7 LITERARY LANGUAGE

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7.1 Introduction: the scope of this chapter

The rise of a national Standard language in the period 1476–1776 (see Görlach this volume) had its literary counterpart in the formation of *a national literature*, embodied in the works of those whom influential opinion identified as the nation's 'best authors'. Indeed, the codifying of language and the canonising of literature were not merely simultaneous but symbiotic processes, with the 'best authors' being quarried for instructive examples as much by grammarians and language teachers as by rhetoricans and literary critics. Dr Johnson, for instance, advised prospective readers of his Dictionary that 'the syntax of this language . . . can be only learned by the distinct consideration of particular words as they are used by the best authors' (Johnson 1747: 19). And Johnson's was not an innovative attitude. He was simply ratifying an alliance between Literary English and Standard English that was already being negotiated almost two centuries earlier. For when Puttenham advises sixteenth-century poets to write in 'the vsuall speach of the Court, and that of London and the shires lying about London within lx. myles, and not much aboue' ([1589]: 145), his sixty-mile radius draws the boundary not of a homogeneous regional dialect, but rather of an emerging establishment variety, centred on the Court and London and circumferenced by the universities of Cambridge and Oxford and the main seat of ecclesiastic power at Canterbury.

The tradition represented by Puttenham and Johnson has proved a powerful one, gaining in strength as it became institutionalised in the syllabuses of nineteenth-century schools and twentieth-century universities. But in the academic debates of more recent years, its restrictive definition of literature has come under attack. Its opponents have exposed the presuppositions behind the creation of a national literary canon, have challenged the

biases of its selections – political, educational, sectarian, sexual – and so recovered for literary analysis varieties of writing which these biases either excluded from print or stigmatised as ephemera, 'the infinite fardles of printed pamphlets, wherewith thys Countrey is pestered' (Webbe, 1586; in Smith 1904: I 226). Since the 1980s, renaissance literature has been progressively de-canonised to give due recognition to works produced by non-establishment writers, such as women and Ranters, or in non-canonical genres, such as letters and broadside ballads.

The present chapter will be more conservative in scope. Although I recognise the importance for later stylistic history of many of these recently revalued writings – the influence, for instance, of the seventeenth-century Puritan conversion narrative on the eighteenth-century novel (Adamson 1994) – for the purposes of this volume I shall follow Puttenham and Johnson, and tell the story of what Partridge christened the 'Literary Standard' (Partridge 1947: 306). For one thing, it is the stylistic sibling of the Standard language-variety, which is the main focus for the companion chapters on phonology, syntax and lexis. But there are historical as well as practical grounds for taking the formation of a Literary Standard as the primary narrative for a history of style in the period 1476–1776, not least the fact that many of the kinds of writing excluded from the official canon defined themselves, and hence shaped their styles, in relation to it. The relation may be one of imitation, as with some women's poetry, or one of active hostility, as with most of the pestering Puritan pamphlets, but in either case an account of the forms of the canonical literary language may be an essential first step towards explaining features of the non-canonical. At the same time, closer inspection of the Literary Standard reveals that its own history is more complicated than the account given so far would lead us to expect. For instance, the persistence of the term 'best authors' can be misleading. Comparing the lists of 'best poets' given in Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) and Bysshe's *The Art of English Poetry* (1702), it is startling to find that where overlap would have been possible, it does not occur: Bysshe inherits Puttenham's bias in favour of writers of educated, court-based English, but he selects *none* of the authors in Puttenham's canon; and of the extensive canon proposed by Meres in *Palladis Tamia* (1598) he retains only Shakespeare and Jonson. Such a disagreement inside what looks like a coherent cultural project suggests that the development of the Literary Standard may be less continuous and cumulative than the development of the Standard language-variety that forms its base. The process of stylistic change in Early Modern English may resemble revolution rather than evolution.

That was certainly the view of Bysshe's contemporaries. Post-Restoration critics, from Dryden to Johnson, saw the political interregnum of the mid-seventeenth century matched by a disruption in the literary tradition, a disruption so severe as to make the stylistic ideals of their predecessors appear alien or even perverse – hence the practice, introduced in the 1670s, of modernising approved writers of 'the former age', such as Shakespeare and Sidney. I have reflected such views in designing this chapter in two parts to correspond to two (overlapping) phases in the history of the Literary Standard. The first phase (sections 7.2–7.4) begins with the educational reforms associated with Erasmus and Colet at the start of the sixteenth century and ends in 1667 with Milton's publication of *Paradise Lost*, the last major work written fully in the spirit of those reforms. The second phase (sections 7.5–7.8) begins in the 1640s, when writers attached to the Stuart court in exile came under the influence of French neo-classicism and writers who remained in England were released from the hegemony of court style and the restrictions of royal censorship. More delicate sub-divisions of period and style are detectable but none is as fundamental. Although many writers of the Jacobean period (1603–25) reacted against their Elizabethan predecessors, they were, in Kuhnian terms, working within the same paradigm, sharing a framework of stylistic practices and assumptions, whereas a profound stylistic gulf separates Bacon from Locke, however similar their philosophies. And although Dryden's first publication (1649) appeared only a decade after Milton's (1637), they are like neighbouring towns separated by a national frontier, sharing many stylistic isoglosses but paying allegiance to a different Literary Standard. What binds the two phases of our period together and sets them apart from the periods on either side (described in *CHEL* II and *CHEL* IV) is the degree of allegiance that both also acknowledge to the stylistic norms of classical literature.

7.2 The renaissance phase, 1500–1667

7.2.1 Of classical literature

The gradual emergence of English as a national language during the course of the sixteenth century, celebrated by Jones (1953) as 'the triumph of English', was a more complex process than that title suggests. As the vernacular extended its functions into domains previously associated with Latin, it extensively remodelled its forms in imitation of the more prestigious and standardised language that it displaced (Adamson 1989, Görlach this volume). In the same way, the drive to establish a national literature – for contemporary commentators the most visible sign of English's

'triumph' – led writers to challenge the achievements of Latin literature by faithfully reproducing its genres and styles in the vernacular. Renaissance 'imitation' was thus a paradoxical exercise, simultaneously subversive and subservient. By the mid-nineteenth century it was already an exercise whose motivating force could only be reconstructed by a difficult feat of historical imagination. Wordsworth, though born before our period ends (in 1770), looks back on Milton's *Lycidas* (1638) as the product of a vanished era:

(1) an importance & a sanctity were at that period attached to classical literature that extended . . . both to its spirit & form in a degree that can never be revived (Wordsworth 1842/3)

In 1500, the concept of 'classical literature', which Wordsworth takes for granted, was itself a novelty. Its formulation was central to the design of a new curriculum for the new grammar schools then being founded to propagate the renaissance humanism brought from Italy by scholars such as Erasmus. John Colet, the founder of St Paul's, perhaps the most influential of these schools, defined its educational programme in self-consciously revolutionary terms:

(2) all barbary all corrupcion all laten adulterate which ignorant blynde folis brought into this worlde and with the same hath distayned and poysenyd the olde laten spech and the varay Romayne tong which in the tyme of Tully and Salust and Virgill and Terence was vsid, whiche also seint Jerome and seint ambrose and seint Austen and many hooly doctors lernyd in theyr tymes. I say that ffylthynesse and all such abusyon which the later blynde worlde brought in which more ratheyr may be callid blotterature thenne litterature I vtterly abbanysh and Exclude oute of this scole and charge the Maisters that they teche all way that is the best and instruct the chyldren in greke and Redyng laten in Redyng vnto them suych auctours that hathe with wisdome joyned the pure chaste eloquence. (Colet 1518)

The school statutes here enshrine the renaissance myth of history that ultimately shaped our own system of historical nomenclature. Colet breaks up the continuum of past time into three distinct periods and unites the two outermost – modern and ancient – in hostility to a middle period (hence *Middle Ages*), which he stigmatises as 'the later blynde worlde', a time of 'barbary' and 'corrupcion'. The goal of education is seen as the recovery of the virtues of ancient civilisation, in a process which Colet's contemporaries imaged as a re-awakening, a resurrection or a re-birth (hence *Renaissance*). Colet is typical in characterising this goal in primarily linguistic terms: he

castigates the medieval period for its 'laten adulterate', which he defines as a deviation from the grammar and usage of 'the tyme of Tully and Salust and Virgill and Terence'. This relatively brief period (say, 190–19 BC), which became known as the Latin 'Golden Age', provided renaissance educators both with a standard of correctness against which to measure the work of later writers (such as 'seint ambrose and seint Austen' [Augustine]) and with a canon of 'best authors' to exemplify it. As a result, when the word *classical* entered the language (c. 1600), it already carried a double sense: it was a temporal term, designating the first of Colet's three periods, and also an evaluative term, meaning 'of the first rank of authority; constituting a standard or model; especially in literature' (*OED* 1).

Literature is a more difficult word. It's clear that around 1500 it covered a wider semantic range than it normally has now, referring to a mental capacity as well as a written product and overlapping with modern terms such as *literacy* and *scholarship*. As late as 1755, Johnson's Dictionary recognised only this older sense of the word, defining it as 'learning; skill in letters'. Hence Colet's canon of literature embraces the genres of history (Sallust), philosophy/theology (St Augustine) and forensic oratory (Cicero [Tully]) alongside the imaginative fictions of poetry (Virgil) and drama (Terence). But in coining the antonym *blotterature*, Colet shows that a significant shift was taking place inside the concept of 'literature', a shift that would eventually make aesthetic value its principal criterial property. *Literature* in the Renaissance is increasingly understood as writing that combines learnedness with good style, or, in the terms that Colet uses here, it is 'wisdome joyned [with] eloquence'. And if he seems to focus on eloquence at the expense of wisdom, it is because for him, as for renaissance humanists generally, good style is inseparable from (indeed the index of) learning and even morality (as hinted by the adjectives *pure* and *chaste* attached to *eloquence*). In a complex equation 'classical literature' became at once an intellectual, a moral and an aesthetic ideal, and this is what gives it for the renaissance period as a whole the 'importance' and the 'sanctity' that Wordsworth detects.

The diffusion of the classical ideal and its conversion into a programme for vernacular literature were due in large part to the pedagogic practices which Colet and other humanists introduced in pursuit of the reform of Latin. The aim of the reformers was to make their target-language Golden Age Latin and to make grammar-school pupils bilingual in Latin and English (hence Latin was prescribed for use even in playtime). These were precisely the right conditions for language interference, and the possibility of interference was enhanced by the introduction of new

teaching methods: the technique of *analysis-genesis*, for instance, required pupils to analyse the grammatical and stylistic construction of a canonic text and then create an imitation or pastiche of their own; the technique of *double translation* interwove the vernacular into this process by requiring them to translate a passage from Latin into English then translate their own English version back again into Latin. Practices such as these necessitated the constant squaring of English with Latin constructions and since the grammatical and stylistic norms of Latin were codified and those of English were not, there was nothing to prevent Latin from being calqued onto English. It is not surprising, then, that the effects of the pedagogic revolution appeared simultaneously in both languages: the 1530s and 1540s saw the first wave of works by English authors in 'the new pure classicizing style of renaissance Latin' (Binns 1990: 3) and the first attempts to imitate the Latin hexameter line in English vernacular verse (Attridge 1974: 129).

But the transfer of Latin forms into English was not just an accidental by-product of pedagogy, it was also a willed cultural project. The humanists' focus on Golden Age Latin had drawn their attention to a period in which the self-definition of the Roman state found expression in its writers' attempts to make Latin rival Greek as a literary language. Terence had imitated Menander, Virgil Homer and Cicero Demosthenes, and Horace regarded his Latin adaptations of Greek poetic forms as his chief claim to immortality (*Odes* 3.30). The study of parallel Greek and Latin passages in the renaissance curriculum made even schoolboys familiar with techniques for calquing styles across languages, while the success of Roman writers created a precedent for English nationalists to make native literature match the achievements of Latin. The dignity of the emerging nation-state was felt to be bound up with its ability to claim a canon of vernacular writers who could each trace their stylistic descent from a classical predecessor. From the 1580s it became common to speak of Spenser as the English Virgil (or Homer), and by 1598 Francis Meres was able to produce a lengthy 'comparative discourse' demonstrating that the English could challenge the Greeks and Romans in every facet of literary performance, ranging from lifestyle ('As Anacreon died by the pot: so George Peele by the pox') to language:

(3) As the Greeke tongue is made famous and eloquent by Homer, Hesiod, Euripides . . .; and the Latine tongue by Virgill, Ouid, Horace . . .: so the English tongue is mightily enriched and gorgeously inuested in rare ornaments and resplendent abiliments by Sir Philip Sydney, Spencer, Daniel, Drayton, Warner, Shakespeare, Marlow and Chapman. (Meres 1598)

7.2.2 *De copia*

Meres's choice of words – *mightily enriched and gorgeously inuested* – points to the key concept in renaissance ideas of an eloquent classical style, the concept of *copia*, which is sometimes translated as *store* or Anglicised as *copie* or *copy*. Since the stylistic sense of *copy* has become obsolete (its complete lifespan, as recorded in *OED* citations, lies within the bounds of the renaissance phase of our period, 1531–1637) and since its surviving descendant *copious* is now largely pejorative as a description of style, it is important to recover the contexts that gave it its renaissance meaning and status before looking at the linguistic practices to which it refers.

The term and concept of copia owed its currency largely to a primer in classical Latin style which Erasmus presented to Colet for use in St Paul's school in 1512 and which became the standard schoolboy introduction to the subject for the next 150 years. He gave it a title that resonated with classical precedents. Its familiar form, *De copia*, was the name of a book which Seneca was popularly (though mistakenly) supposed to have sent to St Paul. In consciously re-enacting this gesture by presenting his own book to the school that Colet had named after St Paul, Erasmus made the cultivation of copia central to the larger humanist project of re-dedicating pagan eloquence to Christian wisdom. The book's full title *De duplici copia rerum ac verborum* [of the double abundance of matter and words], echoed the phrase in which the Roman rhetorician, Quintilian, summed up the linguistic resources of the ideal orator, epitomised for him by Cicero. In adopting this title, Erasmus was implicitly accepting the style of Ciceronian oratory as the primary model for neo-Latin literature more generally. And for the whole of the renaissance phase of our period, vernacular literature, too, was studied and practised under the rubric of oratorical rhetoric. Erasmus's *De copia* and Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, which codified and theorised the practice of Cicero, were the main ancestors of manuals of English eloquence from Sherry's *Treatise of Schemes and Tropes* (1550) to Blount's *Academie of Eloquence* (1654), and we have the evidence of Drummond that Ben Jonson, at least, regarded Quintilian as the best mentor for poets (in Spingarn 1908: I 210).

In this respect, the Renaissance could be seen as the end, not the beginning, of a stylistic tradition, since medieval theories of style were also rhetorically based and also descended from Quintilian. But the sixteenth century brought a crucial change of emphasis. During the medieval period, the formal features commended by Quintilian had become divorced from their classical function of forensic oratory and associated instead with the

politeness rituals of courtly and diplomatic letter-writing. In Chaucer, rhetoric is primarily a resource of 'endyting' and 'the poet' is often equated with 'the clerk'. In renaissance poets, from Skelton to Milton, a more frequent collocation is 'poets and orators'. What happened in the Renaissance – partly through the discovery of new manuscripts of Quintilian and Cicero – was a re-integration of the formal figures of rhetoric with the suasive and affective functions of oratory and this went together with an enhanced conception of the orator's social role (Vickers 1988: 254–93). Quintilian had argued that a great orator is 'the mouthpiece of his nation' [*apud hunc et patria ipsa exclamabit*] and one whom 'men will admire as a god' [*hunc ut deum homines intuebuntur*] (*Institutio* 12.x.61, 65). Correspondingly renaissance rhetoricians also place emphasis on the power of eloquence and on eloquence as a form of power, as when Peacham takes up Colet's theme of 'wisdom with eloquence':

(4) so mighty is the power of this happie vnion, (I mean of wisdom & eloquence) that by the one the Orator forceth, and by the other he allureth, and by both so worketh, that what he commendeth is beloued, what he dispraiseth is abhorred, what he perswadeth is obeied, and what he disswadeth is auoidede: so that he is in a maner the emperour of mens minds & affections, and next to the omnipotent God in the power of perswasion, by grace, & diuine assistance. (Peacham 1593)

At one extreme, this image of eloquence finds its most perfect embodiment in the eponymous hero of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* (1587/8). Modern productions of this play have tended to foreground the violence of Tamburlaine's actions, but the text emphasises that his first step towards becoming 'emperour' – his defeat of Theridamus and a thousand Persian horsemen – is achieved by an oration. 'Won with thy words' concedes Theridamus, endorsing Peacham's characterisation of rhetoric as an arsenal of 'martiall instruments both of defence & inuasion . . . weapons alwaies readie in our handes' (*Tamburlaine* I.ii.228; Peacham 1593: sig. ABiv^{r}).

But eloquence doesn't always conquer by force. Alongside the *armamental* ideal of rhetoric runs an *ornamental* ideal, descending more directly from the 'aureate' styles of Lydgate and the post-Chaucerians (Blake *CHEL* II: 527–8) and from late medieval notions of the form and function of courtly language (Burnley 1983: 186–200). Among Elizabethan theorists, the ornamental view is most clearly expressed by Puttenham:

(5) And as we see in these great Madames of honour, be they for personage or otherwise neuer so comely and bewtifull, yet if they want their courtly habillements or at leastwise such other apparell as custome and ciuilitie

> haue ordained to couer their naked bodies, would be halfe ashamed or greatly out of countenaunce to be seen in that sort, and perchance do then thinke themselues more amiable in euery mans eye, when they be in their richest attire, suppose of silkes or tyssewes & costly embroderies, then when they go in cloth or in any other plaine and simple apparell. Euen so cannot our vulgar Poesie shew it selfe either gallant or gorgious, if any lymme be left naked and bare and not clad in his kindly clothes and coulours, such as may conuey them somwhat out of sight, that is from the common course of ordinary speach and capacitie of the vulgar iudgement, and yet being artificially handled must needes yeld it much more bewtie and commendation. (Puttenham [1589])

Style here is conceived as charming, rather than changing, the mind of an audience. Where Peacham's images are masculine Puttenham's are feminine and 'martiall instruments' are replaced by 'richest attire'. In this conception, eloquence is part of the self-celebration and self-maintenance of the contemporary Court and Puttenham's description belongs alongside the Tudor sumptuary laws, which restricted the wearing of gold to members of the nobility, and the Ditchley portrait of Queen Elizabeth (in London's National Gallery), which shows her subjugating Europe with her 'costly embroderies'.

Both ideals of eloquence – armamental and ornamental – are present in the connotations of the word *copia*, whose range of use in Latin covers the supply both of wealth and of military forces. And for the Elizabethans, many other terms had a similar duality, notably *brave*, *gallant*, *(h)abiliments*. Around 1600, all these words, – and, indeed, *ornaments*, too – had a sense range that encompassed both the martial and the sartorial, whereas their modern descendants have specialised into one sense field or the other. In the case of *copia*, its two facets are held together in the image with which Erasmus opens *De copia* and crystallises its stylistic ideals:

> (6) There is nothing more amazing or more glorious than human speech, superabounding with thoughts and words and pouring out like a golden river.
> *[non est aliud vel admirabilius vel magnificentius quam oratio, divite quadam sententiarum verborumque copia, aurei fluminis instar exuberans]* (Erasmus 1512)

Erasmus here combines Quintilian's image of the impassioned orator as an irresistible natural force (the great river overflowing its banks, described in *Institutio* 5.xiv.31, 12.x.61) with the late medieval image of poetry as opulent artifice (a river of gold). The conjunction of these two ideals is difficult to maintain and, when separated, both prove to have their problems. Opulent artifice in the hands of an insufficient artificer degenerates into

diffuse decoration while suasive-affective power can as easily destabilise as uphold a nation-state. Marlowe's Tamburlaine occupies the role of both hero and villain and, as Sidney complains, the 'honny-flowing Matron Eloquence' may be impersonated by 'a Curtizan-like painted affectation' (Sidney 1595; in Smith 1904: I 202). But although such worries are voiced in sixteenth-century discussions of copia, it is predominantly the positive connotations that are foregrounded; in the seventeenth century, the negative undertones become commoner and more insistent.

7.2.3 Of figures of speech

(7) As figures be the instruments of ornament in euery language, so be they also in a sorte abuses or rather trespasses in speach, because they passe the ordinary limits of common vtterance (Puttenham [1589])

All accounts of copia – whether ornamental or armamental, positive or negative – agree with Puttenham in identifying its 'instruments' as *figures of speech*, that is, forms of expression that deviate in specified ways from the norms of 'common utterance'. Providing a descriptive taxonomy of such figures was a primary goal of renaissance manuals of classical rhetoric, such as *De copia*; and the later manuals of vernacular rhetoric – whether addressed to poets, like Puttenham's treatise or to lawyers, like Hoskins's – followed suit, attempting to supply English equivalents for all the figures attested in classical theory or practice. It is clear that from their schooldays onwards, renaissance writers studied, memorised and internalised sets of figures and, under the same influence, renaissance critics – and ordinary readers – analysed a text or an author's style in terms of the repertoire of figures it deploys, as witness E.K.'s commentary, appended to Spenser's *Shepheards Calender* (1579), or Hoskins's guide to Sidney's *Arcadia* (Hoskins [?1599]). Some modern scholars have argued that this is still the most historically responsible approach to renaissance style.

(8) If you cannot pick up a list of the figures and read it through avidly, thinking of all the instances of their application and re-creation in Petrarch or Racine, Shakespeare or Milton, then you have not yet thought yourself back into a Renaissance frame of mind (Vickers 1988: 283)

Though I accept the spirit of these recommendations, it is not so easy to implement them in practice. The renaissance passion for rhetoric has bequeathed us not *a list* of figures but many lists – frequently at odds with one another in their nomenclature and classification systems. What is called a *trope* (a figure of thought) in one manual may be classed as a *scheme* (a

figure of sound) in another and though, for example, both Peacham and Puttenham have a figure called *onomatopoeia*, it has a much wider scope in Peacham's account (where it includes archaism and compounding). Add to this the sheer number of figures involved – approaching 200 in Peacham's list – and it becomes clear that for any brief account some principle of selection and synthesis is indispensable. The principle I have adopted here is to identify the subsets or collocations of figures responsible for some of the main stylistic trends of the period and to describe them in a way that attempts to mediate between definitions current in the Renaissance and linguistic terminology more familiar to modern readers.

I follow Hoskins – who follows Erasmus – in the titles I give to my groupings: *figures of varying* and *figures of amplifying*. Though I shall not always follow Hoskins – who does not always follow Erasmus – in deciding which figures belong to each category, the category labels themselves provide a useful reminder that rhetoric had a functional basis, in which figures were cultivated not as a set of forms but as the 'instruments' of a suasive or affective purpose. Varying is what attracts an audience and causes them to listen or read with pleasure, amplifying causes them to admire the author and remember his words. Varying achieves its ends by giving a discourse richness and diversity, amplifying gives it intensity and grandeur. Theoretically they are separable aspects of copia and can be separately exemplified (as they will be here). But it is when they are combined that the golden river of eloquence flows in full force.

7.3 Of varying

7.3.1 Introduction: the metamorphic style

Figures of varying all play off an element of persistence or repetition against an element of change. Many of these figures have a long history of use, their popularity spanning the Classical–Medieval–Renaissance divides. But almost all fell from favour by the end of the seventeenth century, and though some have found their defenders among twentieth-century critics, the full varying style has never been reinstated in popular taste. Modern readers confronted with Lyly or Shirley are still apt to share the impatience voiced by Bateson (1934: 32–3; 63–4) and Lewis (1969: 83–7). It's important to remember therefore that varying is central not only to the practice of copia but to renaissance aesthetic and cultural ideals more generally. As we have already seen (in 7.2.1), it is deeply rooted in the period's pedagogical practices (with their emphasis on putting a given content through multiple linguistic forms) and in its attitude to history (which looks to find

the classical past re-born in modern forms, casting Erasmus as a modern Seneca or Peele as a modern Anacreon). Quite commonly, linguistic and historical translations go hand in hand, as in Daniel's 1609 version of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, which simultaneously turns Latin into English and the Roman civil wars into the 'bloody factions' of Lancaster and York.

But the work which tells us most about what varying could mean to its renaissance practitioners is Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, arguably the most popular classical text of the first half of our period. Already famous for its tales of physical transformation (Chaucer, for instance, expected his audience to recognise allusions to Daphne becoming a tree and Actaeon a stag), *Metamorphoses* owed its enhanced renaissance standing to the way in which it gives its theme both a stylistic and a metaphysical dimension. Ovid was the recognised master of the figures of varying surveyed below (7.3.2–7.3.6) and in the final book of his poem he justifies both his stories and his style by an appeal to the philosophy of Pythagoras. Here all linguistic and physical metamorphoses are celebrated as types of metempsychosis, the process by which (in Pythagorean doctrine) each individual soul persists and retains its identity despite bodily change and all individual souls are diverse manifestations of a single divine original. Dryden called the speech in which this philosophy is expounded 'the Master-piece of the whole *Metamorphoses*' (Dryden 1700; in Watson 1962: II 270) and Sandys, in the commentary attached to his translation of the poem, interpreted Pythagorean ideas of perpetual variation, expressed in passages such as (8), as a noble pagan prefiguring of Christian ideas of immortality:

(8) All alter, nothing finally decayes:
Hether and thether still the Spirit strayes; . . .
As pliant wax each new impression takes;
Fixt to no forme, but still the old forsakes;
Yet it the same: so Soules the same abide,
Though various figures theire reception hide. (Sandys 1632)

7.3.2 *Varying the word i: morphological variation*

I shall follow Dryden in using *the turn* as a convenient shorthand name for a group of related figures that appear in renaissance rhetorics under more formidable titles, such as *adnominiatio*, *enallage*, *paregmenon*, *polypototon*, *traductio*. All represent the attempt to find native equivalents for the practice, much favoured by Ovid, of juxtaposing *morphological variants*, by which I mean different forms built on the same root lexeme. Gerard Langbaine,

writing in 1691, notes both the decline of the turn among his own contemporaries and its prominence a century earlier. He exemplifies its Latin pattern from Plautus:

(9) *Justam* rem & facilem <esse> oratum a vobis volo:
Nam *juste* ab *justis justus* sum Orator datus.
Nam *injusta* ab *justis* impetrare non decet:
Justa autem ab *injustis* petere insipientia'st

The formal variation in (9) draws partly on the resources of derivational morphology (to produce the series *justa-injusta-juste*) but more heavily on inflectional morphology (which produces *justam-justus-justa-justis*). While the first of these groups can be replicated in English (*just-unjust-justly*), the second creates more difficulty since *just*, like other English adjectives, is not inflected for number or case. Early-Modern-English writers faced the same difficulty, as Puttenham notes ([1589]: 171). By the sixteenth century, the loss of inflectional morphology had gone so far that the invariant word was pretty well the norm (see Lass this volume), which meant that it was almost impossible to make a single root produce patterning as dense as Plautus's. The examples in (10) are more typical of the English turn, both in their relative brevity and in their exclusive reliance on derivational variants.

(10) a) How should we tearme your dealings to be *iust*
If you *vniustly* deale with those, that in your *iustice* trust. (Kyd 1592)

b) if it be the guise of Italy to welcome *straungers* with *strangnes*, I must needes say the custome is *strange*. (Lyly 1579)

In many cases the lack of inflections means that the turn becomes quite abstract, existing only in the reader's recognition that an invariant form occupies two distinct syntactic categories or plays two distinct syntactic roles. So in (11a) *love* turns from verb to noun and in (11b) *pitie* turns from object to subject.

(11) a) They doe not *loue*, that doe not shew their *loue*
(Shakespeare 1623/?1594)

b) Knowledge might *pitie* winne, and *pitie* grace obtaine (Sidney 1591)

If further extended, turns of this type run the risk that their unvarying repetition of sound may (as Erasmus warns) strike the reader as demonstrating not copia but a cuckoo-like lack of it (King & Rix 1963: 16). Compare (9) with (12) for instance:

(12) But yet, per*chance* som *chance*
May *chance* to change my tune:

And, when (Souch) *chance* doth *chance*:
Then, shall I thank fortune? (Wyatt 1557/?1530–7)

But though the structure of English puts strict constraints on the viability of the turn as a stylistic device, the pre-standardised state of the language in the renaissance phase of our period offered temporary compensation, by providing writers with a repertoire of alternative realisations in both morphology and phonology (Lass, this volume). Variation between these forms occurs in most texts of the time, following predictable sociolinguistic patterns; but it may also be exploited for the more purely aesthetic purposes of creating turns, as in (13), where juxtaposition foregrounds the alternation between *th/s* verb endings in (13a) and variant syllable counts in (13b).

(13) a) With her, that *hateth* thee and *hates* vs all
(Shakespeare 1623/?1590–1)

b) These *violent* [3 syll.] delights have *violent* [2 syll.] endes.
(Shakespeare 1623/?1595–6)

Sometimes, instead of varying a lexical morpheme, writers create turns purely from the variants of grammatical morphemes. So (14) plays on the allomorphs of the (weak) past participle morpheme and (15) pits synthetic against analytic forms of the genitive (described by Rissanen in 4.2.5):

(14) Despis'*d*, distress*éd*, hat*ed*, martyr'*d*, kill'*d* (Shakespeare 1623/?1595–6)

(15) a) Upsprang the crye *of men* and *trompettes* blast [both in subject role]
b) In *Priams* ayd and rescue *of his town* [both in object role]
(Surrey 1557/?1540)

It may even be that the *double comparative* and *double superlative* forms of adjective (described by Lass in 3.8.3), which are often attributed by modern commentators to uncertainty of usage or typological transition in Early Modern English, should be interpreted, at least in some instances, as deliberate turns, which, like the genitives of (15), play off analytic against synthetic alternatives by combining the two. It's notable that such forms can be found in consciously grandiloquent discourse, as with the double comparative of (16a), and that Ben Jonson explicitly claims the usage as an 'Englishe Atticisme, or eloquent Phrase of speech', perorating, as if to prove his point, on the double superlative of (16b):

(16) a) The Kings of Mede and Lycaonia
With a *more larger* list of sceptres (Shakespeare 1623/1606–7)

> b) an Englishe Atticisme, or eloquent Phrase of speech, imitating the manner of the *most ancientest*, and finest Grecians, who, for more emphasis, and vehemencies sake used [so] to speake. (Jonson 1640)

In many cases, morphological varying supports other features of stylistic design. Considerations of metre, for example, may play a part in all the examples from (13) to (15), and in (15) the combining of genitive forms also allows Surrey to imitate a type of varying much admired in Latin but normally difficult to achieve in English without violating word-order norms or losing intelligibility. This is the figure of *chiasmus*, in which a sequence of identical or equivalent constituents is repeated in reverse order, making a pattern of ABBA:

A	B	B	A
cry	men	trumpet	blast
Priam	aid	rescue	town

In other cases, the formal pattern is semanticised, making the turn a figure of thought as well as a figure of speech:

(17) a) *loue* is not *loue*
Which *alters* when it *alteration* findes,
Or bends with the *remouer* to *remoue* (Shakespeare 1609)

b) Or as a Thief . . .
In at the window *climbes* . . .
So *clomb* this first grand Thief into Gods Fould:
So since into his Church lewd Hirelings *climbe*. (Milton 1667)

In (17a) *alter* and *remove* both imitate the inconstancy they denote by recurring in variant forms (*alteration*, *remover*); the equation of true love with constancy is echoed in the *in*variance of the repeated form *love–love*. In (17b) Milton uses the turn *climbs–clomb–climb* to align the actions of a generic prototype (*a thief* . . . *climbs*) with its parallel realisations in the biblical past (Satan's entry into Eden) and the English present (the transformation of the clergy into a salaried profession). And in (18):

(18) thou art so truth (Donne 1633/?1590s)

Donne produces an elliptical turn, in which the choice of the noun *truth* instead of the adjective *true* (present in the reader's consciousness, if not in the text, because demanded by the syntax) implies that truth is the essence of the beloved rather than a mere attribute.

By the end of the seventeenth century, the force of such examples could no longer be felt. Although Dryden uses the turn (for instance, 'their *vain*

triumphs and their *vainer* fears'), he does so as a conscious resurrection of the practice of Spenser, Ovid and Virgil and increasingly with misgivings. In 1693, he calls turns 'great Beauties' of style, but by 1697 he sees them as 'little Ornaments' or a 'darling Sin', unsuitable for an epic poem (such as Milton's) or the representation of a strong passion (such as Donne's). Using the favoured STYLE = CLOTHING metaphor of the period, he dismisses turns as 'thin and airy Habits' unlike 'the weight of Gold and of Embroideries . . . reserv'd for Queens and Goddesses' (in Watson 1962: II 150–2, 238–9).

