Milton's Poetic Diction in the Pastoral "Lycidas"

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Abstract

John Milton's "Lycidas" is examined from the viewpoint of poetic diction in the "pastoral" genre.　Careful and detailed analysis of the poem's language reveals how cleverly Milton treats the conventional literary genre of pastoral with his personal and emotional expression through his skillful use of various parts of speech.　A traditional poem of elegiac theme is evolved into a divine pastoral.

【Key words】　　John Milton, "Lycidas", pastoral, genre, poetic diction, parts of speech, English

I

Dr. Samuel Johnson provides a useful starting point for discussion when he states the principle that "where there is leisure for fiction there is little grief" in his commentary on "Lycidas".[1]　This suggests that an expansive style is likely to seem insincere.　In the "Life of Waller" he explains his idea when he makes a comment on the style which he considers appropriate to religious poetry：　"Repentance trembling in the presence of the judge is not at leisure for cadences and epithets."[2]　This implies that an adjectival element in a poem's style tends to give an impression of exaggeration and display, and consequently of insincerity.

Since "Lycidas" is an occasional poem and an elegy for dead Edward King, the representation of feelings is particularly important.　It is necessary to make a distinction between feelings and the poetic representation of feelings.　The whole question of sincerety is central to "Lycidas".

"Lycidas" is certainly written in a highly adjectival style.　Adjectives take up a large

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proportion of the total words:　204 adjectives in the total of 1473 words.　But what really matters is the use of those adjectives and their place in the context of the poem.　The observation of a tendency in style should not become a prejudice.

Because "pastoral" is a convention that can easily degrade into shallow skill, especially in elegy, the problem of representation of feeling could increase in "Lycidas".　Is "Lycidas" a patchwork of old-fashioned conventions connected together in *JUSTA EDOVARDO KING naufrago* (Cambridge, 1638) by an ambitious young Cambridge poet in order to promote his own reputation?　Is "Lycidas" a sincere poem?

Many of the poem's admirers will think such questions irrelevant, but important questions are raised by them which cannot be ignored if the poem is to be admired.　Dr. Johnson's criticism of "Lycidas" is not to be dismissed entirely as prejudice against the pastoral genre, especially when he says:

> [that the poem] is not to be considered as the effusion of real passion; for passion runs not after remote allusions and obscure opinions.　Passion plucks no berries from the myrtle and ivy, nor calls upon Arethuse and Mincius, nor tells of 'rough satyrs and fauns with cloven heel'.[3]

Dr. Johnson shows a concern for the representation of authentic emotion by poetically conventional means.　His criticism is still echoed even today.　In his essay "A Poem Nearly Anonymous"(1933) John Crowe Ransom argues convincingly that a traditional convention such as pastoral must be either absorbed or revolutionized by poets using it. Ransom thinks that Milton in "Lycidas" is bound by convention.　For Ransom, the poem afforded Milton "Little chance . . to express the interests, the causes, which he personally and powerfully was developing" by being "too occasional and too formal".[4]

Ransom's point is essentially a biographical one, but, as a New Critic, he underestimates the importance and relevance of Milton's biography.　One of Milton's preoccupations before "Lycidas" is the passing of time, and Milton repeatedly expressed this theme in his poems.

"Sonnet VII"("How soon hath Time . .") expresses spiritual shock at a failure to reach "inward ripeness"(l. 7) with age, and "Sonnet IX"("Lady, that in the prime of earliest youth . .") praises the Lady, not for her beauty, but for her virtue as a "Virgin wise and pure"(l. 14) who anticipates the coming of "the Bridegroom"(l. 12) "at the mid-hour of night"(l. 13).

