Gentlemen and Ladies*, (London, 1694), pp. 7-8.

<sup>32</sup> Gildon, *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>33</sup> Gildon, *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays*, pp. 10 and 21 respectively.

<sup>34</sup> Gildon, *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays*, p. 26.

<sup>35</sup> Gildon, *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays*, p. 21.

<sup>36</sup> Gildon, *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays*, pp. 26-27.

<sup>37</sup> Gildon, *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays*, p. 27. For an interesting philo-theological discussion which touches on many of these same issues and resolves them in a similar manner, particularly on the arguments about harmony, see William Jameson, *An Essay on Virtue and Harmony, Wherein a Reconciliation of the Various Accounts of Moral Obligation is Attempted* (Edinburgh: 1749), especially pp. 54-57 and 117-130. Jameson, after a long disquisition on the relations between the senses and moral thought, argues that imagination, a central faculty, is "The Power of forming opinions or Phantasies concerning the Value of external Things" (p. 92). The imagination's ability to establish the value of external things leads us to a recognition of the "Unity of Design" in nature which produces the "Good of the Whole" which occurs because of a "Sympathy of Parts" (p. 129).

<sup>38</sup> *The Republic*, p. 438.

<sup>39</sup> Southwell, *Complete Poems*, p. 5. The tradition that poets were in league with the devil, or that singing and rhyming were sinful, was an old one. See, for instance, the opening stanza to Robert Mannyng of Brunne's *The Dancers of Colbeck*, in *Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose*, p. 4.

<sup>40</sup> Southwell, *Complete Poems*, pp. 4-5. Giles Fletcher also remarks upon the abundance of poetic imagery in the Bible and stresses that poetry originally sang the praises of God. See, Fletcher, Giles and Phineas, *Poetical Works*, I, pp. 10-13.

<sup>41</sup> Southwell, *Complete Poems*, p. 5. Giles Fletcher also remarks upon the abundance of poetic imagery in the Bible and stresses that poetry originally sang the praises of God. See, Fletcher, Giles and Phineas, *Poetical Works*, I, pp. 10-13.

<sup>42</sup> Southwell, p. 4. Sidney, of course, made this same point in his *Defence of Poetry*: see, *Selected Writings*, pp. 108-109.

<sup>43</sup> Southwell, *Complete Poems*, p. 5.

<sup>44</sup> Docherty, *John Donne, Undone* (London & New York: Methuen, 1986), p. 18.

<sup>45</sup> Crashaw, *The Poems*, 2nd ed., ed. L. C. Martin (1927; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1957), p. 75.

<sup>46</sup> Featly, in Fletcher, Giles and Phineas, *Poetical Works*, II, p. 4.

<sup>47</sup> Poole, *The English Parnassus: Or, a Helpe to English Poesie* (London: 1657), sig. A3<sup>v</sup> and sig. A5 respectively. Of course, Locke would have heaped scorn on

Poole's educational policies.

<sup>48</sup> Norris, *A Collection of Miscellanies: Consisting of Poems, Essays, Discourses, and Letters, Occasionally Written* (Oxford: 1687), n. pag. (from the Preface).

<sup>49</sup> Thomas Flatman, in the Preface to his *Poems and Songs*, 4th ed. (London: 1686), similarly asserts that he will put his Pindarics to serious moral purposes: "*But in good earnest, as to the Subjects, which came in my way to write upon, I must declare that I have chosen only such as might be treated within the Rules of Decency, and without offence either to Religion or good Manners*" (n. pag.).

<sup>50</sup> Campion, *Works*, ed. Percival Vivian (1909; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1967), p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> Drayton, *The Works*, ed. J. William Hebel (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1932), II, p. 315.

<sup>52</sup> Drayton, *The Works*, II, p. 310.

<sup>53</sup> Drayton, *The Works*, II, pp. 310 and 344.

<sup>54</sup> Poole, *The English Parnassus*, sig. A2<sup>v</sup>. All further references to this edition will appear in the text as *EP*.

<sup>55</sup> Poole, *The English Parnassus*, sig. A3. Poole, by the way, admits his debt to Sidney at this point in his argument.

<sup>56</sup> Poole, *The English Parnassus*, sig. A5<sup>v</sup> and sig. A6 respectively.

<sup>57</sup> Flatman, *Poems and Songs*, n. pag.

<sup>58</sup> Drayton, *Works*, II, p. 344.

<sup>59</sup> Flatman, *Poems and Songs*, n. pag.

<sup>60</sup> Wesley, *An Epistle to a Friend Concerning Poetry* (London: 1700), introd. by E. N. Hooker, *ARS*, No. 5 (1947), n. pag. All further references to this edition will appear in the text as *ECP*.

<sup>61</sup> Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella*, Sonnet 1, in *Selected Writings*, ed. Richard Dutton (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1987), p. 29.

<sup>62</sup> For a brief discussion of issues relating to the concept of wit at the turn of the eighteenth century, see Mack, *Alexander Pope: A Life* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), pp. 169-170. See, also, A. Bosker, *Literary Criticism in the Age of Johnson*, 2nd ed., rev. (1953; rpt. New York: Gordian Press, 1970), pp. 36-44.

<sup>63</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, pp. 101 and 104 respectively.

<sup>64</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 101.

<sup>65</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 101.

<sup>66</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 104.

- <sup>67</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 105.
- <sup>68</sup> Dryden, *Notes and Observations on the Empress of Morocco*, in *The Works*, eds. Samuel Holt Monk et al (London: Univ. of California Press, 1971), XVII, p. 181.
- <sup>69</sup> See, Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Nidditch (1975; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp. 156-157.
- <sup>70</sup> Addison, *Spectator* 62, 1711, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), p. 264.
- <sup>71</sup> Blackmore, *An Essay Upon Wit*, Introd. Richard C. Boys, *ARS*, No. 1 (1946), p. 199.
- <sup>72</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, etc.*, ed. John M. Robertson (London: Grant Richards, 1900), I, pp. 47-48.
- <sup>73</sup> Welsted, *Epistles, Odes, &c. Written on Several Subjects* (London: 1724), p. xli.
- <sup>74</sup> Welsted, *Epistles, Odes, &c. Written on Several Subjects*, p. xli.
- <sup>75</sup> Blackmore, *An Essay Upon Wit*, p. 233.
- <sup>76</sup> Blackmore, *An Essay Upon Wit*, pp. 200-201.
- <sup>77</sup> Blackmore, *An Essay Upon Wit*, pp. 200.
- <sup>78</sup> Addison, *Spectator* No. 62, 1711, p. 268.
- <sup>79</sup> Shaftesbury, "A Letter Concerning Enthusiasm" (1708), in *Characteristics*, p. 6.
- <sup>80</sup> Blackmore, *An Essay Upon Wit*, pp. 200-201.
- <sup>81</sup> Welsted, *Epistles, Odes, &c.*, pp. lix-lx.
- <sup>82</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol II (July, 1732), p. 861. The piece was originally printed in the *Weekly Register* (July, 1732), No. 119.
- <sup>83</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol II (July), 1732, p. 861.
- <sup>84</sup> See, Anonymous, *An Essay On Wit: To Which Is Annexed, A Dissertation On Antient and Modern History*, Introd. E. N. Hooker, *ARS*, No. 20 (1946), pp. 10-15 in particular.
- <sup>85</sup> Addison, *The Spectator*, No. 23, 1711, p. 79.
- <sup>86</sup> Morris, *An Essay Towards Fixing the True Standards of Wit, Humour, Raillery, Satire, and Ridicule* (London: 1744).
- <sup>87</sup> Dryden, *Essays of John Dryden*, ed. W. P. Ker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900), p. 190.
- <sup>88</sup> Anonymous, *An Essay On Wit*, p. 14.

<sup>89</sup> Greville, *Selected Poems*, ed. Neil Powell (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1990), p. 25.

<sup>90</sup> Dryden, *Essays*, ed. W. P. Ker, p. 163.

#### Chapter Four - Eighteenth-Century Lyric

<sup>1</sup> Berkeley, *Guardian* No. 49, ed. John Calhoun Stephens (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1982), pp. 192-193; No. 117, p. 419.

<sup>2</sup> Gay, *The Enlightenment* (1966; rpt. New York, Knopf, 1967), I, p. x.

<sup>3</sup> Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Penguin Books, 1982), p. 258. See, also, James Sambrook, *The Eighteenth Century* (London and New York: Longman, 1986), pp. 1-24 especially, but each of the chapters of this overview emphasise the role of science in the period.

<sup>4</sup> Eichner, "The Rise of Modern Science and the Genesis of Romanticism," *PMLA*, Vol. 97, No. 1-6 (1982), pp. 8-30. Eichner notes, in a discussion of Lovejoy's and Foucault's respective contributions to debate about the rise of romanticism, that "it is surprising that neither of them pays more than fleeting attention to what was surely the most significant achievement of European thought between 1500 and 1800 and probably the most significant achievement since the glories of ancient Greece: the creation of modern science. Yet it seems to me that the history of modern thought from 1500 to the present day must be written with this achievement constantly in mind" (p. 8). Certainly writers throughout the eighteenth century considered experimental science one of the great glories of their time.

<sup>5</sup> Anonymous, *An Essay on the present State of Society in all civilized Nations, but particularly in France and England*, in the *Universal Magazine and Review*, p. 316.

<sup>6</sup> Anonymous, *An Essay on the present State of Society in all civilized Nations, but particularly in France and England*, p. 315. The writer adds that "Authorities are more and more set aside. The conjectures of Newton himself, even in England, are not regarded with submissive veneration. His ethereal fluid is forgotten, and every one is turned to the powers of electrical fire, and the different species of air" (p. 316).

<sup>7</sup> Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, revised by P. H. Nidditch (1888; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), pp. 173, 174-175 respectively. See, also, Hume's introduction to *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. Selby-Bigge, revised by Nidditch (1888; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), pp. xiii-xix. For a discussion of the importance of new-science influences on moral thought, see Thomas L. Hankins, *Science and the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), pp. 158-190.

<sup>8</sup> *An Essay on the present State of Society in all civilized Nations, but particularly in France and England*, p. 316.

<sup>9</sup> Bolingbroke, *Letters or Essays Addressed to Alexander Pope, Esq*, in *The Works* (1844; rpt. London: Frank Cass & Co., 1967), III, p. 52.



<sup>10</sup> Bolingbroke, *Letters or Essays Addressed to Alexander Pope, Esq*, in *The Works*, III, pp. 46-47. Bolingbroke adds that what goes by the name of metaphysical "deserves no rank in philosophy, not the last, and much less the first" (p. 47).

<sup>11</sup> Bolingbroke, *Letters or Essays Addressed to Alexander Pope, Esq*, in *The Works*, III, pp. 49-50. Not surprisingly, Bolingbroke proves himself a fan of Locke, seeing in Locke an exemplar of the man of knowledge who refused to take the opinions of others or the systems of the schoolmen for granted: Locke "grounded all he taught on the phenomena of nature. He appealed to the experience and conscious knowledge of every one, and rendered all he advanced intelligible"; as a result, his philosophy "has forced its way into general approbation" (p. 52).

<sup>12</sup> Bolingbroke, *Essays on Human Knowledge*, in *The Works*, III, p. 88.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Bolingbroke's *Essays on Human Knowledge*, in *The Works*, III, pp. 91-92; and *Letters or Essays Addressed to Alexander Pope*, p. 44, where he specifically addresses the role of the poet.

<sup>14</sup> Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. Adam Phillips (Oxford and New York: OUP, 1990), p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup> Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> Godwin, *The Enquirer: Reflections on Education, Manners, and Literature* (London: 1798), p. vi.

<sup>18</sup> Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, 3rd ed., ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, revised by P. H. Nidditch (1975; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 28-29.

<sup>19</sup> Godwin, *The Enquirer*, p. 20. Also, p. 24: "It is the madness of philosophy only, that would undertake to account for every thing, and to trace out the process by which every event in the world is generated. But let us beware of falling into the opposite extreme. It will often happen that events, which at first sight appear least to associate with that regularity and that precise system to which we are accustomed, will be found upon a minuter and more patient inspection really to belong to it. It is the madness of philosophy to circumscribe the universe within the bounds of our narrow system; it is the madness of ignorance to suppose that every thing is new, and of a species totally dissimilar from what we have already observed."

<sup>20</sup> Reresby, *A Miscellany of Ingenious Thoughts and Reflections* (London: 1721), p. 72. In an earlier essay called "Concerning Sublimity of Stile and Discourse" Reresby similarly argued that "THE Beauties of the whole Creation are no more than slender Shadows and Reflections of *Beauty itself*, which is GOD. He is the *Idea* and Essence of Beauty. . . . the whole Creation seems to be one great *Mirror* of the DIVINITY" (p. 47).

<sup>21</sup> Reresby, *A Miscellany of Ingenious Thoughts and Reflections*, p. 73.

<sup>22</sup> Hampson, *The Enlightenment* (1968; rpt. London: Penguin, 1987), pp. 10 and 146 respectively. For similar remarks see Arthur O. Lovejoy, "The Parallel of Deism and Classicism," *MP*, 29 (1931-32). While he argues that the intellectual and aesthetic sensibilities of the early eighteenth century derive from that philosophy termed "the rationalism of the Enlightenment," he thinks it unwise to link individual theorists and the rest of society together in one seamless fabric. Rationalism "is not a system which you will find connectedly set forth by any one philosopher; it is rather a set of *preconceptions* which you will find taken for granted by most philosophers, and determining the opinions, on all manner of subjects, of the majority of the educated men," and this holds true only "insofar as they were emancipated from the dominance of tradition and authority" (p. 281). Also, Gay, *The Enlightenment*: "the men of the Enlightenment were divided by doctrine, temperament, environment, and generations" (I, p. x); Bronson, *Facets of the Enlightenment*: "The age was, as we now recognize, extraordinarily complex; far from monolithic; and full of self-contradictions, change, and violent contrast. Its spokesmen were notably individuated, often sharply antagonistic, endowed with a high degree of articulate energy, which they cultivated assiduously in many directions, with abundant variety" (Preface); James L. Clifford, *Eighteenth-Century English Literature*, pp. vii-ix.

<sup>23</sup> Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove from the first German ed. (1951; rpt. Boston: Beacon, 1955), p. ix. Similarly, Selby-Bigge counsels that "HUME's philosophic writings are to be read with great caution. His pages, especially those of the Treatise, are so full of matter, he says so many different things in so many different ways and different connexions, and with so much indifference to what he has said before, that it is very hard to say positively that he taught, or did not teach, this or that particular doctrine. He applies the same principles to such a great variety of subjects that it is not surprising that many verbal, and some real inconsistencies can be found in his statements." Introd., *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, p. vii.

<sup>24</sup> Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, p. 175.

<sup>25</sup> Resesby, *A Miscellany of Ingenious Thoughts and Reflections*, p. 73. See, also, p. 82. Throughout his writings, Resesby displays an interesting amalgam of idealism and empiricism, and if space permitted a closer study of his ideas would reveal the hegemonic confluences at work in his formulations and opinions on various matters.

<sup>26</sup> Addison, *Guardian* No. 110, p. 377.

<sup>27</sup> One of the longer standing misconceptions about eighteenth-century attitudes to genre, and hence about attitudes to writing, must be the notion that the Augustans and their successors were rigidly prescriptive and conservative about the function of genre. Even as recently as 1987 Alistair Fowler maintained this view in his otherwise superb study, *Kinds of Literature* (1982; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1987), pp. 26-28. As I hope to show in the following pages, many of the writers of this period, while they usually show unflinching respect for the concept of universal forms, feel equally free to experiment with and to adapt genres to their specific expressive needs. Further, even as critics generally considered ancient genres a standard by which to measure contemporary performances, they equally encouraged and even embraced works that did not imitate exactly the ancient kinds. For a suggestive discussion of the complexity of eighteenth-century views about the relationship of generic proprietariness and poetical experimentation, see John Barrell and Harriet Guest, "On the Use of Contradiction: Economics and Morality in the Eighteenth-Century Long Poem," in *The New Eighteenth Century*, eds. Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (New York and London: Methuen, 1987), pp. 121-143. Also, Margaret Anne Doody, *The Daring Muse* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985, pp. 232-264, where

she argues that "the Augustans did not like closed forms" (p. 258). Stephen K. Land observes that one of the defining features of eighteenth-century intellectual life was a pervasive search for origins, and that "The purpose of the search for origins was the discovery not of historical facts, nor even of historical probabilities, but of principles of human nature." *The Philosophy of Language in Britain* (New York: AMS Press, 1986), p. 132. Debate about genre in the period falls into this category of search.