7.3.3 Varying the word ii: polysemy and homonymy

For the sake of familiarity, I shall again use a late-seventeenth-century term, *the pun*, to cover a range of renaissance terms, such as *allusio*, *ambiguitas*, *amphibologia*, *antanaclasis*, *paronomasia*, *ploce*, *prosonomasia*, *skesis*. The pun is in some sense the converse of the turn, since here the form remains constant or nearly constant and what varies is the meaning. But it shakes hands with the turn in those cases where the writer draws attention to the figure by juxtaposing two occurrences of an invariant form in its variant senses, as in (19)

(19) a) or *pay* me quickly, or Ile *pay* you ['remunerate' → 'punish']
(Jonson 1616)

b) At one slight *bound* high overleap'd all *bound* ['jump' → 'limit']
(Milton 1667)

or when pun and turn are combined, as in (20), where the word that changes its meaning also changes its form (20a) or its syntactic category (20b):

(20) a) the *last* and *lasting* part ['final' → 'enduring'] (Browne 1658)

b) for he had almost forgot his *Compasse*, he was so farre out of *compasse* with thinking howe to *compasse* Philomela
[concrete noun → abstract noun → verb; 'instrument' → 'reckoning' → 'succeed with'] (Greene 1592)

This kind of pun, cultivated assiduously in the early part of our period, declined along with the turn in the course of the seventeenth century and by modern commentators is sometimes not recognised as a pun at all. But renaissance writing is equally rich in what is now regarded as the central, if not the sole, type of this figure, the elliptical pun, in which the form occurs only once and its two (or more) meanings are evoked by the context. Puns

of this sort are found, of course, in all periods; what distinguishes renaissance practice is the frequency with which they are used in non-comic contexts and for propositional or heuristic purposes. In *the heuristic pun* (as I shall call it) a similarity of sound between two words is used as evidence of a similarity or relatedness in what they denote. The title of Herbert's poem, *The Collar* (1633), is a heuristic pun of this kind, encapsulating the proposition (which the poem as a whole then illustrates) that anger (*choler*) is equivalent to a state of bondage (*collar*), and in another title, *The Sonne*, Herbert draws on one of the most popular puns of the period to prepare the reader for the discovery of Christ's dual nature, uniting the humble *son* of man with the glorious *sun* of heaven. In Milton's *At a Solemn Musick*, two heuristic puns in successive lines form the basis of a developing theological argument:

(21) That undisturbed Song of pure concent,
Ay sung before the saphire-colour'd throne (Milton 1673/?1633)

Concent can mean either 'assent' (now spelt *consent*) or 'musical concord' (now spelt *concent*) and here both meanings are invoked to create an equation between obedience and harmony, which is taken one step further by the pun on *ay* ('always' and 'yes') which invites us to imagine heavenly eternity as a state of perpetual assent.

As these examples illustrate, the variability of Early Modern English spelling fuels punning by creating a proliferation of homographs (see Salmon this volume). But the motivation to utilise this resource as a device of argument is the belief that a *homonym* is also, in some sense, a *synonym*, which is one facet of the more general belief that there is a natural correspondence between form and meaning. This view of language, often itself expressed by punning means – that *oratio est ratio* [speech is reason] or *nomen est omen* [name signals nature] – came down to renaissance writers with both classical and biblical authority. They found it debated in Plato's *Cratylus* (one of the works rediscovered in the Renaissance), exemplified in the etymological speculations of Varro's *De lingua latina*, and endorsed by Christ himself when he gave Simon the name Peter (*Petros* in the Greek New Testament) as a sign that he was to be the rock (*petra*) on which the Church would be founded (Matthew 16.18). The *nomen–omen* equation is not always entertained without scepticism in the Renaissance (and the opposite view carried the weight of Aristotle's authority); but it is entertained very widely, so that, whether seriously or whether with a conscious suspension of disbelief, most writers use puns as a source of knowledge – or at least a legitimate form of argument – regardless of whether there

is any etymological relatedness between the homonyms or any empirical similarity in their referents, as in the case of the Protestant polemicist, quoted by Wilson, who 'vehement in the cause of his countrie' turned Cardinal Pole's surname into a moral heuristic:

(22) o Poule, o whurle Poule, as though his name declared his evill nature (Wilson 1551)

7.3.4 Varying the word iii: lexical fields and sense relations

7.3.4.1 Introduction

A large number of the figures of varying involve word-play based on the sense relations we now call *synonymy*, *antonymy*, *hyponymy*. The simplest of these, synonymy, can be seen as the inverse of the pun: whereas the pun combines (full or partial) identity of form with difference in meaning, synonymy combines (full or partial) identity of meaning with difference of form. Antonymy and hyponymy are more complex types of relation, in which a shared element of meaning is combined with a foregrounded relation of opposition (in the case of antonymy) or inclusion (in the case of hyponymy). All three are *paradigmatic* relations, in that they structure the vocabulary to create a set of options for a given lexical slot. What is characteristic of the varying style is that the options are not treated as mutually exclusive; instead, the text presents a constellation of related words which play variations on the element of meaning they have in common. In (23), to take an extreme example, Burton exploits the recursive potential of the adjective slot to play a dozen variations on the theme of 'decrepit':

(23) How many decrepite, hoarie, harsh, writhen, bursten bellied, crooked, toothlesse, bald, bleareyed, impotent, rotten old men shall you see flickering still in every place. (Burton 1632)

Though the general description I have given applies to all the figures in this group, there are significant differences dictated by the kind of sense relation that is most salient, so that it will be worth considering the three main sense relations separately.

7.3.4.2 Synonymy (the basis of such figures as *sinonimia*, *interpretatio*, *paraphrasis*)

The multiplication of synonyms – *sinonimia* as it was generally called – is the first method of cultivating copia that Erasmus recommends and its popularity in the period owes much to the authority it gained from its

prominence as a school exercise in the Erasmian syllabus. To Puttenham it is so central to the concept of copia that he calls it 'the figure of store' (Puttenham [1589]: 214). This is in fact a revision of Erasmus's intentions, in that for him the practice of sinonimia was primarily a pedagogic strategy by which the budding orator acquired a repertoire of semantically equivalent words and became adept in selecting the one most appropriate to any particular audience, topic or occasion, since 'there is no word that is not the best in some particular place' (trans. King & Rix 1963: 20). But in the vernacular successors of *De copia*, the pedagogic practice has been converted into a feature of style. Peacham, for instance, describes sinonimia as a figure which

(24) adorneth and garnisheth speech, as a rich and plentiful wardrop, wherein are many and sundry changes of garmentes, to bewtifie one and the same person (Peacham 1593)

The simplest form of sinonimia, which Peacham himself draws on here, is the use of synonymic doublets (*adorneth and garnisheth*, *rich and plentiful*, *many and sundry*, *one and the same*). *Doubling*, as it has been called, has a long history in English and indeed can be documented as a stylistic feature of Indo-European languages in general (Koskenniemi 1968). It has been explained as a means of creating emphatic forms (by close-coupling items with primary stress) and/or of foregrounding key ideas (Mueller 1984: 147–61), and a list of the doublings in Colet's statutes (2) would indeed act as a précis of his message: *barbary/corrupcion – distayned/poysenyd – the olde laten spech/the varay Romayne tong – that ffylthynesse/abusyon – I abbanysh/Exclude*. But by the time Colet was writing, at the start of the sixteenth century, an intensified use of doublings had become the hallmark of the aureate style favoured by Caxton and his press; and by the century's end, under the intervening influence of Erasmian pedagogy, sinonimia was producing styles where, as in (24), every clause contains a doubling or, as in (5), doubling has become so commonplace – *comely/bewtifull*, *habillements/apparell*, *ashamed/out of countenaunce*, *plaine/simple*, *gallant/gorgious*, *clothes/coulours* – that tripling is required to foreground the central contrast between 'richest attire' (*silkes, tyssewes, costly embroderies*) and the undressed state (*naked, bare and not clad*).

In this form of sinonimia, the emphatic function of doubling, arguably still present in Colet's use, has been heavily overlaid with an elaborative or ornamental function. Peacham implicitly acknowledges this when he adopts Puttenham's 'rich clothing' analogy to describe the figure in (24) and it causes him to issue a caution on its use: 'although the eares of simple

hearers be satisfied, yet their minds are smally instructed' (Peacham 1593: 150). One solution to this problem (where it is felt as a problem) is to exploit the fact that synonymy rarely if ever involves a complete identity of meaning. In fact, in Erasmus's pedagogic plan, one point of practising sinonimia was to sensitise pupils to the differences (whether of sense or register) between referentially similar words. This practice finds literary expression in the device I shall call *interpretive sinonimia*, in which synonyms are arranged in a sequence that deepens or changes our understanding. In (25), for instance, Ralegh progressively expounds the meaning of *this earth* with two partial synonyms whose differences map the sequence of his (and his reader's) prospective burial and dissolution:

(25) But from this *earth*, this *grave* this *dust*
The Lord will raise me up I trust (Ralegh 1618)

The difference between elaborative and interpretive sinonimia is strikingly illustrated when Shakespeare uses them for respectively the first and last utterances of Holofernes in *Love's Labour's Lost*. Holofernes enters the play as a parodic version of the Erasmian pedagogue, the embodiment of what Hoskins (no doubt recalling the miseries of his youth) calls a 'schoolmaister foaming out synonymies' (Hoskins [?1599]: 24). He deals not in doublings but in quadruplings and, compared with (25), his synonyms for *earth* are repetitive rather than progressive or climactic.

(26) ripe as the pomewater, who now hangeth like a jewel in the ear of *caelo*, the *sky*, the *welkin*, the *heaven*, and anon falleth like a crab on the face of the *terra*, the *soil*, the *land*, the *earth*. (Shakespeare 1623/?1594–5)

His last speech however is very different. Rebuking the courtiers who have made fun of him and his companions, he substitutes interpretive for elaborative sinonimia:

(27) This is not generous, not gentle, not humble

Here *gentle* is linked by sound echoes to the words on either side of it (sharing its root morpheme *gen* with *generous* and its syllabic /l/ with *humble*) and it is partially synonymous with both of them. But they relate to quite different sectors of its Early Modern English sense range: as a term of social description (cf. *OED* 1), *gentle* is the opposite of *humble* and coincides with *generous* (a word recently imported to express the rank and appropriate virtues of the high-born courtier); but in its increasingly prevalent use as a term of moral description (cf. *OED* 8), *gentle* falls within the same semantic field as *humble*. The sequence of (27) as a whole thus probes the interconnections between social and moral values and, in context, provides

a crushing reproach to Holofernes's addressees, who, as courtiers, are of gentle rank, but accept the responsibilities of neither a social code (in which gentles are generous) nor a moral code (in which the gentle are humble).

In both its forms, elaborative and interpretive, sinonimia remains a major feature of literary language throughout the renaissance period. It is perhaps not coincidental that its dominance as a figure of speech coincided with the high-water mark of foreign borrowing (see Nevalainen, this volume), reflecting what was surely a heady sense that the lexical resources of English were becoming almost boundless. Its grip on the stylistic imagination of the time can be seen when Bacon uses it even in the act of criticising the excesses of copia:

(28) the whole *inclination and bent* of those times was rather towards copie than weight (Bacon 1605)

and when he revised his Essays in 1625, he massively increased the number of doublings (arguably promoting elaborative 'copie' at the expense of forensic 'weight'):

(29) a) Reade not to contradict, nor to belieue, but to waigh and consider (Bacon 1597)

b) Reade not to Contradict and Confute; Nor to Beleeue and Take for granted; Nor to Find Talke and Discourse; But to weigh and Consider. (Bacon 1625)

By the mid-seventeenth century, however, sinonimia was in decline, as changes in Milton's vocabulary confirm. Corns notes an increasing tendency towards an invariant form–meaning correspondence:

> Milton had in his earliest writing a pronounced preference for using sets of synonyms for recurrent concepts, whereas later he favours using the same words whenever a subject reappears. For example, in the first 3,000 words of *A Treatise of Civil Power* (1659) 'scripture' and 'scriptures' occur together twenty-five times, and the only other word used for holy writ is 'gospel' . . . In contrast, in the opening 3,000 words of *Prelatical Episcopacy* (1641) Milton uses not only the recurrent terms 'Bible', 'Gospel', and 'Scriptures', but also 'holy writ', 'that sovran book', 'the pure Evangelick Manna', 'holy text' and 'Gods word' (Corns 1990: 115)

7.3.4.3 Antonymy

Cruse points out that of all sense relations, the relation of oppositeness, though ill-defined and multifarious, is 'the most readily apprehended by

ordinary speakers' and 'possess[es] a unique fascination' (Cruse 1986: 197). Antonyms are experienced as at once maximally separated and very close, so that members of an antonymic pair often have identical contexts of use and are readily substituted for each other in speech errors. Common reasons for antonyms to co-occur in a discourse are as an expression of contrast (the figures of *syncrisis*, *contentio*, *antithesis*) as in the example Peacham quotes from Solomon's proverbs: '*wise* women *vphold* their house, but a *foolish* woman *pulleth it down*' (Peacham 1593: 162), or as a means of selecting the relevant sense of a polysemous word ('by *light* I don't mean not-*dark*, but not-*heavy*'). This is the use we find in (5), where Puttenham brings out the composite sense of *gallant* and *gorgeous* ('richly dressed') by a double set of antonyms, the *naked, bare and not clad* sequence focussing the 'dressed' component of their meaning while *plain* and *simple* highlight the 'rich' component. What is more specific to the renaissance handling of antonymy is a predilection for figures that seek to assert *both* halves of an antonymic pair, rather than treating them as mutually exclusive alternatives. It is this use of antonyms that we find in (4), partially repeated in (30) below, where Peacham's praise of the power of eloquence is expressed in its (and his) encompassing of opposites (*commendeth–dispraiseth*, *perswadeth–disswadeth*, *beloued–abhorred*, *obeied–auoidede*).

(30) what he commendeth is beloued, what he dispraiseth is abhorred, what he perswadeth is obeied, and what he disswadeth is auoidede

(Peacham 1593)

The extreme form of mutually inclusive opposites is the figure known from the mid-seventeenth century as *oxymoron* (more common sixteenth century terms are *contrapositum*, *synoeciosis*). This 'composicion of contraries' as Hoskins calls it ([?1599: 36) can be achieved by conjunction at the level of syntax (as in Wyatt's 'I *feare and hope*: I *burne and frese*') and compounding at the level of the word (as in Sidney's *climb-fall* or Herbert's *sowre-sweet*). But it is perhaps most commonly expressed by adjective–noun collocations and Lanham invites his readers to practise oxymoronic reading on such modern combinations as *military intelligence*, *academic administration*, *business ethics* and *airline food* (Lanham 1991: 106). Typical renaissance examples are Milton's *living death* and *darkness visible* or Sidney's *mourning pleasure*, *delightful terribleness* and *unkind kindnesse* (which combines oxymoron with a turn on *kind*). The closely related figure of *paradox* turns such combinations into propositional form, as in Shakespeare's *fair is foul and foul is fair* or Donne's *when thou hast done, thou has not done* (which combines paradox with a pun on *done/Donne*).

These figures of self-contradiction all challenge the 'commonsense view

of life as systematized in ordinary usage' by asking the reader to interpret collocations which 'entail irreconcilable elements of meaning or reference' (Leech 1969: 143, 140). Sometimes, in religious discourse particularly, the contradictions are maintained *as* contradictions and used to point to a plane of reality that transcends human conceptual categories, as with the paradoxes of the Annunciation in (31a). In other cases, the contradiction can be resolved, either by positing an out-of-the-ordinary psychological state, in which normally incompatible emotions and beliefs coexist, such as the self-divisions of Petrarchan love in (31b); or by varying the interpretation of one of the terms (via pun or metaphor) to yield a second, non-contradictory sense, as in (31c–d).

(31) a) yea thou art now
Thy Makers maker, and thy Fathers mother (Donne 1633)

b) So strangely (alas) thy works on me prevaile,
That in my woes for thee, thou art my joy;
And in my joyes for thee, my onel' anoy. (Sidney 1591)

c) No face is faire that is not full so blacke
[*black* = 'dark-complexioned'; *fair* = 1.'pale-complexioned' (*OED* 6); = 2. 'beautiful' (*OED* 1)] (Shakespeare 1623/?1594–5)

d) I wak'd, she fled, and day brought back my night
[*day* is interpreted literally, *night* metaphorically as 'emotional darkness' and/or 'physical blindness'] (Milton 1673)

All these forms of paradox are well precedented in classical and native vernacular tradition; but, as with the pun, the Renaissance pushes a traditional practice to extremes, creating what Colie (1966) called a 'paradoxia epidemica'. One result was to force a specialisation in the sense of the term *paradox* itself. It entered English meaning 'an opinion contrary to common belief' (a definition that covers both Erasmus's famous defence of folly and Copernicus's hypothesis that the earth moves round the sun). But by the mid-seventeenth century, this was giving way as the dominant sense of the word to the more specialised meaning of 'a self-contradictory statement which is nonetheless true'. By that time, though, the epidemic had almost burnt itself out. Where Browne in 1642/3 was happy to entertain Tertullian's famous paradox of faith *certum est quia impossibile est* [it is certain because it is impossible] on the grounds that 'to credit ordinary and visible objects is not faith but perswasion' (*Religio Medici*: I, 9.), Hobbes in 1651 was frankly dismissive: 'both parts of a contradiction cannot possibly be true; and therefore to enjoin the belief of them, is an argument of ignorance' (*Leviathan*: I, 12). From the standpoint of empirical rationalism, paradox

appeared not so much an instrument of knowledge as a form of verbal trickery.

The relation between linguistic description and empirical reality is also at issue in another major figure of contrast in the period, *paradiastole*, which brings into confrontation two descriptive terms with identical reference but opposite evaluations: 'as, to call an unthrift, a liberall Gentleman . . . the niggard, thriftie' (Puttenham [1589]: 185). Paradiastole enters the literary language from the rhetorics of both Court and law-court, and it carries the characteristics of each. Puttenham, the courtier, calls this figure 'the soother' and associates it with courtly euphemism (which might be described, paradiastolically, as either flattery or politeness). Peacham (in his 1577 edition) associates it rather with the forensic function of extenuation; but by 1593 he castigates it as a perverted use of the 'rich wardrop' of rhetoric: it is used 'to cover vices with the mantles of virtues' (Peacham 1593: 169). In the course of the seventeenth century paradiastole became increasingly problematic through being associated with the relativising of political morality in Machiavelli's arguments that *clemency* is equivalent to *weakness* or *cruelty* to *justice* (Skinner 1991). But sixteenth-century writers could still use it positively, as a means of introducing moral discrimination into the language of description. In (32), Sidney performs a paradiastolic variation on the simple statement 'knight fought against knight' to insinuate the different moral standing of the two protagonists, since in each variation the first term is a negatively valued equivalent of the second:

(32a) there was . . . rage against resolution, fury against virtue, confidence against courage, pride against nobleness; (Sidney 1590)

To climax the series Sidney turns to the figure of paradox:

(32b) love in both breeding mutual hatred

forcing his reader to discriminate between apparent synonyms (*in both/mutual*) and to see contrary emotions (*love/hatred*) as co-present and causally related.

In all these cases, the compatibility or coexistence of opposites receives more emphasis than their differences. In renaissance writing generally, the force of antithesis is more commonly carried by lexis than by syntax and often there is a counterpoint between lexis and syntax, with antonyms characteristically appearing in syntactic structures which make them parallel (e.g. *what commendeth . . . what dispraiseth* in (30)) or sequential (e.g. *now hangeth . . . anon . . . falleth* in (26)) or conjoined (e.g. *burn and freeze*) or dependent (e.g. *hot ice*). (33) is typical:

(33) the treasures we vp-lay
Soone wither, vanish, fade and melt away (Bolton 1600)

The semantic focus here is on the contrast between human aspiration and its frustration by the power of mutability (expressed in the quadruple sinonimia of the last line), but structurally their adversative relation is diminished: the couplet form foregrounds the phonetic similarity between *uplay* and *melt away* and the syntax places *uplay* in a restrictive relative clause modifying the main argument (*treasures*) of *melt away*. In effect, the construction is a large-scale version of the modifier–head relation found in oxymorons such as *living death*.

7.3.4.4 Hyponymy and meronymy (the figures of *distributio*, *diaeresis*, *divisio*, *enumeratio*, *merismus*, *partitio*; *itemising*, *anatomising*)

Hyponymy is a class–member relation where the *superordinate* term names the class and the *hyponyms* its component members. The prototype case is biological taxonomy and it is an example of this type that Peacham chooses to illustrate the figure of *diaeresis*:

(34) aske the cattaile, and they shall inform thee, the fowles of the aire & they shal tel thee . . . or the fishes of the sea, and they shal certifie thee (Peacham 1593)

Here, as Peacham points out, a generalisation ('brute beasts do teach') is replaced by its instantiating particulars. But because each of the particulars contains the superordinate term as a component of its meaning (*cattaile*, *fowles*, *fishes* all entail 'beast'), there is a high degree of semantic recurrence in a list of hyponyms, even where individual hyponyms are mutually incompatible (as *fowl* is with *fish*). And in the verb set of (34), hyponymy blurs into synonymy (depending on whether we take *inform/tel/certifie* to be variant types of the action 'teach' or simply alternative labels for the same act). At the other extreme of hyponymy are sets such as (35):

(35) The Rose, the shine, the bubble and the snoe (Bolton 1600)

whose superordinate term – call it *ephemera* – does not denote a so-called natural class like 'creature' but an artificial class created by a particular world-view or an individual act of imaginative apprehension (though as Lakoff (1987) and others have argued, the distinction between natural and culture-specific classification systems is by no means clear-cut). Many such classes were created by renaissance theories of the universe as a network of analogical structures which correspond to each other at all points (Mazzeo 1964). Within this scheme of things, for example, *lion*, *sun*, *gold* (which to

most modern readers evoke quite disparate natural classes) are interpreted as co-hyponyms of a superordinate term for 'head of a hierarchy'. But as that example shows, unless reader and writer share the conceptual scheme which provides the underlying generalisation, hyponymic sequences are liable to dissolve into semantically incoherent lists. Herbert's poem *Dotage* opens up this possibility by offering an apparently disparate sequence – *casks of happinesse*, *childrens wishes*, *chases in Arras* – as instances of the traditional class of 'earthly vanities'.

Different problems of construal are presented by sets of terms such as:

(36) a) Rattles, Drums, Halberts, Horses, Babies o' the best . . .
(Jonson 1631/1614)

b) your beech-coale, and your cor'siue waters,
Your crosse-lets, crucibles, and cucurbites. (Jonson 1612)

c) phesants, caluerd salmons,
Knots, godwits, lamprey's (Jonson 1612)

It may be tempting to read (36c) as a more detailed example of the 'brute beast' set in (34): in this case itemising the individual species of 'fish' and 'fowl'. But in context the common factor is that they are all items on the same menu, just as the terms in (36b) are unified by denoting an alchemist's tools of trade, and those of (36a) by being a stock-list of things for sale at Bartholomew Fair. In other words, a different lexical relation is at work in (36); words are bound together not by hyponymy but *meronymy*. Like hyponymy this is a relation in which one term can be said to 'include' a number of others. But whereas hyponymy is a member–class relation, reflecting a taxonomy or conceptual hierarchy, meronymy is a part–whole relation, reflecting the existence of complex structures in concrete reality. The *holonym* names the whole and the *meronyms* its component parts. The prototype case of meronymy is 'the division of the human body into parts' (Cruse 1986: 157–80), and the figure of *divisio* in renaissance writing often takes this form too, as when Spenser celebrates the body of his bride by cataloguing 'her goodly eyes . . . her forehead . . . her cheeks . . . her lips . . . her brest . . . her paps . . . her snowie necke' (*Epithalamion* 1595: ll.171–7). But meronymy is also at work in the analysis of an event into its causal and/or chronological phases, as in (37) where an event first summarised as 'my love is slain' is then analysed into a narrative sequence:

(37) Assail'd, fight, taken, stabb'd, bleed, fall, and die (Donne 1635)

Renaissance rhetoricians tend not to distinguish between hyponymic and meronymic figures (though Peacham's discussion of *enumeratio*, for

instance, is clearly and exclusively meronymic) and in the stylistic practice of the period their similarities are probably more important than their differences. Both provide techniques for particularising rather than generalising and many examples could be construed as either, for instance:

(38) And swims or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flyes (Milton 1667)

This is in one sense hyponymic, all the verbs being modes of 'locomotion'. But, as with (36c), the context makes their relation meronymic: they enumrate the component vicissitudes of Satan's journey. Similarly, Burton's list (23) could be construed as either the varieties of decrepitude (hyponymy) or its coexistent symptoms (meronymy). But the exercise of reading these examples both ways highlights crucial differences between hyponymy and meronymy. Hyponymic figures reflect the procedures of renaissance neo-Platonic thought by approaching an abstract idea (such as mutability) through its divergent concrete instantiations (such as a primrose, a bubble, snow) to which the idea in turn gives meaningful connection; meronymic figures, in which a physical entity is broken down into its component parts or an event into its successive phases, look forward to the more empirical approach to nature that comes to the fore in the later seventeenth century.

7.3.5 *Varying the word iv: metaphor (translatio, transport, translated words; allegoria; conceit)*

Metaphor is a form of lexical variation in which a word from one field of reference (the *tenor*) is replaced by one from another field (the *vehicle*) on the basis of some perceived similarity between the two fields (the *ground*). In the example with which Puttenham ([1589]: 178) illustrates the figure: 'to say, *I cannot digest your unkinde words*, for I cannot take them in good part', the tenor is *take in good part*, the vehicle is *digest*, and the ground is the analogy between the mental process of receiving information and the physical process of eating.

Metaphor thus shares with other figures of varying a persistence (of meaning) combined with a change (of form), and it has particular affinities with hyponymic figures, since the semantic link between tenor and vehicle (as between co-hyponyms) is their mutual relation to an unstated third term (in one case the ground, in the other the superordinate): digesting and taking in good part are both instances of, let's say, 'successful assimilation', in the same way as, in (35), the bubble and the snow are both instances of 'ephemera'. But metaphor is at once the more challenging and the more rewarding figure. In interpreting sequences like (34) and (35), the reader can

reconstruct the superordinate by comparing the co-hyponyms, whereas in the pure form of metaphor neither tenor nor ground are stated and their recovery imposes a more active role on the reader, who becomes almost co-creator of the metaphorical meaning. A passive reader can after all take *I cannot digest . . . words* as a literal (if trivially informative) statement of fact.

Most renaissance commentators agree with Quintilian (*Institutio* 8.vi.4–18) that metaphor is both 'the commonest and by far the most beautiful of tropes'. It is the commonest because of its occurrence in the metaphors of everyday speech, where I '*boil* with rage' or '*see* your point'; in its literary form, it is 'the most beautiful' not only because it evokes creative activity in the reader but because that activity results, as in the case of the heuristic pun and some forms of paradox, in a changed understanding of the world, in this case by causing us to reanalyse one phenomenon in terms of another. Puttenham's metaphor, for instance, prompts a mutual transfer of attributes between the activities of conversing and eating, in a way that, potentially, alters our attitude to both.

Allegory, where this double apprehension is extended from a single word to a whole narration, is, in consequence, even more highly valued. Peacham likens metaphor to a star, allegory to a constellation (1593: 27) and for Puttenham allegory is 'the chief ringleader and captaine of all other figures, either in the Poeticall or oratorie science' ([1589]: 186). They speak for a period that inherited allegory not only as a genre of writing (medieval vernacular precedents include *Piers Plowman* and the *Roman de la Rose*) but also as a method of reading, which could be applied to texts not overtly allegorical. The Stoic philosophers had found moral meanings in Greek myths, the Church Fathers had turned the Old Testament into an allegory of the New and laid the foundations for a four-level interpretation of all Scriptural writings, and the early humanists had transferred these methods of bible exegesis to classical texts such as Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, finding that 'manie times under the selfesame words they comprehend some true vnderstanding of naturall Philosophie, or sometimes of politike gouernement, and now and then of diuinitie' (Harington 1591: in Smith 1904 II, 201–2). It was as the conscious culmination of these traditions that Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1590/1596), the first native and nationalist epic of the Renaissance, was designed as a multi-level allegory extended through twenty four Books.

Where allegory intensifies metaphor by protracting the vehicle and multiplying the tenor, the *conceit* does so by increasing the conceptual distance between tenor and vehicle and so heightening the sense of wonder when the ground of their likeness is discovered. In practice, a conceit is

almost always an extended metaphor since the writer undertakes to prove the 'far-fetcht' likeness he has posited, to 'hammer it out' as Shakespeare's Richard II puts it, having set himself the task of comparing 'this prison where I live unto the world' (*Richard II* V.v.1–41). Sidney similarly offers a feature-by-feature comparison between a palace façade and Stella's face (*Astrophil and Stella*, ix), and, in what is now, and was then, one of the most famous of renaissance conceits, Donne details the respects in which lovers' souls are like a pair of compasses:

(39) Thy soule the fixt foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if the'other doe.
And though it in the center sit,
Yet when the other far doth rome,
It leanes, and hearkens after it,
And growes erect, as that comes home (Donne 1633)

But if allegory can be regarded as the 'captain' among metaphoric figures, the conceit is perhaps the group's overreacher. Compare (39) with the two metaphors for beheading which Hoskins cites from Sidney's *Arcadia* (Hoskins [?1599]: 8)

(40) a) to divorce the faire mariage of the head & body
b) heads disinherited of their naturall signioryes

Both of these metaphors are grounded in the system of natural correspondences that were believed to exist between physical, interpersonal and political structures, such that

head : body :: husband : wife :: prince : state.

Metaphors such as (40) support the belief system that supports them by encouraging the reader to discover it afresh in the act of interpreting them. In principle, a conceit works in the same way, merely taking a more unexpected starting-point. Sidney's conceit of the palace façade simply elaborates a very old analogy which sees the body as the house of the soul. But conceits like (39), and its more extreme descendants in the work of Cowley and Cleveland, go beyond the range of traditional correspondences in search of ever more startling ones, until, effectively they begin to privatise metaphor (as Herbert's *Dotage* begins to privatise hyponymy). And by privatising metaphor, they make the whole system of correspondences appear to be the product of a poet's conceit (= 'imaginative prowess') rather than something given in nature.

The conceit fell from favour by the end of the seventeenth century and the extravagance of its procedures was in part responsible for the

discrediting of metaphor more generally (as well as for the rapid pejoration of the terms *far-fetched* and *conceited*). But for the late Elizabethan commentators, there is still 'no trope more flourishing than a metaphor' (Fraunce 1588: 15). Peacham puts it first in his collection and gives it by far the longest entry (1593: 3–14) and Hoskins revises Erasmus by replacing sinonimia with metaphor at the head of his figures of varying. Metaphor can indeed be seen as the epitome of renaissance varying, if only because its alternative name, *translation*, identified it with those other types of varying to which the period gave the name *translation* too: from metaphrase, the translation of language, through metamorphosis, the translation of bodies, up to metempsychosis, the translation of souls.

7.3.6 Varying the phrase: apposition as a structural principle

As we have seen in 7.3.2.3, the practice of lexical variation is associated with parallel and recursive constructions in syntax. The paradigm case is *apposition*. In one sense, apposition is the inevitable syntactic consequence of the figure of sinonimia, since it appears in its simplest form as soon as synonyms are juxtaposed, or, to take the definition given in Lily's *Royal Grammar* (1567), wherever there is 'direct or indirect conjunction of two substantives in the same case, one of which is explained by the other' (Michael 1970: 136). Lily and other renaissance commentators treat apposition as a category of both grammar and rhetoric and its rhetorical applications in the period frequently stretch the bounds of its grammatical description. It may be useful, however, to start from a more restrictive modern definition. In the canonic case, two or more linguistic units are said to be in apposition under the conditions listed in (41):

(41) (a) they are co-constituents of a larger unit;
(b) they are constituents of the same grammatical level;
(c) they are performing the same syntactic function;
(d) one of them could be omitted without affecting the acceptability of the larger unit;
(e) they have the same extra-linguistic reference
(see Quirk *et al.* 1972: 620–48; Matthews 1981: 222–36)

The key criteria of apposition then are semantic reiteration, formal reiteration and codependency. In renaissance practice, any one of these criteria may be be relaxed (or conversely, foregrounded) in specific examples of use. The following examples will illustrate some of the main possibilities (appositional units are enclosed by {..})

(42) Come Sleepe, o Sleepe, {the certaine knot of peace,}
{The bathing place of wits,} {the balme of woe,}
{The poor mans wealth,} {the prysoners release,}
{The indifferent Judge betweene the hie and lowe} (Sidney 1591)

In (42) all five conditions of (41) are met. The six marked units occur in the same sentence, where they are constituents of the same level and type (all noun phrases fulfilling the same syntactic role as the first term in the series, *sleep*). They all have the same extra-linguistic referent (the concept or state that *sleep* usually designates) and any one of them could be omitted without making the sentence as a whole ungrammatical. This example represents the simplest form of appositional structure and its sequence of noun phrases shows obvious affinities with the elaborated address forms of Lydgate (see Blake *CHEL* II: 527–8), which derive in turn from the litany and canticle formulae of religious discourse. But Sidney here carries out a more thoroughgoing secularisation of the content and the synonymic sequence is as much interpretive as elaborative, one effect of the whole being to provide a definition of the original unanalysed term, *sleep*. Apposition is a popular method of definition in the period, it defines by accumulation rather than by abstraction or reduction and it permits – indeed promotes – the inclusion of alternative and potentially contradictory perspectives.