In "On Time"("Fly envious Time, . ."), Time is faced in a spirit akin to what John Donne(1572-1631) faces Death in his sonnet "Death, be not proud"("Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations", 1633).　The omnipotent abstraction is made important by the witty display of a direct address.　But the conquest of Time remains a merely verbal one.　Time remains "envious Time"(l. 1), and has to be redeemed by achievements that are not "false and vain"(l. 5).　William Riley Parker notes that "In 'On Time' there is none of the zest for

life, the sensuous joy, the humanistic air of well-being which had animated the earlier poems in Latin and English".[5] "Lycidas" represents the mature culmination of this passionate concern with time. In addition to significant tense-alternation in its verbs, the poem contains 38 temporal adverbs ("once more", "no more", "now", "never", etc.), 19 temporal adjectives ("mellowing", "due", "destined", "rathe", etc.), 6 temporal nouns ("occasion", "prime", "evening", etc.), and 2 temporal prepositions ("before" and "ere").

The shocking possibility of early death forces a review of the worth of virtue and fame on Milton. Previously he had assumed that there would be time for both to develop. In "On Shakespeare. 1630" Shakespeare is a "Dear son of memory, great heir of Fame"(l. 5) who has built himself a "live-long Monument"(l. 8) in his readers' admiration. In "Lycidas" fame becomes uncertain because death may deny a young man the very opportunity of earning it.

II

Milton could hardly have been unfamiliar with death. His younger sisters, Sara and Tabitha, were buried as babies, and in the autumn of 1625, the year of King James's death, the plague claimed 35,000 victims.[6] The years 1625-6 saw the deaths of a considerable number of eminent figures in university and public life. In 1637 itself, Milton's mother, Ben Jonson, and the Countess Dowager of Derby died. Milton wrote "Arcades"(1632) for her. But with the exception of the Marchioness of Winchester, who died at the age of 23, Milton did not resemble others as he did Edward King. The deaths of older relatives, infants, well-known poets, and public figures could seem remote. But Edward King made "the immutable fact of death" tragically real to Milton, though probably no great personal loss to Milton.[7]

It is not that Milton may have been unmoved by the other deaths, but that the death of Edward King came at a time when Milton's interest in being a religious poet was becoming particularly intense. Death really shook Milton for the first time. Rex Warner sees it as a marking of Milton's real coming of age: "In this poem he comes mentally of age".[8] No matter how successfully "Lycidas" may handle the theme of premature death, there is little doubt that the theme itself allowed the finishing of Milton's personal and powerful interests in 1637. There was certainly enough passionate concern on his part to write a successful poem.

The criticisms of "Lycidas" made by Dr. Johnson and John Crowe Ransom emphasize the superior importance of the poem over the personal history, although when considering Milton's choice of the pastoral genre, it is worth remembering that the personal history was likely to produce a representation of "real feeling". Dr. Johnson is prejudiced against the pastoral genre. He sharply dismisses one of the poems of Lyttleton with the remark: "It is sufficient blame to say that it is pastoral".[9] Dr. Johnson is legitimately concerned with realism, and feels that conventional expression obscures genuine feeling in "Lycidas". But

what Ransom calls "great raw grief"[10] is an emotion, not a poem, and poems are not spontaneous speech acts, but representations of speech acts, recorded and reworked.

As Frank Kermode has pointed out, it is true that the pastoral mode praised by the Elizabethans today suggests "mannerism, triviality, lack of seriousness, possibly even the *ersatz*".[11] But a conventional response to a literary tradition disturbs literary criticism. What matters is the use made of the convention in the individual poem. Only a careful and detailed analysis of the poem's language will reveal this.

III

"Lycidas", the poem in which Dr. Johnson sees "where there is leisure for fiction there is little grief", is also a descriptive work, with a high adjective frequency. But what matters is the nature and function of the description. This may be observed in the opening verse-paragraph (ll. 1-14). This passage establishes several patterns most fundamental to the poem's structure:

> YEt once more, O ye Laurels, and once more
> Ye Myrtles brown, with Ivy never-sear,
> I com to pluck your Berries harsh and crude,
> And with forc'd fingers rude,
> Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
> Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
> Compels me to disturb your season due:
> For *Lycidas* is dead, dead ere his prime,
> Young *Lycidas*, and hath not left his peer:
> Who would not sing for *Lycidas*? he knew
> Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
> He must not flote upon his watry bear
> Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
> Without the meed of som melodious tear.　　　　(ll. 1-14)

Adjectives occur 19 times in the total 104 words. Josephine Miles notices that adjectives are common in the passage, but comments that "the strongest content . . consists in the brown, sere, harsh, crude, mellowing, bitter, sad, dear, due, young, dead, dead, rather than in I come, shatter, compel, hath not left, would not sing, which are less frequent and less full of the significance of atmosphere."[12] She finds that adjectives are emphasized more than verbs. But her neat procedure of skimming off words into inflexible grammatical categories, and her application of purely numerical criterion of "strong" content, are open to question.