<sup>28</sup> Anonymous, *The Beauties of Poetry Display'd* (London: 1757), I, p. iv.

<sup>29</sup> Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste," in *Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller (1985; rpt. Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1987), p. 231.

<sup>30</sup> See, *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. XXII (May, 1752), pp. 224-225,

<sup>31</sup> Cobb, *Bersaba: Or, The Love of David* (London: 1695), sig. A2-A2<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> Cobb, *Poems on Several Occasions*, 3rd ed. (London: 1710), sig. A4<sup>v</sup>. All further references are to this edition and appear in the text as *PSO*.

<sup>33</sup> Cobb, *Poems on Several Occasions*, n. pag.

<sup>34</sup> Parnell, *An Essay on the Different Stiles of Poetry* (London: 1713), sig. A4.

<sup>35</sup> Parnell, *An Essay on the Different Stiles of Poetry* (London: 1713), sig. A4-A4<sup>v</sup>. A year later, in *The Lay Monastery. Consisting of Essays, Discourse, &c.*, 2nd ed., ed. Richard Blackmore (London: 1714), a writer defines the ideal critic, and he clearly shares that tolerance which marked the new scientist's attitude to the past and to new ideas: "his peculiar Ornament" is that "he is deliver'd from the Ostentation, Malevolence and supercilious Temper, that so often blemish Men of that Character. His Remarks result from the Nature and Reason of Things, and are form'd by a Judgment free, and unbiass'd by the Authority of those who have lazily followed each other in the same beaten Track of Thinking, and are arriv'd only at the Reputation of acute Grammarians and Commentators; Men, who have been copying one another many Hundred years, without any Improvement; or, if they have ventur'd farther, have only apply'd in a mechanical Manner the Rules of ancient Criticks to modern Writings, and with great Labour discover'd nothing, but their own Want of Judgment and Capacity." The true critic, however, "penetrates to the Bottom of his Subject, by which Means his Observations are solid and natural, as well as delicate, so his Design is always to bring to Light something useful and ornamental" (pp. 8-9).

<sup>36</sup> Webb, Preface, *Poems* (Salisbury: 1790), pp. 39-43.

<sup>37</sup> Morrice, *An Essay on the Poets* (London: 1721), sig. A3.

<sup>38</sup> Morrice, *An Essay on the Poets*, pp. 7-8. He opines that "*I cannot but conceive Poetry to be at present (and ever to have been as yet) under to many disadvantages amongst us, to arrive at any very considerable Compleatness; to be even capable of gaining that noble Simplicity so eminently remarkable in the most celebrated of the Antients; the graceful, neat, and most admirably seeming Negligence, where the finest Art is conceall'd under the Resemblance of a familiar Ease, and in reality is the highest pitch of Human Skill*" (sig. A3-A3<sup>v</sup>).

<sup>39</sup> Baker, *Medulla Poetarum Romanorum: or, the Most Beautiful and Instructive Passages of the Roman Poets* (London: 1737), n. pag.

<sup>40</sup> *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. LVI (July 1786), p. 591.

<sup>41</sup> Mark Akenside, for instance, defends his performances in his *Odes on Several Subjects* (London: 1745) with the remark that he "pretends chiefly to the merit of endeavouring to be correct, and of carefully attending to the best models" (p. 2). Interestingly, in "Ode X. On Lyric Poetry," after a long paean to the ancient lyric, Akenside concludes with a statement of the emotional basis of the lyric impulse which requires no models: "But when from envy and from death to claim / A hero bleeding for his native land; / Or when to nourish freedom's vestal flame, / I hear my Genius utter his command, / Nor Theban voice, nor Lesbian lyre / From thee, O Muse, do I require, / While my prophetic mind, / Conscious of pow'rs she never knew, / Astonish'd grasps at things beyond her view, / Nor by another's fire hath felt her own confin'd" (p. 54).

<sup>42</sup> Pinkerton, *Letters on Literature* (London: 1785), p. 211. All further references are to this edition and appear in the text as *LL*.

<sup>43</sup> In "Of the Standard of Taste," Hume puts forward a similar argument about the danger of trying to force a young writer to follow strictly any set rules of composition, especially since "Many of the beauties of poetry and even of eloquence are founded on falsehood and fiction, on hyperboles, metaphors, and an abuse or perversion of terms from their natural meaning. To check the sallies of the imagination, and to reduce every expression to geometrical truth and exactness, would be the most contrary to the laws of criticism; because it would produce a work, which, by universal experience, has been found the most insipid and disagreeable" (p. 231). Even so, Hume hardly thinks it advisable to dispense with the rules altogether: "but though poetry can never submit to exact truth, it must be confined by rules of art, discovered to the author either by genius or observation"; typically, he enters the caveat that "though all the general rules of art are founded only on experience and on the observation of the common sentiments of human nature, we must not imagine, that, on every occasion, the feelings of men will be conformable to these rules. Those finer emotions of the mind are of a very tender and delicate nature" (pp. 231-232).

<sup>44</sup> Morris, *An Essay Towards Fixing the True Standards of Wit, Humour, Raillery, Satire, and Ridicule* (London: 1744), p. xxvi.

<sup>45</sup> Baker, *Original Poems: Serious and Humorous* (London: 1725), pp. viii-ix.

<sup>46</sup> Baker, *Original Poems*, p. ix.

<sup>47</sup> Baker, *Original Poems*, p. viii. A poet with the surname Wicksted offers similar justification for his efforts in his *An Ode for the Year MDCCXVII. To the King* (1717), sig. A2. Also, James Ogden confesses that when he sat down to write his *An Epistle on Poetical Composition* (London: 1762), he did so "endeavouring to forget whatever had been wrote on the subject"; he adds that he took up the subject "having observed the poverty of thought, so frequently complained of (owing, perhaps, to laziness, but more immediately to a servile imitation of the Antients) I ventured to speak my sentiments with the freedom of an Englishman, and a warmth which may be pardonable, if we consider in how many discoveries and improvements we excel the Antients, and how little interesting their Fables are to the Trade, Commerce, and Connections of *Britain*" (pp. 5-6).

<sup>48</sup> S. K. Heninger, Jr. points out that, in direct response to the steadily emerging empiricist ethos, a move to make poetry more depictive was occurring at the end of sixteenth century. The authority to define poetry as an art capable of creating "speaking pictures" was found in ancient poetry and criticism. See, "Speaking Pictures: Sidney's Rapprochement Between Poetry and Painting," in *Sir Philip Sidney and the*

*Interpretation of Renaissance Culture*, eds. Gary F. Waller and Michael D. Moore (London: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 3-16.

<sup>49</sup> Morris, *An Essay Towards Fixing the True Standards of Wit, Humour, Raillery, Satire, and Ridicule*, p. xxvi.

<sup>50</sup> Welsted, *Epistles, Odes, &c. Written on Several Subjects* (London: 1724), p. vi. All further references are to this edition and appear in the text as *EOSS*. Welsted, another of those many poets whose fame lives on only in Pope's *Dunciad*, enjoyed some favour throughout the eighteenth century, as a letter to *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. LVI (November 1786), signed by J. N. makes clear. The writer, interestingly, puts the decline in Welsted's reputation down to Pope's poem: "That this ingenious Bard, who in his day was considered as a rival to Pope himself, is unjustly consigned to oblivion; and that his character and his verses are with equal injustice and malevolence attacked in the notes on the *Dunciad*; I doubt not of being able to demonstrate" (p. 940).

<sup>51</sup> Of course, the issue of whether or not the English language had reached a state of perfection or near-perfection or was perfectible ran throughout the eighteenth century. The contributions to this debate are so various that it would be impossible to draw any satisfactory conclusions about any general consensus.

<sup>52</sup> Welsted argues that "a judicious Writer may find an opportunity of throwing a Jewel into our Language, a Word or Expression of more Sweetness and Significancy, than it had before; but all Men have not the Talent of doing this with Judgment, as all do not distinguish between hard and elegant Words, or see how Poetry and Eloquence differ from Pedantry" (*EOSS*, pp. viii-ix).

<sup>53</sup> Like many other writers of the time, Welsted makes a plea for better criticism: "True Criticism is the truest Friend of Poetry; and all good Poets must naturally wish, that the Knowledge of it was as extensive and universal, as the Exercise is unlimited, and that there were as many just Critics or Judges in Poetry, as there are in any other Art" (*EOSS*, p. xxxv). Pinkerton doubts that criticism could ever be reduced to laws or rules: "In speaking of criticism I have avoided treating of systematic, because the ancients knew no such thing; it was left for the folly of the moderns to frame elements of universal criticism. An attempt than which nothing can be more absurd; for if no critic hath yet arisen able fully to discuss one particular branch of this science, what shall we say of him who boldly undertakes to examine and illustrate the whole?" (*LL*, p. 514).

<sup>54</sup> Welsted, in common with many writers of the time who worried about poetic decline, puts the blame for this decline on the burden of the past, but not in the same terms offered by modern critics--the problem lies in trying to imitate or copy the past, not that the present could not achieve works of equal or greater sublimity. The problem, moreover, persists throughout time: "If one considers the Herd of Writers, in the past and present Times, they have, great Part of them, been servile Copiers after others, and this perhaps is one Cause that the *English* Genius has not gone greater Lengths. Imitation is the Bane of Writing, nor ever was a good Author, that entirely form'd himself on the Model of another" (*EOSS*, p. xxxvii).

<sup>55</sup> For Welsted, "that which truly and lastingly pleases in Writing, is always the Result of a Man's own Force, and of that first Cast of Soul, which gives him a Promptitude to excel" (*EOSS*, p. xxxviii).

<sup>56</sup> Clearly, and as Welsted so aptly shows, in order to account for the change in style and idiom from early eighteenth-century diction to that of the Romantics we cannot rely solely upon critical or aesthetic declarations about the emotional, imaginative,

spiritual, and other such "life" affirmative concepts found in poets, critics, writers of the century. As G. S. Rousseau argued so forcefully in his essay, "On Reading Pope," all the same writerly and "life" virtues which supposedly animated and distinguished the Romantics from the Augustans are articulated in eighteenth-century writings. I would suspect that part of the answer lies in the gradual adjustment of the rhetorical principles of the new science with literary values, coupled with the emergence of writers whose style provided exempla of the new idiom. Coleridge, we might recall, considered Bowles the most natural writer he knew, while an essay in *The Monthly Miscellany, or Gentleman and Ladys Complete Magazine* (London: 1744) entitled "*The Humble PETITION of EPITHETS, to the Editors of the MAGAZINES,*" points to the prose styles of "the *chaste* Melmoth, the *elegant* Dr. Robertson, the *sententious* Hume, the *nervous* Ferguson, the *judicious* Dean Tucker, and the *argumentative* Beattie" (p. 19) as the reason for the decline in excessive use of epithets.

<sup>57</sup> John Gilbert Cooper, in his *Letters Concerning Taste* (London: 1757), shows the same synthesizing urge as Welsted. He defines taste as the "Correspondence betwixt the *Senses, Imagination, and Understanding* of the same person" (p. 13), noting that "Taste does not *wholly* depend upon the natural Strength and acquired Improvement of the *Intellectual Powers*; nor *wholly* upon a fine Construction of the *Organs* of the Body; nor *wholly* upon the intermediate Powers of the *Imagination*; but upon a Union of them all happily blended, without a too great Prevalency in either" (p. 27).

<sup>58</sup> Welsted instances Descartes, Hobbes, and Locke as three exemplary men who worked with their own apprehensions of things and "who thereby have struck out their Discoveries by the mere Strength of a great Genius, without treading the Steps of any who went before 'em, and without being much oblig'd to the Assistance of Learning" (*EOSS*, p. xxxviii).

<sup>59</sup> For Williams's remarks on Thomson, see *Prophetic Strain* (Chicago and London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 70-76. Although much of her analysis of eighteenth-century lyric rarely strikes one as accurate or convincing, Williams does on occasion break out of her Wordsworthian teleology to make insightful remarks into the development of the lyric. In general, her approach suffers from a too-trusting reliance upon secondary sources and not enough research into primary evidence.

<sup>60</sup> Aikin, *Essays on Song-Writing* (London: 1772), p. 29.

<sup>61</sup> Aikin, *Essays on Song-Writing*, pp. 34-35.

<sup>62</sup> Maynard Mack stands out as a notable exception to the general tendency to ignore pastoral conventions. In arguments too numerous to detail here, Mack shows in his biography of Pope just how significant and integral pastoral was to Pope's development as a poet. In light of this disregard, John Sitter's point that "historical criticism ought to regard some of the too-familiar characteristics of eighteenth-century poetry, especially invocations, apostrophes and personifications, not as 'mere' conventions but as of poetically deep significance precisely because they are shared and frequent" could well be extended to include the whole pastoral genre. "Mother, Memory, Muse and Poetry after Pope," *ELH*, 44 (1977), p. 312. See, also, Jeffrey L. Duncan's "The Rural Ideal in Eighteenth-Century Fiction," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, Vol. III, 1968, pp. 517-535.

<sup>63</sup> *The Spectator*, No. 15, 1711, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), I, pp. 67-68. No. 120, 1711, reiterates a similar point, as do many of the other numbers, whether by Addison or other contributors to the work.

<sup>64</sup> Johnson, *The Adventurer* 108, in *The Works*, eds. W. J. Bate et al (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1963), II, p. 447. Although Johnson tended to make disparaging observations about pastoral, his reflections on it were by no means consistently negative: see, for instance, *The Rambler*, Nos. 36, and 37, in *The Works*, eds. W. J. Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1969), III, pp. 195-205.

<sup>65</sup> *The Idylliums of Theocritus, with Rapin's Discourse of Pastorals done into English* (London: 1684), p. 4.

<sup>66</sup> Creech, *Idylliums*, p. 4.

<sup>67</sup> Morfitt, *Philotoxi Ardenae; The Woodmen of Arden*; A Latin Poem. With a Translation in Blank Verse; Another in Rhyme &c. (Birmingham: 1788), p. 5. For similar comments see the following: *The Guardian*, ed. John Calhoun Stephens (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1982), Nos. 22 and 23; Joseph Trapp, *Lectures on Poetry* (1742), ed. Malcolm Kelsall (Menston: The Scholar Press, 1973), pp. 33-34; Joseph Warton, *A Dissertation Upon Pastoral Poetry*, in *The Works of Virgil* (London: 1743), Vol. I, pp. 37-43. Anonymous, *The Grove of Fancy: A Poem* (London: 1789), pp. 9-11.

<sup>68</sup> Cohen, *The Art of Discrimination* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 22; James Thomson, *The Seasons*, edited and introduction by James Sambrook (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. xciv. Readers should consult Cohen's *Discrimination* and his *The Unfolding of The Seasons* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), and Sambrook's introduction to *The Seasons* for publication histories, and appraisals, of Thomson's writing practices.

<sup>69</sup> Cohen, *Discrimination*, pp. 72, 23 respectively. See, also, Sambrook, *Seasons*, p. Ixviii. Besides their works, see also Alan D. McKillop, *The Background to The Seasons* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1942; London: OUP, 1942); Patricia Meyer Spacks, *The Varied God* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1959); Otto Zippel, editor, *Thomson's Seasons, A Critical Edition*, (1908; rpt. n. p.: Folcroft Library Edition, 1970), pp. xxxii-xl; John Chalker, *The English Georgic* (London: Routledge, Kegan & Paul, 1969), pp. 100-134. All argue that *The Seasons* employs a complex, allusive structure.

<sup>70</sup> *Letters and Documents 1700 - 1748*, ed. Alan D. McKillop (Lawrence: Univ. of Kansas Press, 1958), p. 46. Hereafter cited as *Letters*.

<sup>71</sup> Johnson, never slow to criticize, called Thomson "a man of genius" who, if "not very skilful in the art of composition . . . much will be forgiven as an original, that will not be forgiven to an imitator, or a successor." *Letters*, ed. R. W. Chapman (Oxford: Clarendon, 1952), I, p. 100.

<sup>72</sup> See Thomson, *Liberty, The Castle of Indolence and other Poems*, ed. James Sambrook (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986), pp. 1-5 for the publishing history of *Newton*. Sambrook points out that the four "editions" of *Winter* probably were made up from one initial press-run; likewise with the four "editions" of *Newton*.

<sup>73</sup> *Letters* p. 13.