In some appositional constructions, the criterion of semantic repetition is loosened, synonymy being replaced by hyponymy or meronymy as the semantic relation between the units, but as if in compensation, the criterion of formal repetition is usually in these cases strictly maintained, as in Fuller's meronymic portrait of Bishop Jewel:

(43) . . . So {*devout* in the *Pew* where he *prayed*} {*diligent* in the *Pulpit* where he *preached*} {*grave* on the *Bench* where he *assisted*} {*milde* in the *Consistory* where he *judged*} {*pleasant* at the *Table* where he *fed*} {*patient* in the *bed* where he *died*} . . . (Fuller 1655; original italics)

Here the appositional series is on the verge of becoming a list. But all elements are bound together syntactically by repeating the pattern *[Adj] in the [N] where he [V]*, and they are linked semantically by referring to a single extra-linguistic entity – Bishop Jewel's life – and together forming a definition of it. The series could easily be recast in the canonic appositional form of (42) as: 'Bishop Jewel, cleric, judge, domestic companion'.

In the following example, it is the criterion of syntactic codependency that is relaxed, since the operative units are complete and independent clauses. What makes the sequence an instance of apposition in the rhetorical if not the grammatical sense is the high degree of semantic reiteration.

In a particularly Ovidian form of variation, all four units express the same proposition (that beauty is evanescent).

(44) {Beauty is but a flowre,
Which wrinckles will deuoure,}
{Brightnesse falls from the ayre,}
{Queenes haue died yong and faire,}
{Dust hath closde Helens eye} (Nashe 1600)

It is by this means that apposition is elaborated and enlarged as a structural principle. For within Nashe's poem as a whole, this stanza takes its place in a much larger design, in which the general proposition that 'none from [death's] darts can fly' is reiterated in successive stanzas, each of which takes a hyponymic variant on the theme, illustrating the death of the rich, of the beautiful, of the strong, of the intelligent. The semantic recurrence is echoed and reinforced by the formal recurrences of stanza and refrain 'I am sick, I must die'. This type of appositional construction could be extended almost *ad infinitum* by writers intent on tracking resemblances across the whole of their analogical universe. Hoskins notes, for example, of Sir John Davies's *Orchestra*, a work of over 1,500 lines, that 'this only tricke made vpp J:Ds poeme of dauncing, All daunceth, the heavens, the elements, mens myndes, commonwealths, & soe by parts all daunceth' (Hoskins [?1599]: 23).

7.4 Of amplifying

7.4.1 Introduction: the grand style

(45) There are three maner of stiles or inditings, the great or mightie kinde, when we vse great wordes, or vehement figures. The small kinde, when we moderate our heate by meaner wordes, and vse not the most stirring sentences. The [lowe] kinde, when we vse no *Metaphores* nor translated words, nor yet vse any amplifications, but goe plainly to worke, and speake altogether in common wordes. (Wilson 1553)

Amplifying is an ambiguous term in renaissance critical vocabulary. One of its senses continues the tradition of medieval rhetoric, in which *amplificatio* effectively means prolongation, being associated with figures for expanding on or extending the topic of discourse (by digressions, repetitions, reformulations). But in the renaissance revision – and re-classicising – of rhetoric, amplifying was also interpreted as the equivalent of what Aristotle had called *auxesis*, a heightening or intensifying of emotional impact (*Rhetoric*, I.1368a 22–27). In this conception, the topic is made imaginatively

larger not just verbally longer; indeed in some contexts the best means of amplifying may be to abbreviate.

For renaissance commentators, amplifying in the *auxesis* sense is preeminently a property of what by the end of our period had become known as *the grand style*. Earlier names are more various, but the basic division of styles into three major types, as given by Wilson in (45), was inherited by the Renaissance from Roman rhetoricians as was the linking of each stylistic type to a particular rhetorical function: 'the simple style for proving, the middle style for pleasing, the vehement style for persuading' [*subtile in probando, modicum in delectando, vehemens in flectendo*] (Cicero, *Orator*, 21.69). Though all three functions are necessary, and a speaker may well switch from one style to another in any given discourse, the grand style (Wilson's *great or mightie kinde*, Cicero's *vehement* style) stands at the head of the triumvirate because it has the power to *change* its audience: it 'implants new ideas and roots out the old' [*inserit novas opiniones, evellit insitas*] (*Orator*, 28.97). It is typically depicted in images of tempests and torrents, or of height, light and flight – hence the terms in which Milton appeals for divine aid to achieve a style grand enough to match the 'great Argument' of *Paradise Lost*:

(46) I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous Song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th'*Aonian* Mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhime . . .
What in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support (Milton 1667)

7.4.2 *Amplifying the word*

7.4.2.1 The latinate vocabulary

For most renaissance commentators, the obvious route to the grand style lay in the use of what Wilson (in 45) calls 'great words', or Marlowe in the prologue to *Tamburlaine* calls 'high-astounding terms'; and most saw the obvious source of such words as the stratum of the lexicon borrowed from the classical languages (which I shall here call *latinate*, adopting the broad-based definition proposed by Nevalainen this volume, 5.2.2). The link between latinity and amplifying is illustrated in (46), where the epic qualities Milton desires are both described and stylistically epitomised in the Latin-derived words *illumine*, *support*, while their negative counterparts (*dark*, *low*) are expressed in what Dryden disparagingly called 'our Old *Teuton* Monosyllables' (Dryden 1697; in Watson 1962: II 252). This

correlation was already well established at the beginning of our period, as witness Caxton's praise of Skelton for translating Diodorus Siculus into '*polysshed* and *ornate* terms' instead of '*rude* and *old* langage' (Prologue to the *Eneydos*, 1490; in Blake 1973: 80). In Caxton's own revision of Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*, published in 1485 and intended, as his Prologue tells us, to supply a 'noble' vernacular work on a nationalist theme, he ennobled the style to match, removing many of Malory's alliterations – the residue of older, native techniques of heightening – and increasing the number of latinate words. Malory's '*s*ate *s*orowyng', for instance, becomes Caxton's 'made *lamentacion*' (Blake 1968: 40–1). Many other writers had the same preference, making the *-ation* (<*acion*>, <*acioun*>) noun suffix and the *-al* and *-ate* adjective suffixes among the most prominent style-markers of fifteenth-century 'aureate' writing (as in aure-*ate* itself). These suffixes are still much in evidence in Skelton's *Replycacion*, foregrounded as rhyme syllables in a passage where, like Milton in (46), he aims to both extol and exemplify the power of poetic eloquence:

(47) Howe there is a spyrituall
And a mysteriall
And a mysticall
Effecte Energiall . . .
Of hevenly inspyracion
In laureate creacyon
Of poetes commendacion (Skelton 1528)

Lexically, Skelton's advance on Caxton is that he is not content with obtaining his 'great words' *via* French; he also borrows from classical sources direct. *Energiall*, for instance, comes to him from Aristotle *via* Quintilian to describe a key property of the grand style, what Sidney later called 'that same forciblenes or *Energia* (as the Greekes cal it), of the writer' (Sidney 1595; in Smith 1904: I 201).

The period separating (47) and (46) – 1528–1667 – witnessed the great influx of latinate borrowings documented by Nevalainen (this volume 5.4.3), an influx that the grand style not only benefited from but actively sponsored. Whereas in technical genres imports were needed to fill gaps in the native lexicon when English displaced Latin in fields of scholarship requiring terms such as *education*, *embryo*, *figurative*, in literary genres the imports were often synonymous – in referential terms – with items already existing in the language. The motive for borrowing in this case is purely stylistic, as appears in the seventeenth-century dictionaries (such as Cockeram 1623 and later editions of Bullokar) which offer their readers lists of

synonyms and defend the apparent redundancy by an appeal to the public demand for 'ample' alternatives to 'vulgar words'. Moreover, just as the distinction between literary and technical genres is not clear-cut in the Renaissance (see 7.2.1 above) nor is the dividing line between stylistic and utilitarian borrowings. No language *has* to borrow to fill a lexical gap. As long as it has word-formation rules it can neologise from native resources (as German renaissance writers largely did), or it can augment its word-stock by calques rather than borrowings, as Sir John Cheke demonstrated by preferring, for instance, *onwriting* to *superscription* (Barber 1976: 91). The relative failure of Cheke's native neologisms and the overwhelming preference of his contemporaries for the latinate reflects in part the previous history of the language, with its long-established habit of borrowing from French (see Burnley, *CHEL* II: 423–32); but, more immediately, it expresses the conscious desire of English renaissance writers to assimilate to classical culture and the widespread belief that latinate forms lent sonorousness and authority to great arguments in whatever genre.

What Cheke and other mid-sixteenth-century purists perhaps did achieve by resisting the latinate invasion and defending the dignity of native 'Saxon' English was to develop a general awareness of the etymological origin of words and an appreciation that the Saxon and latinate elements in the word-stock had different and complementary expressive properties. As I have argued elsewhere (Adamson 1989), these properties relate directly to the different conditions in which the two layers of the lexicon are learned. Saxon words are typically learned early, learned through speech and in the context of physical experience. Hence no one needs to be told the meaning of *light* or *strong*; they consult their memories of all the experiences with which the word is connected. Words like *illumine* or *energial*, by contrast, are learned late, learned through education and interpreted by reference to explicit definition. They are therefore associated not only with a formal, public style but also with a range of meaning that is primarily abstract and ideational, whereas Saxon words are associated with private and intimate discourse and their semantic range is characteristically experiential: they encode perceptions, emotions, evaluations. This means that any discourse aiming to encompass both kinds of meaning is likely to incorporate both kinds of word, as Shakespeare does in (48) where the second line virtually paraphrases the first:

(48) Absent thee from felicitie a while,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in paine
(Shakespeare 1623/1600–1)

Here – as Hamlet urges Horatio not to commit suicide – the two coordinated imperatives focus on complementary aspects of what it means to forgo the comforts of death, and they do so by drawing on the complementary strengths of the two lexical strata. In the first line, the key words, *absent*, *felicity*, are used to convey an intellectual apprehension of a state of stoical endurance, which they simultaneously dignify by their own stylistic formality. The second line turns to the physical reality of living on and expresses it in predominantly Saxon vocabulary (the only exception, *pain*, though Romance in origin, would, for renaissance writers, be assimilated to the group of Dryden's 'old Teuton monosyllables' by virtue of at least being monosyllabic and old).

In drama and sermon, whose audiences might include both the educated and the unlatined, this kind of register-switching and self-paraphrase is particularly common, but the pattern is repeated in other genres too, including the natural home of the grand style, epic. Perhaps because the grand style was so clearly defined in functional rather than formal terms and because its function was so clearly understood to be persuasion or moving, most renaissance writers ground the magniloquent latinate in the homely Saxon. In a trivial sense, they have no choice: since the *closed class* words of English (prepositions, articles, conjunctions) have remained almost exclusively Germanic, even the most ardent Latiniser is bound to produce a hybrid text. It is only in the *open class* (nouns, verbs, adjectives) that significant choice can be made and at this level, from the mid-sixteenth century onwards, the norm for the grand style is to interweave latinate and Saxon. Apart from phrasal varyings, such as (48), we find synonymic doublings (e.g. Bacon's *find talk and discourse*; Donne's *contignation and knitting*; Browne's *breach or dichotomie*; *fire and scintillation*) and syntagmic couplings (e.g. Shakespeare's *lass unparalleld*; *cold obstruction*; Milton's *irrecoverably dark*; *bad eminence*; and, in (46), *things unattempted*). Styles which, by contrast, collocate latinate with latinate – in couplings such as *ingent affabilitee* and *magnificall dexteritee* or doublings such as *celebrate and extoll* or *tortive and errant* – tend to appear in parodies rather than instances of the grand style, as the marker of an 'affectate' discourse or a speaker out of touch with reality. The language of Wilson's Lincolnshire clergyman (excerpted in (49)) or Shakespeare's Agamemnon (discussed in Adamson 1989: 220–2) exemplifies not *auxesis* but the figure called *bomphiology* (or, more familiarly, *bombast*), the use of words 'as seeme altogether farced full of wind' (Puttenham [1589]: 259):

(49) Pondering, expending, and reuoluting with my selfe, your ingent affabilitee, and ingenious capacity, for mundaine affaires: I cannot but celebrate, and extol your magnifical dexteritie aboue all other. (Wilson 1553)

7.4.2.2 Malapropism (*cacozelon*)

It has been argued that the stratification of the English lexicon is not simply a linguistic fact but a social problem, since it is 'apt to form or . . . accentuate class divisions' (Jespersen 1946: 134). As Jespersen notes, anyone who has not had access to a classical education will find latinate words hard to understand and to produce, because 'there are usually no associations of ideas between them and the ordinary stock of words and no likenesses in root or in the formative elements to assist the memory'. And because English is unique among Germanic languages in the degree to which it has borrowed its prestigious words from Latin, it has, he suggests, a unique form of humour, based on the abortive efforts of the unlatined to achieve a grander style. The usual name for their speech errors, *malapropism*, commemorates Sheridan's Mrs Malaprop, a character created in the neo-classical phase of our period (in *The Rivals* 1775), but the literary type came into being much earlier. In 1553, Wilson supplied anecdotes of 'poore simple men' or 'ignorant felowes' mangling the form or meaning of latinate words; in 1577, Peacham turned the malady into a figure of speech, *cacozelon* (a term borrowed from Quintilian and redefined for the purpose); and by 1600 Shakespeare had created two of literature's most memorable cacozealots, Mistress Quickly and Dogberry (the latter almost certainly inspired by one of Wilson's anecdotes). The class bias of the humour is evident enough. Both characters use grandiose words to shore up an insecure social footing: Quickly, as the would-be respectable 'hostess of the tavern', and Dogberry as 'a wise fellow, and which is more, an officer, and which is more, a houshoulder . . . and one that hath two gownes' (*Much Ado* IV.ii.80–5); and both trip over their want of Latin, misforming words (such as *allicoly* for *melancholy*, *vagrom* for *vagrant*) or misapplying them (*redemption* for *damnation*, *odorous* for *odious*) or sometimes doing both at once, as in Quickly's praise of the 'fartuous' Mistress Page (*Merry Wives* II.ii.97).

And yet – *pace* Jespersen – Dogberry's repertoire of great words is not simply, or not solely, the object of ridicule. One important distinction between dogberryisms and malapropisms is that in the renaissance phase of our period the distinction between creative and incompetent latinising was far from clear-cut: a looser set of restrictions on latinate derivational morphology obtained than for later periods and until 1604 there was no dictionary to show which forms or meanings were already attested and in use. So whereas in 1775 Mrs Malaprop is simply wrong in using *reprehend* for *comprehend* in (50a):

(50) a) Sure if I reprehend any thing in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue (Sheridan 1775)

the case is not so clear in 1600 when Dogberry uses *comprehend* for *apprehend* in (50b):

b) our watch sir haue indeede comprehended two aspitious persons (Shakespeare 1623/?1598–9)

since some of Shakespeare's far from illiterate contemporaries – in an attempt to revive the original Latin sense-range of *comprehend* – were seriously using it to mean 'seize' or 'arrest' (see *OED* 1 & 2). And although this is a latinism that Shakespeare himself evidently rejects, many of his own coinages – such as *disquantity*, *immoment*, *irregulous*, *composture*, *besort* – have struck later commentators as 'abortions' or 'barbarisms' (Garner 1987a, b). In a sense, all renaissance latinisers were experimenters like Dogberry, and their efforts produced a heady proliferation of equivalent forms (as in *vastness*, *vastity*, *vastacy*, *vastidity*, *vastitude* and *vasture*) and alternative meanings (*inequitable*, for instance, was coined not only as 'unjust', from the Latin *aequus* = 'just', but also as 'not to be ridden through', from *equus* = 'horse', on the model of *unnavigable* from *navis* = 'ship'). There was even a distinct form of discourse devoted to such experimentalism, treading the borderline between malapropism and the grand style, the form known as *fustian*. Cockeram – though with disclaimers – included fustian words in his dictionary:

(51) I haue also inserted . . . euen the *mocke-words* which are ridiculously vsed in our Language, that those who desire a generality of knowledge, may not bee ignorant of the sense, euen of the *fustian termes*, vsed by too many who study rather to be heard speake, than to vnderstand themselves (Cockeram 1623)

and Hoskins evidently rather preened himself on his 'fustian speech' to the Middle Temple (Hoskins [?1599]: 15, 50; 111–113).

Cacozelic comedy (the conscious manipulation of malapropism) thus takes its place as one of a group of derivatives of the grand style which are also anti-types to it. Though terminological distinctions are never consistently applied, *bombast* refers to the excessive or unwarranted use of latinisms, *fustian* to their playful or anarchic use. Both words gained their metalinguistic senses in the last decades of the sixteenth century, developing, in line with the STYLE = CLOTHING metaphor of the time, from terms for material: *bombast*, the cotton wool padding used for false enlargement (*OED* 2), *fustian*, the cotton velvet which imitates the finery of the real thing (*OED* 1a/c).

7.4.2.3 Archaism

Jespersen's retrospective doubts about the value of latinising were voiced at the time, not only by Sir John Cheke and others in the sixteenth century but also in the seventeenth century by, for instance, Milton's teacher, Alexander Gil, who claimed that Latin influence had done more damage to the nation than the havoc wreaked by Danish and Norman invaders (Gil 1619: 23). In literary terms, the question that vexed these linguistic nationalists was how to achieve a grand style with native resources and one answer was by the use of *archaism*, which enabled a poet to heighten his language above 'common wordes' without handing it over to foreigners. As Jonson put it, paraphrasing Quintilian: 'Words borrow'd of Antiquity, doe lend a kind of Majesty to style . . . For they have the Authority of yeares, and out of their intermission doe win to themselves a kind of grace-like newnesse' (in Spingarn 1908: I 38). The most influential exponent of the archaising grand style was Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1590/1596), whose opening Book presented its readers with this form of 'grace-like newnesse' in thirty seven out of its fifty five stanzas (Sugden 1936: 11).

Spenser had prepared the ground with *The Shepheard's Calender* (1579), in which he not only employed many words no longer current in the English of his time, but drew attention to their presence by including E.K.'s glosses and prefatory apologia, the *Epistle Dedicatory*. There archaising is defended on the grounds of cultural continuity, with Chaucer and Lydgate cited as the sources of particular words or usages. The *Epistle* argues that it is the depletion of English vocabulary by the loss of Chaucerian words 'which is the only cause that our mother tonge, which truly of it self is both ful enough for prose and stately enough for verse, hath long time ben counted most bare and barrein of both' and its author opposes the attempt to make up the deficiency by those who 'borrowing here of the French, there of the Italian, every where of the Latine . . . haue made our English tongue a gallimaufry or hodgepodge of al other speches' (in Smith 1904: I 130). The rejection of latinate vocabulary is not, it should be emphasised, a rejection of classical influence. What Spenser is attempting is, very often, a large-scale version of the word-calquing practised by Cheke. In both cases, a classical form is taken as pattern, whether a word (as in Cheke's *superscriptum*), or a genre (such as the *eclogue*) or a figure (such as *epanorthosis*) and then filled with native material. As the examples in (52) show, E.K.'s glosses draw attention as much to the classicism of Spenser's forms (the rhetorical figure in (52a), the calqued phrase in (52b)) as to the antiquity and Englishness of is lexis (as in (52c)); and the two impulses meet in (52d) with the discovery

that the 'olde' English word *make* is closer to classical Greek than the modern English *versify*.

(52) a) I loue) a prety Epanorthosis in these two verses, and withall a Paronomasia or playing with the word
[glossing the line: *I loue thilke lass (alas why doe I loue?)*]

b) Neighbour groues) a straunge phrase in English, but word for word expressing the Latine vicina nemora.

c) Gride) perced: an olde word much vsed of Lidgate, but not found (that I know of) in Chaucer

d) to make) to rime and versifye. For in this word making, our olde Englishe Poetes were wont to comprehend all the skil of Poetrye, according to the Greeke woorde [*poiein*] to make, whence commeth the name of Poetes. ('E.K.', 1579)

Despite the carefully scholarly tone of glosses like (52c) (52d), Spenser's archaising was creative rather than conservative, particularly in spelling and morphology. As Osselton notes (1990: 52), Spenser attaches the 'typical Middle English -n inflection . . . to foreign loan-words, as in *atchieven*, *displeasen*'; he uses the obsolete past participle prefix *y-* (< OE *ge-*) for foreign as well as native stems, as in *yglanced*. He also extends what were felt to be antique Saxon spellings to words of French origin, substituting <despight> for <despite> or <quight> for <quite> (a substitution made possible by the combination of an unstandardised spelling system with a sound-change – the loss of OE /x/ described by Lass in 3.5.1 – that had turned pairs like *wright/write* into homophones for some groups of Early Modern English speakers). It is not clear how learned a philologist Spenser was, but it seems likely that these practices were the result of policy rather than ignorance, since his 'mistakes' in Chaucerising are closely in line with his treatment of contemporary vocabulary, where he also saxonises borrowed words, either by drawing them into compounds with native words (e.g. *life-resembling*, *late-attempted*) or by re-forming them, as when he coins *discordful* by taking the well-established latinate form *discordant* and replacing its Romance inflectional ending with the native suffix *-ful*. The overall effect was to homogenise his poetic vocabulary and confer genetic citizenship on borrowed words, implying that the lexis for an English grand style could be assembled by extending the productivity of native word-formation processes.

Spenser's poetic programme was the culmination of a trend begun much earlier in the century. Pynson's edition of Chaucer was published in 1526, followed by Thynne's edition of 1532, reprinted with additions in 1542,

1550, 1561, a publishing history that bears out Wilson's observation at the mid-century that 'the fine courtier wil talke nothyng but *Chaucer*' (Wilson [1553]: 162). A new edition by Speght in 1598 suggests a resurgence of this popularity at the end of the century. Nonetheless many contemporary commentators agreed with Jonson in condemning Spenser's archaism as artificial: 'in affecting the Ancients [he] writ no Language' (in Spingarn 1908: I 34), and those who tried to prove the naturalness of Chaucerisms ran into other difficulties. The most common defence was that archaisms were still living words in other dialects of English, which led Gil to commend the use of northern dialect in poetry (Gil 1619: 18). But for a Court-centred, London-based literary circle, this was rather a *dis*commendation and it is the rusticity, as much as the unnaturalness, of archaism that limited its appeal. Hence Puttenham advises the poet *against* northern dialects 'though no man can deny but that theirs is the purer English Saxon at this day, yet it is not so Courtly nor so currant as our Southerne English is' (Puttenham [1589]: 145) and Sidney, normally an advocate of Spenser, finds 'that same framing of his stile to an old rustick language' to be something he 'dare not alowe' (in Smith 1904: I 196). Despite the prestige of *The Faerie Queene* and the dominance of Spenserian styles in *England's Helicon*, the collection which celebrated the state of English poetry in 1600, by that date the archaisers were generally on the retreat in the battle for the grand style, though, perhaps *via* Gil, Spenser's influence and a significant segment of his archaic vocabulary passed on to Milton, who combined it with the latinity it had originally opposed.

7.4.2.4 The epithet (*adjectivum*, *appositum*, *attributum*, *epitheton*, *sequens*)

The *epithet* is commended as means of amplifying from Aristotle onwards and renaissance interest in the figure is marked by the appearance of collections such as Textor's *Epitheta* (1524) or Poole's *English Parnassus* (1657). Although Puttenham's account ([1589]: 176–7) makes clear that the epithet should not be exclusively identified with the adjective (it can be any descriptive 'addition'), the adjective is the form it most commonly takes. Its role in amplifying can be seen in (53), where to create a climax in the last line of a sonnet's octave, Bolton repeats the nouns of the previous line, adding an adjective to each and using the adjectives to orchestrate his poem's central themes of beauty (*fair*, *sweet*) in transience (*vain*, *brittle*):

(53) Of praise, pompe, glorie, ioy (which short life gathers,)
Faire praise, vaine pompe, sweet glory, brittle ioy. (Bolton 1600)

For poets of the Spenserian school, who were generally chary of latinate vocabulary, the intensive use of adjectives provided an obvious alternative method of amplifying. A climactic stanza from Book III of *The Faerie Queene* yields twelve adjectives in nine lines (discounting the modifying noun *mirtle*) and five of the lines have the proportions of the Latin 'golden line', combining a verb with two nouns and two adjectives:

(54) Right in the middest of that Paradise,
There stood a *stately* Mount, on whose *round* top
A *gloomy* grove of mirtle trees did rise,
Whose *shadie* boughes *sharp* steele did neuer lop,
Nor *wicked* beasts their *tender* buds did crop,
But like a girlond compassed the hight,
And from thir *fruitfull* sides *sweet* gum did drop,
That all the ground with *precious* deaw bedight,
Threw forth most *dainty* odours, and most *sweet* delight (Spenser 1596)

None of these adjectives is a recent latinism and though not all are Saxon, they were all well established in the language before Chaucer's time, with two significant exceptions: in *gloomy* and *shadie*, Spenser has neologised by taking an existing noun and adding a native adjectival suffix *-y* (< OE *-ig*). This practice, first made fashionable by Wyatt, was widely adopted by later poets. Groom attributes its popularity to the metrical usefulness of disyllabic words, pointing to cases where *-y* was tacked on to words that were already adjectives: *calm* > *calmy*, *pale* > *paly* (Groom 1955: 7–10); and Carew's 1594 translation of Tasso richly illustrates the type, including *blacky*, *hugy*, *largy*, *shrilly*, *straungy*, (Sherbo 1975: 42). But metrical considerations alone would not explain the massive Early Modern English increase in the adjective class as a whole, which seems rather to support Jespersen's view that adjectives had been 'rather sparingly represented' in the native vocabulary (Jespersen 1946: 122–3). It suggests at least that renaissance writers, intent on amplifying by epithet, felt some need to augment their resources. Apart from suffixation (as in the *-y* coinages), two other strategies lay to hand: one was to borrow adjectives direct from Latin (as in Bacon's *lunar* < Lat. *lunaris* 1626) the other was to create them by compounding (as in Milton's *moon-struck* 1674) and the controversy over latinisation lent a special edge to the choice between these routes. Compounding was endorsed by linguistic nationalists as a natural native practice and the influence of the most famous national poet, Spenser, lent a prestige to the results which secured a poetic niche for compound epithets beyond the bounds of our period. But nationalism was not the only factor. Greek creates adjectives in the same way and this enabled Sidney to combine nationalism with classicism by aligning

English with Greek in opposition to Latin: '[our language] is particulerly happy in compositions of two or three words together, neere the Greeke, far beyond the Latine: which is one of the greatest beauties can be in a language' (Sidney 1595; in Smith 1904 I 204).

It is noticeable that some of the most fluent compounders, Spenser, Chapman, and Sidney himself, were familiar with Greek and made direct translations of Greek originals, such as Spenser's '*rosy-fingred* Morning' or Chapman's '*earth-shaking* god'. But this input accounts for only a small proportion of the whole. In the exuberance of their compounding renaissance writers utilise all the patterns described by Nevalainen (this volume 5.5.4.3) and increasingly draw into them borrowed as well as native base forms. We find: *dartthirling*, *peoplepesterd*, *hertgripyng*, *fore-watched* (Grimald); *climb-fall*, *fore-accounting*, *wrong-caused*, *live-dead*, *kiss-cheek*, *seven-double* (Sidney); *filthy-feculent*, *cold-congealed*, *nigh-forwearied*, *mossy-hoar* (Spenser) and even whole phrases, as in Shakespeare's '*world-without-end* hour' or Herbert's '*Christ-side-piercing* spear'.

Comparing these compounds with the set of adjectives in (53) and (54) reveals the advantages of the practice: *sweet*, *sharp*, *wicked*, *tender* do not create the rhetoric of wonder that is the hallmark of amplifying. By contrast, compound epithets not only carry the shock of new words, they also open the vista of new thoughts. As Leech points out, new compounds imply 'the wish to recognise a concept or property which the language so far can only express by phrasal or clausal description' (Leech 1969: 44). They thus cause readers to re-think their existing stock of categories and to admire the 'depe-wittednesse' of the prompting poet. But this inventiveness brings its penalties. There is no consistent shape to compound epithets: they do not carry a clear marker of their adjectival function (unlike, say, adjectives formed with the *-y* suffix); without a standardised practice of punctuation it is often unclear whether or not a sequence is to be read as a compound (is Marlowe's '*high astounding* terms', for instance, equivalent to *high*, *astounding* or *high-astounding*?); and there is great variability in the relations between the compounded elements (the forms in '*cloud-capped* towers' and '*fen-sucked* fogs' look similar but require quite different interpretations). In general, the more inventive the writer the less transparent the relation between the compound and the phrase or clause to which it might be said to be equivalent. Shakespeare, for instance, has puzzled many subsequent interpreters with such collocations as '*child-changed* father', '*death-practised* duke', '*water-standing* eye', '*thought-executing* fires' (Salmon 1987: 202).

Uncompounded latinate adjectives cause no such problems. They have a recognisable set of suffixes (Nevalainen this volume 5.5.3.3.2), whose semantic relation to the base form is relatively predictable; and they carry

with them the heightening effect regularly associated with latinate lexis. It is perhaps not surprising then that compounding lost favour, as we see from a comparison between Milton's early work – from *Comus* (1637) to the Psalm paraphrases (1645) – where he produces compounds such as *sin-worn*, *new-entrusted*, *sea-girt*, *smooth-dittied*, *froth-becurled*, *thunder-clasping*, and his later work, where the numbers are fewer and the forms more conventional and transparent. Dryden took the process further, explicitly rejecting Sidney's views on compounding (in Watson 1962: II 206) and in his own poetry favouring latinate adjectives, or the even more discreet and transparent method of *-y* suffixation. By the mid-eighteenth century the pattern he set had become stylised as part of poetic diction. Johnson's Dictionary entry for *epithet* dismisses the wider extension that the term had in the Renaissance ('it is used . . . improperly for title, name . . . it is used improperly for phrase, expression') and offers as defining illustrations of the form a latinate adjective 'the *verdant* grove' and two with *-y* suffixes: 'the *craggy* mountain's *lofty* head'.

7.4.2.5 Conclusion

(55) You Sulph'rous and Thought-executing Fires,
Vaunt-curriors of Oake-cleauing Thunder-bolts,
Sindge my white head. And thou all-shaking Thunder,
Strike flat the thicke Rotundity o' th' world,
Cracke Natures moulds, all germaines spill at once
That makes ingratefull Man. (Shakespeare 1623/?1605)

This passage is taken from a paradigm context for the grand style – a kingly speaker expressing a tempest within and defying a tempest outside – and it draws on all the strategies for amplifying the word that I have surveyed in this section. There are recent *latinisms*: *sulphurous* (1530), *ingrateful* (1547), *rotundity* (1589), *germain* (1605), the last probably coined by Shakespeare in this very line (< Lat. *germen*, 'a seed'). There is one notable *archaism*: *spill*, which Shakespeare normally uses in the sense of spilling blood or liquid, appears here with its original OE sense of 'destroy', a sense that by 1605 was already well down the road of obsolescence. And there are many *epithets*, both in the broad sense of appositive, descriptive phrases (line 2 is an epithet of this sort) and in the narrow sense of *adjectives*, of which there are seven in the six lines, including three *compound-adjectives* (*thought-executing*, *oake-cleaving*, *all-shaking*).

But contrary to what one might expect from Wilson's description of the grand style in (45), this speech of Lear's also demonstrates that the

'common wordes' of English are not simply the inert residue or the thread on which the 'great wordes' are strung. Rather, they make a distinct contribution to the grand style's character. The register-mixing found in (46) and (48) is very much in evidence here, too, both in concrete–abstract couplings like *thick rotundity* and in the larger-scale contrast between the 'great words' of the opening noun phrases, which invoke cosmic powers, and the four Saxon monosyllables which, equally powerfully, depict their human effects: *sindge my white head*.