The first verse-paragraph of "Lycidas" contains 12 verbs and 4 adjectives derived from

verbs("forc'd", "mellowing", "parching", "unwept").　That is, 16 out of 104 words are verbal in implication.　Their focus is strengthened by significant patterning:　"I com", "Shatter", and "Compels" are placed at the beginnings of lines.　And "unwept" is made outstanding by syntax.　"Shatter" is a violent word.　In the Trinity College Manuscript Milton wrote a gentler word "crop" at first, but changed it later.　The contrast with the gradual natural clemency of "mellowing" makes it the more so.　The speaker's manifest purpose, to announce the reason for his utterance, depends crucially on emphasizing verbs, since his motivating conviction is that something must be done.　The strange impersonality of the motivation, the feeling that Lycidas's death is somehow unreal, is suggested by the use of 2 abstract nouns ("constraint", "occasion") as subjects of the transitive verb "compels".　The speaker's deliberate actions ("I com to pluck . . and . . Shatter") parallel Lycidas's former positive actions ("he knew . . to sing, and build"), since Lycidas's present helpless passive condition ("flote", "welter") implies the existence of a destructive force in the world that threatens all creativity.　Nature has to be disturbed, for it is indifferent equally to the cruelty of "the parching wind" to Lycidas's body and to the gentleness of "the mellowing year" to fruit.　Positive action is seen as emotional compensation for the negation implicit in Lycidas's death:　"[Lycidas] hath not left his peer" is followed by rhetorical "Who would not sing for *Lycidas*?", which implies that anyone would take action and sing for Lycidas. The double negatives in "must not flote . . Unwept . . Without the meed of som melodious tear" cancel each other out to enjoin remedial action.　The intensity with which this action is urged strengthens in the violent adjectives: "harsh", "crude", "forc'd", "rude", "Bitter", "dead", "dead", and "parching".　The reader is not asked to muse over a mild idyllic sadness, but rather to feel the shock of death through those emphatic words.

　"Lycidas" contains opposed elements.　The most random juxtaposition of language units shows variety, contrast, and opposition.　The technique lies in how Milton has given form to the apparently formless, and also in how he has reconciled those elements to produce a harmony.　His basic technique is repetition, which takes various forms. Alliterative and rhythmic patterns are strong in creating unity, but more limited effects have been detected in the imagery.　The image patterns include rising and falling, coming and going, growth and decay, death and resurrection, the solar cycle, flowers, water, song and singer, the stars, and eye, ear, and mouth images.[13]

　Verbal repetition occurs throughout the poem as follows:

YEt once more, O ye Laurels, and once more
Ye Myrtles brown, with Ivy never-sear,　　　(ll. 1-2)

For *Lycidas* is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young *Lycidas*, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not sing for *Lycidas*?　he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.　　　(ll. 8-11)

Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well,
That from beneath the seat of *Jove* doth spring,
Begin, and somwhat loudly sweep the string.　　(ll. 15-17)

For we were nurst upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill.
　　Together both, ere the high Lawns appear'd
Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,
We drove a field, and both together heard
What time the Gray-fly winds her sultry horn,　　(ll. 23-28)

　　But O the heavy change, now thou art gon,
Now thou art gon, and never must return!
Thee Shepherd, thee the Woods, and desert Caves,
With wilde Thyme and the gadding Vine o'regrown,
And all their echoes mourn.　　　　　　(ll. 37-41)

What could the Muse her self that *Orpheus* bore,
The Muse her self, for her inchanting son
Whom Universal nature did lament,　　　　(ll. 58-60)