<sup>74</sup> *Letters*, p. 98. This view surfaces throughout the century and is too extensive to document here. See for example Pope's *The Dunciad*, Bk I, ll. 9-16; Bk IV, ll. 627-656, in *Poems*, ed. John Butt (1965; rpt. Methuen & Co., 1985); Richard Blackmore, editor, *The*

*Lay-Monastery* (London: 1714), sig. A2; or even *Grandsire Hamden's Ghost and Peace, or No Piece. Two Poems*, [Sometimes attributed to Edward Ward.] (London: 1712), pp. 4, 5, 6, 15.

<sup>75</sup> Trapp, Preface, *The Works of Virgil* (London: 1731), I, p. xv. See, also, the Dedication to Charles Gildon's *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays, On Several Subjects* (London: 1694), sig. A3-A8<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>76</sup> Thomson, *The Seasons*, ed. James Sambrook (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 303. All further references to the Preface are from this edition and appear in the text.

<sup>77</sup> Pope, *The Dunciad*, Bk IV, l. 656, in *Poems*.

<sup>78</sup> Pope strikes a similar chord in *An Essay On Man*, Epistle IV, ll. 391-393. In *Poems*.

<sup>79</sup> *Letters* p. 76.

<sup>80</sup> Thomas Rundle saw Thomson's efforts in this light: "now the muses are grown coquettes; and boys and rakes have been their only minions. The wise who valued reputation, have been ashamed to assist them; and it was almost proof that a man wanted virtue, to say he had often been in their company. . . . If [Thomson] reforms these amiable dames, and gives them once more a taste above delighting in trifles, and persuades them no longer to be dishonourable handmaids of dissoluteness, he will deserve our esteem." *Letters*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>81</sup> Thomson's response to Newton hardly needs repeating, nor does the eighteenth-century's admiration for Newton require documenting here. Helpful works include Thomson, *The Castle of Indolence and Other Poems*, ed. Alan D. McKillop (Lawrence: Univ. of Kansas Press, 1961), p. 128 especially; Marjorie Hope Nicolson, *Newton Demands The Muse* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1945); E. W. Strong, "Newtonian Explications of Natural Philosophy," *JHI*, 18 (1957), pp. 49-83; and Herbert Drennan, "James Thomson's Contact with Newtonianism," *PMLA*, 49 (1934), pp. 71-80, "Scientific Rationalism and James Thomson's Poetic Art," *Studies In Philology*, 31 (1934), pp. 453-471, and "Newtonianism in James Thomson's Poetry," *Englische Studien*, 70 (1936), pp. 358-372.

<sup>82</sup> Thomson, *Indolence*, p. 132. McKillop sums up most evaluations of *Newton*, but see also Rundle's remarks, *Letters* p. 62; G. C. Macaulay, *James Thomson* (London: MacMillan, 1908), p. 189; Douglas Grant, *James Thomson, Poet of the Seasons* (London: Cresset Press, 1951), p. 109. Regardless of the Romantic depreciation of Newtonian science, a view too readily disseminated by modern critics, Newtonian science played an extensive role in the eighteenth-century imagination. W. Powell Jones shows, for example, that the many biblical paraphrases which utilize Newton's discoveries "furnish a good example of how poetic imagination can be so enlarged by scientific discoveries as to give fresh emphasis and enthusiasm to an old theme deeply imbedded in the reading and daily life of the English people." "Science in Biblical Paraphrase in Eighteenth-Century England," *PMLA*, 74 (1959), p. 44. Thomson employs Newtonian imagery throughout his poetry, of course.

<sup>83</sup> Grant, *Thomson*, p. 71.

<sup>84</sup> Grant, *Thomson*: "the public recognized that it was not an occasional work written to take advantage of national regret at the loss of a great man" (p. 71).



<sup>85</sup> None of the critics mentioned earlier reads *Newton* as an important stage in Thomson's development. An exception is Michael G. Ketcham's "Scientific and Poetic Imagination in James Thomson's 'Poem Sacred to the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton'," *PQ*, 61, No. 1 (1982), pp. 33-50. He sees the poem as a "vehicle for an eighteenth-century mythology of science, a mythology which reflects less the empirical methods of science itself than an imagery of light derived from the neoplatonic and Christian traditions of wisdom" (p. 33). Thus, "The elegy for Newton comes near the end of a long tradition of imagery combining light, intuitive knowledge, and immediate vision" (p. 41). I differ: Thomson makes it clear that Newton does not belong to *any* tradition--his works stand apart from those of the past, his light and motion are *new*; as I show, Thomson recommends the scientific method as *the* necessary way for disciplining the poetic imagination.

<sup>86</sup> For a discussion of the ways in which Thomson confronts the dilemma of the growing authority of the scientist, see Mark L. Greenberg, "Eighteenth-Century Poetry Represents Moments of Scientific Discovery: Appropriation and Generic Transformation," in *Literature and Science*, ed. Stuart Peterfreund (Boston: Northeastern Univ. Press, 1990), pp. 115-137. Although I read Greenberg's essay quite some time after formulating my thoughts about Thomson's poem on Newton, certain facets of his argument share similarities with my reading; however, his concern lies primarily with the way in which the young Thomson tropes himself into a poet of authority, while my reading focuses more on the analysis and criticism of contemporary poetry undertaken by Thomson in his poem.

<sup>87</sup> Thomson, *Liberty, The Castle of Indolence and Other Poems*, ed. Sambrook, p. 6, ll. 1-4. All future references to *Newton* are to this edition and appear in the text.

<sup>88</sup> Thomson probably owes the idea to John Dennis who, in 1720, said that Newton's "Merit is above what the Muses themselves can commend" because he "oblig'd and astonish'd the Learned World by his Immortal and unparallel'd Treatises; Those Treatises that have made him an Honour to his Country, an Advancer of the noblest Learning, and an Enlarger of the Empire of the Mind." In *Critical Works*, ed. E. N. Hooker (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1943), II, p. 208.

<sup>89</sup> Shortly after Newton's death, Henry Pemberton published *A View of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy* (1728), a popular, comprehensible prose exposition of Newton's works.

<sup>90</sup> Many writers took a similar view about the benefits of science to poetry. See for example Trapp, *The Works of Virgil*, I, p. v; John Aikin *An Essay on the Application of Natural History to Poetry* (Warrington: 1778), pp. 3-4; John Scott, *Critical Essays on Some of the Poems of Several English Poets* (1785; rpt. Farnborough: Gregg International Pub., 1969), p. 59.

<sup>91</sup> Thomson, *The Seasons*, ed. James Sambrook (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), II, 355-358. All further references are from this edition and appear in the text. For the most part I employ Sambrook's abbreviations for the various editions, drawing attention to particular editions as required.

<sup>92</sup> Thomson describes an experience of significance to many eighteenth-century readers which should not be underestimated. Even Johnson valued such experiences: during the tour of Wales he wrote that his host's property "sits very pleasantly by the side of a small river, of which the bank rises high on the other side shaded by gradual rows of trees. The gloom, the stream, and the silence generate thoughtfulness." *Diaries, Prayers, and Annals*, in *The Works*, eds. E. L. McAdam, Jr., and Donald and Mary Hyde (New

Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1958; London: OUP, 1958), I, p. 213. See also *Rambler* 7, in *The Works*, eds. W. J. Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1969), III, pp. 35-40.

<sup>93</sup> For an excellent discussion of the evolution of Tory political satire in the face of an ever more homogeneous political ethos, see Vincent Caretta, *The Snarling Muse* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1983), chapters V and VI especially.

<sup>94</sup> The pattern which Thomson follows belongs, in fact, to a long rhetorical tradition, as in a way does his use of the grove as a scene of inspiration. I would contend, however, that Thomson exploits these conventions in a thoroughly personal way, dwelling on specific issues only in the grove as a means of concentrating the reader's imagination on the philosophical and moral concerns of the poem. For a succinct discussion of the tradition of the grove, see Karina Williamson, "Wild Woods and Sacred Groves," *RES*, New Series, Vol. 34, No. 136 (1983) pp. 464-470. For an excellent discussion of the rhetorical tradition which utilized patterns of blame and praise for the purpose of educating the politician in the ethics of social duty, see Brian Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), ch. 1, "An Outline of Classical Rhetoric," pp. 56-57 especially.

<sup>95</sup> Thomson owes the personification of Inspiration to a suggestion by Mallet: "I thank you heartily for your Hint about personizing of Inspiration. It strikes me." *Letters* p. 45.

<sup>96</sup> Thomson's formulation fits into a familiar tradition. In *Guardian* 34, for example, Steele remarks that "the great Poet animates all the difficult Parts of Learning by the Force of his Genius, and irradiates all the Compass of his Knowledge by the Lustre and Brightness of his Imagination" (pp. 143-44).

<sup>97</sup> In *Guardian* 15 Steele argues that "Deep Reflections are made by a Head undisturbed; and Points of Wit and Fancy are the Work of an Heart at Ease" (p. 85).

<sup>98</sup> For a more detailed account, see Patricia Meyer Spacks, *The Varied God* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1959), pp. 133, 143. See also *Letters* pp. 170, 172.

<sup>99</sup> Many of the best passages in *The Seasons* discuss these relations, as Spacks notes in *The Varied God*: "The most effective poetic fusion of aesthetic, emotional, and moral outlook takes place in *The Seasons* when nature is conceived as a vast pattern of order including man, and it is this concept which seems most essentially important to the poet" (p. 6). For a suggestive analysis of Thomson's appreciation of the importance of nature to our moral concepts, see Ralph Cohen, "Thomson's Poetry of Space and Time," in *Studies in Criticism and Aesthetics, 1600-1800*, eds. Howard Anderson and John S. Shea (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1967): Thomson's personifications, for instance, "suggest human attitudes--ease, authority, disregard--implying that nature has a socially relevant as well as scientifically correct appearance" (p. 178); and Cohen, "The Augustan Mode in English Poetry," in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Brissenden, pp. 171-192.

<sup>100</sup> Bowden, *Poetical Essays on Several Occasions*, 2 Vols. (London: 1733, 1735), I, p. 4.

<sup>101</sup> Bowden, *Poetical Essays on Several Occasions*, I, pp. 31 and 15 respectively.

<sup>102</sup> *The Correspondence of Thomas Gray and William Mason, with Letters to the Rev. James Brown, D. D.*, 2nd ed., ed. John Mitford (London: 1855), pp. 62 and 65 respectively.

<sup>103</sup> *The Correspondence of Thomas Gray and William Mason*, pp. 127-128.

<sup>104</sup> *The Correspondence of Thomas Gray and William Mason*, p. 131.

<sup>105</sup> *The Adventurer*, Vol. I (London: 1753), No. 4, argues that "IT is always necessary, that facts should appear to be produced in a regular and connected series, that they should follow in a quick succession, and yet that they should be delivered with discriminating circumstances." Although this constitutes quite simple and straightforward advice, the writer who fails to achieve such a simple "narrative" of the facts runs a great danger: "If they have not a necessary and apparent connection, the ideas which they excite obliterate each other, and the mind is tantalized with an imperfect glimpse of innumerable objects that just appear and vanish; if they are too minutely related, they become tiresome; and if divested of all their circumstances, insipid" (pp. 19-20).

<sup>106</sup> See, for instance, Chester F. Chapin, *Personification in Eighteenth-Century English Poetry* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1955): he shows that a new interest in allegory and personification occurs under the influence of empirical theories of mind. The persistent demand that ideas derive from actual sense impressions led to a reevaluation of various poetic figure of speech, and allegory and personification proved their worth because they fit the necessary criteria for representational vividness. Chester adumbrates the basic qualities of allegory and personification which struck eighteenth-century theorists: aids to instruction; capable of producing sublime moments which moved the emotions; though fictional, capable of representing truth, if done with discernment and judgment; showed originality, a strong imagination, and inventiveness (pp. 3-30). Theorists, Chapin argues, accepted that "the personified abstraction was not only a 'fiction'; it was a 'sensible image'" (p. 30). See, for instance, Samuel Wesley, *The Life of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. An Heroic Poem: Dedicated to Her Most Sacred Majesty* (London: 1697), in *ARS*, No. 5 (1947). Wesley argues that in order to fulfil the instructive and delighting function of literature, a writer needed to imitate some particular action from mythic or actual life, and this ought to be done as honestly as possible. The poet remains "free" to invent some situation, however, as long as the poem rings true, and in this light he ought to avail himself of allegory and fable because they teach morality and virtue more effectively than precept; the allegory, moreover, will carry greater conviction the more the writer roots it in concrete details: "certain, that 'tis singulars and particulars which give an Air of Probability, and the main Life and Beauty to a poem" (p. 8).

<sup>107</sup> For a suggestive discussion of the new emphasis on description, see Rachel Trickett, "'Curious Eye': Some Aspects of Visual Description in Eighteenth-Century Literature," in *Augustan Studies*, eds. Douglas Lane Patey and Timothy Keegan (Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press, 1986; London and Toronto: Associated Univ. Presses, 1986), pp. 239-252. Trickett notes that "there is no doubt that the visual quality in eighteenth-century poetry is different in kind as well as in degree from that of earlier periods," and this change clearly indicates a "new attitude toward the visible world, especially the visible world of nature" (p. 240).

<sup>108</sup> Anonymous, *The Lay-Monastery*, 2nd ed., ed. Richard Blackmore (London: 1714), p. 227.

<sup>109</sup> Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, 3rd ed., ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, revised by P. H. Nidditch (1975; rpt.

Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 17.

<sup>110</sup> Cooper, *Letters Concerning Taste* (London: 1757), p. 44. All further references are to this edition and appear in the text as *LCT*. Cooper accepts, however, that a simple or conventional description rarely moves the judgment and "never sinks deep into the Heart" (p. 44). Cooper's argument derives from Addison, *The Spectator*, No. 416, 1712, III, pp. 558-561.

<sup>111</sup> Jackson, *Thirty Letters on Various Subjects*, 3rd ed. (London: 1795), p. 109.

<sup>112</sup> Webb, *Poems* (Salisbury: 1790), p. 41.

<sup>113</sup> Webb, *Poems*, p. 42.

<sup>114</sup> Jackson, *Thirty Letters on Various Subjects*, p. 109.

<sup>115</sup> Anonymous, *The Lay-Monastery*, p. 228. *The Adventurer*, Vol. I, No. 63, likewise draws attention to the difficulty of creating truly original or novel descriptions, and finds that part of the problem derives from a too slavish attention to the past, and part lies in the objects of sense and in mechanisms by which sense impressions become words: "THE number of original writers, of writers who discover any traces of original thought, or veins of new expression, is found to be extremely small, in every branch of literature. Few possess ability or courage to think for themselves, to trust to their own powers, to rely on their own stock; and, therefore, the generality creeps tamely and cautiously in the track of their predecessors. . . . IT happens unfortunately in poetry, which principally claims the merit of novelty and invention, that this want of originality arises frequently, not from a barrenness and timidity of genius, but from invincible necessity and the nature of things. The works of those who profess an art whose essence is imitation, must needs be stamped with a close resemblance to each other; since the objects material or animate, extraneous or internal, which they all imitate, lie equally open to the observation of all, and are perfectly similar. Descriptions, therefore, that are faithful and just, must be uniform and alike; the first copier may be, perhaps, entitled to the praise of priority; but a succeeding one ought certainly not to be condemned for plagiarism" (p. 373-374).

<sup>116</sup> Anonymous, *The Lay-Monastery*, p. 223. The writer feels compelled to make a typical statement about the quality of English poetry: "I shall conclude this Paper with a Remark, which I believe will be allow'd by all impartial Criticks, That whoever will take the Pains to look into the several Descriptions of this Kind, which may be found in the Works of ancient and modern Writers, will find that the *English* Poets have describ'd the *Morning* with at least as much Elegance of Fancy as any others have done, and with more Variety" (p. 233).

<sup>117</sup> Webb, *Poems*, p. v.

<sup>118</sup> Webb, *Poems*, p. vi.

<sup>119</sup> Coward, *Licentia Poetica Discuss'd: Or, the True Test of Poetry* (London: 1709), sig. A2. All further references are to this edition and appear in the text as *LPD*.

<sup>120</sup> Coward's view that poor poetry must result from the many and various misguided prescriptions offered to the eighteenth-century poet throws another log on the burden of the past fire; and his point deserves a hearing, it seems to me, if for no other reason than that it does surface in so many discussions on the state of English poetry, whether these take place at the beginning, middle, or end of the century. A large body of opinion during the century felt that, while studying ancient models could provide

invaluable hints about how to structure a work, the distance in time and the differences in language, customs, and daily concerns of the respective ages meant that the modern needed to establish his own content and linguistic style. *Spectator* 29, for instance, contends that "Musick, Architecture, and Painting, as well as Poetry and Oratory, are to deduce their Laws and Rules from the general Sense and Taste of Mankind, and not from the Principles of those Arts themselves; or in other words, the Taste is not to conform to the Art, but the Art to the Taste. Musick is not design'd to please only Chromatick Ears, but all that are capable of distinguishing harsh from disagreeable Notes." Thus, English music could benefit greatly from Italian opera, as long as "the Subject Matter of it be English." *The Spectator*, I, p. 123.