7.4.3 *Amplifying the phrase: periodicity as a structural principle*

7.4.3.1 Introduction

One influential model for a vernacular high style already available at the beginning of our period was the 'aureate' prose associated with Caxton's press, particularly with his own writings (Blake *CHEL* II: 529–30; Mueller 1984: 162–77). This is now generally known as *curial* style and, as the name implies, it is thought to originate in the prose of court administrators. Burnley has suggested that its most salient formal features are directly attributable to its original diplomatico-legal functions, which he characterises as 'congratulatory ceremoniousness' and 'continuous clarity' (Burnley 1986: 596). The first is achieved through latinate vocabulary, synonymic doublets and elaborated forms of address and invocation; the second – which Burnley takes to be the more essential property of the style – depends on devices that simultaneously promote textual cohesion and referential precision. In practice, this means a heavy use of relativisers (especially *which (N)*; *the which (N)*) and other forms of anaphoric conjunction (such as *and* + *that same* (N); *or* + *the said* (N); *that is to say*) linking clauses into larger units, sometimes of great length. To most modern commentators the result has appeared 'trailing', 'rambling' or 'shapeless' and even the defenders of late fifteenth-century prose concede the difficulty of dividing its flow into what would now be regarded as well-formed sentence units (Blake 1973: 36–42).

Shapelessness was not a problem for curial prose in its original administrative contexts, as it was essentially a written style. But in literary genres, the humanist shift to oratorical models led to demands for a grand style that, while retaining the 'continuous' quality of curial prose, would add affective force to its 'ceremoniousness' by being organised in ways more suited to oral delivery and aural comprehension. So although curial style persists into the sixteenth century, its structural indeterminacy is gradually tamed by a stylistic ideal exemplified in the practice of Cicero and codified

in the theory of Quintilian. The epitome of this ideal is the figure of speech known as *periodos*, or *the period*. (To avoid confusion, I will use *Period* for the figure of speech and *period* for the unit of time.)

A Period is often now thought of as a particular type of complex sentence, in which the main clause is completed at, or towards the end of, the construction, having been preceded or interrupted by one or more subordinate clauses. But this definition took shape only gradually during the course of the eighteenth century; and renaissance writers, like their classical mentors, regarded the Period as a category of *rhetoric* rather than *grammar*, to be discussed primarily in terms of meaning or effect. The Greek original of its name – *periodos* – means 'circuit' and Aristotle (on the most probable interpretation of *Rhetoric* III 9) likens the effect of periodic style to the experience of running round the circuit of a race-track, as opposed to the dispiriting effect of running with no end in view (an admirable analogy for the experience of reading curial prose). Roman rhetoricians offer the alternative names of *comprehensio*, *continuatio* and *conclusio* and, as these imply, they see the characteristics of the Period as a certain comprehensiveness, continuity and completeness of sense. Renaissance commentators echo these views when they describe a Period as 'a circuit of speech' or praise a well-crafted example as 'rounded' or 'perfected' (i.e. completed).

The formal correlates of these aesthetic judgements are very varied, though bi-partite constructions are common, fostered by Aristotle's metaphor of the outward and return movement of a race, and, on the authority of Cicero and Quintilian, four-part constructions are often cited as the ideal, a view perhaps prompted by another dominant metaphor for the Period, which envisages its component units as the limbs of a body (the original meaning of the names by which they are known: *colon* in Greek, *membrum* in Latin, and *member* in Early Modern English). In later accounts it becomes common to equate a member with a clause, but this is not the case in renaissance practice, as we see in this example from Nashe (discussed in Parkes 1992: 88):

(56) Hauing spent manie yeres in studying how to liue, and liude a long time without money; having tyred my youth with follie, and surfetted my minde with vanitie, I began at length to looke backe to repentaunce, & addresse my endeuors to prosperitie: But all in vaine, I sate up late, & rose early, contended with the colde, and conuersed with scarcitie; for all my labours turned to losse, my vulgar Muse was despised & neglected, my paines not regarded or slightly rewarded, and I my selfe (in prime of my best wit) layde open to pouertie. (Nashe 1592)

(56) exemplifies the close relationship that Parkes detects between the rise of renaissance periodic style and the humanist punctuation system. Nashe

uses a colon (followed by the capital on *But*) to divide (56) into two halves, which are in turn divided into halves by semi-colons. But there is no consistency of length or construction between the four units thus marked out: the first member (*hauing spent . . . money*) comprises a cluster of non-finite clauses, the second and much longer member (*hauing tyred . . . prosperitie*) is a complex sentence, while the last two members both include a number of independent clauses linked by coordination or parataxis. In fact, either of these units (*But all . . . scarcitie* and *for all . . . pouertie*) could qualify as an independent bi-partite or four-member Period in its own right (*sate up . . . / rose . . . // contended . . . / conversed . . .* and *my labours . . . / my Muse . . . // my paines . . . / my selfe . . .*). Modern editors often re-punctuate examples such as (56) as multi-sentence paragraphs, and it could be argued that the renaissance notion of the Period conflates two structural concepts that have since been distinguished and specialised: the paragraph as a sense-unit and the complex sentence as a syntactic unit.

However, despite the lack of a formal definition of a Period and despite the range and variety of the forms that renaissance commentators include under that title, there is sufficient consensus of practice for us to identify what may be called a *principle of periodicity* and to offer an account of it in terms of the two aims that most clearly distinguish periodic grand style from the curial style that preceded it: they are a *unified composition* (7.4.3.2) and a *foregrounded ending* (7.4.3.3).

7.4.3.2 The unified composition

Baxandall (1971) has likened (and linked) the Renaissance's rediscovery of the principle of periodicity to its discovery of a new principle of unified composition in painting, fixed point perspective, the art of arranging all the elements of a composition to give the visual impression of a continuous recession from a single viewing-point. He, like many others, takes the grammatical equivalent of perspectival geometry to be the use of subordination, envisaging a Period as a hierarchically organised construction in which each subordinate clause realises or modifies a constituent of the clause immediately superordinate to it, and all depend on a single main clause. The example of 'a Period of two Members' given by Brightland and Gildon (1711: 146) is a construction of this type:

(57) (1) Before I shall say those Things (O Conscript Fathers) about the Public Affairs, which are to be spoken at this Time; (2) I shall lay before you, in few Words, the Motives of the Journey, and the Return.

Here unified composition is realised by nested subordination: (1) consists of two clauses, the second being subordinate to the first (*which . . . Time* is a restrictive relative clause modifying *those Things*) and (1) in turn is subordinate to (2) (in a relation of adverbial adjunct to main clause). The effect is to foreground (2) and the information it conveys as the focal point of the message, relegating the two clauses of (1) to the function of supplying relevant but subsidiary context. However, although constructions like (57) provide a model for periodic writing from the eighteenth century onwards and come gradually to be seen as the Period's canonic form, they are relatively rare in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century practice. There syntactic unification is far more commonly expressed through those constructions which Matthews groups under the title of *juxtaposition* (Matthews 1981: 220–41). Four clause types are particularly frequent:

i. *non-restrictive relatives* (for the restrictive versus non-restrictive distinction, see Huddleston 1984: 398–402 and for Early Modern English usage, see Rissanen this volume 4.6.2.2). The non-restrictive relative is a prominent feature of (2), reprinted as (60) below.

ii. *participial clauses* (for a fuller description, see Ross 1893, Sørensen 1957: 131 and Rissanen this volume 4.6.2.3). Nashe uses a series of participial clauses to open (56) and Schlauch (1959: 252–3) and Ronberg (1992: 107–8) both provide examples from Sidney's *Arcadia* of long Periods based almost exclusively on this clause type.

iii. clauses introduced by conjunctions which can be analysed as either (or neither) subordinators or coordinators: e.g. *for*, as in the final member of (56) above and of (63) below. (For a fuller discussion of the status of *for*, see Fischer *CHEL* II: 291–2, Wiegand 1982).

iv. *correlative constructions*, such as 'either you clean the kitchen, or we get a divorce'; 'the more he ate the fatter he grew'. In 7.2.2. there are examples of long Periods by Puttenham (5) and Meres (3) based on the *as . . . so* correlative, a pattern that Meres makes the staple of his style in *Palladis Tamia* (see Smith 1904: II 309–24).

Various explanations can be offered for the prevalence of such constructions in renaissance periodic syntax. It may reflect the lack of an analytic framework capable of differentiating between construction types, since the concept of the subordinate clause was not fully formulated until the 1670s (Michael 1970: 473–8) and the distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive relatives was not recognised until much later. Equally, it may reflect a transitional stage in the historical development of techniques of clause combining – a stage of *inter*dependency that occupies the mid-point of a cline from the relative *in*dependence of parataxis to the full

dependency of embedded constructions (Hopper and Traugott 1993: 168–77). Correlative constructions in particular have been posited as the bridge between parataxis and hypotaxis in the history of other Indo-European languages (Haudry 1973) and Workman's study of fifteenth-century English prose shows that what we now think of as subordinators more commonly appear there in correlative combinations: *when . . . then*; *where . . . there*; *if . . . then*; *because . . . therefore* (Workman 1940: 50, 37–58 *passim*).

The problem with applying such explanations to the history of style is that they tend to reinforce the view, prevalent in many discussions of Early Modern English prose particularly, that the renaissance periodic sentence is a clumsy and primitive ancestor of sentences such as (57) on which the modern definition is based. It is important to entertain the alternative supposition that it represents a radically different stylistic ideal and that renaissance writers may have been working with a notion of unified composition that did not imply a hierarchical constituent dependency. After all, the metaphor of the Period as a body can be construed in two ways: by imagining the limbs either as all subordinate to the head, or as equal and independently functioning partners.

Some such hypothesis is necessary to account for the zeal with which renaissance writers cultivated what I shall call *the paratactic Period*. The members of such constructions consist of syntactically complete and independent clauses, but they are made to exhibit unity and interdependence not only by punctuation but by parallelisms of form or meaning (matching the body's symmetrical patterns of two arms *versus* two legs, or left side *versus* right side). In the typical case, a repetition of syntactic structure (the figure of *parison*) is echoed in other formal patternings, such as *isocolon* (equal length members), *epiphora* (identical endings), *epanaphora* (identical openings) or, on the semantic level, synonymy, antonymy and the other types of lexical variation described in 7.3.4. To take one example:

(58) Shee is gonn, Shee is lost, shee is found, shee is ever faire.
(Ralegh ?1592)

All four members of this group have the same structure and the same opening; additionally, the first two clauses are related by the synonymy of *gone/lost*, clauses two and three by the antonymy of *lost/found*, and the final pair by the alliteration of *found/fair*. On a larger scale, Nashe, in (56) above, reinforces the signals of his orthography by the same means, ending the two halves of his Period on words that chime in sound and contrast in meaning: *prosperitie/povertie*.

7.4.3.3 The sense of an ending

The close link between periodicity and closure is reflected in sayings such as: 'death sets a period to all suits in courts', in the American English use of *period* as the equivalent of British English *full-stop* and, more recently, as a discourse marker signalling the end of a topic or discussion.

For Aristotle, it was the fact that the ending is always in sight that distinguished the periodic circuit from loose, running prose. For Quintilian, the ending was the high point of the Period and he gives the budding orator much advice on how to make his endings tell: sentences should rise and grow in force, the whole Period should converge to a point at the end, the hearer's expectations must be roused and satisfied (*Institutio* 9.iv.23, 30, 62). In terms of its effect, the Period thus consists of a sequence of suspensiveness, crescendo and resolution. The means by which these effects are achieved are partly prosodic (as I will illustrate in 7.4.3.5) and partly syntactic. What Quintilian proposes is that in a clause sequence, the main clause should occur at the end, and should itself end with the verb 'for it is in verbs that the real strength of a discourse resides' [*in verbis enim sermonis vis est*] (*Institutio* 9.iv.26); in other words the sense and syntax of the whole construction are held in suspension until resolved simultaneously by the verb as the last word of the sequence.

Quintilian's advice is, of course, addressed to those composing in Latin. When it is applied to English, problems begin to appear. The postponement of the main clause within the clause group is problematic, because the rhythmic bias of English is towards right-heavy rather than left-heavy structures and the effect of a left-heavy Period is likely to be bathos rather than resolution. And within the clause itself the postponement of the main verb can also cause problems. As Fischer notes (*CHEL* II: 372–5), there was a consistent drift away from verb-final constructions from the Old English period onwards, and, as time went by, the continuing loss of inflections made it increasingly difficult to distinguish subjects from objects when the expected SVO order was violated. Since pronoun inflections have been retained, it remains possible to interpret OSV constructions such as Spenser's *her he hated* or Milton's *him the Almighty power hurled*, but where nouns are used the lack of case-marking means that it is often an exercise in problem-solving to determine whether a given sequence is to be construed as OSV or SOV. The solution is relatively simple in the two instances that appear in consecutive lines of the stanza quoted in (54):

> Whose shadie boughes sharp steele did never lop [OSV]
> Nor wicked beasts their tender buds did crop [SOV]

But elsewhere Spenser's reader may be forced to halt and weigh one option against the other in the light of contextual clues, as in the following instances (discussed in Dillon 1976: 14–15):

(59) a) that false winged boy/Her chast hart had subdewd
b) Her swollen hart her speach seemd to bereaue

In multi-clause constructions the difficulties of postponing the main verb are greatly increased, as shown by example (60) (reprinted from (2) in 7.2.1):

(60) [A]ll barbary all corrupcion all laten adulterate WHICH ignorant blynde folis brought into this worlde and with the same hath *distayned and poysenyd* the *olde laten spech and the varay Romayne tong* WHICH in the tyme of Tully and Salust and Virgill and Terence was vsid, WHICHE also seint Jerome and seint ambrose and seint Austen and many hooly doctors lernyd in theyr tymes. I say *that ffylthynesse and all such abusyon* WHICH the later blynde worlde brought in WHICH more ratheyr may be callid blotterature thenne litterature I vtterly *abbanysh and Exclude* oute of this scole and charge the Maisters that they teche all way that is the best and instruct the chyldren in greke and Redyng laten in Redyng vnto them suych auctours that hathe with wisdome joyned the pure chaste eloquence.

(Colet 1518)

This passage occupies a transitional position between curial and periodic methods of amplifying. Burnley's description of curial style, given in 7.4.3.1, provides almost a structural blueprint for many of its procedures: the heavily modified opening noun phrase (the equivalent in discursive prose of the elaborated address forms of diplomatic epistolary prose), the synonymic doublets (here italicised), the multiple redefinitions (*with that same*, *I say that*, *which . . . may be callyde*) and the prominence of *which* (here capitalised) as a clause connector. But (60) also exemplifies in embryonic form the principle of periodicity, notably in Colet's attempt to implement Quintilian's advice and make the whole Period converge towards the end by turning the series of seemingly digressive *which* clauses into a contained interlude between the fronted object (*all barbarye . . . all Laten adulterate*) and its governing verb (*I abbanyshe and Exclude*). But the attempt is more strenuous than successful. Apart from creating problems of construal for the reader, who is likely to be led down the garden path by an initial assumption that *all barbarye . . .* is the sentence subject, there are problems of control for the writer, as we see from his apparent need to recapitulate his topic/object halfway through (*I say that ffylthynesse and all suche abusyon*).

To mitigate such difficulties, those who persevere with Quintilian's

model typically employ devices to buttress or foreground the postponed elements: as Colet does in (60), reinforcing his postponed main verb by sinonimia (*abbanyshe and Exclude*) and adding weight to his postponed main clause by a tagged-on coordinate (*and charge the maisters . . .*). Other writers follow the spirit rather than the letter of Quintilian's advice and foreground the ending by other means, such as a concluding metaphor, epigram, or reversal of expectation, as in (58), for example, where the final *fair* breaks the semantic set of *gone–lost–found*. The aim in all cases is to find a means of postponing the reader's grasp of the Period's unity until its close. In other words, the unified composition and the sense of an ending are not separate but interdependent ideals. The Period is a teleological construct whose author works in the same spirit as the divine creator, foreseeing the end and directing the unwitting reader/hearer towards its final disclosure.

7.4.3.4 Some renaissance Periods

(61) Almightie God, whiche hast geuen suche grace to thy Apostle sainct Andrewe, that he counted the sharp and painfull death of the crosse to be an hye honour and a great glory: Graunt us to take and esteme all troubles and aduersities whiche shal come unto us for thy sake, as thinges profitable for us toward the obtainyng of everlasting life: through Jesus Christ our Lorde. (Cranmer 1549)

In devising a vernacular version of the Collect form for inclusion in the first *Book of Common Prayer* (1549) Cranmer simultaneously provided one influential solution to the problem of naturalising periodic construction in English (Mueller 1984: 226–43). Syntactically, (61) consists of a single complex sentence, but it is orthographically divided into two halves by the first colon and following capital letter. This draws attention to the main verb *Graunt* which begins the second half. By this means, Cranmer combines the virtues of suspense and sentence balance: the verb is delayed by the sequence of clauses following the initial vocative, but since it occurs at the mid-point of the structure, the weight is evenly distributed between right and left halves. Like (60), (61) has affinities with curial style, for instance, in the elaborated invocation which constitutes the first half of the Period and in the heavy use of synonymic doublets: *sharp and painfull*, *hye honour and great glory*, *take and esteme*, *troubles and adversities*. But 'rounding' and 'perfecting' are achieved by making the text perform a verbal circle from *Almightie God* to *Christ our Lorde* and by making its orthographic division semantically structural. Just as Meres in (3) uses the *as . . . so* construction to correlate classical past with renaissance present, Cranmer matches

a biblical precedent (Andrew's 'painfull death') with a contemporary application (our 'troubles and adversities'). In this respect (61) typifies not only one form of the renaissance Period but also the metaphysical significance which writers of the time attached to periodicity as a compositional principle. As Mueller puts it, the design of the Collects images 'the constant cooperation of God's grace with man's free will' (Mueller 1984: 236). Ricks finds similar theological overtones in the famous Period which opens *Paradise Lost*, encompassing in its circuit all past and future divine history from 'Mans First Disobedience' to his regaining of Paradise (Ricks 1963: 28).

The example of *Paradise Lost* acts as a reminder that periodicity is not simply a feature of prose. In fact, as (62) shows, the effects of Marlowe's 'mighty line' may owe as much to his mastery of the principle of periodicity as to his mastery of the iambic pentameter (I use capitals and brackets to clarify the construction):

(62) OUR SOULES, [whose faculties can comprehend
The wondrous Architecture of the world:
And measure euery wandring planets course,]
[Still climing after knowledge infinite,
And alwais mouing as the restles spheares,]
WILS US TO WEARE OUR SELUES {and neuer rest,}
UNTILL WE REACH THE RIPEST FRUITES OF ALL,
<That perfect bliss and sole felicitie,>
<The sweet fruition of an earthly crowne.> (Marlowe 1592/?1587)

Unlike Colet in (60), Marlowe begins with his sentence subject (*our soules*), but he creates suspense by delaying the main verb (*wils*) for six lines by a series of juxtapositional clauses: non-restrictive relatives (*whose faculties . . . comprehend . . . and measure*) followed by participial clauses (*climbing . . . and moving . . .*). But though delayed, the verb is not final; Marlowe balances the potentially left-heavy structure with an ending composed of a series of synonymic phrases: *ripest fruites*, *perfect bliss*, *sole felicitie*, *sweet fruition*, culminating in *earthly crowne*, the concrete reality for which the preceding terms are metaphoric variations. (For its contemporary audience the sense of an ending in this final phrase would have been enhanced by a frisson both of social revolution and of blasphemy, since the orthodox goal of 'our soules' would have been a *heavenly* crown.)

The length of the construction in (62) is essential to Marlowe's effects here. It creates a continuously mounting climax, appropriate to the 'still climing' soul, and it arouses the audience's admiration for the author's (or protagonist's) virtuosity in unifying and 'perfecting' a large-scale structure.

For similar reasons, mastery of the long Period was the goal of many renaissance writers: Schlauch quotes one of 177 words from Sidney's Arcadia (1959: 252–3) and Milton's *At a Solemn Musick* extends a single Period through a twenty-four line poem. But length alone does not distinguish periodic from curial style and, although a certain length in the Period may be regarded as the condition on which its other properties achieve their optimum development, it should be seen as a contingent not a criterial feature. In fact, many renaissance Periods are relatively short, as Jonson illustrates in the process of making precisely this point:

(63) Periods are beautifull when they are not too long; for so they have their strength too, as in a Pike or Javelin. (Jonson 1640)

Here Jonson colloquialises periodic construction by abbreviating it and placing the main clause/verb very early. But the principle of periodicity is preserved in the circuit of thought which, like the runner in Aristotle's image, turns back on itself halfway. The consciously polemical first half is balanced by the second which explains and justifies it; and the ending is foregrounded by the analogy with which he clinches the point.

The contest between Mark Antony and Brutus for the sympathies of the crowd in *Julius Caesar* is also a contest between two conceptions of periodic construction, epitomised in these two extracts.

(64) a) There is Teares, for his Loue. Ioy, for his Fortune: Honor, for his Valour: and Death, for his Ambition.

b) And in his Mantle, muffling vp his face,
Euen at the Base of *Pompeyes* Statue
(Which all the while ran blood) great *Cesar* fell. (Shakespeare 1623/1599)

(64a) is symmetrical and paratactic. Like Ralegh in (58) above, Brutus repeats a syntactic formula and rounds it to a close by the shock of the last member's semantic dissonance. In (64b), the final conjunct of a more extended structure, Antony exemplifies an asymmetrical and hypotactic periodicity: three members of different syntactic type (a participial clause (line 1), a prepositional phrase (line 2), a non-restrictive relative clause (line 3)) resolve on to a concluding main clause with a concluding verb (*great Caesar fell*). This is the type of cumulative construction that Quintilian and Cicero associated with oratory's power of moving, with the power and passion of the grand style; Brutus's symmetrical construction, patterned and static, is associated with the pleasing grace and artistry of the middle style. By giving the victory to Antony in this battle for men's minds, Shakespeare suggests that he shares Cicero's evaluation

of the relative persuasiveness – or demagogic power – of the two types, but the un-Ciceronian brevity of (64b) points to the way in which the cumulative Period was to be naturalised in English.

7.4.3.5 Periodicity and prosody

In all the classical discussions, the Period is considered as much a unit of prosody as of sense. Aristotle likens it to a strophe and this view of its structure is reinforced and extended by the Quintilian/Ciceronian notion that the component units of a four-member period should each approximate in length to a hexameter line.

It was natural then that the renaissance revivers of the Period should try to match it to modern vernacular verse-forms. Two in particular proved hospitable to periodic composition. For those interested in the long Period, the *sonnet* provided an appropriate vehicle: the *Petrarchan* sonnet lends itself readily to bi-partite compositions, allowing octave to be set against sestet, as in Milton's 'Fairfax, whose name'; while the *Shakespearean* sonnet (in fact pioneered by Surrey, with its three quatrains and a couplet, is well suited to four-member constructions. A typical case is Shakespeare's 'When I consider everything that grows', or Surrey's 'In the rude age' (discussed in Spearing 1985: 324–5), where the three quatrains present three parallel conditional clauses leading up to a rhetorical question, which is then answered in the exclamation of the concluding couplet. Many single-Period sonnets were produced in the century between Wyatt and Milton and it is arguably not coincidental that the sonnet and the long Period rose and fell in favour at the same time.

For the abbreviated Period, which gained ground from 1600 onwards, the couplet is a more appropriate verse correlate and it too is construable as either a bi-partite or four-member construction, as in (65) where Drayton takes a Period of the same type as (57) and (64b) and tailors it to match the concluding couplet of a sonnet (brackets added to clarify):

(65) [{Now if thou would'st,} {when all haue giuen him ouer,}]
[{From Death to Life,} {thou might'st him yet recouer.}]
(Drayton 1619)

It is significant that Jonson who, as (63) shows, championed the abbreviated Period, also promoted the renaissance revival of continuous couplet writing, creating by their combination a prosodic–syntactic pattern that was refined by Waller and Denham in the mid-seventeenth century and transmitted *via* Dryden to the eighteenth century (see 7.7.3.2).

In prose genres, too, classical precedent prescribed that attention should be given to qualities of sound, most notably to the management of the *clausula*, a rhythmical pattern used to enhance the sense of an ending, analogous to a cadenza in music. Though a clausula might occur at any of the major internal divisions of a Period, its canonical site is at the conclusion of the final member, the place where 'our minds take breath and recruit their energies' [*animi velut respirant ac reficiuntur*] (Quintilian, *Institutio* 9.iv.62).

The rules governing Cicero's repertoire of clausulae were first established by Zielinski in 1912 and have been extensively reviewed since, but comparable consideration of his renaissance vernacular imitators awaits the resolution of remaining problems in our understanding of how renaissance writers construed Latin prosody and how they mapped Latin's phonological contrasts of quantity on to the sound-pattern of English. To complicate matters, the Renaissance inherited alongside the clausula, the *cursus*, its stress-based descendant, used in medieval liturgical Latin; and to complicate matters further, there were also attempts to develop native clausulae, which differed from both of the Latin models in being stress-final. Cranmer's punctuation marks off a unit of this type in (61), the commonly used cadence of x/x/x/:*through* JEsus CHRIST *our* LORD (here and below I use capitals to indicate stressed syllables).

The best-studied of these cadence types is the anglicised cursus (Croll 1966: 303–59, Parker 1938). The patterns of its models in liturgical Latin derive from the most common Ciceronian clausulae, reinterpreted to substitute syllable stress for syllable length. Though part of the medieval 'adulterate' Latin rejected by humanists like Colet, these patterns had the virtue of familiarity and of obvious compatibility with the stress-based prosodic system of English. In transferring them from Latin liturgy to vernacular prose, renaissance writers were heightening secular language with features appropriated from the religious register and simultaneously recreating the classical function of the clausula as a marker of the grand style in the genres of oratory and history. In the work of Sir Thomas Browne, for instance, the stylistic cline from the low style of *Vulgar Errors* (1646) to the middle style of *Religio Medici* (1643) to the high style of *Urn Burial* (1658) is marked by a progressive increase in use of such cadences (Warren 1971). The basic set of cursus patterns can all be illustrated from Period endings in chapter 5 of *Urn Burial*:

(66) a)(i) *cursus planus 1*: /xx/x
e.g. BONES at the BOTtome; TAUNT of iSAIah
a)(ii) *cursus planus 2*: /xxx/x
e.g. EDGE of repetITions; meTHUselas of HECtor; LONG as agaMEMnon

b)(i) *cursus tardus 1*: /xx/xx
e.g. HUmane disCOvery; POSThumous MEMory; THROWN at his MONument. (The ending of (56) is also a cadence of this type: OPen to POVertie.)
b)(ii) *cursus tardus 2*: /xxx/xx
e.g. BALsam of our MEMories; ANGles of conTINgency; ANCient magnaNIMity
c) *cursus velox*: /xxxx/x
e.g. IN famy of his NATure: FOLly of expectATion; ART of perpetuATion

The most famous of the classical clausulae is known as the *esse videatur* type. The phrase *esse videatur* had been notorious in classical times when Tacitus accused Cicero of using it excessively and vapidly, as an inflated variant of *sit* (equivalent to using *seems to be* instead of *is* in English) solely in order to end his Periods with the cadence – ˘ ˘ ˘ – ˘. The formula returned to notoriety in renaissance England when Gabriel Harvey earned the nickname of *esse videatur* from his attempts to reproduce Ciceronian clausulae in his own Latin writings. It is certain therefore that this particular prose cadence was salient; and it was ripe for adaptation into English vernacular prose because it already had a stress-based equivalent in cursus planus 2 ((66a)(ii) above). For these reasons, it occurs widely in renaissance writing and often with a certain metalinguistic self-consciousness, as a marker of the rhetorical grand style itself. Shakespeare gives it to Brutus, for instance, to round off the set-piece Period quoted in (64a): *DEATH for his amBITion*; and it is used by Jonson to commend comely composition, (67a), by Donne to assert the rhetorical claims of scriptural language, (67b), and by Bacon to mock at the rhetorical excesses of Ciceronians such as Harvey (67c):

(67) a) Then take care, in placing and ranking both matter and words, that the composition be comely; and to doe this with *DILigence and OFTen*.
(Jonson 1640/?1620–35)

b) the Holy Ghost in penning the Scriptures delights himself, not only with a propriety, but with a delicacy, and harmony, and *MELody of LANguage*. (Donne 1640/1623)

c) the round and cleane compo*SITion of the SENtence*, and the sweet *FALLing of the CLAUSes* . . . (Bacon 1605)

7.5 The neo-classical phase, 1660–1776

7.5.1 Of classical literature

During the last hundred years of our period, the literary prestige of classical models persists, but there is a discernible shift in the nature of their

influence. Where early renaissance classicisers attempted to reproduce the stylistic features of Latin in the linguistic material of English, later writers increasingly looked for equivalence rather than imitation. By the end of the seventeenth century there was a widespread belief that each language had its own particular 'genius'; it followed that instead of remodelling English in the form of Latin, writers should seek native means for achieving classical effects. As a result, the classicism of the eighteenth century involves an affinity of spirit rather than a copying of forms: Pope aims at reproducing the *tone* of Horace where Milton had imitated his syntax. When Milton describes his translation of *Odes* 1.5. (1673) as: 'rendred almost word for word without rhyme according to the Latin measure, as near as the language will permit', he shows his kinship with a sixteenth-century writer such as Stanyhurst, who attempted to replicate not just the word order of Latin poetry but its prosodic system of length contrast. But Dryden championed the native English idiom (Watson 1962: I 70, 206, 268–9) and Young speaks for most of Dryden's successors when he argues that it is time for the *forms* of classical literature to be set aside.

(68) Let us build our Compositions with the Spirit, and in the Taste, of the Antients; but not with their Materials. (Young 1759)

This is in part a natural development from renaissance nationalism. But it is also a testimony to the achievement of renaissance writers. In the frontispiece of Blount's *Academy of Eloquence* (1654) Sidney and Bacon appear alongside Cicero and Demosthenes, and by the reign of Queen Anne, English writers could look back on a native Golden Age and find a whole pantheon of native classics, to be admired or outdone in their turn. So where Chapman's *Iliad* (1598–1611) competed with Homer, Pope wrote his version (1715–20) with one eye on Homer and the other on Chapman; Johnson's prose, as his contemporaries noted, owed as much to Browne as to Cicero; and for innumerable eighteenth-century poets Milton occupied the role of stylistic mentor that Virgil had filled for Surrey. By the end of our period, anthologies of *English* literature were being introduced into grammar schools and there were proposals in the air for a radical revision of the classical curriculum outlined in 7.2.1. Buchanan's *Plan of an English Grammar-school Education*, published in 1770, came with 'an introductory inquiry whether by the English language alone, without the embarrassment of Latin and Greek, the British youth, in general, cannot be thoroughly accomplished in every part of useful and polite literature'.

7.5.2 *Of orators and men of letters*

By taking oratory as the role model for poetry, the Renaissance had bridged the traditional medieval divide between clerk and knight, since in the figure of the orator the clerkly virtues of literacy gain the badge of social honour formerly reserved for the military prowess of the knight. This fusion of categories appears everywhere in the early part of our period: in Gascoigne's motto, which dedicates him equally to the gods of war and eloquence (*tam Marti quam Mercurio*); in Chapman's fantasy of an ideal university where 'all doubts or differences of Learning, Honour, Duellisme, Criticisme, and Poetrie, shall bee disputed' (*Monsieur d'Olive*, 1606, I.ii.14–15); and in Skelton's obsession with being known as Poet Laureate, – the laurel wreath being the classical tribute awarded, as Sidney notes, only to poets and to 'tryumphant Captaines' (1595; in Smith 1904: I 193). Puttenham's literary history fostered the myth that renaissance poetry was the product of a race of 'courtly makers' ([1589]: 60) and to many, at the time and since, the myth became reality in the figure of Sir Philip Sidney – nobleman, soldier and poet, patriot and patron of poets.

The equivalent myth for the eighteenth century is 'the Grub Street hack', and it is a characterisation often endorsed by the writers themselves, as in Goldsmith's *Epitaph* on Edward Purdon (1773), which commemorates him as 'a bookseller's hack', or in Johnson's Dictionary entry for *lexicographer*, where he commemorates himself as a 'harmless drudge'. Images are not of course straightforward reflections of fact; the drudges of literature outnumber its aristocrats in any period. But the shift in image is nonetheless significant. The synthesis of courtier–soldier–poet embodied in Sidney had disintegrated a century later. Dryden's attempt to sustain it by insisting, in his *Discourse concerning the Original and Progress of Satire* (1693), that the Earl of Dorset surpasses both himself and Donne as a satirist is already a sycophantic fiction. By that date, the 'courtly maker' has become either the dilettante patron or the professional man of letters, earning his living poised precariously between court patronage and a mass reading public. In Dryden himself, the role of poet-laureate, which for Skelton existed as an ideal, becomes fully institutionalised but, in the process, reduced in status from a civic tribute to a state pension; and Dryden's own pride in his 'laurel wreath' was ridiculed in the nickname 'Bays', maliciously bestowed by members of the Court that ostensibly honoured him.

