MILTON AND METAPHOR

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C O N T E N T S

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary criticism has centred its attention upon metaphor as the criterion of a poet's greatness. This emphasis can be traced back to Aristotle's Poetics where he states that "the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learnt from others." Metaphor requires that the writer should possess an "intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars."[1] Modern theorists recognize in it that act of fusion of meaning which is at the core of all literary creation. Professor Northrop Frye says that "whatever is constructive in any verbal structure seems to me to be invariably some kind of metaphor or hypothetical identification." Similarly, Professor Cleanth Brooks considers that "all the subtler states of emotion, as I.A. Richards has pointed out, necessarily demand metaphor for their expression."[2]

Judged largely by this yardstick, Milton was downgraded by Dr Leavis,

[1] Poetics, trans. Bywater, Oxford, 1920, p. 78.

[2] N. Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, Princetown, N.J., 1957, p. 77; Brooks, The Well-Wrought Urn, Fpbk. 1968, p. 6. Professor Brooks alludes to Richards' discussion of metaphor in The Philosophy of Rhetoric, 1936, where he says that "Thought is metaphoric, and proceeds by comparison, and the metaphors of language derive therefrom." Although his view is opposed to that of Aristotle, both agree in their elevation of the status of metaphor. Op. cit., p. 94. In Philosophy Looks at the Arts (ed. J.A. Margolis, N.Y., 1962) Max Black gives a bibliography of many of the major modern works on metaphor.

who compares him adversely with Shakespeare.[3] Since then commentators have become increasingly conscious that the Shakespearian metaphor[4] is not the only possible kind and simultaneously the critical estimate of Milton has become more favourable. This was partly due to excellent detailed studies of passages in Milton by Professors Brooks and Empson, to name but two.[5] A milestone in this fresh "revaluation" of Milton was Professor Ricks' work on "Milton's Grand Style."[6] This finally vindicated Milton's precision of language against T.S. Eliot's and F.R. Leavis's charges by pointing to such things as his control of several levels of meaning within a passage and his use of the shape of the line to emphasise his meaning.

However, Professor Ricks held back from a complete endorsement of Milton's use of metaphor because he saw little of the Shakespearian

[3] Revaluation, 1936 in Patrides, Milton's Epic Poetry, 1967, pp. 20, 27, 31.

[4] One might attempt to differentiate Shakespearian metaphor from other types (notably the Miltonic) by suggesting that, like the metaphysical conceit, it stands out from its context, making the reader pause. It draws attention to itself in the theatre and holds the interest of the audience. An example might be Desdemona's phrase for herself, left behind as "a moth of peace." (I, iii, 256) This becomes associated by dramatic irony with her death when this "moth," attracted by the flame, flutters too close and dies. Thus, Dr Leavis praises a similarly Shakespearian metaphor in Comus which stands out from the rest of the passage: the "Worms / . . . in their green shops." (Patrides, op. cit., pp. 19-20).

[5] For Brooks, see his edition of the shorter poems with J.E. Hardy, and articles in Sewanee Review, LIX (1951) and PMLA, LXVI (1951). For Empson, see Some Versions of Pastoral, 1950 and The Structure of Complex Words, 1951, pp. 101-104.

[6] Oxford, 1963.

metaphorical technique in his poetry. Perhaps his method of close scrutiny of the text tends to concentrate upon the individual metaphor and is therefore peculiarly suited for appreciating Shakespeare's technique. Again it is possible that comparison with one great poet may inhibit, rather than illuminate, one's understanding of another writer. This may be tested by studying the metaphorical technique at work in one of Milton's major poems, focussing upon a larger area than is usual in close-reading.

An obvious starting-point is to choose a key metaphor and then to work out its function within the poem. The two images chosen are the 'plant' and 'eye' metaphors within "Paradise Lost," since they occur in conjunction in both this epic and the early "Lycidas." This provides an opportunity for comparison and comment on the development in Milton's technique. In tracing them through the epic, (Chaps. 1 and 2) one is continually drawn out into parallel images, such as that of Nature with the former, and of light, darkness and sight with the latter. One finds oneself describing the total structure of the work from the viewpoint of a single image.

This leads one on to examine how metaphor can become a major structural device. Before attempting to describe this in "Paradise Lost," the metamorphosis theme in "Comus" is outlined to test the method within a more manageable field. Because of Milton's debt to Shakespeare's "The Tempest," a comparison between this play and Milton's masque is the starting-point for the study but the metaphorical strategy of "Comus" is considered apart from that of the Romance.