<sup>121</sup> See, for instance, "An Apology for Poetry, in an Essay directed to Walter Moil Esq," in Charles Gildon's *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays, on Several Subjects* (London: 1694), p. 16, and Isaac Watts, *Horae Lyricae. Poems, Chiefly of the Lyric Kind*, 8th ed. (London: 1743), pp. iii, viii, xxi.

<sup>122</sup> Watts, *Horae Lyricae*, 8th ed. (London: 1743), pp. xxi and xxii.

<sup>123</sup> Wicksted, in *An Ode for the Year MDCCXVII. To the King* (London: 1717), apologizes in the Preface for "giving so lofty a Title to a Number of Verses, which have nothing of the divine Fury of a Poet to recommend them: A Composition, where Fiction as well as the Embellishments of Description and Similitude is entirely wanting." However lacking in descriptive accurateness or appropriate poetical adornment, Wicksted defends his poem with the observation that "upon the Subject of all others the most Universally Entertaining, they have succeeded the Best, who wrote from their Hearts; I was so secure of this, which I thought the Grand Qualification, that I never examin'd my self about any other" (sig. A2).

<sup>124</sup> *The Guardian* reiterates Coward's point, and it does so in a language which both reveals and obscures its participation in the linguistic ethos of the new science: Number 13 declares that "clear Conception will produce clear Expression, and clear Expression proper Action," while Number 15 lays down the critical axiom that "every Thought which is agreeable to Nature, and expressed in a Language suitable to it, is written with Ease" (pp. 80 and 84 respectively).

<sup>125</sup> Coward typically declares that when it comes to comparing the descriptive poetry of ancients and moderns he wagers that "We are not inferior to Them in the least" (*LPD*, p. 60).

<sup>126</sup> See Shaftesbury, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, etc.*, 2 Vols., ed. John M. Robertson (London: Grant Richards, 1900), pp. 94-97.

<sup>127</sup> Cooper echoes here Addison in *The Spectator*, No. 413, 1712, III, pp. 545-546.

<sup>128</sup> Besides warning against using a too luxuriant or witty language, Coward takes issue with too much repetition of both argument ("which will scarce bear a second Reading") and "insipid tedious long Descriptions" (*LPD*, p. 30) in a poem.

<sup>129</sup> Contemporary debates about factors such as metre, transitions, language, and control bear out Coward's sense of a decided lack of consensus about the basic structural and linguistic conventions of the lyric genre. See, for instance, Congreve's *A Pindarique Ode, Humbly Offer'd to the Queen . . . To which is prefix'd, A Discourse on the Pindarique Ode* (London: 1706), sig. A-A3<sup>v</sup>, Prior's "An Ode, Humbly Inscrib'd to the Queen. On the Glorious Success of Her Majesty's Arms" (1706), in *The Literary Works*,

2nd ed. Eds. H. Bunker Wright and Monroe K. Spears (1959; Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), I, pp. 230-232, and Samuel Cobb's two poems, *Bersaba: Or, The Love of David* (London: 1695), sig. A2-B'; *The Female Reign: An Ode, Alluding to Horace, B.4 Od. 14 . . . With a Letter to a Gentleman in the University* (London: 1709), pp. 3-4.

<sup>130</sup> In a similar frame of mind to Coward, John Dart notes in his Preface to his translation of *The Works of Tibullus* (London: 1720) that English elegy writers laboured under a severe shortcoming. He laments that records from the ancients do not provide an account of the "first Inventor" (p. iii) of this type of poetry, and as a consequence elegy, "as practis'd with us, is improperly so call'd, since it is bound to our *Heroick Measure*, yet the nature of it is the same" (p. x). While Dart accepts that several modern critics--he notes the Duke of Buckingham--have established "rules for an *English Elegy* . . . founded on a just Judgment, and an exquisite Discernment of what an *English Genius* can bear" (p. xii), he nonetheless wishes "that we had an exact Model for Elegy" derived from ancient practice since "No Moderns have better succeeded than those who have been observers of the Rules and Writings of the Ancients" (p. xxiii). Interestingly, while Dart looks to the ancients for a proper model, when it comes to translating the sexually explicit passages in ancient elegy he argues that "an *English Translator* is by no means excusable to transplant the Crimes of other Countries into his own, when the soil is of its own accord too productive of that growth" (p. xxxviii).

<sup>131</sup> Congreve, *A Pindarique Ode, Humbly Offer'd to the Queen*, sig. A.

<sup>132</sup> Dart, translator, *The Works of Tibullus*, makes a similar point about the use of transitions in the elegy. While he accepts that an elegiast should make use of frequent transitions because the subject matter of this type of poem permits such a style of writing, he nevertheless censures poets who fail to understand the difference between a natural transition and an artificial one: the style of an elegy "ought to be suitable to the Subject, soft, smooth, fluent, easie, and harmonious, of sweet and solemn Voice, not swelling, sounding, nor harsh, not too many Exclamations, nor too frequent Repetitions, Practices, frequently common among some late Writers, to supply the Defect of natural passionate Thoughts, and hide the Want of Numbers, loose and unerv'd Writings" (pp. xxiv-xxv).

<sup>133</sup> Bowden, "The *RETREAT*: or Contemplative Solitude. Inscribed to the Right Honourable the Countess of *HERTFORD*," in *Poetical Essays on Several Occasions* (London: 1733), I, p. 4.

<sup>134</sup> Of course, Coward's own sense of what constituted a great English lyric hardly provides evidence of his critical acumen. He felt that "if any where Great PINDAR Lives, / And in our English Verse again survives, / By Transmigration in Another Shape, / SPRAT's *Plague of Athens* seems His Soul t'enwrap" (*LPD*, p. 64).

<sup>135</sup> Coward's pessimism about the demand for rhyme was not, of course, ill-placed. In his *An Essay on Poetry* (London: 1709), John Sheffield observes that "Number, and Rhime, and the harmonious sound, / Which never does the Ear with *Harshness* wound, / Are *necessary*" (p. 4) in all lyric poems, but like Coward he defines number and rhyme as "yet but *vulgar Arts*" and "superficial parts" which "all in vain . . . / Contribute to the Structure of the whole / Without a *Genius* too, for that's the *Soul*" (p. 4).

<sup>136</sup> Husbands, publisher, *A Miscellany of Poems by Several Hands* (Oxford: 1731), sig. A2. All further quotations are to this edition and appear in the text as *PSH*.

<sup>137</sup> Dart, translator, *The Works of Tibullus*, p. v.

<sup>138</sup> Jones writes: "It seems probable then that *poetry* was originally no more than a strong, and animated expression of the human passions, of *joy*, and *grief*, *love*, and *hate*, *admiration*, and *anger*, sometimes pure and unmixed, sometimes variously modified and combined: for, if we observe the *voice* and *accents* of a person affected by any of the violent passions, we shall perceive something in them very nearly approaching to *cadence* and *measure*; which is remarkably the case in the language of the vehement *Orator*" (p. 193). Jones, in fact, contends that the genres arose from real experiences, that initially poetry did not imitate but expressed an actual state--refinements, polishing, and art followed later. As Jones argues, "A man, who is *really* joyful or afflicted, cannot be said to *imitate* joy or affliction" (pp. 201-202). Accordingly, he says that "we may define *original and native poetry* to be *the language of the violent passions, expressed in exact measure, with strong accents and significant words*; and *true musick* to be no more than *poetry, delivered in a succession of harmonious sounds, so disposed as to please the ear*" (p. 200). *Poems, Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Language*, 2nd ed. (London: 1777).

<sup>139</sup> The anonymous author of *An Hymn to God* (London: 1746), for example, makes this precise link between Pindaric and scriptural sublimity: see pp. viii-ix.

<sup>140</sup> Thomas Parnell, in *An Essay on the Different Stiles of Poetry* (London: 1713), contends that allegory "*is not only engaging to the Fancy whenever it is well perform'd, but it has been thought also one of the first [ways of writing] that the Poets made use of*" (sig. A3<sup>v</sup>). He sees allegory as a particularly useful poetic device for teaching truth in a pleasing way, and he considers that "*there seems to be no likelier way by which a Poetical Genius may yet appear as an Original, than that he should proceed with a full compass of Thought and Knowledge, either to design his Plan, or to beautify the Parts of it, in an Allegorical manner*" (sig. A3<sup>v</sup>-A4). We may suppose that Parnell's observations about allegory go some way towards explaining the popularity of personifications and allegorical figures in eighteenth-century poetry: not only were they considered to bring the poet close to the sources of poetry (to nature) but they offered a means of expressing original thoughts. A poet like Collins exploited this view of allegory in quite obvious ways.

<sup>141</sup> While Hurd's *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (London: 1762) constitute the best-known analysis of the positive strengths of allegorical figures and the use of imaginary beings in poetry, what he called "a world of fine fabling; the illusion of which is so grateful to the *charmed Spirit*" (p. 120), his arguments about this issue do not differ markedly or radically from writers whom I discuss in this chapter. Hurd, of course, usually makes it into the ranks of the pre-romantics based on his attacks on "the philosophic moderns" who Hurd declared "have gone too far, in their perpetual ridicule and contempt" (p. 4) of poetry. However, a close reading of Hurd's *Letters* shows that, while he censures reason for demanding that fancy accept its reins, his targets were really those neo-classical critics who misapplied generic rules based on ancient models (a point made by quite a few eighteenth-century critics), who judged Gothic art by Grecian standards (pp. 55-60); and, he says, a type of reason assisted "by party, and religious prejudices" (p. 119). This brand of critic "would endure these *lying wonders*, neither in their own proper shape, or as masked in figures" and so they "drove them off the scene" (p. 119). Typically, Hurd declares that the only way to rectify this type of bad criticism is by proceeding in a properly philosophic manner: "The only criticism, indeed, that is worth regarding is, the philosophical, but there is a sort which looks like philosophy, but is not" (p. 88).

<sup>142</sup> Andrews, *Eidyllia: Or, Miscellaneous Poems* (Edinburgh: 1757), p. 3. All further quotations are from this edition and appear in the text as *EMP*.

<sup>143</sup> Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, develops a similar argument as Dryden. See, pp. 89-93.

<sup>144</sup> Dryden, *Essays*, ed. W. P. Ker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900), p. 187.

<sup>145</sup> Similarly, Sheffield, in his *An Essay on Poetry*, declares that, unless a poem exudes some "Spirit which inspires the Work throughout," no degree of ornamentation will save it from the fate of mediocrity. Just as the spirit or force "of Nature moves the World about," so too does the poetical spirit provide "A Heat which glows in every word that's writ, / 'Tis something of Divine, and more than Wit" (p. 4).

<sup>146</sup> Aikin, *An Essay on the Application of Natural History to Poetry* (Warrington: 1778), p. 1. All further references are to this edition and are included in the text as *EANHP*.

<sup>147</sup> For a revealing discussion of the way in which eighteenth-century writers appropriated the language of science, and their attitude to the value of scientific terms in producing accurate descriptions, see John Arthos, *The Language of Natural Description in Eighteenth-Century Poetry* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1949). See, especially, his remark that critics often fail to appreciate the language of eighteenth-century poetry because we take for granted that the scientific "terms meant what they seemed to mean, and nothing else," when in fact "In the eighteenth century, their associations were taken for granted, and so there was no need for comment" (p. 27).

<sup>148</sup> Aikin does not reject imitation or copying out of hand—he provides a number of examples from Shakespeare, Milton, Collins, and Gray which show how a poet could borrow an image and adapt it with accuracy and elegancy. See, p. 9.

<sup>149</sup> For a brief but illuminating discussion of Aikin's *Essay*, see Jeffrey Plank, "John Aikin on Science and Poetry," *Studies in Burke and His Time*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (1977), pp. 167-178. Plank rightly points out that Aikin, "A contemporary of Johnson, Wordsworth, and Coleridge and one of the most important dissenting critics at the turn of the nineteenth century . . . has not been given much attention in our time. He is known as a perceptive critic of Thomson and as an innovative thinker in medical theory, science, politics, and economics, but his application of scientific methodology to literary studies has been ignored" (p. 167). (Of course, as Plank's notes indicate, Aikin has not been completely ignored.) As Plank argues, "Aikin's literary criticism has its conceptual underpinnings in his medical studies and the reality basis of their value; his systematic thinking about scientific problems allows him to recognize traditional critical positions as problems and to suggest how conceptions of experience derived from empirical disciplines alter thinking about poetry" (p. 167). See, also, William Powell Jones, "John Aikin on the Use of Natural History in Poetry," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 21 (1963), pp. 439-443. Jones argues that Aikin's critical articulation of the relationship between natural history and descriptive poetry "was new to criticism when he wrote *An Essay on the Application of Natural History to Poetry* in 1777" (p. 440). Jones also points out that, while the tradition of physico-theological poetry made use of plants and animals to prove the wisdom of God, using discoveries made with the microscope to discuss marvels, the common objects of natural history do not become common discussion points until after mid century. Only after Linnaeus' system of classification did plants and animals become popular, particularly with amateurs, and Aikin's observations about the necessity to pay close attention to natural history thus fell upon receptive ears. Interestingly, in my copy of Aikin's *Essay* a somewhat cryptic, handwritten note on an inner leaf reads: "ever since I read your Aiken on the practical use of Natural History, a favourite study of mine, the characters of the Vegetable & the manners



of the Animal Kingdoms." The note is signed Burns to Dugald Stewart, July 30, 1790.

<sup>150</sup> Soame Jenyns, in "An EPISTLE, Written in the COUNTRY, to the Rt. Hon. the Lord Lovlace," articulates similar ideas, though with a more satirical object in mind. In *Miscellaneous Pieces* (London: 1761), I, pp. 42-43.

<sup>151</sup> Young, *Ocean. An Ode. . . . To which is prefix'd, An Ode to the King: And a DISCOURSE on ODE* (London: 1728), p. 3 and p. 25 respectively. All further references are to this edition and appear in the text as *OO*.

<sup>152</sup> Shepherd, *Odes, Descriptive and Allegorical*, 2nd ed. (London: 1761), p. iii. All further references are from this edition and appear in the text as *ODA*.

<sup>153</sup> Scott, *Critical Essays on Some of the Poems of Several English Poets* (1785; rpt. Gregg International Pub., 1969), p. 12. All further references are to this edition and appear in the text as *CESP*.

<sup>154</sup> Williamson, "Smart's *Principia*: Science and Anti-Science in *Jubilate Agno*," *RES*, Second Series, Vol. 30, No. 120 (1979), p. 411. Thus, when it came to a clash between biblical doctrine or fable and new scientific discoveries "Smart is clearly not interested in the scientific arguments. The authority of the word of God sweeps away all empirical objections" (p. 411).

<sup>155</sup> Aikin, *Essays on Song-Writing: With a Collection of such English songs as are most eminent for Poetical Merit. To which are added Some Original Pieces* (London: 1772), p. viii. All further references are to this edition and appear in the text as *ESS*.

<sup>156</sup> Robert Potter, in his *An Inquiry into some Passages in Dr. Johnson's Lives of the Poets: Particularly his Observations on Lyric Poetry, and the Odes of Gray* (London: 1783), pp. 13-14, makes the same point. The desire by some critics to see the lyric genre as a product of more refined and civilized social structures indicates, in a minor way, that the lyric genre had reached major genre status.

<sup>157</sup> Pinkerton's division of the lyric into the sublime and beautiful indicates clearly that his categories derive from Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757). Since my intent in this work is not to trace specific critical and aesthetic influences between major and minor writers, as I mentioned in the introduction, a detailed account of Burke's ideas has not been undertaken. However, the thorough-going empiricism of Burke's study further supports my argument that the ideals of the new science influenced debate about poetry.

<sup>158</sup> Francis, *A Poetical Translation of the Works of Horace* (London: 1753), I, p. xi.

<sup>159</sup> *The Correspondence of Thomas Gray and William Mason, with Letters to the Rev. James Brown, D. D.*, pp. 71-72.

<sup>160</sup> *The Correspondence of Thomas Gray and William Mason, with Letters to the Rev. James Brown, D. D.*, p. 108.

<sup>161</sup> *The Correspondence of Thomas Gray and William Mason, with Letters to the Rev. James Brown, D. D.*, p. 72.