But at the same time the literary influence of the Court was dwindling: the technological changes that made literature more widely available made a public outside the Court a possible alternative source of remuneration

and honour. Pope, debarred from court patronage and the laureateship by his Catholicism, was probably the first English writer to make a living on mass sales. His translation of Homer, particularly popular with the new middle-class audience that had classical aspirations but limited classical learning, enabled him to boast his independence:

(69) But (thanks to *Homer*) . . . I live and thrive,
Indebted to no Prince or Peer alive (Pope 1737)

Johnson's repudiation of Lord Chesterfield's fickle patronage, in a letter famous from the time it was written in 1755 and finally made public by Boswell in 1791, stands as a symbol of the progressive disestablishment of literature in the course of the century, a process that can be interpreted equally as a liberation or a demotion. From then on, the writer had to defend the dignity of his calling: otherwise he was likely to find himself bracketed with the journalist rather than with the statesman and orator. Boswell's heroising *Life of Johnson* (1791) paves the way for the revaluing of 'the Grub Street hack' by providing the portrait of Johnson that Carlyle handed on to the nineteenth century as the image of the 'Hero as Man of Letters': 'in his squalid garret, in his rusty coat; ruling . . . whole nations and generations' (*Heroes and Hero-Worship*, 1841: 250).

7.5.3 Of poetic diction

These changes have profound and in some ways contradictory consequences for literary style. On the one hand, the shift from a courtly to a middle-class audience promoted, particularly in the prose of the period, a shift from highly wrought élitist language to a democratic plain style, from formal virtuosity to semantic transparency. The figure of *correlative distribution* in which Shakespeare had celebrated the renaissance ideal 'the Courtiers, Soldiers, Schollers: Eye, tongue, sword' (*Hamlet* III.i.151) violates the phrase-structure norms of English to produce a pattern that only the scholar's eye can turn into communicative sense; and Puttenham in commending allegory as 'the Courtly figure', had acknowledged that its 'couert and darke termes' make it problematic for 'the world' outside ([1589]: 186). The new note in poetry is sounded by Denham's *Cooper's Hill* (1642/3), in a passage which Dryden's admiration turned into a model for the century that followed. (It is still quoted with approval in Priestley 1777: 299.)

(70) Oh could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
My great example, as it is my theme!

> Though deep, yet clear, though gentle, yet not dull,
> Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full (Denham 1643)

Denham's central metaphor echoes Quintilian's description of the middle style, which flows gently like a clear stream contained within green banks [*lenior tamen ut amnis lucidus quidem sed virentibus utrinque ripis inumbratus*], in contrast to the overflowing torrent of the grand style (*Institutio* 12.x.59–61). Since this is the style which is designed for 'pleasing' or 'conciliating' an audience (*delectandi . . . conciliandi*) it is perhaps the appropriate choice for writers who depend on mass sales. On the other hand, the development of literature as a *profession* promoted, particularly in poetry, the perception of its language as a professional register, with codified rules and conventions that set it apart from the language of its readers' day-to-day communications. Johnson claims that the rise of a specifically 'poetical diction' is a product of the period since Dryden (1779–81: I 330), an analysis supported both by Gray, who favoured poetic diction, and by Wordsworth, who at the end of the century rebelled against it (Adamson *CHEL* IV, 7.2.). But if 'poetical diction' is the eighteenth-century equivalent of the renaissance 'grand style', then it marks a specialisation and reduction in the ideal of poetic discourse. This is paralleled by a restriction in the scope of all associated concepts. By the end of our period, for instance, we find a marked change in the application of the term *literature* (Williams 1976: 150–4). The synthesis of learning and verbal art which defined *literature* for Colet in (2) has begun to break down, the learning being assigned to 'useful literature' (and later *science*) and the verbal art to 'polite literature'. And within this latter and increasingly aestheticised category, the term *poetry* tends to be used as the antonym of *prose* (and later *the novel*), rather than in the broader sense of Aristotle's *Poetics* or Sidney's *Apologie*, where poetry is the rival science to history and philosophy. The change in meaning of *elocution*, which loses its sense of 'eloquence' (*OED*.1–2) and becomes specialised to 'polite pronunciation', is perhaps the most decisive of all these shifts and the most telling sign of the demotion of the cluster of concepts that made up the renaissance stylistic ideal.

7.6 Of perspicuity

7.6.1 The principle of perspicuity

The change in literary style that took place towards the end of the seventeenth century has often been represented – both at the time and since – as a rejection of rhetoric. It is perhaps more accurately described as a *redirection* of rhetoric, in which the practitioners of many different genres, as

though acting in concert, divert their energies away from copia towards alternative goals: the 'plain and simple' style of nonconformist demotic oratory; the 'naturalness and ease' of coffee-house conversation; the '*clarté*' that the French Academy prescribed as the first virtue of neo-classical literature; and the 'truth' that the Royal Society demanded in the descriptive language of empirical science. The coverall term for these goals – and we meet it everywhere in commentators of the time – is *perspicuity*.

Like copia, perspicuity has its roots in classical antiquity and indeed it is commended as a stylistic virtue by English renaissance theorists too. But the neo-classical period did with perspicuity what the Renaissance had done with copia – turn a motif into the main theme. For Quintilian, perspicuity had been largely a practical necessity, the forensic orator's defence against an inattentive jury or a dullwitted judge (*Institutio* 8.ii.22); for Hoskins ([?1599]: 6–7), it is a virtue associated primarily with the genre of letter-writing (rather than the art of the *Arcadia*). But for neo-classical writers, it permeates the whole aesthetics of literary style. Eighteenth-century handbooks offer as many recipes for being perspicuous as their sixteenth-century predecessors gave for being copious.

The concept of perspicuity that emerges in the period has two aspects, differently weighted in its various sponsoring groups: that speakers should be mutually intelligible and that language should act as a transparent window on the world. The ideal of *mutual intelligibility* lends impetus to the period's attempts to establish standardised usages, since it is clear that speakers understand one another most readily when they speak the same variety of a language; and the ideal of *referential transparency* fuels the drive towards establishing fixed relations between words and things. Increasingly, the two kinds of perspicuity are felt to be linked: a language of transparent reference is held to be the most easily intelligible and so is recommended as the foundation for a standard variety which can survive social difference and temporal change. It is no accident that neo-classical writers repeatedly couple the concept of perspicuity with ideas of universality and permanence. Defoe, for instance, in recommending 'a direct Signification of Words, . . . which we call speaking *Sense*' argues that 'this, like Truth, is sullen and the same, ever was and will be so, in what manner, and in what language soever 'tis express'd. *Words* without it, are only Noise' (1697; in Bolton 1966: 98–9). Such views led to a widespread belief in translation as a test of perspicuity, for if a piece of language can be translated without obvious change of meaning, then it demonstrably owes its force to its 'truth' (i.e. its empirical or logical validity) and not to the 'noise' of its words.

Addison applies this test to literary language in his influential distinction between true and false wit (*Spectator* 1711, Nos. 58–63). True wit consists in the resemblance of *ideas*, and these remain unchanged however they are dressed in language because the mind apprehends them independently of their linguistic garb. False wit consists in resemblances of *language*, hence 'the only way . . . to try a Piece of Wit is to translate it into a different Language', because

(71) One may represent true Wit by the Description which *Aristinetus* makes of a fine Woman, When she is *dress'd* she is Beautiful, when she is *undress'd* she is Beautiful (Addison 1711; original italics)

Addison here radically reverses the argument of his renaissance predecessor, Puttenham, by locating beauty in the body not in its clothing (compare (5) above). Sprat, too, replaces gorgeousness with nakedness as a metaphor for the ideal style ('a close, naked, natural way of speaking') when he describes how members of the Royal Society set about divesting themselves of the trappings of the previous age (1667; in Spingarn 1908: II 118). Most eighteenth-century handbooks of style follow suit, often seeming, like the grammar books of the time, to be courses in what *not* to write. In general, this includes all forms of language that draw attention to themselves: amplifications, ingenious word play and intricate patterns of sound. If not rejected outright, such gaudinesses are relegated to the literature of burlesque, for, as we see from Pope's *Peri Bathous* (1728), the characteristic features of copia are reassembled to form the new age's stereotype of bad writing. Serious art follows the rules of perspicuity.

These rules, like the directions for copia, apply both to the choice of words and to their combination in discourse, and I shall again discuss both, but reversing the order followed in 7.3. and in 7.4., in line with the period's own change of priorities. In ideas of style we find the same shift that has been noted in theories of language (Land 1974, Cohen 1977) – the renaissance focus on the unit of the word gives way to a neo-classical focus on units of syntax or discourse.

7.6.2 The Perspicuous Discourse

7.6.2.1 'Reject all amplifications, digressions, and swellings of style'

This was one of the stylistic objectives the Royal Society set itself according to its historian Sprat (1667; in Spingarn 1908: II 118). And although a touch of sinonimia is to be found in the way he expresses the ideal in 1667 (*amplifications . . . and swellings*) we can see the progress it had made by 1711,

if we set Addison's terse handling of the STYLE = CLOTHING metaphor in (71) alongside Puttenham's elaboration in (5). Gone are Puttenham's extended comparison (*as we see . . . even so*), his use of parentheticals (*at leastwise . . .*; *suppose of . . .*; *that is . . .*), his lexical variations (*comely and beautiful*; *naked and bare and not clad*). Instead, Addison pares the form of his second sentence down to the starkness almost of an algebraic paradox: a = x, neg (a) = x. (The model of 'Mathematical plainness' commended by Sprat is implicit in many stylistic discussions of the period; it is perhaps most explicitly taken up in Priestley's *Lectures on Oratory* (1777: 45), when he proposes to 'explain the method of geometricians, and endeavour to show how far it may be adopted, or imitated with advantage, by writers in general'.)

Where there *is* verbal variation in (71) it corresponds to empirical variation, in the sense that what remains the same in the referent remains the same in the language (*beautiful* → *beautiful*), while what changes in the referent changes in its linguistic expression too (*dressed* → *UNdressed*). Addison similarly transmutes renaissance periodic construction: its function of creating suspense is retained (indeed suspense and a surprise ending are central to his effects here) but its form is radically simplified and abbreviated to two parallel adverbial-clause–main-clause sequences (*When . . ., she is . . .//when . . ., she is . . .*). Finally, the relative clause, the servant of copia in renaissance poetics but a perpetrator of digression in neo-classical eyes, is also reformed and rehabilitated: the example here (*which Aristinetus makes*) is a *restrictive relative*; its role is to define rather than to add descriptive elaboration, in contrast, say, to Colet's *non-restrictive relatives* in (60) or Spenser's in (54).

Addison's stylistic revision of Puttenham is typical of his period. Neoclassical writing in general shows a marked decline in the use of parentheses and non-restrictive relative clauses, and the practice of variation, commended by renaissance critics, becomes a vice rather than a virtue. Its main features are epitomised and mocked by Addison in the productions of his fictional would-be poet, Ned Softly:

(72) *I fancy when your Song you sing.*
(Your Song you sing with so much Art) . . .

> . . . pray observe [says Ned] the Turn of Words in those Two Lines. I was a whole Hour in adjusting of them, and have still a Doubt upon me, Whether in the Second Line it should be, *Your Song you sing*; or, *You sing your Song* (Addison 1710)

In two lines Ned manages to combine the lexical repetitiveness of the turn – *sing/song* – and the digressive syntax of the parenthesis. And to make

matters worse, they are accompanied by another fault that neo-classical critics detected in renaissance practice: its perverse distortion of natural word order.

7.6.2.2 'Reduce transpos'd words to the Natural Order'

This is how Lane's *Key to the Art of Letters* (1700: 108–9) expressed a maxim which became central to neo-classical notions of perspicuous syntax. Its growing importance in our period may be gauged from the shift of emphasis in schoolroom practice. Where Poole's *Practical Rhetorick* of 1663, one of the vernacular descendants of *De copia*, concentrated on exercises in 'varying an English', schoolmasters a century later preferred to set exercises in 'resolution', defined by Buchanan as 'the unfolding of a Sentence, and placing all the Parts of it . . . in their proper and natural Order, that the true meaning of it may appear' (1767; quoted by Michael 1970: 471). So Greenwood resolves (73a) into (73b):

(73) a) O Woman, *best are all Things* as the Will
Of God Ordain'd them, his creating Hand
Nothing Imperfect or Deficient *left*
b) O Woman, *all Things are best* as the Will of God Ordain'd them, his creating Hand *left* nothing Imperfect or Deficient (Greenwood 1711)

Milton provided the text for many of these exercises, with his Latin-inspired word order a particularly popular target, as here, where Greenwood 'corrects' the subject–complement inversion in the first line and the postponed verb in the last. For increasingly 'the Natural Order' was equated with the *English* order. As Brightland and Gildon put it: 'the regular Connection of the Words in the Form of Nature . . . is generally more regarded by the English, and other Modern Languages than by those of the Ancients' (1711: 141). There was a general preference for maintaining an SVO sequence and for placing adjective before noun, verb before adverb and main clause before subordinate adverbial clause. But these preferences were justified by an appeal not only to norms of English usage but to universal reason, and where the 'Natural Order' of conversational practice turned out to be at odds with the 'Natural Order' of rational grammar, the latter was often preferred. Hence Dryden's revision of his own style to reduce the practice of preposition-stranding in such constructions as: *which none boast of*, *the Age I live in*, *what were you talking of?*, *this the poet seems to allude to*. Although very common in spoken English, preposition-stranding was regarded by some as a violation of the logic by which a *preposition* was so

called because it was *pre-posed*, its 'natural place' being in front of the word it governs (Bately 1964: 275–6).

In other cases, principles of communicative efficiency or conversational 'easiness' were allowed to prevail. There is no technical term for *information structure* in the period, but the concept is invoked whenever grammarians discuss, for example, what items other than the subject can be allowed to hold first position in the sentence. They recognise that word order often performs the function of distributing the writer's emphases and enabling the reader to discriminate between *given* and *new* information. So, for example, whereas Greenwood's exercises in transposition regularly restore the canonical SVOA order by removing to final position adverbial clauses introduced by *if*, *though*, *as long as* (Greenwood 1711: 218–19), Priestley's advice reflects an understanding that natural stress and focus fall at the end of an information unit, which means that there are times when 'it favours perspicuity' for the adverbial clause to precede the main clause (as with Addison's *when* . . . clauses in (71)): 'for were those circumstances placed after the principal idea, they would either have no attention at all paid to them, or they would take from that which is due to the principal idea' (Priestley 1777: 282). In the same spirit, Lane (1700: 110) concedes that address forms and other 'exciting particles' can replace the subject in sentence-initial position (as with *O woman* in (73)) because they serve to 'excite the attention of the hearers to what follows' (undoubtedly the function of Dr Johnson's famous 'Sir, . . .'). Priestley adds to this an important distinction between initial and parenthetical address forms, which points to an interest in the pragmatic functions of word ordering: the initial position, he suggests, is more formal, the parenthetical is more 'easy and familiar' (Priestley 1777: 283; see also Kames [1762]: II 73).

7.6.2.3 'Make a coherent Discourse'

Locke's interest in the connection of ideas as a philosophical and psychological issue is reflected in his and his period's interest in the stylistic issue of *cohesion*, or as Locke puts it, how 'to make a coherent Discourse' (Locke [1690]: 471). Locke himself establishes a fundamental stylistic maxim for the century that follows him when he goes on to claim that 'the clearness and beauty of a good stile' consists in 'the right use' of 'the Words, whereby [the mind] signifies what Connection it gives to the several Affirmations and Negations, that it Unites in one continu'd Reasoning or Narration'. It is perhaps more than anything the new attention paid to

connective strategies that causes the sea-change in prose which everyone notices in passing from renaissance to neo-classical styles.

Anaphora

One role of the pronoun is (in Early Modern English terminology) to 'rehearse' an antecedent noun. In this role it is purely a function word with no independent meaning or colour. As a consequence, in styles aiming at the virtues of copia, the 'rehearsal' of antecedents is often carried out by synonymic noun phrases. But this poses a double threat to the perspicuity of a text: readers have to establish sameness of sense in order to establish grammatical coreference; and they may have difficulties in interpreting the information structure of the message (in terms of its given–new relationships) since a new linguistic form may or may not signal a new topic. More generally, where all terms are heightened by the practice of sinonimia their relative importance becomes unclear. The sharpness of Addison's epigram on true wit, (71), depends in part on the fact that he gives us only one lexical formulation for 'a fine woman'; thereafter he uses the anaphoric pronoun *she*, thus making the semantic cohesion clear while throwing the reader's attention forward on to the new information contained in the predicates (*she is . . . dressed/ . . . beautiful/ . . . undressed*). Buchanan's *British Grammar* provided a whole chapter of exercises in replacing noun phrases with pronouns (Buchanan 1762: 219–39), and Kames pointed out the confusion that can arise if this principle is neglected, as for instance in: 'instead of reclaiming the natives from their uncultivated manners, they were gradually assimilated to the ancient inhabitants', where the reader is left in doubt whether *the natives* and *the ancient inhabitants* refer to different groups or are 'only different names given to the same object for the sake of variety' (Kames [1762]: II 23).

The anaphoric function of the relative marker was also well known, and it is almost certainly perspicuity rather than Latinity that prompts the favouring of *wh-* over *th-* markers in the theory and (to a lesser degree) the stylistic practice of the time. Swift commented that 'one of the greatest difficulties in our language, lies in the use of the *relatives*; and the making it always evident to what antecedent they refer' (cited in Bately 1964: 282). The *wh-* markers diminished the difficulty because, unlike *that*, they cannot be confused with complementisers or demonstratives and they provide explicit grammatical information: the *who/which* contrast specifies the animacy of the antecedent, the *who/whom* contrast signals the pronoun's syntactic role in its own clause. As Wright has shown, Addison, often taken as the model of perspicuous prose, consistently revised his work to increase the proportion of *wh-* to *th-* relatives (Wright 1997).

Discourse deictics

The same motives account for the increased prominence given to demonstratives and other discourse deictics (e.g. *this*, *that*, *such*). Like anaphoric pronouns, they bind a discourse together, but in addition the semantic contrast between *this* and *that* gives the writer a means of distinguishing levels of textual or emotional distance (Huddleston 1984: 296–7). Some of these functions can be seen in the opening of Steele's essay on *The Death of a Friend*:

(74) There is a sort of Delight which is alternately mixed with Terror and Sorrow in the Contemplation of Death. The Soul has its Curiosity more than ordinarily awaken'd, when it turns its Thoughts upon the Conduct of such who have behaved themselves with an Equal, a Resigned, a Chearful, a Generous or Heroick Temper in that Extremity. We are affected with these respective manners of Behaviour as we secretly believe the Part of the Dying Person imitable by our selves . . . However, there are no Ideas strike more forcibly upon our Imaginations than those which are raised from Reflections upon the Exits of great and excellent Men. (Steele 1711)

Each sentence here has a new subject, which means there is a danger of the discourse becoming fragmented. The discourse deictics (*that* in the second sentence, *these* in the third) avert that danger. They enhance cohesion by formally binding each sentence to its predecessor and they enhance comprehension by signalling that the new lexical material of the noun phrases they introduce is to be construed as given information: '*that* extremity' rehearses *death*, '*these* . . . manners of behaviour' rehearses the sequence *an equal* . . . *temper*. In addition, they guide the reader through the topic-flow of the discourse, the distal deictic *that* marking the receding topic, the proximal deictic *these* marking the topic of continuing relevance or more immediate personal involvement.

The so-called 'existential *there*' that opens the essay also belongs to this network of textual signposts. Like *this* and *that*, it began life as a spatial deictic and it retains much of this deictic force in its discourse function, which has caused some linguists to name it the 'presentative *there*' (Bolinger 1977: 90–123). In Present Day English it is typically used to buttonhole the addressee/reader and to signal the newness of the information that follows. Breivik, who tracked its historical development to 1550, notes that by that date it 'is governed by virtually the same syntactic factors as those operative today' but that it has not 'acquired quite the same pragmatic status as it has in contemporary English' (Breivik 1983: 324). Steele's use in 1711 is fully modern. *There* appears not only at the beginning of the

essay, but also in the last sentence of the extract when the next topic is announced.

Finally in this group of textual pointers, we can include *respective*. Although not deictic in origin it performs the same function as *this/that* in simultaneously rehearsing and clarifying. As used in Steele's third sentence, it refers back to the series, *Equal, Resigned, Chearful, Generous* and blocks the possibility of the reader misconstruing it as a set of synonymic variations by informing us that they are to be construed as separate and mutually exclusive alternatives. This metalinguistic function of *respective* appears to have been largely a late seventeenth-century development (the *OED*'s first citation is from 1646) and its emergence is one more indicator of the period's growing concern with what it termed 'contexture'.

Conjunctions and conjunctive adverbials

When Locke commends connecting words he is referring above all to the use of conjunctions and conjunctive adverbials, such as the *however* that introduces Steele's last sentence in (74). These are all words which not only bind parts of a discourse together but also specify, to a greater or lesser degree, the nature of the binding relationship. In renaissance appositional styles the main conjunctions are *and* and *or*, both classed by Harris as the most rudimentary members of their class, since they link but fail to specify the nature of the link: *and* 'does no more than barely *couple*' and *or* does 'no more, than *merely disjoin*' (Harris 1771: 242, 252). *Or* may mark an alternative possibility or an alternative formulation, while *and* may express almost any relation at all. Writing that relies heavily on conjunctions like these thus poses continual problems of interpretation for its readers. In the neo-classical period, writers aiming at perspicuity deploy a greater range of connectives and differentiate their functions more precisely. Steele's *however*, widely used by himself and his contemporaries, is a case in point. It appears to have joined the repertoire of conjunctive adverbials only in the seventeenth century (Finell 1996: 205–10) and, as illustrated by its role in (73), it provides a more specific alternative to *but*, allowing the writer simultaneously to concede the position stated in the sentence preceding it and to announce the approach of an adversative or qualifying statement in the sentence it introduces.

For Locke, the function of connectives is 'to express well' a sequence of 'methodical and rational Thoughts' and he makes this the key criterion of 'the clearness and beauty of a good Stile' (Locke [1690]: 471–2). Locke thus recognises no distinction between *cohesion* as a stylistic device and *coherence* as a semantic relation, or rather, he adopts an ideal view in which the one acts as signal of the other. Swift bases his satiric strategy on their possible

divergence. Stylistically he pushes his period's interest in connectivity to an extreme: as Milic has shown, he begins a third of his sentences with a connective, often a double connective (e.g. *for although*; *and first*; *but however*) and not infrequently a whole cluster (e.g. *and indeed if*; *and therefore if notwithstanding*) (Milic 1967: 122–36, 225–30). The effect on contemporary readers may be gauged from the fact that Johnson, not one of Swift's admirers, conceded that 'it will not be easy to find any embarrassment in the complication of his clauses, any [inconsequence] in his connections, or abruptness in his transitions' (Johnson 1779–81: II 483). However, as Milic correctly notes, the connectives are in fact often used redundantly or inappropriately, with their specific meanings either disregarded or actively distorted. He concludes that the spurious 'appearance of great logic' is a persuasive device, designed to make readers feel 'enlightened by order and clarity' (Milic 1967: 136). But it is important to add that in many cases Swift then forces his readers to do a double-take on the process of persuasion they have undergone, by making them realise that his apparently lucid and irresistible line of argument has led to conclusions they find morally or emotionally unacceptable (most notoriously in his *Modest Proposal* of 1729, which suggests solving the economic problems of Ireland by turning surplus babies into 'nourishing and wholesome food'). In other words, both Steele and Swift testify to the importance of connective strategies in the new stylistic ideal, but where Steele does so by implementing Locke's recipe for 'the clearness and beauty of a good Stile', Swift parodies it and puts in question the 'methodical and rational' values with which it is associated.

7.6.3 The Perspicuous Word

7.6.3.1 'Positive expressions, clear senses'

When the Royal Society came to consider perspicuity at the level of the word, what it demanded, so Sprat reports, was the use of 'positive expressions, clear senses' (Sprat 1667; in Spingarn 1908: II 118). In the linguistic research sponsored by the Society in the late seventeenth century, this imperative inspired Bishop Wilkins's efforts to create an artificial lexicon based on the principle of one-form–one-meaning (Salmon 1972: 32–7; 1979: 191–206); as a stylistic maxim, it is echoed up to the end of our period. In the 1760s Priestley was recommending those attending his lectures on oratory to begin by fixing the definition of 'all the important words' in their discourse, this being the 'very touchstone of truth' (Priestley 1777: 46–7).

The first effect of applying this criterion to literary language is to exclude

anything that savours of equivocation or pun, which Addison defines as 'a Conceit arising from the use of two Words that agree in the Sound, but differ in the Sense' (1711; in Bond 1965: I 262–3). He illustrates such figures from Milton in his later critique of the language of *Paradise Lost* (1712; in Bond 1965: III 63).

(75) a) Begirt th'Almighty throne/*Beseeching* or *besieging* . . .
b) At one slight *Bound* high overleapt all *Bound*

Word-play of this sort fails the translatability test in the most spectacular manner and it is one of the chief faults that writers of this period find in their predecessors. Ridiculing the classical terminology with which renaissance theorists had dignified the practice (*paragram*, *ploce*, *paranomasia*, *antanaclasis*), they replace it with consistently belittling terms (*jingle*,*quibble*, *clench* and *pun* itself), as when Dryden censures Ben Jonson for using 'the lowest and most groveling kind of Wit, which we call clenches' (1672; in Watson 1962: I 178–9) or Dr Johnson, a century later, censures Shakespeare, because 'a quibble was to him the fatal *Cleopatra* for which he lost the world, and was content to lose it' (1765: 23–4). In lamenting Milton's propensity to pun, Addison portrays it as the vice of an age now ended. In the generation succeeding Milton, he believes, punning has been 'entirely banish'd out of the Learned World' and 'universally exploded by all the Masters of Polite Writing' (1711, in Bond 1965: I 261; 1712, in Bond 1965: III 63).

'Entirely' and 'universally' may be to overstate the case. While it is true that puns appear less frequently in neo-classical than in renaissance writing, they did not disappear altogether. They are important to Swift (Nokes 1978) and not uncommon in Pope, as for instance the famous pun on *port* in (76):

(76) Where Bentley late tempestuous wont to sport
In troubled waters, but now sleeps in Port. (Pope 1743)

which is explained in a spoof learned footnote:

> Viz. 'now retired into harbour, after the tempests that had long agitated his society.' So *Scriblerus*. But the learned *Scipio Maffei* understands it of a certain wine called *Port*, from *Oporto*, a city of Portugal, of which this professor invited him to drink abundantly. –SCIP. MAFF., *De compotationibus academicis*.

But the presence – and length – of the footnote suggests that Pope (or Warburton) did not altogether trust the eighteenth-century reader to spot the 'harbour'/'wine' double meaning without guidance, and the pun's location – in a section of knockabout satire – is a sign of the genre restriction

the period imposed on this kind of word-play. Addison allows puns 'into merry Speeches and ludicrous Compositions' (and hence occasionally into his own humorous essays); what he and other neo-classical critics deplore in earlier writers is their tendency to pun in serious genres, such as 'the Sermons of Bishop *Andrews*, and the Tragedies of *Shakespear*' (1711; in Bond 1965: I 260). So Dryden, after an early outbreak in *The Wild Gallant* (acted 1663), largely avoided punning in his later drama.

The immediate explanation for this restriction is the period's growing concern for linguistic *decorum*, a matching of style to discourse type which prescribes that, for instance, serious genres and topics should be expressed in serious words. But we need also to explain why the pun came to be regarded as axiomatically non-serious. A number of factors are involved. For one thing, it is important to note that sermons and drama, dominant genres in the earlier period, are both performance arts and their oral/aural mode of operation provides the most favouring conditions for the pun: /kɒlər/ for instance, can be interpreted equally as 'anger' or 'neck-strap', as it is in successive lines of *Romeo and Juliet* (I.i.4–5). But Andrews and Shakespeare reached their eighteenth-century audience in *written* form, where the attempt to identify <choler> with <collar> is bound to appear more strained. The later period's own literary production was more dominated by written genres and the increasing standardisation of spelling made it increasingly difficult to indicate a pun in writing without manifest wrenching of accepted norms. From the mid-seventeenth century onwards, the drive towards a rational one-form–one-meaning spelling system, fostering and fostered by the growth in dictionary-making, reduced the possibility of puns by decisively dividing pairs such as *travel/travail*, *concent/consent*, *sun/son*. Hence all modernising editions of earlier writers were (and still are) forced to resolve indeterminacies, thus implying that in any given context one form–meaning relation is primary and any alternative meanings are secondary, inessential or artificial.

But the main change was less technological than ideological. Puns were confined to comedy and satire because neo-classical writers were disinclined to take seriously a naturalist view of language which concedes to the pun the power to suggest an occult link or correspondence between its diverse referents. This particularly affects the use of puns based on *homophony*, where two empirically distinct referents share 'one noise'. It is an accident of sound-change that pairs such as *sun/son* and *heart/hart* have fallen together, an accident of cultural history that a wine and a harbour share the name *port*. It is this kind of pun particularly that neo-classical writers consigned to burlesque. Puns based on *polysemy*, where one sense has developed

out of another, are more rational; hence, though largely confined to satiric genres, they can be used for serious purposes.

Pope, for instance, achieves many of his deadliest effects simply by the oscillation between the abstract and concrete senses of a word or phrase, as in (77)

(77) Your country's peace, how oft, *how dearly bought*! (Pope 1737)

where the abstract reading – 'achieved at great sacrifice' – presents the poem's addressee as a hero, while the concrete reading – 'paid for with a lot of money' – carries quite different implications. In this instance, since the addressee was King George II, it was perhaps politic for the intended meaning to remain veiled. More commonly Pope forces the double-take on his reader by the exploitation of *zeugma*. In renaissance rhetorics, zeugma is no more than its name (= 'a yoking') implies, a construction in which one word governs two others. Day illustrates the figure with the example: 'his loosenesse overcame all shame, his boldnesse feare' (1599: 82), where *overcame* acts as the yoke between two subjects and two objects. But although Johnson's Dictionary offered the same definition (and example) in 1755, neo-classical practice was establishing the more specific modern sense of zeugma, in which it applies to cases like *he lost his temper and his hat*. Here the objects appear to be *incongruously* yoked because they draw on different senses of the yoking verb. This is the form of zeugma used by Pope in examples such as (78a)–(78c):

(78) a) Or stain her Honour or her new Brocade
b) Or lose her Heart, or Necklace, at a Ball
c) Dost sometimes Counsel take – and sometimes *Tea*
(Pope 1714; original italics)

But although these can certainly be described as puns, the pun here survives in severely restricted form: it lies only in the two different senses of the verbs (*stain*, *lose*, *take*) that are foregrounded by their simultaneous collocation with abstract and concrete nouns. And whereas renaissance heuristic puns urge their hearer/reader to see a likeness in two things overtly unlike (son = sun, choler = collar), the jolting effect of zeugma encourages us to find differences where the linguistic form suggests affinities. Pope's moral argument is that staining honour is precisely *not* equivalent to staining brocade, that counsel should *not* be 'taken' in the same spirit as tea, and that hearts are different from necklaces. In the terms popularised by Locke, the puns in (78) are an exercise in *judgement* rather than *wit*, where wit consists in looking for imaginary resemblances, while judgement involves

'separating carefully, one from another, Ideas, wherein can be found the least difference, thereby to avoid being misled by Similitude and by affinity to take one thing for another' (Locke [1690]: 156).

The other main type of pun to survive is the *double entendre*. It probably owes its name to this period (the *OED* dates it to 1673) and it is appropriate that it should, because it typifies the neo-classical attitude to multiple meaning, both in its restricted sphere (the genre of comedy, the topic of sexual impropriety) and in the way it operates. Take, for example, these *double entendres* from Wycherley's *The Country Wife*:

(79) *Sir* Jaspar *calls through the door to his Wife, she answers from within*
Sir Jas. Wife! my Lady Fidget! wife! he is coming in to you the back way.
La. Fid. Let him come, and welcome, which way he will.
. . .
Enter Lady Fidget *with a piece of China in her hand, and* Horner *following.*
La. Fid. And I have been toyling and moyling for the pretti'st piece of China, my Dear.
Hor. Nay she has been too hard for me, do what I cou'd.
[*Mrs Squeamish*.] Oh Lord I'le have some China too, good Mr. *Horner*, don't think to give other people China, and me none, come in with me too.
Hor. Upon my honour I have none left now.
Squeam. Nay, nay I have known you deny your China before now, but you shan't put me off so, come —
Hor. This Lady had the last there.
La. Fid. Yes indeed Madam, to my certain knowledge he has no more left.
Squeam. O but it may be he may have some you could not find.
La. Fid. What d'y think if he had had any left, I would not have had it too, for we women of quality never think we have China enough.
(Wycherley 1675)

Wycherley retains the comic convention of naming characters within the *nomen = omen* tradition outlined in 7.3.3 (a convention still apparent a century later in Fielding's Mrs Slipslop or Sheridan's Sir Antony Absolute) but his characters' use of language seems almost tailor-made to illustrate the consequences of holding the opposite view, expounded by Locke. If, as Locke famously argued ([1690]: 404–8), there is no natural connection between word and referent, then a word's meaning may vary according to context and user. In this instance, *come in the back way* is a vague, generalised phrase that is given specific but different meanings by Sir Jasper (who is talking about rooms) and Lady Fidget (who is talking about bodies). The *double-entendre* on *China* is an even more extreme case: its sexual meaning (as

far as I know) is purely arbitrary and is available only to those who, like the audience, share the coterie frame of reference established by Horner and his ladies. In some ways, this could be called the perfect *anti*-pun since the double meaning is created without any pre-existing homophony or polysemy to supply an ambiguous form.