He ask'd the Waves, and ask'd the Fellon winds,　(l. 91)

Last came, and last did go,　　　　　　(l. 108)

But that two-handed engine at the door,
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.
　　Return *Alpheus*, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams; Return *Sicilian* Muse,　(ll. 130-133)

Weep no more, woful Shepherds weep no more,　(l. 165)

Where other groves, and other streams along,　(l. 174)

And now the Sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the Western Bay;　　(ll. 190-191)

The gesture of consolation makes some kind of repetition standard practice in elegies.[14]

IV

In "Lycidas" repetition is particularly important to the speaker's emotion.   In lines 23-28, the gentle insistence of "self-same hill . . same flock" and "Together both . . both together" implies pastoral peace and leisure, but sadly, for the implied mutual friendship of the two shepherds has been broken.   The speaker's obsession with Lycidas's death is fixed with passion in the calling of his name:

> For *Lycidas* is dead, dead ere his prime,
> Young *Lycidas*, and hath not left his peer:
> Who would not sing for *Lycidas*?   (ll. 8-11)

in the double "dead, dead", and later in the strong and sad expression of

> now thou art gon,
> Now thou art gon, and never must return!   (ll. 37-38)

This is immediately disturbed by the more animated

> Thee Shepherd, the the Woods, and desert Caves,
> With wild Thyme and the gadding Vine o'regrown,
> And all their echoes mourn.   (ll. 39-41)

and leads to the near-exasperated repetition of "the Muse her self" in the troubled syntax of

> Had ye bin there——for what could that have don?
> What could the Muse her self that *Orpheus* bore,
> The Muse her self, for her inchanting son   (ll. 57-59)

These variations on the theme of "Lycidas is dead" express a whole range of natural reaction and a sad irony to the diligent search:

> He ask'd the Waves, and ask'd the Fellon winds,
> What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain? (ll. 91-92)

Disturbance and acceptance are modulated throughout within the same schemes.   The stirring exhortation "begin . . begin"(ll. 15-17) that follows the anguished call for action in the opening verse-paragraph is balanced by the plea:

> Return *Alpheus*, the dread voice is past,

That shrunk thy streams; Return *Sicilian* Muse,　(ll. 132-133)

that follows the Pilot's passionate call for action within the church.　Even the disruptive figure of the Pilot appears in an ordered procession.　The formalized inevitability of "Last came, and last did go, The Pilot of the *Galilean* lake"(ll. 108-109) prepares for the awful final act of "that two-handed engine at the door, Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more"(ll. 130-131), and is also integrated into the poem's calm rhythm of coming and going.
　　The last repetition:

　　And now the Sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
　　And now was dropt into the Western Bay;　　　(ll. 190-191)

implies the calmness of the natural cycle.　The simultaneous all-seeing implied by "and now . . and now", the imperceptible motion in "the <u>still</u> morn <u>went</u> <u>out</u>", and the blurred time distinctions in the succession of "morn", noon, evening, and "To morrow"(ll. 187-193) show that the eternal point of view has been accepted.
　　The repetitive devices calm down the forcefulness of all previous repetitions.　In "Lycidas", repetition gives structure to moments of varied emotion by a process of adapting both the speaker and the reader to dramatic alternations of turbulence and calm.　It traces the process by which order is achieved, and thus emphasizes that poetry is both the means of expressing feelings and the means of confronting the confusing forces in the world.
　　The shattering of the leaves symbolizes the necessity of writing prematurely because Lycidas is dead "ere his prime", but also the changing of the convention from within. Throughout the poem the speaker expresses an attitude to pastoral.　The swain touches "the tender stops of various Quills"(l. 188), signifying the inclusion of different styles, and revealing distinctions are made between the "higher mood" of Phoebus's speech, the lower style of the pastoral "Oate", and the "dread voice" of the Pilot (ll. 87-88, 132-133).　In the course of the poem the code of pastoral is cracked.
　　Milton draws on the very tradition of pastoral to suggest continuity in the face of death.　But death also calls for a fresh understanding in the poet, or rather an internal revolution.　This makes stylistic change obligatory.　"Lycidas" converts purely idyllic pastoral as represented in its third verse-paragraph into a more realistic world picture. The style of the third verse-paragraph is important as a basis for the poetic diction of the poem:

　　　Together both, ere the high Lawns appear'd
　　Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,
　　We drove a field, and both together heard
　　What time the Gray-fly winds her sultry horn,

Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night,

Oft till the Star that rose, at Ev'ning, bright,

Toward Heav'ns descent had slop'd his westering wheel.