<sup>162</sup> West, trans, *Odes of Pindar* (London: 1749), sig. A3. All further references are to this edition and appear in the text as *OP*. This debate about the structure of the ode carries on throughout the century. See, for instance, William Preston, "Thoughts on Lyric Poetry," in *The Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy* (Dublin: 1787), pp. 57-73.

<sup>163</sup> Francis, *A Poetical Translation of the Works of Horace*, p. xii.

<sup>164</sup> Sheffield, *An Essay on Poetry*, p. 7.

<sup>165</sup> Francis, *A Poetical Translation of the Works of Horace*, I, pp. ix-xiii, once again agrees with West, but he argues as well that he studied a number of English stanza forms which seemed to suit Horace's subject matter and therefore adopted them instead of trying to match English measure to Horace's forms.

<sup>166</sup> Preston accepts most of West's arguments (though he comes to the debate through Mason's remarks on one of Gray's odes), but he does not think that the strophe, antistrophe, or epode are necessary in English, or that a regular ode makes it more difficult to write lyric poetry than an irregular ode. See, "Thoughts on Lyric Poetry," pp. 61-62.

<sup>167</sup> Preston, for instance, argues that the irregular ode requires a high degree of skill and talent for any hope of success: see, "Thoughts on Lyric Poetry," pp. 69-73. For a brief but instructive discussion of the terms of this debate, see Roger Lonsdale, ed., *The Poems of Gray, Collins and Goldsmith* (1969; rpt. New York: Longman Group Ltd, 1980), pp. 158-160.

<sup>168</sup> Thomas Gray, for example, makes a distinction between a nature which displayed God's power and could therefore move the imagination and that lesser, more habitual nature familiar to the urban dweller. He writes: "I am returned from Scotland charmed with my expedition; it is of the Highlands I speak; the Lowlands are worth seeing once, but the mountains are ecstatic, and ought to be visited in pilgrimage once a year. None but those monstrous creatures of God know how to join so much beauty with so much horror. A fig for your poets, painters, gardeners, and clergymen, that have not been among them; their imagination can be made up of nothing but bowling-greens, flowering shrubs, horse-ponds, Fleet-ditches, shell-grottoes, and Chinese rails." *The Correspondence of Thomas Gray and William Mason, with Letters to the Rev. James Brown, D. D.*, p. 349.

<sup>169</sup> Smollett, *Ode to Independence* (Glasgow: 1773), p. 9.

<sup>170</sup> Ogilvie, *Poems on Several Subjects* (Dublin: 1769), I, p. cxxiii. All further references are to this edition and volume and appear in the text as *PSS*.

### Chapter Five - Concluding Remarks

<sup>1</sup> Pemberton, *A View of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy* (London: 1728), pp. 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> Pemberton, *A View of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy*, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Pemberton, *A View of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy*, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Pemberton, *A View of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy*, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Pemberton, *A View of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>6</sup> Jenyns, *Miscellaneous Pieces* (London: 1761), I, p. 20.

<sup>7</sup> Wodhull, *A Poetical Epistle to [John Cleaver], M.A.*, 2nd ed. (London: 1762), pp. 5-6. All further references are to this edition and appear in the text.

<sup>8</sup> Watts, *Horae Lyricae. Poems, Chiefly of the Lyric Kind*, 8th ed. (London: 1743), p. 147.

<sup>9</sup> Watts, *Horae Lyricae*, p. 148.

<sup>10</sup> Watts, *Horae Lyricae*, pp. 171-172.

<sup>11</sup> Campbell, *Odes and Miscellaneous Poems. By a Student of Medicine in The University of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: 1796), p. 18. See, also, Anonymous, *A Poem Sacred to the Memory of John Gregory, M. D.* (Edinburgh: 1773), for similar imagery and sentiments about a man of science.

<sup>12</sup> McFarland, *Romanticism and the Ruins of Form* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1981), p. 54; see also pp. 3-55 on the importance of fragmentation and of fragmented works as critical registers of cultural stability, and pp. 216-254 for the problem of evaluating the longer, fragmented, incomplete works.

<sup>13</sup> To enter into the debate about the Romantics and science would, of course, entail a lengthy disquisition. That they were informed and influenced by science in a positive way seems beyond doubt, even when we take note of their negative protestations. See, for instance, Trevor H. Levere, "The Lovely Shapes and Sounds Intelligible": Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Humphry Davy, Science and Poetry," in *Nature Transfigured*, eds. John Christie and Sally Shuttleworth (Manchester and New York: Manchester Univ. Press, 1989), pp. 85-101; Donald Ault, *Visionary Physics* (1974; rpt. Chicago and London: Univ. Of Chicago Press, 1975).

## Bibliography

### Primary Sources

- Aikin, John. *An Essay on the Application of Natural History to Poetry*. Warrington: 1778.
- . *Essays on Song-Writing*: With a Collection of such ENGLISH SONGS as are most eminent for POETICAL MERIT. To which are added SOME ORIGINAL PIECES. London: 1772.
- Akenside, Mark. *Odes on Several Subjects*. London: 1745.
- Andrews, Robert. *Eidyllia: Or, Miscellaneous Poems*. Edinburgh: 1757.
- Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, for the Year 1788, The*. 2nd ed. London: 1790.
- Anonymous. *An Answer to a Late Pamphlet, called An Essay Concerning Critical and Curious Learning*. London: 1698.
- Anonymous. "An Apology for Poetry, in an Essay directed to Walter Moil Esq." In *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays, on Several Subjects*. Ed. Charles Gildon. London: 1694.
- Anonymous. *The Beauties of Poetry Display'd*. Vol. I. London: 1757.
- Anonymous. "The Defects of Modern Education." In *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*. Vol. L. London: 1772.
- Anonymous. "An Essay on the present State of Society in all civilized Nations, but particularly in France and England." In *The Universal Magazine and Review*. London: 1789.
- Anonymous. "An Essay on the STATE of LITERATURE in Great Britain." In *The Monthly Miscellany, or Gentleman and Ladys Complete Magazine*. Vol. I. London: 1774.
- Anonymous. "An ESSAY on THOUGHT." In *The Monthly Miscellany, of Gentleman and Ladys Complete Magazine*. Vol. I. London: 1774.
- Anonymous. *An Essay On Wit: To Which Is Annexed, A Dissertation On Antient and Modern History*. Introd. E. N. Hooker. *ARS*, No. 2, 1946.
- Anonymous. *Grandsire Hambden's Ghost and Peace, or No Piece. Two Poems*. [Sometimes attributed to Edward Ward]. London: 1712.
- Anonymous. *The Grove of Fancy: A Poem*. London: 1789.
- Anonymous. *An Hymn to God*. London: 1746.
- Anonymous. "The Humble PETITION of EPITHETS, to the Editors of the MAGAZINES." *The Monthly Miscellany, or Gentleman and Ladys Complete Magazine*. London, 1774.

- Anonymous. "Observations on the UNIVERSE, and the different Systems of which it is composed." In *The Royal Magazine; Or Gentleman's Monthly Companion*. Vol. II. London: 1760.
- Anonymous. *A Poem Sacred to the Memory of John Gregory, M. D.* Edinburgh: 1773.
- Anonymous. *Ranelagh: A Poem*. By the Author of some late PUBLICATIONS. 2nd ed. London: 1777.
- Anonymous. "Some Account of Elfrida, a dramatic Poem; written, on the Model of the ancient Greek Tragedy, by Mr Mason; with Remarks." In *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. XXII, May, 1752, pp. 224-225.
- Anonymous. *Theologia Ruris sive Schola et Scala Naturae: Or, The Book of Nature, Leading Us, by Certain Degrees, to the Knowledge and Worship of the God of Nature*. Appended to *The History of Hai Ebn Yockdan, an Indian Prince; or, the Self-Taught Philosopher . . . Set Forth not long ago in the Original Arabick, with the Latin Version*, by Edward Pocock (London: 1686). In *ARS*, No. 56, 1956.
- Arnold, Matthew. *The Complete Prose Works*. Ed. R. H. Super. Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1973. Vol. IX.
- Auden, W. H. *Collected Longer Poems*. London: Faber and Faber, 1968.
- Bacon, Francis. *The Advancement of Learning and New Atlantis*. Ed. Arthur Johnson. 1974; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980.
- Baker, Thomas. *Reflections Upon Learning*. 5th ed. London: 1714.
- Baker, Henry. *Medulla Poetarum Romanorum: or, the Most Beautiful and Instructive Passages of the Roman Poets*. London: 1737.
- *Original Poems: Serious and Humorous*. London: 1725.
- Berkeley, George. *Of the Principles of Human Knowledge*. In *Berkeley's Philosophical Writings*. Ed. David M. Armstrong. 1965; rpt. London: Collier Books, 1980.
- "On the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America." In *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth-Century Verse*. Ed. Roger Lonsdale. 1984; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1987
- Blackmore, Richard. *An Essay Upon Wit*. Introd. Richard C. Boys. *ARS*, No. 1, 1946.
- Blake, William. *Jerusalem, Selected Poems and Prose*. Ed. Hazard Adams. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970.
- Bolingbroke, Viscount St. John. *Letters or Essays Addressed to Alexander Pope, Esq. In The Works*. 1844; rpt. London: Frank Cass & Co., 1967.

- Boswell, James. *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* Eds. Frederick A Pottle and Charles H. Bennett. London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1963.
- . *Life of Johnson*. Ed. R. W. Chapman. Introd. Pat Rogers. 1953; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1991.
- Bowden, Samuel. *Poetical Essays on Several Occasions*. 2 Vols. London: 1733, 1735.
- Bowles, William Lisle. *Poetical Works*. 2 Vols. Ed. George Gilfillan. Edinburgh: 1855.
- Boyle, Robert. *The Sceptical Chemist*. Introd. M. M. Pattison Muir. London: J. M. Dent; New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., nd.
- Broome, William. *Poems On Several Occasions*. London: 1727.
- Burke, Edmund. *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. Ed. Adam Phillips. Oxford and New York: OUP, 1990.
- Byron, George Gordon. *Poetical Works*. Ed. Frederick Page. 1904; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1975.
- Bysshe, Edward. *The Art of Poetry*. London: 1725.
- Campbell, Alexander. *Odes and Miscellaneous Poems. By a Student of Medicine in The University of Edinburgh*. Edinburgh: 1796.
- Campion, Thomas. *Works*. Ed. Percival Vivian. 1909; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1967.
- Cobb, Samuel. *Bersaba: Or, The Love of David*. London: 1695.
- . *Poems on Several Occasions*. 3rd ed. London: 1710.
- . *The Female Reign: An Ode, Alluding to Horace, B.4 Od. 14 . . . With a Letter to a Gentleman in the University*. London: 1709.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *The Collected Works*. Eds. James Engell and Walter Jackson Bate. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983. Vol. 7:1.
- . *Collected Letters*. Ed. Earl Leslie Griggs. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956. Vol. I.
- Colman, George. *Modern Novels*. (Inscribed to the Author of the Monk). In *Annual Register*. London: 1797, p. 448.
- Congreve, William. *A Pindarique Ode, Humbly Offer'd to the Queen . . . To which is prefix'd, A Discourse on the Pindarique Ode*. [First Edition, 1695] London: 1706.
- Coombes, William. *The Justification: A Poem*. London: 1777.
- Cooper, John Gilbert, *Letters Concerning Taste*. London: 1757.

- Coward, William. *Licentia Poetica Discuss'd: Or, the True Test of Poetry*. London: 1709.
- Cowley, Abraham. *The Essays and Other Prose Writings*. Ed. Alfred B. Gough. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1915.
- Crashaw, Richard. *The Poems*. 2nd ed. Ed. L. C. Martin. 1927; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1957.
- Creech, Thomas. Trans. *The Idylliums of Theocritus, with Rapin's Discourse of Pastorals done into English*. London: 1684.
- Dart, John. Trans. *The Works of Tibullus*. London: 1720.
- Day, Thomas. *The Dying Negro, A Poetical Epistle*. London: 1773.
- Defoe, Daniel. *An Essay Upon Projects*. London: 1697.
- Dennis, John. *Critical Works*. Ed. E. N. Hooker. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1943. Vol. II.
- Descartes, René. *The Philosophical Works*. Trans. Elizabeth S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross. 1911; rpt. Cambridge: CUP, 1979. Vol. I.
- Drayton, Michael. *The Works*. Ed. J. William Hebel. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1932. Vol. II.
- Dryden, John. *Essays of John Dryden*. Ed. W. P. Ker. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900.
- *Poems*. Ed. James Kinsley. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958. Vol. IV.
- *The Works*. Eds. H. T. Swedenberg, Jr. and Vinton A. Dearing. Los Angeles and London: Univ. of California Press, 1972. Vol. II.
- *The Works*. Eds. Samuel Holt Monk et al. London: Univ. of California Press, 1971. Vol. XVII.
- Featly, Daniel. Foreword to Phineas Fletcher's *The Purple Island, Or The Isle of Man: Together With Piscatorie Eclogs and other Poetical Miscellanies* (1633). In Fletcher, Giles, and Phineas. *Poetical Works*. Ed. Frederick S. Boas. Cambridge: CUP, 1908. Vol. II.
- Fielding, Henry. *Jonathan Wild*. Ed. David Nokes. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982.
- Flatman, Thomas. *Poems and Songs*. 4th ed. London: 1686.
- Fletcher, Giles, and Phineas. *Poetical Works*. Ed. Frederick S. Boas. Cambridge: CUP, 1908. Vol. I.
- Francis, Philip. *A Poetical Translation of the Works of Horace*. London: 1753. Vol. I.
- Gaskell, Elizabeth. *Cranford*. Introd. Frank Swinnerton. Foreword. J. M. Dent. 1906; rpt. London: Dent; New York: Dutton.

- Gentleman's Magazine: and Historical Chronicle, The.** London. Vol. II (1732); Vol. XX (1750); Vol. XXIII (1753); Vol. LIV (1784); Vol. LV (1785); Vol. LVI (1786); Vol. LVII (1787).
- Gildon, Charles. Ed. **Miscellaneous Letters and Essays, On Several Subjects . . . By several Gentlemen and Ladies.** London, 1694.
- , and John Brightland. **A Grammar of the English Tongue, with NOTES, Giving the Grounds and Reason of Grammar in General.** To which are now added The Arts of Poetry, Rhetoric, Logic, &c. Making a Compleat System of an English Education. 2nd ed. London: 1712.
- Godwin, William. **The Enquirer: Reflections on Education, Manners, and Literature.** London: 1798.
- Goldsmith, Oliver. **Collected Works.** Ed. Arthur Friedman. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966. Vol. I.
- Googe, Barnabe. **Eglogs, Epytaphes, and Sonettes** (1563). Introd. Frank B. Fieler. Gainesville: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1968.
- Gray, Thomas, and Mason, William. **Correspondence, with Letters to the Rev. James Brown, D. D.** 2nd ed. Ed. Mitford, John. London: 1855.
- Guardian, The.** Ed. John Calhoun Stephens. Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1982.
- Hawkesworth, John. **The Adventurer.** No. 63. London: 1753. Vol. I.
- Hawkins, John. Trans. **The Odes of Horace, The Best of Lyrick Poets, Contayning much morality, and sweetness.** London: 1631.
- Hazlitt, William. **Collected Works.** Eds. A. R Waller and Arnold Glover. London: 1902. Vol. V.
- Hegel, G. W. F. **The Philosophy of History.** Trans. J. Sibree. Pref. Charles Hegel. New introd. C. J. Friedrich. 1899; rpt. New York: Dover Publications, 1956).
- Herrick, Robert. **The Poetical Works.** Ed. L. C. Martin. 1956; rpt. London: OUP, 1968.
- Hobbes, Thomas. **Leviathan.** Ed. John Plamenatz. 1962; rpt. Glasgow: William Collins & Sons, 1974.
- Howard, Henry. Earl of Surrey. **Poems.** Ed. and introd. Emrys Jones, 1964; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1973.
- Hume, David. **Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals.** 3rd ed. Ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge. Rev. P. H. Nidditch. 1975; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1985.
- . **Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary.** Ed. Eugene F. Miller. 1985; rpt. Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1987.
- . **A Treatise of Human Nature.** Ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge. Rev. P. H. Nidditch. 1888; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1985.