This feature allies it to the form of double meaning that not only survives but flourishes in the neo-classical period: *irony*. Irony is the rhetorical figure that makes a virtue of the neo-classical belief in the arbitrariness of the form–meaning connection, since it works by divorcing the word said from the word meant. In Stirling's mnemonic rhyme:

(80) An *Irony*, dissembling with an Air,
Thinks otherwise than what the Words declare (Stirling 1733)

Irony is not so much a figure of speech as a method of double reading. In this it resembles allegory (discussed in 7.3.5), a link recognised by Puttenham, when, having reviewed a set of ironic figures (*ironia*, *sarcasmus*, *asteismus*, *micterismus*, *antiphrasis*, *charientismus*), he concludes: 'all these be souldiers to the figure allegoria and fight vnder the banner of dissimulation' ([1589]: 191). But the literary history of the period suggests that irony and allegory are competitors rather than collaborators, in that the growing importance of the first coincides with the decline of the second. One explanation appears in the way Scaliger differentiates the two (*Poetices libri septem* 1561: III 85): allegory brings together similars, while irony brings together contraries, precisely in order to expose the ground of their difference. Translated into Lockean terms, allegory is a figure of wit, irony a figure of judgment, appealing to the same literary taste that is manifested in the neo-classical revision of zeugma. Indeed, as practised in (78) zeugma is itself a form of irony, since the reader is required to disbelieve the equation that 'the Words declare'.

The general change in the status of irony can be gauged by setting two schoolmasters' accounts alongside each other. In Poole's late Erasmian primer (published posthumously in 1663), irony is simply one among many methods of varying; in Stirling's *System of Rhetoric* (1733), it is one of the four master tropes that appear together on the first page. Their illustrations differ significantly too:

(81) a) Love is weak, *for sooth*! and every thing overcomes it; *yes*, *indeed* [Ironic variation on *love conquers all*]
b) Self-love sees all things, is very *quick-sighted I assure you, believe me that will.* [Ironic variation on *self-love is blind*] (Poole 1663; original italics)

(82) Fairly, i.e. scandalously done. Good, i.e. bad Boy (Stirling 1733)

Where Poole in (81a)–(81b) obviously feels the need to signal irony in the *form* of the language – by repetition and a heavy use of truth-proclaiming disjuncts, which he italicises for extra emphasis – Stirling's examples (no doubt typical of the ironies he employed in his own classroom) rely for their interpretation purely on a complicity – of shared context or values – between speaker and hearer. They are cruder examples of the process by which Swift relies on his reader to interpret a 'modest' proposal as an 'outrageous' proposal, or 'praise' of religious enthusiasm as a 'condemnation'. The power of techniques that enlist the reader as 'both a Reader and a Composer' is noted by Addison, citing Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681) as a particularly successful example (*Spectator*, No. 512, 1712). The difficulty of the reader's interpretive role in such works is considered by Priestley (1777: 219). While praising irony and the mock-heroic mode, he comments that 'it might justly appear surprizing, that a person should say one thing, and mean another, and yet his real meaning be perfectly understood' and concedes that without the aid of tone of voice, gesture or an audience of intimates, the ironist always risks being 'misunderstood for a time'. This is exactly what happened to many of the eighteenth-century ironists: to Defoe, imprisoned for recommending the extermination of dissenters in *The Shortest Way with Dissenters* (1702), a pamphlet now seen as a defence of their cause; to Pope, whose *Epistle to Augustus* (the source of (77)) was widely read in 1737 as a eulogy of George II; and to Swift, whose intended meaning in Book IV of *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) is still under debate. All bear witness to the paradox that the perspicuous style can be very obscure indeed.

7.6.3.2 'General expressions'

The drive towards using words in single literal senses served the first criterion of perspicuity – that there should be fixed and transparent relations between word and thing. The second criterion – that there should be mutual intelligibility between speakers – promoted a different kind of reform: the restriction of the literary lexicon to a standard general vocabulary. Addison went so far as to claim that 'one of the great beauties of poetry' lay in using 'such easy language as may be understood by ordinary Readers' (1712; in Bond 1965: III 63) and by this line of reasoning he and other critics condemned all the 'hard words' that renaissance writers had used as a means of amplifying. Shakespeare's neologisms, Spenser's archaisms, Sidney's compounding and Milton's latinisms all at various times came under attack. Addison himself was taken as the model of a 'middle style'

that, in terms of vocabulary choice, relied for its keywords on the repertoire of well-integrated, non-monosyllabic Romance loans, as exemplified by the words in which Johnson commends it: '*familiar*, but not coarse, and *elegant*, but not ostentatious' (1779–81: II 86).

A further narrowing of vocabulary range results from what Johnson formulates as 'a general rule in poetry, that all appropriated terms of art should be sunk in general expressions, because poetry is to speak an universal language' (1779–81: I 344). By 'terms of art', Johnson means the technical vocabularies associated with different professional varieties of English. Such terms threaten a writer's intelligibility because they will be unfamiliar to most of his readers. On these grounds, Johnson reproves Dryden for including in *Annus Mirabilis* (1666) naval words like *seam*, *calking iron*, *tarpawling* and *shrouds*, just as Addison had complained about Milton's architectural vocabulary: '*Doric Pillars*, *Pilasters*, *Cornice*, *Freeze*, *Architrave*' (1712; in Bond 1965: III 64). The embargo however does not always extend to satire. Providing, as so often, the obverse of its period's stylistic ideals, eighteenth-century satire testifies to the widespread mistrust of specialised vocabularies not by excluding them but by making them its vehicle or target. For example, the very first indication that Swift's 'modest proposal' is the practice of cannibalism is given, many lines before it is explicitly stated, in the substitution of agricultural terminology for a general expression: 'a Child, *just dropt from it's Dam*, may be supported by her Milk, for a Solar year' already equates a child with a lamb or calf (*A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People from Being a Burthen to their Parents or the Country* (1729: 4)). And the essay as a whole works on Swift's assumption that his readers can at least recognise the different specialist varieties of butcher, cook and political economist. What aligns him with Johnson is that in this confrontation of varieties, it is always the general moral vocabulary that is vindicated. In neo-classical writing, specialist varieties are almost invariably purveyors of limited or perverted perspectives; not until the modern period are they seen as sources of fresh aesthetic or moral insights (see Adamson *CHEL* IV 7.2).

In some cases 'terms of art' threaten mutual intelligibility not because they are unfamiliar but because they exist both in general usage and in specialised varieties but have different meanings or implications in each. Both Locke and Dr Johnson draw attention to this phenomenon, Locke noting the widely different significations attached to *gold* by the child and the chemist ([1690]: 485–6), Johnson commenting on the shift in meaning that takes place when *eccentric* is borrowed from the astronomer's vocabulary or *sanguine* from the physician's (1755: C_2^r). Sterne shows the potential for

misunderstanding in *Tristram Shandy*, when Mr Shandy, using *auxiliary* in the specialised grammatical sense, bewilders Corporal Trim, for whom it carries only its specialised military meaning (*Tristram Shandy* 1762: V 145–6). But in recommending that writers should systematically prefer the most general acceptations of such words, neo-classical critics were pushing literature not simply towards perspicuity but also towards more abstract or generalised meanings, because words tend to have a more restricted scope when used in specialised varieties. Compare, for example, the vagueness of *operation* in general use with the more specific and concrete meanings it takes on in military or medical contexts. The 'general expressions' Johnson advocates are thus also inevitably *generalised* expressions.

Johnson himself bows to the inevitable with some alacrity. His fictional sage, Imlac, expresses the view that 'the business of a poet . . . is to examine, not the individual, but the species', ignoring local variations in favour of 'general and transcendental truths' (*Rasselas* 1759: I 68–70) and Johnson reflects Imlac's priorities in his own choice of vocabulary. He typically prefers the superordinate term to the hyponym, the abstract to the concrete noun, the nominalisation to the verb and the generic to the specific form of reference (Wimsatt 1941: 52–9). All are illustrated in (83), which offers a striking contrast to the itemising styles of Burton (23) or Jonson (36).

(83) he [i.e. mankind] must always discover new motives of action, new excitements of fear, and allurements of desire. (Johnson 1750)

Though there was some dissent from Johnson's view (Kames, for instance, believing that 'abstract and general terms' were not suited for poetry or 'literary performance intended for amusement' (Kames [1762]: I 215)), it was widely shared. Other aims are involved than the representation of general nature, as becomes apparent when Lawson, advising his audience of would-be orators to avoid descending into 'minute Details', warns them that 'a Desire of being particular and exact' has 'betrayed many good well-meaning Men into Notions and Expressions, gross and low, mean or unseemly' (Lawson 1758: 410). Here the species is preferred to the individual on stylistic rather than philosophical grounds, simply because concrete, particular terms are more likely to belong to the class of what Lawson, like most commentators of his time, rejects as unsuitably 'low' words.

This restriction of vocabulary calls for special comment. The motive here cannot be perspicuity, since, with the exception of slang or thieves' cant, 'low words' are not unintelligible. Indeed, on the grounds of clarity, Sprat reports that the Royal Society would prefer 'the language of Artizans

Countrymen, and Merchants, before that, of Wits, or Scholars' (1667; in Spingarn 1908: II 118). Even for literary purposes, Johnson considers that 'a stile which never becomes obsolete' is primarily 'to be sought in the common intercourse of life, among those who speak only to be understood, without ambition of elegance', and he rebukes 'the polite' for rejecting vulgar usage 'when the vulgar is right' (Johnson 1765: xviii). Nevertheless, he had already himself found fault with Shakespeare's phrase 'peep through the blanket of the dark', not because the metaphor is unclear but because the words *peep* and *blanket* are risibly low (*Rambler* No. 168, 1751). Addison, who similarly objects to Milton's use of homely phrases such as 'for fear lest dinner cool' and 'for this we may thank Adam', confronts the inconsistency in his own position directly:

(84) If Clearness and Perspicuity were only to be consulted, the Poet would have Nothing else to do but to cloath his Thoughts in the most plain and natural Expressions. But, since it often happens, that the most obvious Phrases, and those which are used in ordinary Conversation, become too familiar to the Ear, and contract a Kind of Meanness by passing through the Mouths of the Vulgar, a Poet should take particular care to guard himself against Idiomatick Ways of Speaking. (Addison 1712)

A class bias is certainly detectable here, the reference to *the mouths of the vulgar* reminding us that the main audience for literature in this period, the 'ordinary readers' with whom writers are attempting to establish common linguistic ground, consists of those who belong, or aspire to belong, to the non-vulgar middle class. Only with the mass audience of the modern period does 'popular literature' seriously challenge the position of 'polite literature' and the language of 'the vulgar' become a viable stylistic model for establishment writers. But the self-contradictions we find in Addison's and Johnson's handling of terms such as *common*, *vulgar*, *domestic* and *ordinary* point to a more general aesthetic problem that has concerned literary critics of other schools and periods too: if it is the task of poetry to defamiliarise and heighten perception, how can that be accomplished through familiar and ordinary forms of speech?

7.7 Of perspicuous sublimity

7.7.1 Introduction: the sublime style

(85) SUBLIME. n.s. The grand or lofty stile. *The Sublime* is a Gallicism, but now naturalized.

Longinus strengthens all his laws,
And is himself the great *sublime* he draws. *Pope*

> The *sublime* rises from the nobleness of thoughts, the magnificence of the words, or the harmonious and lively turn of the phrase; the perfect *sublime* arises from all three together. *Addison.* (Johnson 1755)

The sublime is a term whose senses proliferate during the course of the eighteenth century as it becomes a key word in the aesthetic theories of first neoclassicism and then romanticism. But for our present purposes, I shall follow the definition offered by Johnson's Dictionary (85) and concentrate on the sublime as a type of style, the eighteenth-century equivalent of what Wilson two hundred years earlier had called the 'great or mightie kind' of writing (cf (45) above). More accurately, it represents a revision of Wilson's concept. For although Gilbert (1979) is right to stress the extent to which writers from Chaucer to Johnson located their styles within the framework of the Roman rhetoricians' tripartite typology of levels (see 7.4.1 above), it is important to add that the classical tradition underwent continuous redefinition during that period and the apparent continuity of terminology can be misleading. In medieval rhetoric, the three styles had become associated with social status, so that what Chaucer calls 'the heigh stile' is primarily the form of language appropriately used by or to the nobility (Burnley 1983: 183–90). During the Renaissance, with the re-classicising of rhetoric and the recovery of relevant source passages in Cicero and Quintilian, the highest of the three styles became associated with the forensic orator's power of persuasion (see 7.2.2 above) and it is in this spirit that Milton invokes the grand style to '*assert* Eternal Providence/ And *justifie* the wayes of God to men' (*Paradise Lost* I 25–6; my italics). The sublime represents a further shift in conception. Under the impact of the re-discovery of Longinus's treatise *On the Sublime*, the 'grand or lofty stile' migrated from the sphere of public speaking to the sphere of private reading: its canonical genre became the poem rather than the oration and its primary function to raise emotions rather than to change beliefs. According to Longinus, 'the *Sublime* does not persuade, but create Transport' (trans. Welsted 1724: 143), producing a state analogous to that of religious ecstasy or 'enthusiastic passion' (Dennis 1701; in Ashfield & de Bolla 1996: 35–9). Hence the terms in which Murdoch describes the power of Thomson's style: 'the reader is left enraptured in silent adoration and praise' (Murdoch 1762 I ix).

Though known in England in the early seventeenth century, as witness Langbaine's Latin edition of 1636, Longinus became popular largely through Boileau's French version of 1674 (hence Johnson's belief that *the sublime* is 'a Gallicism'). As a result, in the form in which the concept came through to the eighteenth century, the *ecstasis* central to Longinus's ideal was severely restrained by the rationalism of the French Academy. Even so,

most eighteenth-century critics were well aware that the expression of violent emotion hardly assists the achievement of perfect perspicuity, and Burke explicitly associated the sublime with the obscure and confused (Burke 1759: 90–110). Writers of the next generation were often content to pay that price. What marks the early eighteenth century is the strenuousness of its attempt to achieve a compromise. 'It is requisite' says Addison, summing up the mood of his time, 'that the Language of an Heroick Poem should be both Perspicuous and Sublime' (1712; in Bond 1965: III 10). In this section I shall look at the terms of the compromise as they affect two key areas of neo-classical poetic practice, poetic diction (7.7.2.) and versification (7.7.3.), corresponding to those aspects of the sublime that Addison in (85) labels 'the magnificence of the words' and 'the harmonious and lively turn of the phrase'.

7.7.2 Poetic diction

It is Milton who prompts Dryden to adopt the term *sublime*, when he pays tribute to *Paradise Lost* as: 'one of the greatest, most noble, and most sublime POEMS, which either this Age or Nation has produc'd' (1677; in Watson 1962: I 196). And it is Milton who provides the stylistic bridge between the renaissance grand style and the sublime diction of eighteenth-century poetry. But it is Milton re-analysed to fit the neo-classical paradigm, his language trimmed and codified to provide a repertoire of techniques for deviating from 'plain and natural expressions' without undue sacrifice of perspicuity. Addison, for instance, in his seminal essay on the language of *Paradise Lost* which paved the way for Milton's wider popularity (*Spectator*, No. 285, 1712), locates its sublimity in precisely those features that were rejected by the criterion of perspicuity – violation of standard word order, insertion of redundant elements and lexical strangeness – but he exemplifies all of them by forms that minimise the problem of construal. By and large, eighteenth-century poetic practice followed the same pattern.

So 'hard words' – neologisms, archaisms and other lexical deformations – became acceptable if they were drawn from an existing Miltonic stock. For instance, of the renaissance latinisms that Addison (incorrectly) attributes to Milton, *embryon* (as adjective) was taken up by Brooke, Harte and Wesley, *miscreated* by Cobb, Croxall and Fawkes, and *Cerberean* by Blackmore, Pitt and Pope. It is not coincidental that all of them are adjectives. The eighteenth century has been called the 'century of the adjective' on the grounds that 'adjectival usage increased out of all proportion to preceding or following uses' (Miles 1974: 107–8) and one reason for the rise

of the adjective in the poetic diction of the period is that it satisfies the dual demands of perspicuous sublimity. It provides a method of 'raising' by what Addison terms 'lengthening the phrase'. But simultaneously the adjective acts as a quarantine site where figurative, archaic or neologistic elements can be kept from contaminating the literal sense. By concentrating lexical strangeness in adjectives, poetic diction can remain perspicuous because the basic plot structure of a sentence (say, *dog bites man*) remains clear when it is adjectivally heightened (into, say, *cerberean dog bites miscreated man*). Hence the widespread practice of collocating a general or common core noun, as prescribed by perspicuity (7.6.3.2), with a more magniloquent adjective, as in Dennis's '*adamantine* chains', '*formidable* king', or Pope's '*retorted* eye', '*implicit* hands', '*celestial* red', or Young's '*ambient* air', '*nitrous* grain', '*ethereal* fires' (Havens 1922: 93, 580–1, 593).

The adjective is also important as source of word-order violation. Though Milton's larger-scale use of latinate ordering was, as we have seen, widely deplored by eighteenth-century grammarians, his 'placing the adjective after the substantive' as Addison calls it, is less likely to cause misunderstandings. Brightland and Gildon even found an ingenious way of defending the practice as natural if not native, because 'in Nature we first think of the NAME, before we think of the QUALITY' (Brightland and Gildon 1711: 145). A scattering of postposed adjectives can be found in most poems of the period as in the 'nymph *reserved*', 'brede *ethereal*', 'maid *composed*', 'pleasures *sweet*', 'fallows *grey*' and 'hamlets *brown*' of Collins's *Ode to Evening* (1746), and the three examples in Gray's *The Progress of Poesy* (1757) suggest the Longinian associations of the inversion: 'arms *sublime*', 'lyre *divine*', 'numbers *wildly sweet*'. In Thomson, who seems to have internalised the Miltonic dialect and made it productive, there is a much more extensive use of inversion, most notably object-fronting, as well as the coining of new latinate and compound adjectives in addition to those directly borrowed from Milton; but these aspects of his style were found 'turgid' and 'obscure' by even the most admiring of his contemporaries (Cohen 1964: 317–35).

Of course, the most obvious method of defamiliarising and raising the language of poetry – recognised and recommended from Aristotle onwards – is by the use of metaphor, and metaphor became the key problem for the new poetics, since it is also the main source of the subversion of literal sense. The problem was intensified by a fundamental change that seems to have taken place in the way metaphor was conceived. In the renaissance paradigm, metaphor was understood as a lexical variation ('translated words') grounded in a structural analogy (so in the example

cited in (40a), *behead* can be translated into *divorce* because head : body :: husband : wife). This model of metaphor allows for the possibility that different words in a collocation may be differently varied so long as the structural relations remain consistent. Hence the kind of complex metaphor that characterises Elizabethan poetry (see Fowler 1975: 87–113 for some detailed analyses). To take a small-scale example, Shakespeare's *take arms against a sea of troubles* (*Hamlet* III.i.58) can be analysed as a double variation grounded in a set of analogies, which might crudely be expressed as (86):

(86)	(vehicle 1)	*take arms against* an invading army
	(vehicle 2)	build dykes against the *sea*
	(tenor)	contend against *troubles*

During the course of the seventeenth century, the *lexical* conception of metaphor gave way to a *pictorial* conception. This is apparent in Hobbes's view that 'an Image is always a part or rather the ground of a poetical comparison' (1675; in Spingarn 1908: II 71) and by the eighteenth century there was a growing tendency to use *image* or *imagery* as a synonym for *metaphor*. The revised model is often made explicit, as when Kames redefines metaphor as precisely *not* a figure of speech but 'an act of the imagination, figuring one thing to be another' (Kames [1762]: II 278) or Priestley proposes that 'an easy and good test . . . of the propriety of strong metaphors, is to imagine them reduced to *painting*, and consider how the images would look in that mode of expression' (Priestley 1777: 192). It is this test, consciously or unconsciously applied, that leads neo-classical critics to find the complex metaphors of renaissance writing deplorably 'mixed' because they create empirically absurd and self-contradictory pictures. Pope, for instance, evidently disconcerted by *take arms against a sea of troubles*, added a footnote to the line in his edition of Shakespeare (1723), suggesting that *sea* might be replaced with *seige*, 'which continues the metaphor of . . . *taking arms*; and represents the being encompass'd on all sides with troubles'.

Longinus, however, had specifically linked metaphor to the sublime. So in his essay on Milton, Addison sets out the terms on which it might be rehabilitated. Metaphors in the new poetic diction should avoid the faults of the previous age: they should not be 'thick sown', which 'savours too much of Wit', or mixed, which 'turns a Sentence into a kind of an Enigma or Riddle' (1712; in Bond 1965: III 12). Two forms of metaphor which pass these tests are *epic simile* and *personification*. Both Addison and Johnson applaud Milton's epic similes, taking as exemplary the following description of Satan's shield:

(87) the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose Orb
Through Optic Glass the *Tuscan* Artist views
At Ev'ning from the top of *Fesole*,
Or in *Valdarno*, to descry new Lands,
Rivers or Mountains in her spotty Globe. (Milton 1667)

In contrast with a conceit (such as (39) above) where the elaboration of the likeness involves a more and more ingenious development of the resemblance between the things compared, in (87) the strict purposes of simile are exhausted in *like the Moon*, which answers in a straightforward way to the shape and cosmic size of Satan's shield. What follows is an elaboration of the topic (or image) of the moon and it is clearly beside the point to expect any detail of that elaboration to resemble Satan's shield. As Addison says (quoting Boileau) 'a general Resemblance is sufficient and . . . too much nicety in this Particular savours of the Rhetorician and Epigrammatist' (1712; in Bond 1965: III 91). Epic similes are not really metaphors at all but 'short Episodes', new topics which by their novelty diversify the discourse and by the scale of the proposed analogue make the original topic more impressive. They subdue metaphor by minimising the element of resemblance-hunting: the simile is only the hinge which links them to the main topic and saves them from irrelevance. So when Addison heroises recent military exploits by likening the 'British legions' to an invading tide, he concentrates on building a consistent picture of a flood (unlike Shakespeare in (86)) and leaves his readers free to interpret the details of this description literally or metaphorically (unlike Donne in (39)):

(88) So *Belgian* mounds bear on their shatter'd sides
The sea's whole weight encreas'd with swelling tides:
But if the rushing wave a passage finds,
Enrage'd by wat'ry moons, and warring winds,
The trembling Peasant sees his country round
Cover'd with tempests, and in oceans drown'd (Addison, 1705)

Personification tames metaphor in a different way, by making the figurative transparent to the literal; unlike most forms of metaphor, it works not by substituting one referent for another, but by a process of simple hypostasis, – well described by Addison when exemplifying the use of 'this beautiful Figure' from Homer: 'instead of telling us that Men naturally fly when they are terrified, he introduces the Persons of *Flight* and *Fear*, who he tells us are inseparable Companions' (1712; in Bond 1965: III 337–8). Personification rapidly became the dominant figurative device of

poetic diction. Havens, comparing the six volumes of Tonson's *Miscellanies* (1684–1709) with the six volumes of Dodsley's *Collections* (1748–58), notes a massive increase in its incidence of use (Havens 1929: 526), and its mid-century status is reflected in Kames's view that personification 'is justly intitled to the first place' in his chapter on Figures ([1762]: II 227). The practice of the time can be seen in Collins's *Ode Occasion'd by the Death of Mr Thomson*:

(89) REMEMBRANCE oft shall haunt the Shore
When THAMES in Summer-wreaths is drest,
And oft suspend the dashing Oar
To bid his gentle Spirit rest!

And oft as EASE and HEALTH retire
To breezy Lawn, or Forest deep,
The Friend shall view yon whit'ning Spire
And mid the varied Landschape weep.

But Thou, who own'st that Earthy Bed,
Ah! what will ev'ry Dirge avail?
Or Tears, which LOVE and PITY shed
That mourn beneath the gliding Sail! (Collins 1749)

Personification has obvious affinities with allegory and superficially there is much in common between Collins's well-populated landscape and the world of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. The differences however are equally striking. Spenser's allegory is both multi-layered and 'dark'. Duessa, for example, simultaneously represents Mary, Queen of Scots, the Catholic Church and duplicity, and only the last of these would be obvious to those without the privileged key to the mystery. In Collins's poem there is a single and clear literal substrate to each personification, whether it is a personified natural object or an animated abstraction. So the figure of Thames dressed in summer wreaths translates readily into a river with the summer foliage along its banks and the figure of Remembrance clearly stands for 'I/those who remember Thomson'. In the last instance (as in the later *Ease*, *Health*, *Love* and *Pity*) the personification is not so much a type of metaphor as a technique of generalisation.

As Priestley shows, this is one of its advantages. Caught between agreeing with Johnson in valuing general expressions ('the sublime of science consists in general and comprehensive theorems' (Priestley 1777: 157)) and agreeing with Kames in valuing concrete particular terms ('in nature . . . we see nothing but particulars, and to these ideas alone are the strongest sensations and emotions annexed' (1777: 84)), he evidently saw personification

as the reconciling trope, since it combines the intellectual power of generalisation with the emotional power of 'sensible images'. The force of an expression, he argues, becomes more '*concentrated*, as it were, in the change of an attribute first from the plural to the singular number, and then from the singular number to an abstract idea personified' as in the shift from *old men are venerable* to *old age is venerable* (1777: 236). In the latter, the concept of age is still associated with a human figure but it has been dissociated from possibly irrelevant contingent attributes attached to the reader's image of specific old men.

If modern readers do not find the outcome in (89) as powerful as eighteenth-century theory might predict, it may be because, intervening between Collins and ourselves, is another revolution in poetic paradigm, which gave a central position to the self-expression of an author in his work and made the notion of a generalised emotion anomalous. As the quotation from Pope in (85) shows, the eighteenth century recognised what Keats later called the 'egotistical sublime' and saw it exemplified in the work of both Milton and Longinus himself, but the linguistic representation of the self proved difficult to reconcile with other features of the dominant stylistic paradigm. So in (89), though an *I* is implied as a dialogic participant (inferred from the address to *thou* in line 9) and as a source of emotion (inferred from the interjection *ah*! in line 10) we cannot locate this speaker in the landscape of the poem. Instead, he is represented by the generic figure of 'the Friend' and the personified abstractions of 'Love and Pity', who externalise his emotions and displace him as the agents of the verbs *weep*, *shed tears* and *mourn*. To the post-romantic reader, the effect is one of self-alienation or a failure of expressivity, as though Collins, like Dickens's Mrs Gradgrind, were saying: 'I think there's a pain somewhere in the room . . . but I couldn't positively say that I have got it.'

7.7.3. Harmonious Numbers

7.7.3.1. The heroic line

All vernaculars seeking to establish a native grand style in the Renaissance had faced the task of finding an equivalent of the classical hexameter, 'the soueraigne of verses and the high Controwler of Rimes' (Harvey 1592; in Smith 1904: II 230). Skelton had discovered the latinate long word (as (47) shows) but had not found a long line to match (as a comparison with (46) shows) and this is one reason why Puttenham discounts his claim to 'the name of a Poet Laureat': 'he vsed both short distaunces and short measures pleasing onely the popular eare: in our courtly maker we banish them

vtterly' ([1589]: 84). Skelton's successors set out to solve the problem and the variety of their experimentation can be seen in the number of different verse-forms chosen to translate Virgil's *Aeneid* between 1500 and 1650 (for representative examples, see Görlach 1991: 285–92). But by the end of the sixteenth century, general practice had already decided the question in favour of the form used in (87) and (88) above, the verse-line now usually known as the *iambic pentameter*. This is not a name commonly used during our period and its appropriateness to English practice has been questioned, in particular because of the implication it conveys that the line is constructed of five independent two-syllable feet. For these reasons, I shall use instead the term favoured by neo-classical critics, the *heroic line*, a name derived from the line's canonical *function* as the vehicle of heroic (i.e. epic) poetry.

It is generally agreed that the heroic line was installed in its canonical function during the Renaissance, extending its domain by the neo-classical phase of our period to become the unmarked choice for poetic production of all kinds. But there is no generally agreed account of its *formal* development, largely because of the controversies that both then and now have surrounded the selection of an appropriate analytic framework. Indeed one possibility, often suggested though relatively little explored, is that different poets may have worked within different metrical systems, the differences between them being partially concealed by the fact that each system produces a certain percentage of lines metrically acceptable to one or more of the others. Another possibility is that the verse-design of the heroic line remained constant through the period but that its permissible range of instantiations was subject to variation, which might be as much idiolectal as chronological. So, for instance, Donne's metrical practice offended his contemporary, Ben Jonson, as much as it offended Dryden seventy years later (see Spingarn 1908: I 211; Watson 1962: II 75, 144).

What does seem clear is that a very similar prototypical form for the heroic line was recognised by Gascoigne and Puttenham in the sixteenth century and by Kames and Priestley two hundred years later (see Smith 1904: I 50–1,54; Puttenham [1589]: 72; Kames [1762]: II 119ff; Priestley 1777: 299). They all envisage it as a ten syllable line with stressed syllables in the even-numbered positions and phrase boundaries after the fourth syllable and at the line-end. (90) below shows this prototypical line, represented in the abstract syllables that Priestley attributes to Mason (a) and in the concrete examples given by Puttenham (b) and Kames (c):

(90) a) ti TUM ti TUM \\ ti TUM ti TUM ti TUM \\
b) i SERUE at EASE, and GOUerne ALL with WOE.
c) beLINda SMIL'D, and ALL the WORLD was GAY.

Much of the heroic verse of the third quarter of the sixteenth century conforms closely to this pattern: in Gascoigne's *The Steel Glass* (1576), for instance, Thompson finds 'in all its 1,113 lines only about two dozen which present any discrepancy' (Thompson 1961: 82). The widespread use of the form for drama in the period 1576–1642, however, led to a relaxation of prosodic conventions. In late Shakespeare and the work of Jacobean dramatists, there is much variation in syllable-count (in the sense both of how many syllables are permitted in the verse-line and of what phonetic strings are permitted to count as a verse syllable), in stress-placement (allowing unstressed syllables to occupy *TUM* positions and stressed syllables to occupy *ti* positions), and in phrase-boundary (allowing variable positioning of the line-internal boundary and a weaker characterisation of the line-end boundary, even permitting the use of line-final proclitic elements such as complementisers and prepositions). Compare (90) with (91):

(91) Some food, we had, and some fresh water, that
A noble *Neapolitan Gonzalo*
Out of his Charity, (who being then appointed
Master of this designe) did giue vs, with
Rich garments, linnens, stuffs, and necessaries (Shakespeare 1623/1611)

With Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) this less restrictive form of the heroic line returned to epic. But by that date, such practices were regarded as 'licentious'. Hence Davenant in editing Shakespeare for Restoration performance removed what he perceived as extraneous syllables, to turn (92a) into (92b):

(92) a) If, once I be a widow, ever I be a wife
b) If once I Widow be, and then a Wife

and Roscommon, one of Milton's earliest admirers, even in imitating his style felt impelled to correct his metre, replacing (93a) with (93b), to align linguistic stress with metrical stress point:

(93) a) Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.
b) And sent them flameing to the vast Abysse.

(91), which evidently resisted such remedial measures, was printed as prose in Restoration editions of *The Tempest* (1670, 1674).

The indigenous heroic line of the neo-classical period observes what

Fussell (1954) calls 'strict syllabism and stress regularity', summed up in the brief section on prosody in the grammar prefixed to Johnson's Dictionary. 'VERSIFICATION is the arrangement of a certain number of syllables according to certain laws' (where *certain* in both instances means 'fixed'); the laws for the line of ten syllables, 'the common measure of heroick and tragick poetry', are that 'the accents are to be placed on even syllables; and every line considered by itself is more harmonious as this rule is more strictly observed' (in Fussell 1954: 25). What Johnson, in a sentence added to the fourth edition, grudgingly permits as the 'variations necessary to pleasure' are also strictly codified, notably by Bysshe (1702: 4–8, 11–19) and Kames ([1762]: II 123–60).