Mean while the Rural ditties were not mute,

Temper'd to th' Oaten Flute,

Rough *Satyrs* danced, and *Fauns* with clov'n heel,

From the glad sound would not be absent long,

And old *Damaetas* lov'd to hear our song.   (ll. 25-36)

This passage is highly descriptive, and the pastoral way of life is celebrated.   Nine sensory adjectives predominate: "high", "opening", "sultry", "fresh", "bright", "mute", "Oaten", "Rough", and "clov'n".

 Syntax is not complicated; sound is pleasant.   Adjectives derived from verbs are intransitive as far as the speaker is concerned.   Those adjectives do nothing to him, but preserve a scene for his delighted observation: "opening eye-lids . . westering wheel . . temper'd".   Seven plural nouns ("Lawns", "eye-lids", "flocks", "dews", "ditties", "*Satyrs*", "*Fauns*") leave the picture generalized.

 And there is a remarkable frequency of definite articles (9 in all):   "the high Lawns", "the opening eye-lids of the morn", "the Gray-fly", "the fresh dews of night", "the Star that rose, at Ev'ning", "the Rural ditties", "th' Oaten Flute", and "the glad sound".   The verbs provide the key to their interpretation: by repeated and frequent actions, they reveal the articles as generic, so that "th' Oaten Flute" represents all oaten flutes.   But the articles also refer to known, identifiable, and associated objects in a picture made from the speaker's memory.   Thus, generic and specific functions are combined.

 The main verbs of the third verse-paragraph of "Lycidas" are in the past tense, not in the present tense.   The illusory timelessness if the pastoral world is represented in the circumlocutory vagueness of "What time", the present tense of "Batt'ning", and the rapid link of morning, noon, night, and evening, which suggests that time flies smoothly.   But the main verbs place the idealized existence firmly in memory.

V

 The dramatic opposition of conventional pastoral and the real world may be traced in the use of several kinds of adjective in "Lycidas".   The artificial permanence and self-absorbed activity, typical of pastoral, are characterized by past-participial forms ("enameld eyes"(l. 139), "the Pansie freakt with jeat"(l. 144), "the well-attir'd Woodbine"(l. 146), and, as in the third verse-paragraph, by intransitive present-participial adjectives ("the gadding Vine"(l. 40), "Smooth-sliding *Mincius*"(l. 86), "gushing brooks"(l. 137), "The glowing Violet"(l. 145).   "sounding Seas" introduces a slight change to this picture of a potentially unfeeling world, but really only intensifies its indifference:

> Ay me!　Whilst thee the shores, and sounding Seas
> Wash far away, where ere thy bones are hurl'd　　　　(ll. 154-155)

"sounding" is vague beside "Wash" and "hurl'd", which dramatically change the idea of nature as a pretty picture by introducing insensitive and impersonal violence.

　　　Transitive participial adjectives show that nature can be uncontrollably active. Lycidas's death is "As killing as the Canker to the Rose"(l. 45).　Milton changed the adjective in "humming tide" in the Trinity College Manuscript for "whelming tide"(l. 157).