- Hurd, Richard. *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*. London: 1762.
- Husbands, John. Pub. *A Miscellany of Poems by Several Hands*. Oxford: 1731.
- Jameson, William. *An Essay on Virtue and Harmony, Wherein a Reconciliation of the Various Accounts of Moral Obligation is Attempted*. Edinburgh: 1749.
- Jackson, William. *Thirty Letters on Various Subjects*. 3rd ed. London: 1795.
- Jeffrey, Francis. Rev. of Walter Scott's edition of the *Works of Jonathan Swift*, in *The Edinburgh Review, or Critical Journal*, XXVII, No. LIII (September 1816).
- Jenyns, Soame. *Miscellaneous Pieces*. London: 1761. Vol. I.
- Johnson, Samuel. *A Dictionary of the English Language* . . . Abstracted from the FOLIO EDITION. 2 Vols. 4th ed. London: 1770.
- *Letters*. Ed. R. W. Chapman. Oxford: Clarendon, 1952. Vol. I.
- *Lives of the English Poets*. Ed. George Birkbeck Hill. Oxford: Clarendon, 1905. Vol. III.
- *Works*. Eds. E. L. McAdam, Jr., and Donald and Mary Hyde. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1958; London: OUP, 1958. Vol. I.
- *Works*. Eds. Walter Jackson Bate et al. New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1963. Vol. II.
- *Works*. Eds. Walter Jackson Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss. New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1969). Vol. III.
- *Works*. Eds. Walter Jackson Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss. New Haven and Yale: Yale Univ. Press, 1968. Vol. V.
- *Samuel Johnson and James Boswell: A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland and The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*. Ed. Peter Levi. London: Penguin, 1984.
- Jones, William Sir. Trans. *Poems, Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Language*. 2nd ed. London: 1777.
- Jonson, Ben. *Volpone Or, The Fox*. Ed. R. B. Parker. Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 1983.
- Langland, William. *The Vision of Piers Plowman*. Ed. and Introd. A. V. C. Schmidt. 1978; rpt. London: Dent, 1984.
- Lay Monastery, The. Consisting of Essays, Discourse, &c.* 2nd ed. Ed. Richard Blackmore. London: 1714.
- Lennox, Charlotte. *The Female Quixote or, the Adventures of Arabella*. Introd. Sandra Shulman, London: Pandora Press, 1986.

- Locke, John. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Ed. P. H. Nidditch. 1975; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985.
- , and Edward Clarke. *The Correspondence*. Ed. Benjamin Rand. 1927; rpt. Plainview, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1975.
- Lonsdale, Roger. Ed. *The Poems of Gray, Collins and Goldsmith*. 1969; rpt. New York: Longman Group Ltd, 1980.
- Mallet, David. *Amyntor and Theodora: Or, The Hermit*. London: 1747.
- Mercer, Thomas. *Poems*. London: 1774.
- Merry, Robert. *Diversity. A Poem*. London: 1788.
- Milton, John. *Complete Poems and Major Prose*. Ed. Merritt Y. Hughes. 1957; rpt. Indianapolis: Odyssey Press, 1980.
- Mirandola, Giovanni Pico Della. "Of the Dignity of Man." Trans. Elizabeth Livermore Forbes. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. III (Jan-Oct, 1942), pp. 348-349.
- Monthly Magazine, or Gentleman and Ladys complete Magazine, The*. London: 1774.
- Morfitt, John. *Philotoxi Ardenae; The Woodmen of Arden*; A Latin Poem. With a Translation in Blank Verse; Another in Rhyme &c. Birmingham: 1788.
- Morrice, Bezaleel. *An Essay on the Poets*. London: 1721.
- Morris, Corbyn. *An Essay Towards Fixing the True Standards of Wit, Humour, Raillery, Satire, and Ridicule*. London: 1744.
- Moxon, Joseph. *A Tutor to Astronomy and Geography*. London: 1670.
- Norris, John. *A Collection of Miscellanies: Consisting of Poems, Essays, Discourses, and Letters, Occasionally Written*. Oxford: 1687.
- Ogden, James. *An Epistle on Poetical Composition*. London: 1762.
- Ogilvie, John. *Poems on Several Subjects*. Dublin: 1769. Vol. I.
- Ozell, John. Trans. *Logic; Or, The Art of Thinking: Containing (Besides the Common Rules) Many New Observations, That are of great Use in forming an Exactness of Judgment*. London: 1717.
- Parnell, Thomas. *An Essay on the Different Stiles of Poetry*. London: 1713.
- Patrick, Simon. *A Brief Account of the New Sect of Latitude-Men, Together with some reflections upon the New Philosophy*. In *ARS*, No. 100, 1963.
- Pemberton, Henry. *A View of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy*. London: 1728.
- Pinkerton, John. *Letters on Literature*. London: 1785.
- Plato. *The Republic*. Trans. Desmond Lee. 1955; rpt. London: Penguin, 1975.

**Poetical Beauties.** 2nd ed. Compiled by S. J. London: 1803.

**Poetical Preceptor; Or, A Collection of Select Pieces of Poetry; Extracted from the Works of the most eminent English Poets, The.** London: 1777.

Poole, Joshua. **The English Parnassus: Or, A Helpe to English Poesie.** London: 1657.

Pope, Alexander. **Poems.** Ed. John Butt. 1965; rpt. Methuen & Co., 1985.

Potter, Robert. **An Inquiry Into Some Passages in Dr. Johnson's Lives of the Poets: Particularly His Observations on LYRIC POETRY, and the Odes of Gray.** London: 1783.

Preston, William. "Thoughts on Lyric Poetry." In **The Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy.** Dublin: 1787, pp. 57-73.

Prior, Matthew. **The Literary Works.** 2nd ed. Ed. H. Bunker Wright and Monroe K. Spears. 1959; Oxford: Clarendon, 1971. Vol. I.

Reresby, Tamworth. **A Miscellany of Ingenious Thoughts and Reflections.** London: 1721.

**Royal Magazine; Or Gentleman's Monthly Companion, The.** Vol. II. London: 1760.

Rymer, Thomas. **An Essay, Concerning Critical and Curious Learning: in which are contained Some Short Reflections on the Controversie betwixt Sir William Temple and Mr. Wotton; and that betwixt Dr. Bentley and Mr. Boyle.** London: 1698.

----- **The Critical Works.** Ed. and Introd. Curt A. Zimansky. 1956; rpt. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1971.

Sayers, Frank. **Miscellanies, Antiquarian and Historical.** Norwich: 1805.

Schomberg, Ralph. Trans. **A Critical Dissertation on the Character and Writings of Pindar and Horace.** By Francois Blondel. London: ?1769.

Scott, John. **Critical Essays on Some of the Poems of Several English Poets.** 1785; rpt. Farnborough: Gregg International Pub., 1969.

Shaftesbury, Anthony Earl of. **Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, etc.** Ed. John M. Robertson. London: Grant Richards, 1900. Vol. I.

Sheffield, John. **An Essay on Poetry.** London: 1709.

Shelley, Percy Bysshe. **Complete Works.** Eds. Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck. London: Ernest Benn Ltd, 1965; New York: Gordian Press, 1965. Vol. VII.

Shenstone, William. **The Letters.** Ed. Marjorie Williams. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939.

----- **The Poetical Works.** Ed. George Gilfillan. London: 1854.

Shepherd, Richard. **Odes, Descriptive and Allegorical.** 2nd ed. London: 1761.

- Sidney, Philip Sir. *Selected Writings*. Ed. Richard Dutton. Manchester Carcanet Press, 1987.
- Smollett, Tobias. *Ode to Independence*. Glasgow: 1773.
- Southwell, Robert. *Complete Poems*. Ed. Alexander B. Grosart. np. 1872.
- Spectator, The*. Ed. Donald F. Bond. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965.
- Sprat, Thomas. *The History of the Royal-Society of London, For the Improving of Natural Knowledge*. Eds. Jackson I. Cope and Harold Whitmore Jones. 1958; rpt. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966.
- Swift, Jonathan. *A Tale of A Tub and Other Satires*. Ed. Kathleen Williams. 1975; rpt. Dent: London, 1982.
- Thomson, James. *The Castle of Indolence and Other Poems*. Ed. Alan D. McKillop. Lawrence: Univ. of Kansas Press, 1961.
- . *Letters and Documents 1700 - 1748*. Ed. Alan D. McKillop. Lawrence: Univ. of Kansas Press, 1958.
- . *Liberty, The Castle of Indolence and other Poems*. Ed. James Sambrook. Oxford: Clarendon, 1986.
- . *The Seasons*. Ed. and Introd. James Sambrook. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981.
- . *The Seasons, A Critical Edition*. Ed. Otto Zippel. 1908; rpt. n. p.: Folcroft Library Edition, 1970.
- Town and Country Magazine; Or Universal Repository of Knowledge, Instruction, and Entertainment*. London: 1770. Vol II.
- Trapp, Joseph. *Lectures on Poetry* (1742). Ed. Malcolm Kelsall. Menston: The Scholar Press, 1973.
- . *Preface to the Æneis*. In *The Works of Virgil*. London: 1731. Vol. I.
- Trenchard, John. *The Natural History of Superstition*. London: 1709.
- Trifler*. Nos. IX, XI. Reprinted in *The Gentleman's Magazine*. London: 1786. Vol. LVI.
- Universal Magazine and Review, The*. London: 1789.
- Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure, The*. London: 1772. Vol. L.
- Walpole, Horace. *Correspondence*. Eds. W. S. Lewis and A. Doyle Wallace. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press; London: OUP, 1937. Vol. I.
- Warton, Joseph. *The Adventurer*. Numbers 127 and 133. London: 1753. Vol. II
- . *A Dissertation Upon Pastoral Poetry*. In *The Works of Virgil*. London: 1743. Vol. I.

- Watts, Isaac. *Horae Lyricae. Poems, Chiefly of the Lyric Kind*. 8th ed. London: 1743.
- "The Hurry of the Spirits, in a Fever and Nervous Disorders." In *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth-Century Verse*. Ed. Roger Lonsdale. 1984; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1987.
- Webb, Francis. *Poems*. Salisbury: 1790.
- Welsted, Leonard. *Epistles, Odes, &c. Written on Several Subjects*. London: 1724.
- Wesley, Samuel. *An Epistle to a Friend Concerning Poetry*. London: 1700. Introd. E. N. Hooker. *ARS*, No. 5, 1947.
- *The Life of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. An Heroic Poem: Dedicated to Her Most Sacred Majesty*. London: 1697. *ARS*, No. 5, 1947.
- West, Gilbert. Trans. *Odes of Pindar*. London: 1749.
- Wicksted, [?]. *An Ode for the Year MDCCXVII. To the King*. London: 1717.
- Wilkins, John. *A Discourse Concerning A New Planet Tending to prove, That 'tis probable our Earth is one of the Planets*. London: 1640.
- *An Essay Towards a Philosophical Grammar, Real Character, and a Philosophical Language*. London: 1668.
- *Of the Principles and Duties of Natural Religion*. London: 1675.
- *The Discovery of a World in the Moone. Or, A Discourse Tending To Prove, that 'tis probable there may be another habitable World in that Planet*. London: 1638.
- Williams, Peter. *Letters Concerning Education: Addressed to a Gentleman entering at the University*. London: 1785.
- Wodhull, Michael. *A Poetical Epistle to [John Cleaver], M.A.* 2nd ed. London: 1762.
- Wordsworth, William. *The Prose Works*. Eds. W. J. B. Owen and Jane Worthington Smyser. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974. Vol. I.
- Wotton, William. *Reflections Upon Ancient and Modern Learning*. 2nd ed. *With a Dissertation Upon the Epistles of Phalaris, Themistocles, Socrates, Euripides; &c.* by Dr. Bentley. London: 1697.
- Young, Edward. *Ocean. An Ode. . . . To which is prefix'd, An Ode to the King: And a DISCOURSE on ODE*. London: 1728.
- *The Works*. London: 1774. Vol. IV.

## Secondary Sources

- Aarsleff, Hans. *From Locke to Saussure: Essays on the Study of Language and Intellectual History*. London: Athlone, 1982.
- Abrams, Meyer. H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. 4th ed. 1957; rpt. London: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1981.
- , *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition*. 1953; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1974.
- , et al. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 3rd ed. 1962; rpt. New York: Norton, 1974.
- Alkon, Paul K. "Critical and Logical Concepts of Method from Addison to Coleridge." *ECS*, 5 (1971-72), pp. 97-121.
- Arthos, John. *The Language of Natural Description in Eighteenth-Century Poetry*. Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1949.
- Atkins, Peter. "Will Science Ever Fail?" *New Scientist*, No 1833 (8 August 1992), pp. 32-35.
- Ault, Donald. *Visionary Physics: Blake's Response to Newton*. 1974; rpt. Chicago and London: Univ. Of Chicago Press, 1975.
- Barnes, Barry, and Steven Shapin. Eds. and Introd. *Natural Order: Historical Studies of Scientific Culture*. Beverley Hills and London: Sage Publications, 1979.
- Barrell, John, and Harriet Guest. "On the Use of Contradiction: Economics and Morality in the Eighteenth-Century Long Poem." In *The New Eighteenth Century: Theory, Politics, English Literature*. Eds. Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown. New York and London: Methuen, 1987, pp. 121-143.
- Barton, Anne. *The Names of Comedy*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1990.
- Bate, Walter Jackson. *The Achievement of Samuel Johnson*. 1955; rpt. Chicago and London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1978.
- . *The Burden of the Past and the English Poet*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1970.
- Bateson, F. W. *English Poetry: A Critical Introduction*. 2nd ed. London: Longmans Green, 1966.
- Beum, Robert. "The Scientific Affinities of English Baroque Prose." *English Miscellany*, 13 (1962), pp. 59-80.
- Biagioli, Mario. "Scientific Revolution, Social Bricolage, and Etiquette." In *The Scientific Revolution in National Context*. Eds. Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich. Cambridge: CUP, 1992, pp. 11-54.

- Birrell, T. A. Introd. *A Brief Account of the New Sect of Latitude-Men, Together with some reflection upon the New Philosophy*. By Patrick, Simon. *ARS*, No. 100 (1963).
- Bloom, Harold. *A Map of Misreading*. New York: OUP, 1973.
- . *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*. New York: OUP, 1973.
- Blom, T. E. "Eighteenth-Century Reflexive Poetry." *ECS*, 10, No. 1 (1976), pp. 52-72.
- Boas, Marie. *The Scientific Renaissance 1450 - 1630*. London: Collins, 1962.
- Bono, James J. "Science, Discourse, and Literature: Role/Rule of Metaphor in Science." In *Literature and Science: Theory and Practice*. Ed. Stuart Peterfreund. Boston: Northeastern Univ. Press, 1990, pp. 59-89.
- Boorstein, Daniel J. *The Discoverers*. 1983; rpt. New York: Vintage Books, 1985.
- Bosker, A. *Literary Criticism in the Age of Johnson*. 2nd ed. rev. 1953; rpt. New York: Gordian Press, 1970.
- Bowra, C. M. *The Romantic Imagination*. 1950; rpt. London: OUP, 1961.
- Boyce, Benjamin. "Sounding Shells and Little Prattlers in the Mid-Eighteenth-Century English Ode." *ECS*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (1975), p. 245-264.
- Bredvold, Louis I. et al. *Eighteenth Century Poetry and Prose*. 3rd ed. 1939; rpt. New York: Ronald Press, 1973).
- Brissenden, R. F. Pref. *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Brissenden. Canberra: Australian National Univ. Press, 1968. Vol. I.
- Bronson, Bertrand. *Facets of the Enlightenment: Studies in English Literature and Its Contents*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1968.
- Brooke, John Hedley. *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives*. Cambridge: CUP, 1991.
- Brooke, Stopford A. *Naturalism in English Poetry*. London and Toronto: J. M. Dent; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1920.
- Brown, Marshall. *Preromanticism*. Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1991.
- . "The Urbane Sublime." *ELH*, 45 (1978), pp. 236-254.
- Brown, Stuart Gerry. "Dr. Johnson and the Old Order." In *Samuel Johnson*. Ed. Donald Greene. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965, pp. 158-171.
- Bullough, Geoffrey. "Bacon and the Defence of Learning." In *Essential Articles for the Study of Francis Bacon*. Ed. Brian Vickers. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1968, pp. 93-113.
- Bush, Douglas. *Science and English Poetry: A Historical Sketch, 1590 - 1950*. New York: OUP, 1950.