After this, one may proceed to a discussion of metaphor as a major structural device, in the sense intended by modern metaphoric critics such as Professor Jackson Cope. Here a distinction is made between metaphor and myth in order to describe the special demands which "Paradise Lost" makes upon one's belief.

This theory is applied to "Paradise Lost" in studies of two of its major metaphors: those of hell and paradise (Chaps. 5 and 6). These two chapters concentrate upon how these metaphors are composed and how they function in combination with smaller metaphors. Finally, it is noted how some kind of metaphorical language is necessary to both the theologian and the religious poet.

Two related studies are included as appendices. The first examines whether there is any evidence of Milton's contact with emblem-books. After tracing similarities between actual emblems and parts of "Paradise Lost," the essay suggests how this repository of figurative meaning and the emblematic method itself may have been of benefit to a metaphoric writer. The second appendix deals with the imagery and metaphor of "Samson Agonistes." This work was seen by Professor Ricks as a failed attempt at the Shakespearia kind of metaphor. Since many of the stylistic assumptions about the work depend upon its controversial dating, the essay is cast in the form of a study of stylistic evidence for dating the tragedy.

SECTION I

INDIVIDUAL METAPHOR

Chapter I

THE PLANT METAPHOR IN MILTON

As Adam and Eve walk hand in hand to their bower at sunset, the narrator reminds us of the hand of God at work:

> it was a place
> Chosen by the sovereign planter.
> (P.L. IV, 690-1)

This title applied to the Creator helps us to understand Creation by presenting it as an act deliberately planned in accordance with natural processes. Planting is both natural and necessary for vegetable life to grow. Afterwards the plant can propagate itself according to Nature's laws.

If Milton, elaborating on the Genesis phrase "God planted a garden . . ." (Gen. ii 8), really sees God's creative act as a "planting," one would expect other examples of this usage to occur in the poem. This expectation is met in Book Four, when Gabriel reproaches Satan for disturbing:

> those
> Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss.
> (P.L. IV, 883-4)

The metaphor of 'planting' is less bold in this context since the "dwelling" could be the whole Garden of Eden. Yet it seems to imply that the whole garden was planted by a single act of God. This "dwelling" might possibly

be the bower in Eden which showered roses on the nuptial bed of Adam and Eve - a loss "which the morn repaired." (P.L. IV, 773) The bower is itself a miraculous plant, flowering anew each day.

The example discussed in the previous passage reinforces Milton's original metaphor of the "planter" when placed beside Satan's words relating a rumour current in Heaven - namely, that God:

> ere long
> Intended to create, and therein plant
> A generation, whom his choice regard
> Should favour equal to the sons of heaven.
> (P.L. I, 651-3)

Milton calls God's creation of Man a "planting" to convey the care with which He prepared the "soil" and "climate." These surroundings are elaborated in Book Seven where Raphael describes the plenitude around Adam and Eve. Indeed, this causes Adam to query "such disproportions:" how

> the firmament
> And all her numbered stars . . . seem to roll
> Spaces incomprehensible . . .
> . . . merely to officiate light
> Round this opacous earth, this punctual spot,
> One day and night.
> (P.L. VIII, 19-20, 22-24)

Raphael dissipates Adam's troubled thoughts by saying that the problem is of little importance and that God may have wished to puzzle men. Next, he suggests that quantity may not be synonymous with quality (the earth's fertility is described as "solid good"), and then, shifting the focus from the earth to its "habitant," he declares that Adam should admire:

> The Maker's high magnificence, who built
> So spacious, and his line stretched out so far.
> (P.L. VIII, 101-2)

and should be daunted by the very bulk of the "Book of God." (66) He takes his argument a step farther to show that the universe, considered logically, must seem:

> An edifice too large for him to fill,
> Lodged in a small partition, and the rest
> Ordained for uses to his Lord best known.
> (P.L. VIII, 104-6)

Raphael demonstrates that logic does not necessarily lead to wrong ideas about God and His Creation; rather, it can impress upon Man his Maker's majesty and increase his own humility. The circumstances render this triumph of reason somewhat ambivalent: Adam is still unfallen; the angel's argument is hypothetical and, as he tells Adam, based on the premise of the heavens' movement around the earth in order,

> to show
> Invalid that which thee to doubt it moved.
> (P.L. VIII, 115-6)