The return to a more restrictive set of prosodic conventions can be attributed partly to the general spirit of standardisation and prescriptivism with which all linguistic matters were treated in the eighteenth century and partly to the stylistic criterion of perspicuity, which preferred transparent relations between verse-design and verse-instance. But metrical regularity carried social implications too, as witness Kames's comment 'one would not imagine without trial, how uncouth false quantity appears in verse; not less than a provincial tone or idiom' (Kames [1762] II: 122–3). Above all it carried ethical implications. In the seventeenth century, Herbert (in *Deniall*) and Milton (in *At a Solemn Musick*) had both used metrical irregularity as an image of moral disorder. Johnson generalises this link, viewing a poet's metrical practice as both a moral diagnostic of its author and a moral influence on its reader. He sees 'the rectitude of [Dryden's] mind' revealed by his 'rejection both of unnatural thoughts and rugged numbers' and argues that 'a solemn deliberation upon accents and pauses' produces 'that harmony that adds force to reason and gives grace to sublimity; that shackles attention, and governs passions' (cited and discussed in Fussell 1954: 41–4).

Like the perspicuous sublime in diction, the ideal of a graceful sublimity in metre represents a radical revision of Longinus's conception, in which prosody is a more turbulent element that 'inspires us to a wonderful degree with generous Ardor and Passion' (trans. Smith 1739: 92). And by the end of the century, the psychological and political implications of a verse-form designed to *shackle* and *govern* passion had led to a metrical rebellion by Blake and others (see Adamson *CHEL* IV 7.3). But most writers and readers of the neo-classical period agreed with Johnson and, for this reason, they not only preferred a high degree of regularity in the instantiation of the individual line, but, of the two large-scale verse-forms with which the heroic line was associated, they preferred the heroic couplet (7.7.3.2) to blank verse (7.7.3.3).

7.7.3.2 The heroic couplet

The sixteenth-century poets inherited a rhyming couplet of ten-syllable lines from Chaucer, who had made it the staple metre of the *Canterbury Tales*. This was the verse-form chosen by Gavin Douglas for the earliest of the renaissance translations of the *Aeneid* (written 1513, published 1553). But by the second half of the century, its epic potential had been discounted. Gascoigne calls it 'riding rime' which 'serueth most aptly to wryte a merie tale' (1575; in Smith 1904: I 56) and James VI dismisses it as a form of doggerel rather than true verse, fit only for chronicle poems (1584; in Smith 1904: I 221). The main problem, according to Puttenham, lay in its failure to observe line-medial or line-final pause; Chaucer and Lydgate, he complains, used 'such vnshapely words as would allow no conuenient Cesure, and therefore did let their rymes runne out at length, and neuer stayd till they came to the end' (Puttenham [1589]: 75). In other words, like curial prose (7.4.3.1.), the Chaucerian couplet appeared rambling and shapeless. And as with prose, the remedy applied was a conscious classicising of the inherited form. In the case of the couplet, the reform began in the last two decades of the sixteenth century and the model chosen was 'the Latin elegiac distich, especially as it had been employed by Ovid in his *Amores* and *Heroides* and by Martial in his *Epigrammaton*' (Piper 1969: 5). What emerged from this process was *the heroic couplet*, a form that in the neo-classical phase of our period came to dominate poetic production and to occupy a position at least equivalent to the periodic sentence as a principle of literary composition more generally.

The elegiac distich consists of a pair of lines, the first a hexameter, the second a pentameter. Ovid describes the form in a pair of lines that exemplifies his own practice of it:

(94a) – ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ – \\ ⏑ ⏑ – – – ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑
Sex mihi surgat opus numeris in quinque residat
– ⏑⏑ – – – \\ – ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ –
ferrea cum vestris bella valete modis

Its English equivalent appears in Marlowe's translation:

(94b) Let my first verse be sixe, my last five feete,
Farewell sterne warre, for blunter poets meete. (Marlowe 1590)

In the Latin model, the cesura of the second line is central by rule; the cesura of the hexameter first line is more variably placed, but in Ovid's practice it occurs 90 % of the time after the long syllable of the third foot; there is commonly a sense-break after the first line and almost always a coincidence of sentence boundary and line-end in the second line (Piper

1969: 32–48). Marlowe reflects this hierarchy of pauses, with a Period boundary at the end of the couplet, a sentence boundary at the end of the first line and a clause or phrase boundary at approximately mid-line. He does not replicate the difference in line-length, but the *effect* of passing from hexameter to pentameter, which Ovid describes as one of flow and ebb or 'swelling' and 'subsiding' (*surgat – residat*) is recreated in the English version by rhyme, where the second line echoes the first and thus completes the movement of the whole. The outcome in both languages is, as both poets state (and illustrate), a verse-form less obviously suited to epic than to epigram. The narrative flow of the Chaucerian couplet is halted, not only by the end-stopping of the couplet but by its internal balancing of line against line and half-line against half-line, often enhanced by lexical patterns which turn each line in on itself (as in the first line of (94b) where Marlowe balances *first* against *last*, *six* against *five*). To make the closed couplet the instrument of heroic verse, it needed to be extended.

That task was carried out in the middle of the seventeenth century, most influentially by Waller and Denham. The 'reform of our numbers' that their neo-classical successors attributed to them is a matter more of managing the phrase-structure and rhetoric of the couplet than of regulating the stress distribution of the individual line, though that too is involved. Something of Waller's contribution can be gauged by comparing a passage from the Waller–Godolphin translation of *Aeneid* Book IV (95b) with Stapylton's translation, also in couplets, but representing the 'open couplet' form that descends more directly from Chaucer (95a).

(95) a) Massylian horse; flesht hounds. At the Court gate,
For the queene lingring in her Chamber, waite
The *Carthage* Lords, her foaming Courser (gay
In gold and purple) on the Bit doth play (Stapylton ?1634)

b) Neerer the gates the Tyrian Peers attend,
And waite the Queen now ready to descend.
Her prouder Steed as fill'd with high disdain
Stamps the dull Earth, & Chawes the frothy Reine (Waller 1658)

Both passages contain one (and only one) line that exactly realises the abstract pattern of (90)

(95a) line 3
x / x / \\ x / x / x /
the CARthage LORDS \\ her FOAM–ing COURser (GAY

(95b) line 3
her PROUder STEED \\ as FILL'd with HIGH disDAIN

The difference is that the semantic and syntactic structure of Waller's line matches its metrical phrase structure in a way that Stapylton's does not. Stapylton's two noun phrases (*the Carthage lords* and *her foaming courser*) belong to different clauses and have different referents, while the last word of the line introduces a new phrase which requires part of the next line for its completion. Waller's line has a single referent (Dido's horse) expressed in a pre-cesural noun phrase and a post-cesural descriptive adjunct. The following line is similarly balanced, the cesura separating two coordinated verb phrases of parallel construction (*Stamps* . . . \\ *& Chawes* . . .). And the couplet as a whole balances the elaborated subject of its first line against the elaborated predicate of its second, the whole forming a complete self-contained sentence, as does the preceding couplet (*Neerer* . . . *descend*). In (95a), by contrast, Stapylton's sentence openings (whether we take the orthographic unit beginning *at the court gate* or the syntactic unit beginning *her foaming courser*) appear almost perversely to avoid coinciding with the start of a line.

But while perfecting the internal structure of the couplet, Waller also guards against its potential atomism by utilising the devices of cohesion. *Prouder* in line 3, for instance, creates a discourse link with the preceding couplet by introducing a contrastive comparison between the attendant lords and the waiting steed (not precedented in the Latin original) and similarly the *Tyrian Peers* of line 1 are linked to the preceding discourse by the comparative *Neerer*.

Denham, to whom Dryden attributes the 'epic' potential of the couplet (1664; in Watson 1962: I 7) took this process a stage further. One reason for the fame of the lines from *Cooper's Hill* ((70) above) is that they succeed in simultaneously increasing the balances of the closed couplet and extending its forward momentum. The first line combines syntactic coordination with semantic parallelism (the noun *stream* echoing the verb *flow*):

> O could I flow like thee \\ and make thy stream

Line 2 makes the semantic parallelism explicit, in the form of direct comparison:

> My great example \\ as it is my theme

Line 3 intensifies the syntactic–semantic parallelism by using identical constructions, and adds a new element of internal antithesis:

> Though deep yet clear \\ though gentle yet not dull

Line 4 repeats the constructional parallelism and the antithesis but adds another new element in the form of a chiasmus, in which the second half line inverts the order of elements in the first half:

(A) Strong (B) without rage \\ (B) without ore-flowing (A) full

In four lines Denham encapsulates the combination of parallelism, antithesis and chiasmus that became the basic rhetorical form of the heroic couplet (Wallerstein 1935, Williamson 1935). But he also shows how these devices can be used incrementally so that successive couplets combine into a larger discourse-unit with some of the properties of continuous climax that we saw in Marlowe's verse Period (see (62) above).

In terms of the individual heroic line, Denham makes small but significant adaptations to the schema provided by (90). Where Waller in (95b) uses a fixed mid-line cesura (always in the canonical position after the fourth syllable), Denham's lines offer constant slight variation: the phrase break follows the sixth syllable in line 1, the fifth in line 2, so that when it falls after the fourth in the last two lines, it gives a sense of returning to the home key. As for the prototype stress-pattern, his main variation is to reduce the number of metrical stress-points that are linguistically actualised, most commonly to four, thus enhancing the balance of the half-lines especially where the stressed syllables fall on parallel or opposed words (e.g. *deep*, *clear*, *gentle*, *dull*). He makes no attempt to locate word-stress or phrase-stress on odd-numbered syllables, except, notably, in line 4 where the placing of *strong* on the first syllable balances *full* on the tenth, creating a particularly well-balanced and self-contained line for the finale of the movement. As (95b) shows, this stress-initial line can be used either as a topic opener (line 1) or a topic closer (line 4). It became so common in neo-classical practice that Kames recognises it as almost a sub-type of the canonical heroic line (Kames [1762]: II 121–2).

The rhyme of the couplet remained a source of unease. Golden Age Latin poetry had not rhymed and rhyming was widely associated with the medieval barbarisation of language. In the neo-classical period, it carried the additional stigma of being precisely the kind of verbal 'jingle' that fails the translation test (see 7.6.1 above). But the jingle is notably less problematic in the closed couplet than in the open couplet of (95a), where it draws attention to itself by continually interrupting the flow of syntax and sense. In the closed couplet, the rhyme typically coincides with a syntactic boundary and so functions, as it were, as a conventionalised marker of closure. Hence the neo-classical preference for stressed syllables and especially monosyllables in rhyme position and the corresponding disfavouring of disyllabic and

trisyllabic rhyme-words, which are both less emphatic in closure and more perceptually salient. It was generally agreed that rhymes such as *drinking/thinking*, *tenderness/slenderness* 'ought wholly to be excluded from serious subjects' since they are 'unworthy the gravity requir'd in Heroick Verse' and 'more properly' belong to Burlesque (Bysshe 1702: 22). Pope, who for most neo-classical commentators was the model of couplet versification (Kames [1762]: II 104), had two solutions to the problem of rhyme. One strategy was to use an extremely restricted repertoire of rhyme words, thereby increasing the conventionalisation of rhyme and reducing the element of novelty and surprise. The second strategy, discussed by Wimsatt (1954: 153–66) and Kenner (1974), was to make couplet rhyme rational by semanticising it.

The model for Pope's 'reasonable rhymes', Kenner suggests, is to be found in Wilkins's *Essay Towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language* (1668). Part of Wilkins's project was to make language reflect reality by first establishing an inventory of 'things or notions to which names are to be assigned' and then assigning them names on the 'methodical' principle that 'those of an agreeable or opposite sense [have] somewhat correspondent in the sounds of them' (Wilkins 1668; cited in Kenner 1974: 85). What is proposed, it should be emphasised, is *not* a return to the heuristic pun, where a correspondence in sound is used to 'discover' an occult correspondence between things apparently unlike (e.g. sun = son). Wilkins's system would produce precisely the obverse case, in which a likeness in the sound of words is judged correct or reasonable by an empirical appeal to common properties in their referents. Kenner suggests that, particularly in *The Rape of the Lock* (1714), Pope adopted this policy for rhyme, using semantically consonant rhyme words (like *bright/light*; *day/ray*) for 'the world of maxim and principle', as in (96):

(96) Love in these Labyrinths his Slaves detains,
And mighty Hearts are held in slender Chains.
With hairy Sprindges we the Birds betray,
Slight lines of Hair surprise the Finny Prey (Pope 1714)

Here the rhymes validate 'classic truths' that chains detain, that we betray our prey (Kenner 1974: 79). By contrast, incongruous or surprising rhymes are used primarily for the satiric observation of the morally defective world of contemporary society, as in (97):

(97) a) Nay oft in Dreams, Invention we bestow,
To change a Flounce or add a Furbelow
b) Here thou, great Anna! whom three realms obey,
Dost sometimes Counsel take – and sometimes Tea. (Pope 1714)

The age of the heroic couplet, from its re-founding to its decline, is 1585–1785; and from the Restoration to the mid-eighteenth century it dominated poetic production in all genres. Couplet verse accounts for fully three-quarters of both *The New Miscellany of Original Poems* (ed. Gildon, 1701) and *Poetical Miscellanies* (ed. Steele, 1714) (Havens 1922: 434). There are, however, signs of a gradual re-thinking of the *role* of the heroic couplet as the period goes on. In the Restoration, it was a popular choice for tragedy, following the success of Katherine Philips's version of Corneille's *Pompée* (1663) and Dryden's early heroic dramas, and it was the obvious choice for epic from Dryden's *Aeneid* (1697) to Pope's *Odyssey* (1725–6), including native epics, such as Addison's celebration of Marlborough, in *The Campaign* (1705). But in the same period Dryden and Pope strikingly demonstrated the form's natural affinities with the point–counterpoint of argument (in Dryden's *Religio Laici* 1682, for example, or Pope's *Essay on Man* 1733) and with the inflation–deflation movement of mock-heroic satire, well-exemplified in (97), where the first line of each distich displays an epic aspiration and the second exposes its comic limitation. As a result, later poets became increasingly uncertain whether the couplet was after all the most appropriate vehicle for the sublime, since the sublime aims at grandeur rather than satire and ecstasy rather than argument. Dryden himself developed doubts about the use of rhyme in tragedies of passion and his choice of blank verse for *All for Love* (1678) was followed by Addison for *Cato* (1713) and Johnson for *Irene* (1749), though all three retain couplets for their non-dramatic poetry. But by the mid-eighteenth century, if we compare Dodsley's *Collection of Poems* (1748–58) with the miscellanies of Gildon and Steele, we find a progressive decline in the proportion of couplet-verse: in the three volumes Dodsley published in 1748, it accounts for one half the total number of pages, in the three volumes of 1755–8, it accounts for one quarter (Havens 1922: 434).

During the long period of its dominance, however, the heroic couplet left its mark not only on the period's conception of what constitutes a 'harmonious and lively turn of phrase' in poetry, but also on the practice of prose. The rhetoric of parallel, antithesis and chiasmus established by Denham for the couplet reappears in the form of the periodic sentence as practised by Addison, Johnson and many others. I have reformatted two examples to illustrate the point. (98a) shows how closely Addison's epigram in (71) approximates to a couplet, and in (98b) Johnson, describing Addison's style, comes very close in form as in meaning to Denham's famous description of his own (70):

(98) a) When she is dressed \\ she is beautiful,
when she is undressed \\ she is beautiful. (Addison 1711)

b) His prose is the model of the middle stile;
on grave subjects not formal, \\ on light occasions not grovelling;
pure without scrupulosity, \\ and exact without apparent elaboration;
always equable, and always easy, \\ without glowing words or pointed sentences. (Johnson 1779–81)

7.7.3.3 Blank verse

Surrey's translation of the *Aeneid* (written around 1540) shows that he was familiar with Gavin Douglas's. But although he borrowed from his predecessor's lexis and syntax, he discarded the couplet verse-form. Instead, he invented a rhymeless version of the heroic line, the form now known as *blank verse*. It appears to have caused its first generation of readers some difficulties. The title page of Day's 1554 edition of Surrey's *Aeneid* Book IV describes it as a 'straunge metre' and in 1586 Webbe still interprets it as a failed attempt to reproduce the quantitative metre of its Latin original (in Smith 1904: I 283). Gascoigne, however, who clearly perceived that the structural basis of the English heroic line was the combination of syllable-count and stress-placement (see 7.7.3.1), also had views on the function and effect of its blank-verse variant. In the preface to his own blank-verse poem, *The Steel Glass* (1576), he calls it 'rymeless verse, which thundreth mighty threats'. He may have been thinking less of Surrey's *Aeneid* or the subsequent blank-verse poems of Grimald and Turberville than of Sackville and Norton's *Gorboduc* (1561), in which blank verse was used for the first time as the medium for classically inspired tragedy (thus distancing it from the rhymed verse of medieval vernacular drama). With the generation of Marlowe and Shakespeare, blank verse extended its domain to the popular drama too, though it retained its associations with the grand style of epic and tragedy, especially when, as we have seen in Marlowe, (62), the heroic line is married to the periodic sentence.

In *Paradise Lost* (1667), Milton returned Marlowe's 'mighty line' to the service of epic. But what looks to us – with the foreshortening effect of historical perspective – like a stylistic continuity or evolution did not appear so then. Earlier blank verse epics, such as Surrey's *Aeneid* and Marlowe's *Pharsalia* (?1593), seem to have been forgotten and the closure of the theatres in 1642 meant that the tradition of dramatic blank verse had been broken too. A quarter of a century of disuse made Milton's

blank verse appear, as Johnson later put it, 'a style of versification new to all and disgusting to many' (1779–81: I 86). That *Paradise Lost* was nonetheless recognised as an instance of the sublime is (again in Johnson's words) 'an uncommon example of the prevalence of genius'. But the recognition was rather fitful. Of the three criteria of sublimity distinguished by Addison in (85), the 'nobleness of thoughts' in *Paradise Lost* was almost universally conceded, partly because of its subject-matter. Some readers also acknowledged 'the magnificence of the words', like Dryden, who 'found in him a true sublimity, lofty thoughts, which were cloath'd with admirable *Grecisms*, and ancient words' (1693; in Watson 1962: II 50). But the third criterial feature, 'harmonious' composition, was not so readily detectable by readers whose ears had become attuned to the verse-music of the heroic couplet. Dryden uncharitably surmised that Milton used blank verse because he had no talent for rhyming (1693; in Watson 1962: II 84–5), and the more general neo-classical response to the versification of *Paradise Lost* has been likened to the reception of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* in the nineteenth century: in both cases, even those who felt the effects felt themselves unable to reproduce them (Havens 1922: 122). It was thirteen years before another poem in blank verse appeared and almost sixty years before the publication of Thomson's *Winter* (1726) began the process of making blank verse again a popular medium by demonstrating that it could be used for other than Miltonic subjects.

The main difficulty lay precisely in the feature that Milton cites as distinguishing his verse from the heroic couplet, the 'sense variously drawn out from one Verse [i.e. line] into another' (1668; in Spingarn 1908: I 207). For although Addison perceives the length of Milton's Periods as a manifestation of his sublimity (in Bond 1965: III 15) and although Kames perceives that blank verse is superior to the couplet and even to the classical hexameter in its ability to sustain the extensive 'music' of long Periods (Kames [1762]: II 160–3), their 'form-feeling' for the couplet (to borrow a term from Sapir) was so strong that they could not fully convert these perceptions into an aesthetic response. So Kames adds to his encomium of blank verse the self-contradictory rider that: 'the great defect of Milton's versification, in other respects admirable, is the want of coincidence between the pauses of the sense and sound' (Kames [1762]: II 167). The same form-feeling inhibits almost all neo-classical attempts to write blank verse. Roscommon, perhaps the earliest imitator of Milton, even when quoting Milton's own words, rearranges them to suit a different aesthetic of style, turning (99a) into (99b)

(99) a) in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand Thunders, which he sent
Before him (Milton 1667)

b) Grasping ten thousand Thunders in his hand (Roscommon 1684)

Apart from correcting Milton's inversion, by replacing the preposed adverbial phrase in its canonical position, Roscommon has matched syntactic unit to line unit, whereas Milton's clauses cut across the line divisions to provide differing degrees of enjambement. Milton's most influential imitator is only somewhat more succeessful:

(100) FOR see! where *Winter* comes, himself, confest,
Striding the gloomy Blast. First Rains obscure
Drive thro' the mingling Skies, with Tempest foul;
Beat on the Mountain's Brow, and shake the Woods,
That, sounding, wave below. The dreary Plain
Lies overwhelm'd, and lost. The bellying Clouds
Combine, and deepening into Night, shut up
The Day's fair Face. (Thomson 1726)

The personified figure of Winter here is a being of Miltonically cosmic stature, whose entry signals Thomson's intention to create a sublime style for the poetry of natural description. As part of that style he clearly means to disrupt the form–meaning correspondences of canonical couplet practice. As the punctuation shows, his main syntactic boundaries fall line-internally not line-finally, and the position of the line-internal boundary need not be around the mid-point. A clause-boundary after syllable two (as in line seven here) appears in many imitations of Milton and seems to have been felt as one of his sublime effects. But Thomson keeps it as a rare effect; and in general, his cesuras remain fairly centralised, occurring in this passage mostly after syllable six (lines 2–6), the position that Kames regards as most 'proper for what is grave, solemn, or lofty' (Kames [1762]: II 153). What this suggests is that Thomson is still thinking in terms of the recurrent harmony of successive lines rather than the cumulative music of the verse-paragraph. And the fact that he has four full stops in eight lines suggests that his units of thought are still roughly couplet-sized in length. So although there are frequent enjambements here (lines 2, 5, 6, 7), their function seems to be more that of strengthening the line-internal pause than of connecting lines into long Periods. And compared with (91), they are not very radical enjambements that might pose a challenge to the alignment of the prosodic phrase-units of metre and speech (it's perfectly normal for a pause to occur between subject and predicate, which is where the line-break

falls in lines 2, 5 and 6). In fact, little would be lost if these lines were rewritten as follows:

> First Rains obscure drive thro' the mingling Skies,
> With Tempest foul; beat on the Mountain's Brow,
> And shake the Woods, that, sounding, wave below.
> The dreary Plain lies overwhelm'd and lost.

It is only towards the end of our period, with the work of the elocutionists, such as Sheridan, that an appreciation develops of how much is lost if Milton's lines are rewritten in this way. In *Lectures on the Art of Reading* (1775), Sheridan suggests there is a counterpoint in Milton's blank verse between sentence prosody and metrical prosody, and that its effects are not only musical but semantic. The moment of enjambement is often a moment of illumination or surprise as the pause demanded by the verse-design allows the possibility of meanings and emphases that the normal sentence prosody would obscure or exclude. To take just one of Sheridan's many examples:

(101) and durst abide
Jehovah thundering out of Sion // Thron'd //
Between the Cherubim

Here normal sentence prosody demands a pause between *Sion* and *Thron'd*, while metrical prosody demands a pause between *Thron'd* and *Between*. The counterpoint between the two, Sheridan claims, produces Milton's sublime effects:

> what sublime ideas does not a single monosyllable excite by its position? bounded on one side by a cesural, and on the other by a final pause. And what more exalted idea could have been conceived of by the Deity, than is expressed by that single word? which, after the description of his executing just vengeance on the rebellious, and darting his thunders at their heads, shews that this required no unusual exertion in the Godhead; He performed these wonders – thron'd! (Sheridan 1775: II 249–50)

For its general implementation in poetic practice Sheridan's insight had to wait for writers of a later generation, because what it represents is not only a discovery (or re-discovery) of the expressive possibilities of blank verse but also a rejection of the form–meaning correspondences that lie at the heart of neo-classical verse-harmony.

7.8 Coda – the breakdown of the neo-classical paradigm

In the last two decades of our period, certainly by the mid-1760s, there are signs of an approaching crisis in the neo-classical stylistic paradigm. The

ideal of perspicuous sublimity was showing the strains of its own internal contradictions while dissentient voices, marginalised during the period of consensus, were coming together to articulate a new paradigm.

In prose, the Addisonian 'middle style' was challenged by forms of writing which more readily courted the extremes. Compare, for instance, the opening of Steele's essay of 1711 (74) with the openings of two works published in 1765:

(102) That praises are without reason lavished on the dead, and that the honours due only to excellence are paid to antiquity, is a complaint likely to be always continued by those, who, being able to add nothing to truth, hope for eminence from the heresies of paradox; or those, who, being forced by disappointment upon consolatory expedients, are willing to hope from posterity what the present age refuses, and flatter themelves that the regard which is yet denied by envy, will be at last bestowed by time. (Johnson 1765)

(103) No – I think, I said, I would write two volumes every year, provided the vile cough which then tormented me, and which to this hour I dread worse than the devil, would but give me leave – and in another place – (but where, I can't recollect now) speaking of my book as a *machine*, and laying my pen and ruler down cross-wise upon the table, in order to gain the greater credit to it – I swore it should be kept a going at that rate these forty years if it pleased but the fountain of life to bless me so long with health and good spirits. (Sterne 1765)

Johnson, who felt that Addison 'sometimes descends too much to the language of conversation' (1779–81: II 86), himself sponsored a mid-century re-emergence of the grand style in prose, announced here by the replacement of (74)'s conversational topic opener (*there is a . . .*) with a markedly uncolloquial form, the nominal clause (*that praises are . . .*). This became a hallmark of Johnsonian grand style, as did the latinate collocations exemplified here by the sequences *eminence–heresies–paradox* and *disappointment–consolatory–expedients*. But the most notable features of (102) result from the stylisation of the key neo-classical devices, seen in (98): parallelism, antithesis and the principle of form–meaning correspondence that prescribes 'where either a resemblance or an opposition is intended to be expressed, some resemblance, in the language and construction should be preserved' (Blair [1783]: 119). So the synonyms of the opening nominal clauses occupy syntactically identical slots (*praises – are lavished – on the dead*; *honours – are paid – to antiquity*) while the abundant antonyms of the second half of the passage are structurally counterpointed, with one member of a pair being placed in a subordinate clause and the other in the clause in

which that is embedded, as in the case of *truth* versus *heresies*, *forced* versus *willing*, *present age* versus *posterity*, *denied* versus *bestowed*.

There are certain structural similarities between (102) and (103). Apart from vying with Johnson in the length of his sentence, Sterne also favours parallel construction (*I said I would . . . provided . . .*; *I swore it should . . . if . . .*) and, like Johnson, he resorts to personification to heighten his conclusion, matching the denying envy and bestowing time of (102) with a *fountain of life* that is *pleased . . . to bless* him. But the surface effect is very different and, at least to its contemporary audience, *Tristram Shandy* appeared to 'descend to the language of conversation' with a realism that even Addison had rarely attempted. It is seen here in the use of contractions (*can't*) colloquialisms (*vile cough*; *kept a going*; *these forty years*), and pragmatic particles (*no*), the last a particularly daring choice of opening word, and more authentically conversational than Steele's presentative, since it is a context-dependent form that implies the existence of a preceding dialogue. The passage's overall organisation is conversational too, in its tolerance of disconnection and parenthesis, variously marked by dashes, brackets and non-restrictive relative clauses (such as *and which to this hour . . .*) in contrast to the heavy use of restrictive relatives in (102).

This kind of digressive construction, condemned at the start of the neoclassical period, was defended at its close by appeals to Hartley's theory of the association of ideas, as set out in his *Observations on Man* (1749). Associationism was a natural development from Locke's model of psychology in the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), but whereas Locke had chosen to stress the importance of connecting ideas together in a publicly accountable way (expressed syntactically by logical connectives), Hartley allowed the possibility that, since associations are formed differently in different people, both thoughts and the transitions between thoughts are essentially individual, private and unpredictable. (Sterne points this up in (103) by having his narrator forget the place in which he swore his oath, but remember the contingent circumstances of crossing his pen and ruler.) Priestley, who makes Hartleyan psychology the basis of his theory of style, at once praises digression and tries to constrain its operation by advising the 'judicious' narrator to follow 'the strongest and most usual associations of ideas' formed by 'the human mind' in general (Priestley 1777: 35–6). But Sterne opens up the more radical route that later literature was to follow. General humanity, represented in (102) by collective, abstract or general terms (such as *the dead*; *posterity*; *envy*; *those, who*) is replaced in (103) by *I* as the topic as well as the agent of the discourse, which is correspondingly organised to display the vagaries of an individual

mind as it disrupts publicly given patterns of logical connection or chronological sequence.

In poetry, too, the neo-classical concept of the perspicuous sublime was undergoing a profound redefinition, though it is one that at first may seem only a shift in emphasis. Where Dryden had praised Virgil for maintaining 'Majesty in the midst of plainess' with some sense of the combination as paradoxical (1685; in Watson 1962: II 22), by the end of the period there was a growing tendency to declare that majesty *is* plainness. As a result, classical models began to be seriously challenged by models taken from more primitive poetry (where primitive was – increasingly – a term of approval). In 1711 Addison had displayed a certain defensiveness when declaring his taste for 'antiquated' ballads (in Bond 1965: I 297–303), but by 1765, when Percy published his collection of ballads in *Reliques of English Poetry*, it was becoming a critical truism that the earliest poetry of any nation was its purest type (Priestley 1777: 227). Lowth's *De sacra poesi hebraeorum* (1753, tr. 1787) had explained how in the Psalms 'the Hebrew poets have accomplished the sublime without losing perspicuity' (Lectures vi–vii); Hurd's *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (1762) had championed the 'Gothic' element in Spenser and earlier writers; and Gray had presented a heroic image of early Welsh poets in *The Bard* (1757), including some attempts to imitate their prosody. From the formal similiarities of these 'ancient' verse-types, criteria began to emerge against which the poetry of Augustan Rome and Augustan England increasingly seemed artificial (where artificial was – increasingly – a term of disapproval). And the change in poetic model was given warrant by Longinus himself. The only rhetorician of antiquity to mention the Hebrew tradition, he had singled out as a type of the sublime the biblical text *God said, let there be light; and there was light*, from which almost every critic of the later eighteenth century concludes that 'it is, generally speaking among the most ancient authors, that we are to look for the most striking instances of the sublime' and that 'of all writings, ancient or modern, the sacred Scriptures afford us the highest instances of the sublime' (Blair [1783]: 36).

Some sense of this change of taste in progress can be conveyed by setting Denham's famous lines, (70), alongside products of the 1760s:

(104) Glorious the sun in mid career;
Glorious th'assembled fires appear;
Glorious the comet's train:
Glorious the trumpet and alarm;
Glorious th'almighty stretched-out arm
Glorious th'enraptur'd main: (Smart 1765)

(105) O Oscar! bend the strong in arm; but spare the feeble hand. Be thou a stream of many tides against the foes of thy people; but like the gale that moves the grass to those who ask thine aid. – So Trenmor lived; such Trathal was; and such has Fingal been. My arm was the support of the injured; and the weak rested behind the lightning of my steel.

(Macpherson 1762)

(104) meets the early eighteenth-century criteria for sublimity in the cosmic grandeur of its subject and in the 'enraptured' emotions of the poet, but of the neo-classical sublime *style* it retains only vestiges, in the form of a few Miltonic elisions (*th'almighty*, *th'enraptured*) and the paraphrastic terms of poetic diction, which avoids 'low words' by substituting *main* for *sea*, *fires* for *stars*. Neo-classical *structures*, however, are notably rejected. The heroic couplet has been replaced by the stanza, and not a classical stanza either, but the tail-rhyme stanza of traditional English metrical romance; the heroic line has given way to the mingled 4-beat, 3-beat lines of ballad and popular hymn; and instead of complex sentences linked by logical connectives, there is a set of elliptical or incomplete clauses, linked by parataxis, sequenced by association and unified by structural and lexical repetition.

(105) by contrast retains the parallelism and antitheses of (102) but recasts them into paratactic syntax and simple, largely Germanic lexis, exoticised by the inclusion of Celtic proper nouns (one of the 'simple and sublime' touches commended by Priestley 1777: 161). The verse-form, like (104), moves radically away from heroic couplet, but here it is in the direction of blurring the distinction between prose and poetry. Purportedly Gaelic, its strongest stylistic influence, like (104)'s, comes from the Psalms.