- Butt, John. Ed. and Comp. Geoffrey Carnall. *The Mid-Eighteenth Century*. 1979; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1980.
- Callan, Norman. "Augustan Reflective Poetry." In *From Dryden to Johnson*. Ed. Boris Ford. 1957; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968, pp. 346-371.
- Campbell, Marion. "Unending Desire: Sidney's Reinvention of Petrarchan Form in *Astrophil and Stella*." In *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture*. Eds. Gary F. Waller and Michael D. Moore. London: Croom Helm, 1984, pp. 84-94.
- Campbell, T. D. *Adam Smith's Science of Morals*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1971.
- Caretta, Vincent. *The Snarling Muse: Verbal and Visual Political Satire from Pope to Churchill*. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1983.
- Carpenter, Frederic Ives. Introd. *English Lyric Poetry 1500-1700*. London: Blackie, nd.
- Cassirer, Ernst. *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*. Trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove from the 1st German ed. 1951; rpt. Boston: Beacon, 1955.
- Chalker, John. *The English Georgic: A Study in the Development of a Form*. London: Routledge, Kegan & Paul, 1969.
- Chapin, Chester F. *Personification in Eighteenth-Century English Poetry*. New York: King's Crown Press, 1955.
- Christensen, Francis. "John Wilkins and the Royal Society's Reform of Prose Style." *MLQ*, No. 7 (1946), pp. 179-187, 279-290.
- Christie, John. "Laputa Revisited." In *Nature Transfigured: Science and Literature, 1700-1900*. Eds. John Christie and Sally Shuttleworth. Manchester and New York: Manchester Univ. Press, 1989, pp. 45-60.
- Christie, John, and Sally Shuttleworth. "Introduction: Between Literature and Science." In *Nature Transfigured: Science and Literature, 1700-1900*. Eds. Christie and Shuttleworth. Manchester and New York: Manchester Univ. Press, 1989.
- Clark, Richard Warren. "Collins's 'Odes' and the Political Crises of the 1740s." Ph. D. Diss. University of Oregon, 1990.
- Cohen, Murray. *Sensible Words: Linguistic Practice in England 1640-1785*. Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1977.
- Cohen, Ralph. "The Augustan Mode in English Poetry." In *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*. Ed. R. F. Brissenden. Canberra: Australian National Univ. Press, 1968, I, pp. 171-192.
- "Association of Ideas and Poetic Unity." *PQ*, 36, No. 4 (October 1957), pp. 465-74.
- *The Art of Discrimination: Thomson's The Seasons and the Language of Criticism*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964.



- "Thomson's Poetry of Space and Time." In *Studies in Criticism and Aesthetics, 1600-1800*. Eds. Howard Anderson and John S. Shea. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1967, pp. 176-192.
- *The Unfolding of The Seasons*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970).
- Collins, Martha. "The Self-Conscious Poet: the Case of William Collins." *ELH*, Vol. 42 (1975), pp. 362-377.
- Courthope, W. J. *A History of English Poetry*. Vol. V. London: MacMillan, 1905.
- Craig, Edward. *The Mind of God and the Works of Man*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.
- Crane, Ronald S. "English Literature, 1660-1800: A Current Bibliography," *PQ*, 10 (April 1930), pp. 169-215.
- Croll, Morris W. "English Literature, 1660-1800: A Current Bibliography," *PQ*, 10 (April 1930), pp. 169-215.
- "The Baroque Style in Prose." In *Seventeenth-Century Prose: Modern Essays in Criticism*. Ed. Stanley E. Fish. New York: OUP, 1971.
- Davenport, Edward. "The Devils of Positivism." In *Literature and Science: Theory and Practice*. Ed. Stuart Peterfreund. Boston: Northeastern Univ. Press, 1990, pp. 17-31.
- Davie, Donald. *Augustan Lyric*. London: Heinemann, 1974.
- *The Late Augustans*. 1958; rpt. London: Heinemann, 1977.
- Davison, Dennis. Ed. and Introd. *The Penguin Book of Eighteenth-Century English Verse*. 1973; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975.
- Dobson, Austin. Introd. *Eighteenth Century Essays*. London: 1889.
- Docherty, Thomas. *John Donne, Undone*. London & New York: Methuen, 1986.
- Donaldson, Ian. "Pope and Feeling." In *Studies in the Eighteenth Century: Papers Presented at the Fifth David Nicholl Smith Memorial Seminar*. Eds. J. P. Hardy and J. C. Eade. Oxford: Aldon Press, 1983, pp. 33-50.
- "Samuel Johnson and the Art of Observation." *ELH*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (1986), p. 779-799.
- Doody, Margaret Anne. *The Daring Muse: Augustan Poetry Reconsidered*. Cambridge: CUP, 1985.
- Doughty, Oswald. *Forgotten Lyrics of the Eighteenth Century*. 1924; rpt. n. p.: Folcroft Library Editions, 1972.
- Drennan, Herbert. "James Thomson's Contact with Newtonianism." *PMLA*, xlix (1934), pp. 71-80.

- . "Scientific Rationalism and James Thomson's Poetic Art." *Studies In Philology*, 31 (1934), pp. 453-471.
- . "Newtonianism in James Thomson's Poetry." *Englische Studien*, LXX (1936), pp. 358-372.
- Duncan, Carson S. *The New Science and English Literature in the Classical Period*. 1913; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, 1972.
- Duncan, Jeffrey L. "The Rural Ideal in Eighteenth-Century Fiction." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 1968, III, pp. 517-535.
- Eco, Umberto. *The Open Work*. Trans. Anna Cancogni. Introd. David Robey. London: Hutchinson Radius, 1989.
- . *Travels in Hyperreality*. Trans. William Weaver. 1986; rpt. London: Pan Books, 1987.
- Eichner, Hans. "The Rise of Modern Science and the Genesis of Romanticism." *PMLA*, Vol. 97, No. 1-6 (1982), pp. 8-30.
- Eliot, T. S. "Poetry in the Eighteenth Century." In *From Dryden to Johnson*. Ed. Boris Ford. 1957; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968, pp. 271-277.
- Elsky, Martin. *Authorizing Words: Speech, Writing, and Print in the English Renaissance*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989.
- Engell, James. *The Creative Imagination: Enlightenment to Romanticism*. Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard Univ. Press, 1981.
- Enright, D. J. "William Cowper." In *From Dryden to Johnson*. Ed. Boris Ford. 1957; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968, IV, pp. 387-398.
- Erskine-Hill, Howard. "Dryden and the Augustan Idea." In *Studies in the Eighteenth Century: Papers Presented at the Fifth David Nichol Smith Memorial Seminar*. Eds. J. P. Hardy and J. C. Eade. Oxford: Alden Press, 1983, V, pp. 3-16.
- Evans, B. Ifor. *Literature and Science*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1954.
- Finch, Casey. "Immediacy in the *Odes* of William Collins." *ECS*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (1978), pp. 275-295.
- Ford, Franklin L. "The Enlightenment: Towards a Useful Redefinition." In *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*. Ed. R. F. Brissenden. Canberra: Australian National Univ. Press, 1968, I, pp. 17-29.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences*. English edn. London: Tavistock Publications, 1970.
- Fowler, Alistair. *Kinds of Literature*. 1982; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1987.
- Fry, Paul H. *The Poet's Calling in the English Ode*. New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1980.

- Frye, Northrop. *A Study of English Romanticism*. New York: Random House, 1968.
- *Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake*. 1947; rpt. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1969.
- *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature*. Toronto: 1981; rpt. New York: First Harvest/HBJ Edition, 1983.
- et al. *The Harper Handbook to Literature*. London: Harper & Row, 1985.
- "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility." In *Eighteenth-Century English Literature: Modern Essays in Criticism*. Ed. James L. Clifford. 1959; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1969, pp. 311-318.
- Gardner, Helen. Ed. and Introd. *The Metaphysical Poets*. 1957; rpt. London: Penguin, 1985.
- Gay, Peter. *The Enlightenment*. 1966; rpt. New York, Knopf, 1967. Vol. I.
- Grant, Patrick. *Images and Ideas in Literature of the English Renaissance*. London: Macmillan, 1979.
- Grant, Douglas. *James Thomson, Poet of the Seasons*. London: Cresset Press, 1951.
- Greenberg, Mark L. "Eighteenth-Century Poetry Represents Moments of Scientific Discovery: Appropriation and Generic Transformation." In *Literature and Science: Theory and Practice*. Ed. Stuart Peterfreund. Boston: Northeastern Univ. Press, 1990, pp. 115-137.
- Greene, Donald J. "'Dramatic Texture' in Pope." In *From Sensibility to Romanticism: Essays Presented to Frederick A. Pottle*. Eds. Frederick W. Hilles and Harold Bloom. New York: OUP, 1965, pp. 31-53.
- Ed. and Introd. *Samuel Johnson*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965.
- *The Age of Exuberance: Backgrounds to Eighteenth-Century English Literature*. New York: Random House, 1970.
- Grierson, H. J. C. *Lyrical Poetry from Blake to Hardy*. London: Hogarth Press, 1928.
- Guthke, Karl S. "Poetry in an Age of Science: Albrecht von Haller and the Crisis of the Enlightenment." In *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*. Eds. J. P. Hardy and J. C. Eade. Oxford: Alden Press, 1983, V, pp. 157-171.
- Hampson, Norman. *The Enlightenment*. 1968; rpt. London: Penguin, 1987.
- Haney, Janice Louise. "Eighteenth-Century Lyrical Models and Lyrical Languages: Essays Towards a Theoretical History of the Lyric." Diss. Stanford Univ. 1978.
- Haney-Peritz, Janice. "'In Quest of Mistaken Beauties': Allegorical Indeterminacy in Collins' Poetry." *ELH*, 48 (1981), pp. 732-756.
- Hankins, Thomas L. *Science and the Enlightenment*. Cambridge: CUP, 1985.

- Harrison, John L. "Bacon's View of Rhetoric, Poetry, and the Imagination." In **Essential Articles for the Study of Francis Bacon**. Ed. Brian Vickers. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1968, pp. 253-271.
- Hartman, Geoffrey. **The Fate of Reading and Other Essays**. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1975, pp. 41-56.
- . **Criticism in the Wilderness**. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1980.
- Harvey, A. D. **English Poetry in a Changing Society 1780-1825**. London: Allison & Busby, 1984.
- Harvey, Sir Paul. Editor and Compiler. **The Oxford Companion to English Literature**. 4th Ed. Rev. by Dorothy Eagle. 1932; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.
- Heath-Stubbs, John, and Philip Salman. Eds. and Introd. **Poems of Science**. London: Penguin, 1984.
- Heninger, S. K. Jr. "Speaking Pictures: Sidney's Rapprochement Between Poetry and Painting." In **Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture**. Eds. Gary F. Waller and Michael D. Moore. London: Croom Helm, 1984, pp. 3-16.
- Henry, John. "The Scientific Revolution in England." In **The Scientific Revolution in National Context**. Eds. Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich. Cambridge: CUP, 1992, pp. 178-209.
- Hesse, Mary. "Francis Bacon's Philosophy of Science." In **Essential Articles for the Study of Francis Bacon**. Ed. Brian Vickers. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1968, pp. 114-139.
- Hilles, Frederick W. "Johnson's Poetic Fire." In **From Sensibility to Romanticism**. Eds. Frederick W. Hilles and Harold Bloom. New York: OUP, 1965, pp. 67-77.
- Horne, C. J. "Literature and Science." In **From Dryden to Johnson**. Ed. Boris Ford. 1957; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968, pp. 188-202.
- Howell, A. C. "Res et Verba: Words and Things." In **Seventeenth-Century Prose: Modern Essays in Criticism**. Ed. Stanley E. Fish. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971, pp. 187-199.
- Humphreys, A. R. "Johnson." In **From Dryden to Johnson**. Ed. Boris Ford.. 1957; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968, pp. 399-419.
- . "The Literary Scene." In **From Dryden to Johnson**. Ed. Boris Ford.. 1957; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968, pp. 51-96.
- Hunter, J. Paul. **Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction**. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Co., 1990.
- Hutchings, William. "To Tempt Creative Praise: New Styles in Eighteenth-Century Poetry." **CQ**, 27, No. 3 (1985), pp. 73.

- Iser, Wolfgang. *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Reading*. German edition 1976; trans. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978.
- Jackson, Gabriele Bernhard. "From Essence to Accident: Locke and the Language of Poetry in the Eighteenth Century." *Criticism*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (1987), pp. 27-66.
- Jackson, Wallace. *The Probable and the Marvelous*. Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1978.
- Jain, Nalini, and John Richardson. Eds. *Eighteenth Century English Poetry: The Annotated Anthology*. London: Harveser Wheatsheaf, 1994.
- Jameson, Fredric. *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. 1981; rpt. London: Routledge, 1989.
- Jeffreys, Mark. "Ideologies of Lyric: A Problem of Genre in Contemporary Anglophone Poetics." *PMLA*, Vol. 110, No 2 (1995), pp. 196-205.
- Jones, Richard F. "The Attack on Pulpit Eloquence in the Restoration: An Episode in the Development of the Neo-Classical Standard for Prose." *JEGP*, Vol. 30 (1931), pp. 188-217.
- "The Bacon of the Seventeenth Century." In *Essential Articles for the Study of Francis Bacon*. Ed. Brian Vickers. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1968, pp. 3-27.
- "Science and English Prose Style in the Third Quarter of the Seventeenth Century." *PMLA*, XLV (1930), pp. 977-1009.
- "Science and Language in England of the Mid-Seventeenth Century." *JEGP*, Vol. 31 (1932), p. 315-331.
- Jones, William Powell. "John Aikin on the Use of Natural History in Poetry." *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 21 (1963), pp. 439-443.
- *The Rhetoric of Science: A Study of Scientific Ideas and Imagery in Eighteenth-Century English Poetry*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966.
- "Science in Biblical Paraphrase in Eighteenth-Century England." *PMLA*, 74 (1959), pp. 41-51.
- Josipovici, Gabriel. *The World and the Book: A Study of Modern Fiction*. 1971; rpt. Herts: Paladin Press, 1973.
- Kaiser, Daniel, Rev. of *A Map of Misreading*, by Harold Bloom. *SiR*, 15, No. 2 (1976), pp. 320-326.
- Kenshur, Oscar. *Open Form and the Shape of Ideas: Literary Structures as Representatives of Philosophical Concepts in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. London and Toronto: Associated Univ. Presses, 1986.
- Ketcham, Michael G. "Scientific and Poetic Imagination in James Thomson's 'Poem Sacred to the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton'." *PQ*, 61, No. 1 (1982), pp. 33-50.

- Knowlson, James. *Universal Language Schemes in England and France, 1600-1800*. Toronto and Buffalo: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1975.
- Korshin, Paul J. "Probability and Character in the Eighteenth Century." In *Probability, Time, and Space in Eighteenth-Century Literature*. Ed. Paula R. Backscheider. New York: AMS Press, 1979.
- Kristeller, Paul Oskar. *Renaissance Thought II*. New York: Harper Torchbook, 1965.
- Kuhn, Thomas. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. 2nd ed. In *International Encyclopedia of Science*, Vol. II, No. 2. 1962; rpt. Chicago and London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1971.
- Lamb, Jonathan. "Hartley and Wordsworth: Philosophical Language and Figures of the Sublime." *MLN*, Vol. 97 (1982), pp. 1064-1085.
- Land, Stephen K. *The Philosophy of Language in Britain: Major Theories from Hobbes to Thomas Reid*. New York: AMS Press, 1986.
- Leavis, F. R. *Revaluation*. 1936; rpt. Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1978.
- Levere, Trevor H. "'The Lovely Shapes and Sounds Intelligible': Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Humphry Davy, Science and Poetry." In *Nature Transfigured: Science and Literature*. Eds. John Christie and Sally Shuttleworth. Manchester and New York: Manchester Univ. Press, 1989, pp. 85-101.
- Levine, Joseph M. "Ancients and Moderns Reconsidered." *ECS*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (1981), pp. 72-89.
- Lindberg, David C. and Robert S. Westman. Eds. and Introd. *Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution*. 1990; rpt. Cambridge: CUP, 1991.
- Lindsay, David W. *English Poetry 1700-1780, Contemporaries of Swift and Johnson*. London: Dent, 1974.
- Lloyd, Claude. "John Dryden and the Royal Society." *PMLA*, XLV (1930), pp. 967-976.
- Lonsdale, Roger. Ed. *Eighteenth-Century Women Poets*. Oxford and New York: OUP, 1990.
- . "Gray and 'Allusion': The Poet as Debtor." In *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*. Eds. R. F. Brissenden and J. C. Eade. Oxford: Alden Press, 1979, IV, pp. 31-55.
- . Ed. *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth-Century Verse*. 1984; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1987.
- Lovejoy, Arthur O. "The Parallel of Deism and Classicism." *MP*, 29 (1931-32), pp. 281-299.
- Macaulay, G. C. *James Thomson*. London: MacMillan, 1908.
- Mack, Maynard. *Alexander Pope: A Life*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985.