This discussion between Adam and Raphael has served to draw conclusions from the matter to Book Seven. This controls the reader's reactions to that book since Adam's comments correspond to some extent to those of the uninformed reader. The force of the descriptions of Creation is both cumulative in its entirety and effective in each detail. One learns how

> the swift stag from underground
> Bore up his branching head: scarce from his mould
> Behemoth biggest born of earth upheaved
> His vastness: fleeced the flocks and bleating rose,
> As plants.
> (P.L. VII, 469-73)

Milton deliberately mentions the stag's horns because the animal creation there seems closest to the vegetable, "branching" being a vivid visual

metaphor that sustains the analogy. The simile is made explicit in the final line of the quotation after the pun on "mould."[1] The animals are represented as plants which grow from the earth, while, unlike plants, they are able to leave their place of birth - growth. The comparisons between Man, animals and plants seem to be a direct result of Milton's belief in "the integrity of the great fabric of created nature."[2] This belief expressed in analogy sets the wires and girders of the Great Chain of Being humming with life, since there is a possibility of Man's ascent when converse with heavenly creatures will "cast a beam on the outward shape." (Comus, 459), just as the flower grows until its fragrance gives "silent praise" to the Creator. (P.L. IX, 195) W.B.C. Watkins points out that Milton "at his most creative, . . . accepts the whole range from the

[1] Here the earth or "mould" (compare "earth's hallowed mould," P.L. V, 321) is the "mould" of Behemoth. Milton often presents creation through this metaphor of pouring substance into a mould. Satan speaks of "Creatures of other mould" (P.L. IV, 360) and of the "grace / The hand that formed them on their shape hath poured." (P.L. IV, 364-5) In the phrase "this sin-worn mould" (Comus, 17), the Attendant Spirit may be referring to either human form composed of the earth's substance or to the earth itself. This "mould" metaphor is complemented by the frequent "dissolve" metaphors for destructio (P.L. XII, 546-7, or Il Pens. 165 "Dissolve me into ecstasies"). It is clearest in the thought of newly-created Adam that:

> I then was passing to my former state
> Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve.
> (P.L. VIII, 290-1)

A metaphor for the body more appropriate to the "plant" image than "mould" is the "corporal rind" (Comus, 663).

[2] Rosemund Tuve, Images and Themes in Five Poems by Milton , Oxford, 1957, p. 106.

physical, specifically the senses, to the ultimately Divine as absolutely unbroken. This glad acceptance means that he is free to speak of any order of being (extending to inanimate matter) in identical sensuous terms as the great common denominator." God may therefore be described in terms that one normally associates with Man the "planter," and Men can be described in terms of the vegetable creation. Thus, in "Samson Agonistes," the hero's "nurture" is "Ordained . . . holy, as of a plant" (362), and in "Paradise Lost," Michael speaks of old age,[3] when

> like ripe fruit thou drop
> Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease
> Gathered, not harshly plucked, for death mature.
> (P.L. XI, 535-7)

Professor Watkins also remarks here the common ground between Milton's temperament and Hebraic non-dualistic thinking in its "blend of ascetic spirituality and sensuality."[4] This explains the "continuing analogy between external nature and human sexuality,"[5] whereby Adam smiles on Eve just as Jupiter smiles on Juno:

> when he impregns the clouds
> That shed May flowers.
> (P.L. IV, 500-1)

[3] Although this example derives from Cicero's De Senectute, 19, the influence of the Bible looms large in Milton's 'horticultural' metaphors. Numerous references lie behind Satan's words calling Christ "the woman's seed / . . . late of woman born" whose "growth now to youth's full flower" dismays the fallen angels. (P.R. I, 64-67) Further examples are cited later in this chapter.

[4] An Anatomy of Milton's Verse, Louisiana, 1950, p. 15 and n. 7.

[5] Joseph H. Summers, The Muse's Method, 1962, p. 93.

and even creation is described in terms of procreation.[6]

The interpenetration between hierarchical levels resulting from these analogies does not bring about a breakdown in the Chain. One is conscious that the animals are not plants because the lion does wrench free his hinder parts and separate himself from the earth. Similarly, the "pathetic fallacy" does not necessarily imply that Man is part of, and identical with a great "Natura". Miss Tuve points out that this convention "neither denies a hierarchy among creatures nor a special tie between man and divinity; its giving man's form of sentience or will or *pathos* to other creatures is a metaphorical way of putting unity not identity."[7] The metaphor does not destroy the hierarchy when it "twins" two concepts to produce a new meaning-complex.[8] In reality, it proves that the Scale of Being is no dead superstructure which imprisons all its members at a pre-determined level. Raphael's partaking of Adam's food is significant since it presupposes a possibility of ascent to the angelic that complements Satan's descent to the animal - and even inanimate (as the mist) - level. This removes the Great Chain of Being from the speculative realm to that of "felt" and "lived" belief.