　　　On the one hand, the gentleness and quiet joy associated with pastoral are represented by the adjectives in the phrases "the glad sound"(l. 35), "joyous Leaves"(l. 44), "soft layes"(l. 44), and "milde whispers"(l. 136).　On the other, a rough and evil wildness is acknowledged through "shaggy top"(l. 54), "Fellon winds"(l. 91), "rugged wings"(l. 93), "beaked Promontory"(l. 94), and "stormy *Hebrides*"(l. 156).　The adjectives ("hard" and "gentle") in the line 92 describing Neptune's plea crystallize the opposition:

> What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?　　(l. 92)

　　　It is the awareness that the world is really hard to life that underlies the tone of the opening verse-paragraph:　the bitter truth is that nature and human reflect each other's cruelty rather than sympathy.　The pastoral world and real world are found to be equally indifferent, or equally harsh, to human life.　And a dark, nihilistic view is shown in which the muse is "thankles"(l. 66), nature in the form of the unpredictable sea is "remorseless"(l. 50), and human as represented by the dead Lycidas is "hapless"(l. 164).

　　　The "false surmise"(l. 153) involved in the traditional pastoral expression of sprinkling flowers on the hearse is replaced by a deeper uncertainty:

> Ay me!　Whilst thee the shores and sounding Seas
> Wash far away, where ere thy bones are hurl'd,
> Whether beyond the stormy *Hebrides*
> Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
> Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
> Or whether thou to our moist vows deny'd,
> Sleep'st by the fable of *Bellerus* old,　　　　　(ll. 154-160)

Attention is redirected to the body in the sea's grip.　The speaker's thought ("where ere . . whether . . perhaps . . or whether . .") cannot be released into mere escapism, but pathetically dramatizes his own helpless condition as he thinks of the helpless Lycidas. Sadly, the fact of death seems to make strong thoughts trifle.　Even though every adjective faces what has happened, the speaker can find no comfort at this point.　The "monstrous

world" need not be only the world of sea monsters.   *OED* explains that in 1637 "monstrous" could mean deviation from the natural order.[15] Even after the Christian consolation, Milton does not choose an easy escape from the constant threat represented by the sea.   It remains "that perilous flood" in which men, being fallen, "wander"(l. 185).

Far from being digressive, the violent language of the Pilot of the Galilean Lake is consistent with this world-view.   It is important that it should be disturbing, to the poem as well as the corrupt clergy.   And the citation of satire on the clergy never lessens the impact of the passionate speech:

> How well could I have spar'd for thee young swain,
> Anow of such as for their bellies sake,
> Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold?
> Of other care they little reck'ning make,
> Then how to scramble at the shearers feast,
> And shove away the worthy bidden guest;
> Blind mouthes!   that scarce themselves know how to hold
> A Sheep-hook, or have learn'd ought els the least
> That to the faithfull Herdmans art belongs!
> What recks it them?   What need they?   They are sped;
> And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
> Grate on their scrannel Pipes of wretched straw,
> The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
> But swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
> Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
> Besides what the grim Woolf with privy paw
> Daily devours apace, and nothing sed,
> But that two-handed engine at the door,
> Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.   (ll. 113-131)

The only thing left undisturbed is the art with which Milton fits this outburst into the poem's structure.   The speech shows the pastoral convention: "the shearers feast", "the worthy bidden guest", "the faithfull Herdmans art", "the hungry sheep", "the rank mist", and "the grim Woolf" are phrase units familiar from the third verse-paragraph, and they are supported again by general language: "Blind mouthes", "lean and flashy songs", "scrannel Pipes", "wretched straw", "wind", and "foul contagion".

What is different is the sharpness with which the Pilot's attitude is expressed.   The adjectives "lean", "flashy", "scrannel", "wretched", "hungry", "swoln", "rank", and "foul" characterize a "dread voice" that reflects the harshness of the religious world.

Also through the verbs the speaker admits that ceremony is abolished, and that reality must be faced: "Creep and intrude . . scramble . . shove . . Grate . . Rot . .

devours"(ll. 115, 117, 118, 124, 127, 129).　In religion the cruelty and injustice are human, and therefore controllable, but the sea and "the blind Fury" remain apparently anarchic. The sequence of verbs in the Pilot's speech stresses strong action, just as "and nothing sed" calls for a remedy before the "two-handed engine" does its final work.　Adjectival severity and an emphasis on verbs are the chief means by which the motivation expressed powerfully in the opening verse-paragraph is recalled.　The Pilot echoes the tone of the swain's voice.　The imagery of "bellies . . feast . . mouthes . . not fed . . swoln . . devours" is the corrupted version of "nurst upon the self-same hill", "Fed the same flock", "Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night", and "weanling Herds that graze":　conventional idyll has become actual disaster.　Dramatic representation blends with structural harmony.