- . "Wit and Poetry and Pope': Some Observations on his Imagery." In ***Eighteenth-Century English Literature***. Ed. James L. Clifford. 1959; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1969, p. 21-41.
- MacLean, Kenneth. ***John Locke and English Literature in the Eighteenth Century***. 1936; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, 1962.
- Maclean, Norman. "From Image to Action: Theories of the Lyric in the Eighteenth Century." In ***Critics and Criticism: Ancient and Modern***. Ed. Ronald S. Crane. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; London: CUP, 1952, pp. 408-460.
- . "Personification But Not Poetry." ***ELH***, Vol. 23 (1956), pp. 163-170.
- . "Theory of Lyric Poetry in England from the Renaissance to Coleridge." Diss. Univ. of Chicago, 1940.
- Martin, Julian. "Natural Philosophy and Its Public Concerns." In ***Science, Culture and Popular Belief in Renaissance Europe***. Eds. Stephen Pumfrey et al. Manchester and New York: Manchester Univ. Press, 1991, pp. 100-118.
- McDermott, Anne. Rev. of James Engell (ed.). ***Johnson and his Age***. Harvard English Studies 12. In ***CQ***, Vol. 27, No. 4 (1985), pp. 86-88.
- McFarland, Thomas. ***Romanticism and the Ruins of Form: Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Modalities of Fragmentation***. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1981.
- McIntosh, Carey. "The Age of Johnson in 1975." ***PQ***, Vol. 55 (1976), pp. 567-583.
- McKillop, Alan D. ***The Background to The Seasons***. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1942; London: OUP, 1942.
- McMullin, Ernan. "Conceptions of Science in the Scientific Revolution." In ***Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution***. Eds. David C. Lindberg and Robert S. Westman. 1990; rpt. Cambridge: CUP, 1991, pp. 27-92.
- Midgley, Mary. "Can Science Save Its Soul." ***New Scientist***, No. 1833, (1 August 1992), pp. 24-27.
- Milic, Louis T. "The Metaphor of Time as Space." In ***Probability, Time, and Space in Eighteenth-Century Literature***. Ed. Paula R. Bachscheider. New York: AMS Press, 1979, pp. 249-258.
- Millar, J. H. ***The Mid-Eighteenth Century***. Edinburgh and London: 1902.
- Miller, Perry. "The Plain Style." In ***Seventeenth-Century Prose: Modern Essays in Criticism***. Ed. Stanley E. Fish. New York: OUP, 1971, pp. 147-186.
- Miner, Earl. "From Narrative to 'Description' and 'Sense' in Eighteenth-century Poetry." ***SEL***, Vol. IX (1967), pp. 471-487.
- . "Mr. Dryden and Mr. Rymer." ***PQ***, 54 (1975), pp. 137-151.
- Nicolson, Marjorie Hope. ***Newton Demands The Muse***. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1945.

- , *Science and Imagination*. New York: Great Seal Books, 1956.
- Novak, Maximillian E. *Eighteenth-Century English Literature*. [England]: n.p.: Macmillan Press, 1983.
- Nussbaum, Felicity, and Laura Brown. Eds. *The New Eighteenth Century: Theory, Politics, English Literature*. New York and London: Methuen, 1987.
- Ong, Walter J. "Psyche and the Geometers: Aspects of Associationist Critical Theory." *MP*, 49 (1951-52), pp. 16-27.
- Osler, Margaret J. "Certainty, Scepticism, and Scientific Optimism: The Roots of Eighteenth-Century Attitudes Toward Scientific Knowledge." In *Probability, Time, and Space in Eighteenth-Century Literature*. Ed. Paula R. Backscheider. New York: AMS Press, 1979, pp. 3-28.
- , and Paul Lawrence Farber. Eds. Preface. *Religion, Science, and Worldview: Essays in Honour of Richard S. Westfall*. Cambridge: CUP, 1985.
- Palmer, D. J. "Marlowe's Naturalism." In *Christopher Marlowe*. Ed. Brian Morris. London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1968.
- Peake, Charles. "Poetry 1700-1740." In *Dryden to Johnson*. Ed. Roger Lonsdale. London: Sphere Books, 1971, pp. 164-189.
- Peterfreund, Stuart. Ed. and Introd. *Literature and Science: Theory and Practice*. Boston: Northeastern Univ. Press, 1990.
- Plank, Jeffrey. "John Aikin on Science and Poetry." *Studies in Burke and His Time*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (1977), pp. 167-178.
- Plumb, J. H. *England in the Eighteenth Century (1714-1815)*. 1950; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1956.
- Pollard, Arthur. Introd. and Ed. *Silver Poets of the Eighteenth Century*. London: Dent, 1976.
- Porter, Roy. *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*. London: Penguin Books, 1982.
- , and Teich, Mikuláš. Eds. and Introd. *The Scientific Revolution in National Context*. Cambridge: CUP, 1992.
- Price, John V. "The Reading of Philosophical Literature." In *Books and Their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England*. Ed. Isabel Rivers. Leicester: Leicester Univ. Press, 1982.
- , "Religion and Ideas." In *The Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Pat Rogers. London: Methuen & Co., 1978, pp. 120-152.
- Prior, Moody E. "Bacon's Man of Science." In *Essential Articles for the Study of Francis Bacon*. Ed. Brian Vickers. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1968, pp. 140-163.



- Pyles, Thomas. "The Romantic Side of Dr. Johnson." *ELH*, 11 (1944), pp. 192-212.
- Quiller-Couch, Arthur. Ed. *The Oxford Book of English Verse*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1918.
- Quintana, Richard, and Alvin Whitley. Eds. *English Poetry of the Mid and Late Eighteenth Century: An Historical Anthology*. 1979; rpt. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1979.
- Rader, Ralph W. "The Dramatic Monologue and Related Lyric Forms." *Critical Inquiry*, 3, No. 1 (1976), pp. 131-151.
- Rawson, Claude. "Order and Misrule: Eighteenth-Century Literature in the 1970's." *ELH*, Vol. 42 (1975), pp. 471-505.
- Reiss, Timothy J. *Tragedy and Truth: Studies in the Development of a Renaissance and Neoclassical Discourse*. New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1980.
- Rogers, Pat. "Introduction: the Writer and Society." In *The Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Pat Rogers. London: Methuen, 1978.
- Rogers, William Elford. *The Three Genres and the Interpretation of Lyric*. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1983.
- Rothstein, Eric. *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Poetry, 1660 - 1780*. Boston and London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981.
- Rousseau, G. S. "The Debate About Historical Culture and the Status of the History of Science." *Literature and History*, Vol. 11:2 (1985), pp. 159-175.
- , and Roy Porter. Eds. *The Ferment of Knowledge: Studies in the History of Science*. Cambridge: CUP, 1980.
- , "On Reading Pope." In *Writers and their Backgrounds: Alexander Pope*. Ed. Peter Dixon. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1972, pp. 1-59.
- , "Science." In *The Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Pat Rogers. London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1978.
- Russell, Colin A. *Science and Social Change, 1700-1900*. [England]: n.p.: Macmillan Press, 1983.
- Ryskamp, Charles. "Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* in Their Time." In *From Sensibility to Romanticism: Essays Presented to Frederick A. Pottle*. Eds. Frederick W. Hilles and Harold Bloom. New York: OUP, 1965, pp. 357-372.
- Said, Edward W. *Beginnings: Intention and Method*. 1975; rpt. New York: Columbian Univ. press, 1985.
- . *The World, The Text, The Critic*. 1983; rpt. London: Vintage, 1991.
- Saintsbury, George. *A Short History of English Literature*. 1898; rpt. London: Macmillan, 1966.

- . *The Peace of the Augustans: A Survey of Eighteenth Century Literature as a Place of Rest and Refreshment*. London: George Bell & Sons, 1916.
- Sambrook, James. *The Eighteenth Century: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature, 1700-1789* (London and New York: Longman, 1986).
- Schwartz, Richard B. "Berkeley, Newtonian Space, and the Question of Evidence." In *Probability, Time, and Space in Eighteenth-Century Literature*. Ed. Paula R. Bakscheider. New York: AMS Press, 1979, pp. 259-273.
- . *Samuel Johnson and The New Science*. Madison and London: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1971.
- Selby, Hopewell. "'Never Finding Full Repast': Satire and Self-Extension in the Early Eighteenth Century." In *Probability, Time, and Space in Eighteenth-Century Literature*. Ed. Paula R. Bakscheider. New York: AMS Press, 1979, pp. 217-247.
- Shuster, George N. *The English Ode from Milton to Keats*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1946.
- Shuttleton, David. "'A Modest Examination': John Arbuthnot and the Scottish Newtonians." *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 18, No. 1 (1995), pp. 47-62.
- Sinfield, Alan. "The Cultural Politics of the *Defence of Poetry*." In *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture*. Eds. Gary F. Waller and Michael D. Moore. London: Croom Helm, 1984, pp. 124-143.
- Sisam, Kenneth. Ed. and Introd. *Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose*. 1921; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978.
- Siskin, Clifford. "Personification and Community: Literary Change in the Mid and Late Eighteenth Century." *ECS*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (1982), pp. 371-401.
- Sitter, John. *Literary Loneliness in Mid-Eighteenth Century England*. Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1982.
- . "Mother, Memory, Muse and Poetry after Pope." *ELH*, Vol. 44 (1977), pp. 312-336.
- Slaughter, M. M. *Universal Languages and Scientific Taxonomy in the Seventeenth Century*. Cambridge: CUP, 1982.
- Smith, David Nicholl. *Some Observations on Eighteenth Century Poetry*. Toronto: 1937; rpt. London: OUP, 1964.
- . Ed. and Pref. *The Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1926.
- Spacks, Patricia Meyer. *The Varied God*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1959.
- Spate, O. H. K. "The Muse of Mercantilism: Jago, Grainger, and Dyer." In *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*. Ed. R. F. Brissenden. Canberra: Australian National Univ. Press, 1968, I, pp. 119-131.

- Staves, Susan. "Pope's Refinement." *The Eighteenth Century, Theory and Interpretation*, 29, 2 (1988), pp. 145-163.
- Stone, P. W. K. *The Art of Poetry 1750-1820: Theories of Poetic Composition and Style in the Late Neo-Classical and Early Romantic Periods*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967.
- Straker, Stephen M. "What Is the History of Theories of Perception the History Of?" In *Religion, Science, and Worldview: Essays in Honour of Richard S. Westfall*. Eds. Margaret J. Osler and Paul Lawrence Farber. Cambridge: CUP, 1985, pp. 245-273.
- Strong, E. W. "Newtonian Explications of Natural Philosophy." *JHI*, Vol. 18 (1957), pp. 49-83.
- Strugnell, Antony. "Report on Second Conference of the French, British and Irish Societies for Eighteenth-Century Studies, 1-3 September 1994: The Colonial Horizon in the Eighteenth Century." In *British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Bulletin*. No. 38 (1995), pp. 3-4.
- Sutherland, James. *A Preface to the Eighteenth Century*. 1948; rpt. London: OUP, 1963.
- Svendson, Kester. *Milton and Science*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1956.
- Szedegy-Maszak, "English Poetry in the Age of Sensibility. A Typological Approach." In *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Literature*. Eds. Miklos J. Szenci and Laszlo Ferenci. Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1974, pp. 117-187.
- Tavor, Eve. *Scepticism, Society and the Eighteenth-Century Novel*. London: Macmillan Press, 1987.
- Trickett, Rachel. "'Curious Eye': Some Aspects of Visual Description in Eighteenth-Century Literature." In *Augustan Studies: Essays in honour of Irwin Ehrenpreis*. Eds. Douglas Lane Patey and Timothy Keegan. Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press, 1986; London and Toronto: Associated Univ. Presses, 1986, pp. 239-252.
- Trowbridge, Hoyt. "Scattered Atoms of Probability." *ECS*, Vol. 5 (1971-1972), pp. 1-38.
- Tillotson, Geoffrey. "Eighteenth-Century Poetic Diction." *Eighteenth Century English Literature: Modern Essays in Criticism*. Ed. James L. Clifford. 1959; rpt. New York: OUP, 1969, pp. 212-232.
- Todorov, Tzvetan. *Genres in Discourse*. Trans. Catherine Porter. Cambridge: CUP, 1990.
- Tuve, Rosemond. *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*. London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1947.
- Vickers, Brian. *Francis Bacon and Renaissance Prose*. Cambridge: CUP, 1968.
- . *In Defence of Rhetoric*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.

- Walker, William. *Locke, Literary Criticism, and Philosophy*. Cambridge: CUP, 1994.
- Waller, Gary F. *English Poetry of the Sixteenth Century*. London: Longman, 1986.
- . "The Rewriting of Petrarch: Sidney and the Languages of Sixteenth-Century Poetry." In *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture*. Eds. Gary F. Waller and Michael D. Moore. London: Croom Helm, 1984.
- Warkentin, Germaine. "The Meeting of the Muses: Sidney and the Mid-Tudor Poets." In *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture*. Eds. Gary F. Waller and Michael D. Moore. London: Croom Helm, 1984, pp. 17-33.
- Wasserman, Earl R. "Collins' 'Ode On the Poetical Character.'" *ELH*, Vol. 34 (1967), pp. 92-115.
- Watkins, John. *Hobbes's System of Ideas*. 1965; rpt. Aldershot, England: Gower Publishing, 1989.
- Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*. 1957; rpt. Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1957.
- . "Two Historical Aspects of the Augustan Tradition." In *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*. Ed. R. F. Brissenden. Canberra: Australian National Univ. Press, 1968, I, pp. 67-88.
- Weinbrot, Howard D. "Recent Studies in the Restoration and Eighteenth Century." *SEL*, Vol. 25, 3 (1985), p. 672.
- Wellek, René, and Austin Warren. *Theory of Literature*. 3rd ed. 1949; rpt. London: Penguin Books, 1982.
- Welsh, Andrew. *Roots of Lyric: Primitive Poetry and Modern Poetics*. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978.
- Wendorf, Richard. *William Collins and Eighteenth-Century English Poetry*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1981.
- Wesling, Donald. "The Inevitable Ear: Freedom and Necessity in Lyric Form, Wordsworth and After." In *Forms of Lyric*. Ed. Reuben A. Brower. New York and London: Columbia Univ. Press, 1970, pp. 103-126.
- Whitehead, Alfred North. *Science and the Modern World*. 1926; rpt. London: Free Association Books, 1985.
- Whiteley, Paul. "The Age of Diversity." *CQ*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (1987), pp. 88-96.
- Whitney, Charles. "Cupid Hatched by Night: The 'Mysteries of Faith' and Bacon's Art of Discovery." In *Ineffability: Naming the Unnameable from Dante to Beckett*. Eds. Peter S. Hawkins and Anne Howland Schotter. New York, AMS Press, 1984, pp. 51-64.
- Willey, Basil. *The Eighteenth-Century Background*. 1940; rpt. London: Peregrine, 1967.

- Williams, Anne. *Prophetic Strain: The Greater Lyric in the Eighteenth Century*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- Williams, Raymond. *Marxism and Literature*. 1977; rpt. Oxford: OUP, 1978.
- Williamson, Karina. "Smart's *Principia*: Science and Anti-Science in *Jubilate Agno*." *RES*, Second Series, Vol. 30, No. 120 (1979), pp. 409-422.
- ". "Wild Woods and Sacred Groves." *RES*, New Series, Vol. 34, No. 136 (1983), pp. 464-470.
- Wimsatt, W. K. "Imitation as Freedom: 1717-1798." In *Forms of Lyric*. Ed. Reuben A. Brower. New York and London: Columbia Univ. Press, 1970, p. 47-74.
- Witherspoon, Alexander M., and Frank J. Warnke. Eds. *Seventeenth-Century Prose and Poetry*. 2nd ed. 1929; rpt. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963.
- Woodhouse, A. S. P. "The Poetry of Collins Reconsidered." In *From Sensibility to Romanticism: Essays Presented to Frederick A. Pottle*. Eds. Frederick W. Hillis and Harold Bloom. New York: OUP, 1965, pp. 93-137.
- Wright, Peter W. G. "On the Boundaries of Science in Seventeenth-Century England." In *Sciences and Cultures: Anthropological and Historical Studies of the Sciences*. Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Pub., 1981, pp. 77-100.
- Youngren, William H. "Generality, Science and Poetic Language in the Restoration." *ELH*, Vol. 35 (1968), pp. 158-187.