The immediate popularity of (105) testifies to the imminent emergence of a new poetic paradigm, and it is significant that where the critics of the 1760s, such as Kames and Priestley, illustrate the sublime from contemporary poetry, it is to Macpherson they turn, setting him alongside Milton and often above Virgil. But it is equally significant that they praise the work without realising that it *is* contemporary and that Smart's work, which was known to be contemporary, was largely abused or ignored. For within the bounds of our period, the new paradigm was not institutionalised, the new poetics was rarely acknowledged or practised as such; the conditions for its success were that it should be introduced covertly, under the guise of being a translation or a discovered document. To the first class belong Gray's Norse and Welsh imitations (1768), to the second belongs the work of Macpherson and Chatterton, who both, to one degree or another, forged the poetry they presented as the output of, respectively, the Gaelic bard Ossian, son of Fingal, and the medieval priest, T. Rowleie. In these

personae, they created models which powerfully influenced the next generation of writers – the style of (105) was taken up by Blake in his 'prophetic books', while Chatterton's Rowleie poems anticipated the Spenserian archaisms of Keats and the experimental ballad metre of Coleridge's *Christabel*. But the work to which these innovators affixed their own names was neither bold nor experimental, expressing a continuing allegiance to the paradigm that their invented *alter egos* were helping to break.

KEY TO THE NUMBERED EXAMPLES

An active manuscript culture in the first part of our period means that the date and authorship of a text is sometimes only conjectural. The dates assigned in the body of this chapter are normally those of the first printed edition. Details are given below of the text used in each case and of gaps between date of composition and date of publication where this might affect our understanding of stylistic history. For the convenience of readers, there are some exceptions to this policy. Excerpts from Shakespeare's plays are all keyed to the Riverside edition, ed. G. Blakemore Evans *et al.*, Boston (1974), but since the Riverside text has been modernised, the text quoted here follows the First Folio; the dates following the quotations are those of the Folio (1623) and of the play's first performance (as conjectured by the Riverside editors). Quotations from most renaissance critics are keyed to the texts given in Smith (1904) and Spingarn (1908); Hoskins [?1599], for which no early printed version exists, is keyed to the accessible and well-annotated edition by Hudson, but corrected from the unmodernised text given in *Life, Letters and Writings of John Hoskyns*, L. B. Osborn, New Haven: Yale University Press (1937). Similarly, Dryden is keyed to Watson (1962), but with spelling corrected from seventeenth century editions. Where possible, renaissance poems are keyed to Norbrook and Woudhuysen (1992).

Unless otherwise indicated, italics in the text are mine rather than the author's.

1. From notes dictated to Isabella Fenwick 1842/3 (the note to the *Ode to Lycoris*). Text as in *Shorter Poems 1807–1820* ed. C. H. Ketcham (The Cornell Wordsworth), Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1989: 544.
2. From the Statutes of St Paul's School. Text as in *A Life of John Colet*, *D. D.*, J. H. Lupton, London: George Bell & Sons 1909: 279–80.
3. From *Palladis Tamia*. In Smith 1904: II 315.
4. Peacham 1593: sig. AB iii^{v}.
5. Puttenham [1589]: 137–8. The first version of this multi-layered text may precede the published version by some twenty years. On its authorship and date of composition, see Wilcock & Walker's introduction, pp. xviii–liii.

6. The first sentence of *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum*. First published by Badius, in Paris, 1512. Text as in J. Wright's 1650 London edition. My translation. For alternatives, see King & Rix (1963) or B. I. Knott vol. xxiv of *Collected Works of Erasmus* (eds. C. R. Thompson *et al.*), Toronto University Press, 1978.
7. Puttenham [1589]: 154.
8. From *Ouids Metamorphosis Englished, Mythologiz'd, and Represented in Figures*, Oxford: John Lichfield, 1632: 494–5 (and 512–4 for Sandys's comments on Pythagoras's philosophy). Facsimile edn. Garland Publishing Inc., New York & London, 1976. The translation, without commentary, was first published in 1626.
9. From *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets*. In Spingarn 1908: III 125. The passage is from the prologue to Plautus's *Amphitruo*; in most modern editions, the second line begins *nam justa* (not *juste*).

10a. From *The Spanish Tragedie* (III.ii.10–11 in most modern editions). Text as in the 1592 edition. 'At London printed by Edward Allde, for Edward White.' Title page undated. Facsimile edn. Menston: Scolar Press, 1966.

10b. *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit*. 1st edn, 1578; this passage was added in the corrected and augmented edition of 1579. Text as in *Complete Works of John Lyly*, ed. R. W. Bond, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902: I 200.

11a. *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I.ii. 31.

11b. From sonnet 1 of *Astrophil and Stella*. 1598 text, as in Norbrook & Woudhuysen 1992: 199 (see Woudhuysen's textual note p. 779).

12. From [Marvaill no more . . .]. Text as published by Tottel in *Songes and Sonettes*, 1557. Written before 1537. For the Egerton ms. text, see *The Canon of Sir Thomas Wyatt's Poetry*, R. Harrier, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975: 144.

13a. *2 Henry VI*, II.iv. 52.

13b. *Romeo and Juliet*, II.vi. 9.

14. *Romeo and Juliet*, IV.v.59.

15a. *Aeneid*, II.399. Text as published by Tottel in *Certain bokes of Virgiles Aenaeis turned into English meter by Henry Earle of Surrey*, 1557. Written c. 1540.

15b. *Aeneid*, II.439. As (15a).

16a. *Antony and Cleopatra*, III.vi.75–6.

16b. From *The English Grammar*, in *Workes*, 1640: 77. Facsimile edn. Menston: Scolar Press, 1972. First version written before 1623, revised version written ?1632.

17a. From sonnet 116. *Shake-speares sonnets. Neuer before imprinted*, 1609. Facsimile edn. Menston: Scolar Press, 1968.

17b. From *Paradise Lost*, IV.188–93. London: Peter Parker *et al.*, 1667. Facsimile edn. Menston: Scolar Press, 1968.

18. From *The Dreame*. Text as in *The Poems of John Donne*, ed. H. J. C. Grierson, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912: I 37. Grierson suggests the theological original of this line is Aquinas *Summa*. I.vi.5. *non solum in ipso sit veritas sed . . . ipse sit ipsa . . . veritas* (Grierson II 34). Donne's poems circulated in manuscript from the

1590s onwards, but most remained unpublished until the posthumous volume of 1633.

19a. From Epigram LXXIII (To Fine Grand), *Epigrammes*, 1616. Text as in *Works*, ed. C. H. Herford and P. & E. Simpson, Oxford, 1925–53 VIII 51.

19b. *Paradise Lost*, IV.181, as (17b).

20a. From ch.2. of *Hydriotaphia, Urne-Burial*. Text as in *Works*, ed. G. Keynes, London: Faber & Faber, 1964: II 140.

20b. From *Philomela: The lady Fitzwaters Nightingale*, 1592. Text as in *Works*, ed. A. B. Grosart, New York: Russell & Russell, 1964: XI 173.

21. From *At a Solemn Musick*. Text as in *Poems etc upon Several Occasions*, London: T. Dring, 1673: 26. Written ?1633, first published in *Poems*, 1645. The Trinity ms drafts read *concent*, changed to *content* in 1645, corrected to *concent* in 1673.

22. From *The Rule of Reason*. Text as in Mueller (1984: 365).

23. From section 3.2.1.2 of *Anatomy of Melancholy*, first published 1621. Text of the 1632 edn, eds. T. C. Faulkner, N. K. Kiessling, R. L. Blair, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989–94: III 55.

24. Peacham 1593: 150.

25. [Even such is time . . .]. Text as in Norbrook & Woudhuysen 1992: 643. For Woudhuysen's textual note, see 834.

26. *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV.ii.4–7.

27. *Love's Labour's Lost*, V.ii.629.

28. From the first book of *Of the proficience and advancement of learning*. In Spingarn 1908: I 3.

29a. From *Of Studies*. Text as in *A Harmony of the Essays of Francis Bacon*, ed. E. Arber, Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1895: 8.

29b. *Ibid.*, 9.

30. As (4) above.

31a. From Annunciation, sonnet 2 of *La Corona*. As (18), I 319.

31b. From sonnet 108 of *Astrophil and Stella*. Text of the first Newman quarto of 1591, as in *The Complete Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. A. Feuillerat, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922: II 286.

31c. *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV.iii.249.

31d. From [Methought I saw my late espoused Saint . . .]. Text as in *Poems etc upon Several Occasions*, London: T. Dring, 1673: 61. Also in Norbrook & Woudhuysen 1992: 658–9.

32a. From *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia*, 1590. Text as in (31b), I 516–17.

32b. *Ibid.*

33. From *A Palinode* by E[dmund] B[olton]. In *Englands Helicon*, London: printed by I.R. for John Flasket, 1600: sig.B4^{v}. Facsimile edn. Menston: Scolar Press, 1973.

34. Peacham 1593: 123.

35. As (33).

36a. *Bartholomew Fair*, II.ii.30–1. Acted 1614, printed 1631. Text as in (19a), VI 42.

36b. *The Alchemist*, I.iii.102–3. Acted 1610, printed 1612. Text as in (19a), V 312.
36c. *The Alchemist*, II.ii.80–1. As (36b), 320.
37. From Elegie XVI, On his Mistris. Text as in (18), 113.
38. *Paradise Lost*, II. 950. As (17b).
39. From *A Valediction forbidding mourning*. Text as in Norbrook & Woudhuysen 1992: 337.
42. From sonnet 39 of *Astrophil and Stella*. Text as in (31b), 258.
43. From *The Church-history of Britain; from the Birth of Jesus Christ, untill the Year 1648*. London: John Williams, 1655: IX 102.
44. From [Adieu, farewell, earths bliss . . .]. In *Summers Last Will and Testament*, acted 1592, published 1600. Text as in *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, ed. R. B. McKerrow, Oxford: Blackwell, 1958: III 283.
45. From *The Arte of Rhetorique*, first published 1553. Text as in the 1585 edn, ed. G. H. Mair, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909: 169. The 1553 text has been transcribed and edited by T. J. Derrick, New York & London: Garland, 1982.
46. *Paradise Lost*, I. 12–23. As (17b).
47. From *A replycacion agaynst certayne yong scolers, abjured of late*. Text as in Norbrook & Woodhuysen 1992: 701–2.
48. *Hamlet*, V.ii.347–8.
49. As (45), 163.
50a. *The Rivals*, London: John Wilkie, 1775: 48.
50b. *Much Ado*, III.v.46.
51. From *The English Dictionarie*, London: Nathaniel Butter, 1623: sig. A4^{v}. Facsimile edn. Menston: Scolar Press, 1968.
52a. From the *Shepheardes Calender*, 1579. Text as in *Spenser's Poetical Works*, ed. J. C. Smith & E. de Selincourt, London, New York & Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1912: 423. The debate over the identity of 'E.K.' has not advanced much beyond the position outlined in Smith 1904: I 380. The main candidates are Edward Kirke, Gabriel Harvey and Spenser himself.
52b. *Ibid.*, 443.
52c. *Ibid.*, 426.
52d. *Ibid.*, 433.
53. As (33).
54. *The Faerie Queene*, III.vi 43. Books I–III first published 1590. Text of the 1596 edition, as in Norbrook & Woudhuysen 1992: 224. See Woudhuysen's note, 781, on the central position and iconographic significance of this stanza.
55. *King Lear*, III.ii.4–9.
56. The opening sentence of *Pierce Penilesse his Supplication to the Devill*, 1st edn, London: Richard Jones, 1592. Facsimile edn, Menston: Scolar Press, 1969. This text differs (trivially) in punctuation and spelling from the version discussed by Parkes 1992: 88.

57. Brightland & Gildon 1711: 147.
58. From *The 21th: and last booke of the Ocean to Scinthia*, I.493. Written ?1592. Text as in Norbrook & Woudhuysen 1992: 115. See Woudhuysen's note, p. 764, for problems of dating and punctuating this text.
59a. *Faerie Queene*, I.i.48–9. Text as in Dillon 1976: 14.
59b. *Faerie Queene*, I.i.54. Text as in Dillon 1976: 15.
60. As (2).
61. *Book of Common Prayer*, 1549: sigs. Lvi^{v}–Lvii^{r}. Text as in Mueller 1984: 238.
62. *1 Tamburlaine*, II.vii.21–29. Acted ?1587. Text as in *Tamburlaine the Great. The first part of the two Tragicall discourses*. London: Richard Jones, 1592. Facsimile edn, Menston: Scolar Press, 1973.
63. From *Timber, or Discoveries*. Written ?1605–35, published posthumously at the end of the second volume of the folio edn of *Works*, 1640–1. Text as in Spingarn 1908: I. 39.
64a. *Julius Caesar*, III.ii.27–9.
64b. *Julius Caesar*, III.ii.187–9.
65. From sonnet 61 of *Idea, in Sixtie three sonnets*, London: John Smethwicke, 1619. Text as in *Works of Michael Drayton*, ed. J. W. Hebel, Oxford: Blackwell, 1932: II 341.
67a. As (63), p. 31.
67b. From a sermon 'Upon the Penitentiall Psalmes', preached in 1623, not published in Donne's lifetime. Text as in *LXXX Sermon*, London: Richard Roston & Richard Marriot, 1640: 556. Also in *Sermons of John Donne*, eds. E. M. Simpson & G. R. Potter, University of California Press, 1953: VI 55.
67c. As (28), p. 2.
68. From *Conjectures on Original Composition in a Letter to the author of Sir Charles Grandison*, London: A Millar and R. & J. Dodsley, 1759: 22.
69. From *The Second Epistle of the Second Book of Horace Imitated by Mr Pope*, II.68–9. Text as in the Twickenham edn of the *Poems of Alexander Pope*, IV, ed. J. Butt. London: Methuen & Yale University Press, p. 169.
70. From *Cooper's Hill*, II.189–93. Text as in Norbrook & Woudhuysen 1992: 158. These lines, not included in the version of the poem printed in 1642, first appeared in the 1643 version.
71. From *The Spectator*, 61, 10 May 1711. Text as in Bond 1965: I 263.
72. From *The Tatler*, 163, 25 April 1710. Text as in Bond 1987: II 407–9.
73a. *Paradise Lost*, VIII. 343–5. Text as in Greenwood 1711: 219.
73b. Greenwood 1711: 219.
74. From *The Spectator*, 133, 2 August, 1711. Text as in Bond 1965: II 25.
75a. *Paradise Lost*, V.865–6. As quoted in *The Spectator*, 297, 9 February 1712. Text as in Bond 1965: III 63.
75b. *Paradise Lost*, IV.181. As 75a.
76. *The Dunciad*, IV.201–2. Text as in the Twickenham edn of the *Poems of Alexander Pope*, V, ed. J. Sutherland, London: Methuen & Yale University Press, p. 362.

77. *The First Epistle of the Second Book of Horace*, I.397. The subtitle 'To Augustus' was added in 1751. As in (69), p. 229.
78. All from *The Rape of the Lock. An Heroi-comical Poem*, London: B. Lintott, 1714. Facsimile edn. Menston: Scolar Press, 1969. Canto and line references are keyed to the Twickenham edition.
    a) II.107. b) II.109. c) III.8.
79. *The Country-Wife, A Comedy*, London: Thomas Dring, 1675: 68,70. Facsimile edn. Menston: Scolar Press 1970.
80. From John Stirling, *A System of Rhetoric For the Use of Schools*, London: Thomas Astley, 1733: 1. Facsimile edn. Menston: Scolar Press.
81a. From Joshua Poole, *A Practical Rhetorick*, London: J. Johnson, 1663: 21. Facsimile edn. Menston: Scolar Press.
81b. *Ibid.*, 51.
82. As (80).
83. From *The Rambler*, 2, 24 March 1750. Text as in Wimsatt 1941: 56.
84. From *The Spectator*, 285, 26 January 1712. Text as in Bond 1965: III 10.
85. From *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 2 vols., 1755.
87. *Paradise Lost*, I.286–91.
88. Lines 185–90 of *The Campaign, A Poem*, London: J. Tonson, 1705.
89. Lines 13–24 of *Ode Occasion'd by the Death of Mr. Thomson*, London: Manby & Cox, 1749.
90a. Priestley 1777: 299.
90b. Puttenham [1589]: 72.
90c. Kames [1762]: II 146.
91. *The Tempest*, I.ii.160–4.
92. *Hamlet*, III.ii.223. Davenant's revision as cited in H. Spencer, *Shakespeare Improved: The Restoration Versions in Quarto and on the Stage*, Cambridge, MA, 1927: 179.
93a. *Paradise Lost*, VI. 866.
93b. From *An Essay on Translated Verse*, 1684. In Spingarn 1908: II 309.
94a. Piper 1969: 33.
94b. *Ibid.*
95a. From *Dido and Aeneas: The fourth booke of Virgils Aeneas*. Text as in Görlach 1991: 286.
95b. From *The Passion of Dido for Aeneas. As it is Incomparably exprest in the Fourth Book of Virgil*. Text as in Görlach 1991: 287.
96. *The Rape of the Lock*, II.23–6. As (78).
97a. *Ibid.*, II.99–100.
97b. *Ibid.*, III.7–8.
98a. As (71).
98b. Johnson 1779–81: II 86.
99a. *Paradise Lost*, VI.836.
99b. As (93b).

100. Lines 112–19 of *Winter. A Poem*, London: J. Millan (1st edn, March 1726).
101. *Paradise Lost*, I.386.
102. *Mr Johnson's Preface to his Edition of Shakespear's Plays*. London: J & R Tonson *et al.*, 1765: v.
103. *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, London: T. Becket and P. A. Dehont, 1765: VII 1.
104. From *A Song to David*. In *A translation of the Psalms of David*, London: Smart, 1765: 194.
105. From *Fingal an Ancient Epic Poem, in six books: Together with other Poems*. London: T. Becket & P. A. De Hondt, 1762: 44–5.

KEY TO THE CITED AUTHORS

Addison, Joseph, 1672–1719
Ascham, Roger, 1515–1568
Bacon, Francis, 1561–1626
Blackmore, Sir Richard, 1654–1729
Bolton, Edmund, 1575?–1633?
Boswell, James, 1740–1795
Brooke, Henry, 1703?–1783
Browne, Sir Thomas, 1605–1682
Burton, Robert, 1577–1640
Carew, Thomas, 1567–1620
Carlyle, Thomas, 1795–1881
Caxton, William, 1422?–1491
Chapman, George, 1559?–1634
Cleveland, John, 1613–1658
Cobb, Samuel, 1675–1713
Colet, John, 1467?–1519
Collins, William, 1721–1759
Cranmer, Thomas, 1489–1556
Croxall, Samuel, 1690?–1752
Daniel, Samuel, 1563–1619
Davenant, Sir William, 1606–1668
Davies, Sir John, 1569–1626
Denham, Sir John, 1615–1669
Dennis, John, 1657–1734
Donne, John, 1573?–1631
Drayton, Michael, 1563–1631
Drummond, William, 1585–1647
Dryden, John, 1631–1700
Erasmus, Desiderius, d.1536
Fawkes, Francis, 1720–1777
Fuller, Thomas, 1608–1661
Gascoigne, George, 1542–1577
Godolphin, Sidney, 1610–1643
Goldsmith, Oliver, 1730?–1774
Gray, Thomas, 1716–1771
Greene, Robert, 1560?–1592
Grimald, Nicholas, 1519?–1562?
Harington, Sir John, 1560–1612
Harte, Walter, 1708–1774
Herbert, George, 1593–1633
Hobbes, Thomas, 1588–1679
Johnson, Samuel, 1709–1784
Jonson, Benjamin, 1573?–1637
Kyd, Thomas, 1557?–1595?
Locke, John, 1632–1704
Lydgate, John, 1370?–1451?
Lyly, John, 1554?–1606
Macpherson, James, 1736–1796
Marlowe, Christopher, 1564–1593
Milton, John, 1608–1674
More, Sir Thomas, 1477?–1535
Nashe, Thomas, 1567–1601?
Peele, George, 1556?–1596?
Philips, Katherine, 1632–1664
Pitt, Christopher, 1699–1748
Pope, Alexander, 1688–1744
Ralegh, Sir Walter, 1552?–1618
Roscommon, Wentworth Dillon, Earl of, 1637–1685
Shakespeare, William, 1564–1616

Sheridan, Richard Brinsley, 1751–1816
Sidney, Sir Philip, 1554–1586
Skelton, John, 1460?–1529
Smart, Christopher, 1722–1771
Spenser, Edmund, 1552?–1599
Stanyhurst, Richard, 1547–1618
Steele, Sir Richard, 1672–1729
Sterne, Laurence, 1713–1768
Surrey, Henry Howard, Earl of, 1517?–1547
Swift, Jonathan, 1667–1745
Thomson, James, 1700–1748
Waller, Edmund, 1606–1687
Wesley, Charles, 1707–1788
Wesley, John, 1703–1791
Wordsworth, William, 1770–1850
Wyatt, Sir Thomas, 1503?–1542
Wycherley, William, 1640?–1716
Young, Edward, 1683–1765

FURTHER READING

Fowler (1982) complements this chapter by providing an introduction to the history of genres while Sanders (1994: 83–332) provides a sketch-map of the wider context of literary history in which these formal developments took place. Brief general introductions to the literature of the renaissance and neo-classical periods and to many of the individual authors cited in this chapter are included in the *Norton Anthology of English Literature* (I), which also offers a good selection of representative texts and useful bibliographies of the relevant literary criticism. For any detailed study of literary language, the usefulness of the Norton anthology is limited by its policy of modernising its texts; but there is no one-volume anthology of equivalent scope that reproduces texts in versions current at their time of production. Norbrook and Woudhuysen (1992) perform this service for poetry from 1509–1659 and many of the period's major works are available in facsimile reprints (e.g. the Scolar Press editions). Guidance to appropriate versions of all the texts cited in this chapter is given in the Key to the Numbered Examples.

An excellent introduction to the synchronic study of literary language can be obtained by reading Traugott & Pratt (1980) alongside Leech (1969) (for poetry) and Leech & Short (1981) (for prose fiction). There are no comparably broad-based introductions to historical stylistics, though the subject has been broached by Stephens & Waterhouse (1990), and Bradford (1993) has supplied a companion volume focussing on change in poetic genres; Gordon (1966) remains the best introductory overview of the development of prose. Though methodologically outdated, the pioneering statistically based histories of style by Miles (1964, 1967, 1974) are still suggestive in their results and impressive in their scope. Detailed studies of the language of individual authors can be found in Deutsch's *Language Library* series and Macmillan's *The Language of Literature* series and there are often substantial sections on language in major editions of an author's works, e.g. the Herford & Simpson edition of Jonson (Oxford 1925–52) or the Bond edition of Lyly (Oxford 1902, reprinted 1967).

The additional reading suggested in relation to the separate sections of this chapter is necessarily very selective and anyone wishing to pursue particular topics

further should consult the extensive bibliographies provided by Bailey and Burton (1968), Bennett (1986) and the annual updates in the journal *Style*.

7.1 For discussions of the role of literary quotations in grammars and dictionaries, see Tieken (1990, 1997) and (for Johnson specifically) Reddick (1990). On the larger processes of codifying language and canonising literature see Jones (1953) and Helgerson (1992) (for the Renaissance) and Crowley (1996: 54–98), Barrell (1988) and Weinbrot (1993) (for the eighteenth century). Some of the more notable early exclusions from the canon are anthologised by Greer *et al.* (1988) and Smith (1983) and discussed by Capp (1985), Beilin (1987) and Hill (1985).

7.2.1 The standard accounts of the classical inheritance and its diffusion through the English education system are, respectively, Bolgar (1954) and Baldwin (1944); a briefer account, usefully focussed on St Paul's and Milton, is Clark (1948). For those unfamiliar with the forms of Golden Age Latin literature, Wilkinson (1963) provides a humane introduction. Panofsky (1960) examines the renaissance notion of renascence in art, Spearing (1985) describes the transition from medieval to renaissance in literary paradigms, and Fox (1986) puts the case for the 1520s as the crucial period for the impact of humanism on English writing.

7.2.2 Vickers (1988) provides an excellent introduction to the history of rhetoric, with particularly useful chapters on the change from medieval to renaissance theory and practice. For a more detailed account of the study of rhetoric in England from 1500–1700, see Howell (1956) and the relevant case studies in Murphy (1983) and Mack (1994). The role of Erasmus and *De copia* is considered in Jardine (1993: 129–45) and copia is rehabilitated from a post-structuralist perspective by Cave (1979).

7.2.3 Ronberg (1992) includes an introductory list of figures with practical demonstrations of the figural analysis of renaissance texts. More comprehensive lists can be found in Sonnino (1968) and Lanham (1991) while more detailed entries for selected terms are given in Donker and Muldrow (1982). Vickers (1970) and Joseph (1947) represent approaches to figural analysis which differ from, but complement, the one adopted in this chapter and they can profitably be read alongside it. Leech (1966) discusses the relation between linguistics and rhetorical analysis.

7.3 Ovid's influence on English literature is the subject of Wilkinson (1955) and the essays in Martindale (1988); and Ovid's mastery of the figures of varying is the subject of Ahl (1985). For those wishing to pursue particular figures in more detail, useful starting-points are provided by Colie (1966) and Shen (1987) (for paradox and oxymoron), Heller (1974) and Redfern (1984) (for the pun), Hawkes (1972) and Steen (1994) (for metaphor), Tuve (1966) (for allegory) and Ruthven (1969) and Fowler (1975) (for the conceit). The sense relations of synonymy, antonymy and hyponymy can be pursued by reading Lyons (1968:

443–81) followed by Cruse (1986). Barton (1990) includes a brief but helpful introduction to renaissance attitudes towards the *nomen–omen* tradition and explores its application in the domain of literary naming; Mazzeo (1964) describes renaissance correspondence theory; and the pervasive importance of Pythagorean ideas in renaissance poetics is argued in Heninger (1974).

7.4.1 Vickers (1988: 80–2) gives a brief introduction to the three styles in classical rhetorical theory. The fate of the three styles in the Middle Ages and the rediscovery of the grand style is the subject of Auerbach (1965 esp. 183–233).

7.4.2 Burnley (1992: 181–95) provides passages illustrating Caxton's heightening of Malory and Skelton's translation of Diodorus Siculus. The stylistic role of latinate vocabulary in the Renaissance is discussed in Adamson (1989) while the loss of balance between latinate and saxon in the later seventeenth century is discussed in Davies (1970). Schlauch (1987) explores the social basis of Shakespeare's malapropisms. Purism and archaism are reviewed briefly in Barber (1976: 90–100) and extensively in Jones (1953). For the practice of compounding in Spenser and Shakespeare, see, respectively, Padelford & Maxwell (1926) and Salmon (1987), and for adjectives and the general development of poetic diction in the sixteenth century, see Rubel (1941).

7.4.3 Curial prose and *heigh stile* are discussed by Burnley (1983: 182–200; 1986) and the early impact of classical prose models by Workman (1940). The importance of periodicity as a compositional principle is explained by Wilkinson (1963), Baxandall (1971), Scaglione (1972) and (with specific reference to Milton) by Ricks (1963) and its impact on humanist punctuation is demonstrated by Parkes (1992: 80–7). Matthews (1981: 220–41) defines and illustrates juxtaposition as a construction type. The emergence of the modern concepts of sentence and subordinate clause is charted in Michael (1970) but, as far as I know, a history of the form and function of the paragraph has not been seriously attempted since Lewis (1894). The cursus has also been neglected in recent scholarship; the best representative of earlier studies is Croll (1966: 303–59). In concentrating on the unifying principles of periodicity, I have avoided the more familiar divisions of renaissance prose style into Attic/Asiatic or Ciceronian/Senecan/Tacitan/Baroque. For discussion of these terms and the controversies (renaissance and early twentieth century) with which they are associated, see Gordon (1966: 73–132), Croll (1966: 7–233), Williamson (1951). For a study which also attempts to side-step such controversies by grounding itself in a discussion of 'the syntax and semantics of conjunction', see Mueller (1984).

7.5 The transition from renaissance to neo-classical paradigms is described by Johnson (1967) and set in its European context by Hazard (1964). Changes in the school curriculum leading to the rise of English literature at the expense of the classics are charted in outline by Palmer (1965: 1–14) and in detail by Michael (1987). The myth and reality of Grub Street are explored in Rogers (1972) and the relation between literature and popular culture and between style and social class in, respectively, Rogers (1985) and McIntosh (1986). For the polarisation

of prose and poetry, see Hamilton (1963) and for the general fate of rhetoric in the eighteenth century, see Howell (1971), Vickers (1981) and Potkay (1994). The fortunes of the word (and concept) *literature* since the Renaissance are summarised in Williams (1976: 150–4).

7.6.1 The traditional view of the roles of science and the pulpit in the rise of anti-rhetorical rhetoric is expounded in Jones (1951) (recent reassessments include Vickers (1985) and Gotti (1996)). For the influence of French neo-classicism, see Pocock (1980) and for the conversational ideal, see Burke (1993) and Klein (1994). The change from lexical to syntactic orientation in linguistic theory is described in Land (1974).

7.6.2 For helpful introductions to cohesion, information structure and the given–new relation, see Brown and Yule (1983: 153–222) and (for discourse deixis more specifically) Levinson (1983: 85–9). The standard full-length study is Halliday & Hasan (1976), but Gutwinski (1976) may be slightly easier reading and is explicitly literary in its application. Very little research has been focussed on the stylistic history of these strategies, but for presentative *there*, see Breivik (1983) and Johansson (1997), for discourse markers Schiffrin (1987) and Brinton (1996), and for anaphora Lyons (1977) and Fox (1993). Among studies of specific authors, see Bately (1964) for preposition-stranding in Dryden, Milic (1967: 122–36) for connectives in Swift, and Wright (1997) for relative markers in Addison. The general sea-change in prose style is the subject of Adolph (1968) and of many of the essays in Watson (1970) and Fish (1971).

7.6.3 Various aspects of pure and philosophical diction in the eighteenth century are covered by Davie (1952, 1963), Wimsatt (1948) and Arthos (1949). Among more narrowly focussed studies, Alderson (1996a, b) offers a revaluation of Augustan attitudes towards the pun, Wimsatt (1954: 169–85) looks at zeugma and related figures in Pope, Downie (1986) documents the problem of irony in Defoe while Pratt (1981) brings a Gricean framework to bear on the understanding of irony and literary cooperation more generally. The problems of conversational implicature can be pursued in Levinson (1983: 97–166) and Wilson & Sperber (1992) while the difficulties of identifying a general/core vocabulary are touched on in several of the chapters of Carter (1987).

7.7.1 Among the many studies of the sublime, Monk (1935) remains the best introduction to the changing role of the term in eighteenth-century critical theory, now usefully complemented by Ashfield and de Bolla's annotated reader of 1996. For an account of seventeenth-century 'enthusiasm' and its extension from the religious to the literary sphere, see Tucker (1972).

7.7.2 Sherbo (1975) charts the codification and transmission of poetic vocabulary from early renaissance translations through the eighteenth century. The particular influence of Milton is the subject of Havens (1922). For a general defence of eighteenth-century poetic diction, see Tillotson (1964) and for the special link between personification and the sublime, see Knapp (1985). An account of the grammatical basis of personification is offered by Bloomfield (1963).

7.7.3 The nature of the heroic line in the fifteenth century is debated by Lewis (1969b) and Cable (1991) puts the case for the persistence of the alliterative tradition. Elizabethan experiments in quantitative metre are described by Attridge (1974) and the triumph of the iambic pentameter over other forms is discussed by Thompson (1961), Woods (1985) and Hardison (1989). Piper (1969) gives the history of the heroic couplet and Allison (1962) and Amis (1976) relate the couplet to other aspects of the 'Augustan poetic' in their case-studies of, respectively, Waller and Pope. The pursuit of stress regularity and strict syllabism in the eighteenth century is documented by Fussell (1954) and the gradual return of enjambement by Bradford (1992) (for blank verse) and Wasserman (1940) (for the couplet). Many of the questions raised by these developments have been addressed by generative phonologists; their contributions could not be reviewed within the space constraints of this chapter but should be pursued by anyone with a serious interest in the subject. Halle and Keyser (1971) link changes in metrical practice with changes in the stress pattern of English and formalise rules of metricality for the iambic pentameter. Starting from this model (most clearly and succinctly expounded in Halle & Keyser (1981)), Freeman (1968) characterises the loosening of metrical constraints between Gascoigne and Marlowe; Kiparsky (1977) (or 1981 for an earlier and simpler version) characterises the tightening of metrical constraints between Wyatt and Pope; Koelb (1987) puts the case for a 'two-system' theory of Shakespeare's metre; and Youmans (1983) demonstrates the link between metrical constraints and word-order inversion. Dillon (1977) compares Kiparsky and Kames on the metrical role of syntactic boundaries. For a recent and helpful introduction to generative metrics, see Fabb (1997).

7.8 The revolt against the Addisonian middle style in prose is described by Gordon (1966), while the sources, form and influence of the Johnsonian grand style are discussed in detail in Wimsatt (1941, 1948). For the rise of the religious sublime in poetry, see Morris (1972) and for an account of the style of Ossian, see Fitzgerald (1966). The new stylistic paradigm emerging at the end of the period is characterised by McGann (1996).