VI

Earthly pastoral and religious pastoral are replaced by heavenly pastoral:

> 　　　Weep no more, woful Shepherds weep no more,
> For *Lycidas* your sorrow is not dead,
> Sunk though he be beneath the watry floar,
> So sinks the day-star in the Ocean bed,
> And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
> And tricks his beams, and with new spangled Ore,
> Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
> So *Lycidas* sunk low, but mounted high,
> Through the dear might of him that walk'd the waves
> Where other groves, and other streams along,
> With *Nectar* pure his oozy Lock's he laves,
> And hears the unexpressive nuptiall Song,
> In the blest Kingdoms meek of joy and love.
> There entertain him all the Saints above,
> In solemn troops, and sweet Societies
> That sing, and singing in their glory move,
> And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.　　　　(ll.165-181)

An aesthetic judgement is involved in dismissing the consolation of "Lycidas".　Milton is committed to a poetic structure.　The familiar phrase units of "the watry floar"(l.167), "the day-star"(l. 168), "the Ocean bed"(l. 168), "the forehead of the morning sky"(l. 171), and so on, and the generalities of "woful Shepherds"(l. 165), "blest Kingdoms meek of joy and love"(l. 177), "all the Saints"(l. 178), "solemn troops"(l. 179), and "sweet Societies"(l. 179), show that the consolation will, at deeper levels, recall the poem before it.　The command "Weep no

more . . weep no more"(l. 165) recalls both "YEt once more"(l. 1) and "the Willows, and Hazles Copses green" "Fanning their joyous Leaves" "no more" to Lycidas's song(ll. 42-44).   This suggests that comfort is precisely made appropriate to the nature of the grief.   The act of wiping "the tears for ever from [Lycidas's] eyes"(l. 181) reflects on the "melodious tear"(l. 14) offered in commemoration, and reveals that all previous mourning has been earthly and impermanent.

The "watry floar"(l. 167) beneath which he is "Sunk"(l. 167) reminds the reader of the bark which "sunk low"(l. 172) his "sacred head"(l. 102), of the deep closing over him(ll. 50-51), and of the "level brine"(ll. 98).   The use of "watry floar" makes the water more solid for Christ's triumphant walk over it.   The "day-star"(l. 168), which suggests Christ and fixes with heraldic permanence in the sky, is the anti-type of "the opening eye-lids of the morn"(l. 26), "the Star that rose, at Ev'ning"(l. 30), and "the swart Star"(l. 138), and its movement into the ocean and again to the sky shows death and resurrection.   In the phrase "other groves, and other streams"(l. 174), "other" can mean a difference in kind as well as in location.   The description throughout this passage identifies the after-life with this life, implying a new life, and establishing some consistency and clear plan in what has seemed chaotic.

Pastoral song(ll. 10-11, 36, 44), and the music of Orpheus which was once drowned by the "hideous roar" of his murderers(ll. 58-63), are transcendently returned, with pastoral companionship, in the "unexpressive nuptiall Song"(l. 176) of saints at the marriage supper of the Lamb.   The vicious, impersonal acts of wild nature against Lycidas's body are past. He hears the heavenly music, is entertained, and has his tears wiped away.   Though the sea has previously washed him in its pitiless tides(ll. 154-155), now he washes his hair, "oozy"(l. 175) from "the bottom of the monstrous world"(l. 158), in the paradisal "*Nectar* pure"(l. 175) of heaven.   Milton transforms earthly pastoral.

The return to a reconstructed earthly pastoral is possible only after the glimpse of the heavenly vision.   Milton has not absorbed or revolutionized "pastoral" all through "Lycidas". He has done both, changing from the anxious turbulence and disorder of the start into the ecstatic and quiet seriousness of the end.   A whole range of feelings is realized without damaging self-consciousness, wordiness, or irrelevance, and the pastoral convention is fully exploited.   "Lycidas" seems to be the most dramatic pastoral ever written.   And Milton's poetic diction is strongly characterized by its richness in adjectival quality.

NOTES:

*The text of "Lycidas" discussed here is from the second edition of Milton's minor poems published in 1673: "POEMS, &c. UPON Several Occasions.   BY Mr. JOHN MILTON: Both ENGLISH and LATIN, &c.   Composed at several times.   With a small Tracte of EDUCATION To Mr. HARTLIB.   LONDON, 1673".   This paper is based on the text in pages 52-56 of Vol. I in *John Milton's Complete Poetial Works, Reproduced in Photographic Facsimile*, ed. Harris Fletcher, 4 vols. (Urbana, The University of Illinois Press, 1943).

**The best reference so far available is: *A Variorum Commentary on the Poems of John Milton* (New York and London, 1970-); about "Lycidas" see pp. 544-734 in Vol. 2 (Part 2)(1972):   The Minor English Poems, eds. A.S.P. Woodhouse and Douglas Bush.

1) *The Lives of the English Poets* (Life of Milton), ed. G. B. Hill (rpt., 1968), Vol. 1, p. 163.

2) *The Lives of the English Poets* (Life of Waller), ed. G. B. Hill (rpt., 1968), Vol. 1, p. 292.

3) *The Lives of the English Poets* (Life of Milton), ed. G. B. Hill (rpt., 1968), Vol. 1, p. 163.

4) "A Poem Nearly Anonymous"(1933), in *Milton's "Lycidas": The Tradition and the Poem*, ed. C. A. Patrides, (New and Revised Ed., 1983), p. 84.

5) W. R. Parker, *Milton: A Biography* (Oxford, 1968, 2nd ed. 1996), Vol. 1, pp. 86-87.

6) W. R. Parker, *Milton: A Biography* (Oxford, 1968, 2nd ed. 1996), Vol. 1, pp. 7-8, 28-29, 31-32,96, 155.

7) Rosmond Tuve, "Theme, Pattern, and Imagery in LYCIDAS" in *Images and Themes in Five Poems by Milton*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), pp. 73-74.

8) Rex Warner, *John Milton*, (London, 1949), p. 56.

9) *The Lives of the English Poets* (Life of Lyttleton), ed. G. B. Hill (rpt., 1968), Vol. 3, p. 456.

10) "A Poem Nearly Anonymous"(1933), in *Milton's "Lycidas":   The Tradition and the Poem*, ed. C. A. Patrides, (New and Revised Ed., 1983), p. 71.

11) *English Pastoral Poetry, from the Beginnings to Marvell*, ed. Frank Kermode (London,1952), "Introduction", p. 11.

12) Cf. "The Primary Language of *Lycidas*", in *Milton's "Lycidas":   The Tradition and the Poem*, ed. C. A. Patrides, (New and Revised Ed., 1983), pp. 86-91.

13) Cf. The articles by Josephin Miles, Richard P. Adams, Wayne Shumaker, Brooks and Hardy, and M. H. Abrams in C. A. Patrides, (New and Revised Ed., 1983), (pp. 86-91, 111-116, 129-139, 140-156, 216-235).

14) Cf. "Approaches to *Lycidas*" by G. S. Fraser, in *The Living Milton*, ed. F. Kermode, p. 43.

15) *OED*, "monstrous" 3.b; see also *Variorum Commentary*, Vol. 2, p. 720.

牧歌『リシダス』におけるミルトンの詩語について

稲　用　茂　夫

【要　旨】　　ジョン・ミルトン作『リシダス』の詩語の扱い方についての検証である。長い伝統をもつ牧歌，田園詩のジャンルの詩的技巧を品詞の観点から詳細に分析することにより，従来からの哀悼詩の題材をミルトンが巧妙かつ大胆に神聖な作品に変容させ，進化させていることを指摘した。

【キーワード】　　ミルトン　『リシダス』　牧歌　ジャンル　詩的技巧
品詞　英語