Here metaphor is being used by Milton to create new patterns within an

[6] P.L. VII, 276-82, cited by Summers, ibid., p. 139.

[7] Tuve, op cit., p. 103.

[8] W.J. Ong, "Metaphor and the Twinned Vision," *Sewanee Review*, LXIII, 1955

apparently fixed order. He appears to discover resources of meaning in an image when he employs it. An example of this may be drawn from Miss Rosemund Tuve's discussion of "symbol" in Milton's "Lycidas."[9] She comments on the line "Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed," (Lyc. 149) which a critic remembering references to that plant in "Paradise Lost" would relate to that which "lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes, / And perfect witness of all-judging Jove." (79-80). In Dr Carey's edition, he states that it is "The immortal flower of Paradise." without asking whether it has this detailed significance in Lycidas.[10] This assumption is justified by his reference to Spenser's Paradise: the Garden of Adonis. (F.Q. III VI 45) However, a critic following up Dr Carey's other reference (to P.L. III, 353-7) would not be justified in using this knowledge of the removal of the amaranth to heaven after the Fall, to link it with the plant of Fame earlier in "Lycidas." Thus, Miss Tuve grants that there is a "sudden depth to the image" but she does not think that "Milton consciously related this line (149) to the spreading heavenly plant which symbolizes immortal honour in ll. 78 ff., nor perhaps that he had yet the idea (image) in "Paradise Lost" III, 353 ff., where the angels cast down their crowns inwove with amaranth." It is only after Milton has made his symbolism explicit that one can read a submerged irony of loss into the lines:

[9] Op. cit., p. 104 and n. 19.

[10] The Poems of John Milton, ed. Carey and Fowler, 1968, p. 251.

from their blissful bowers
Of amarantin shade, fountain or spring,
By the waters of life, where'er they sat
In fellowships of joy.
(P.L. XI, 77-80)

Miss Tuve sums up the development of the amaranth-symbol by saying that Milton "was probably having the idea; symbolic images grow slowly, like all ideas involving complicated relationships of much experience."[11] The "plant" metaphor seems to follow a similar path of discovery by the poet, as Milton realizes the potentialities of meaning in the vitality and organic richness of Nature - potentialities which the poet feels in them and can express through them - which are first indirectly utilised as imagery and then employed directly in metaphor.

This development seems to suggest that metaphor plays a more central role than imagery in figurative speech. Indeed only metaphor can convey the full force of figurative language in the most concentrated form. Therefore, if Milton uses metaphors from Nature in his later work while using nature imagery in the earlier poems, one would have reason to suppose that he is discovering a more economical and perhaps more effective technique for expressing the ideas which Nature "enshrines" for him. The relative effectiveness of the two methods can only be gauged from a comparison of actual examples.

To illustrate this development from imagery to metaphor in Milton's

[11] Tuve, op. cit.

use of nature, two vivid instances may be examined in detail: "quaint enamelled eyes" (Lyc., 139) and "there plant eyes" (P.L. III, 53). In both, there is a metaphorical linking of Nature with eyes. The couplet in "Lycidas" where this first phrase occurs is related to the rest of the poem, where the eye-image is applied figuratively to natural objects. The significance of the phrase "opening eyelids of the morn," (Lyc., 26) is not lessened by its traditional nature, which is traced by John M. Steadman.[12]

However, in a pastoral elegy, the eye-image must take second place to the "continued metaphor" of the pastoral convention. By employing the pastoral, Milton can express his sense of loss in terms of the desolation of Nature. The reserves of figurative meaning which may be expressed through natural objects are shifted to the foreground in the pastoral and other means must be devised to vary the "continued metaphor" of Nature. Milton's solution, stated baldly, is to add another layer of metaphor. This tends to produce conceits. In lines 139-40, Milton has three layers of metaphor as well as the pastoral metaphor:

> Ye valleys low . . .
> Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
> That on the green turf suck the honied showers . . .
> (136-140)

According to Warton, the term "eyes" is technical in the botany of flowers.[13] Here the poet is pleading with the valleys to "throw hither" their flowers.

[12] "'Eyelids of the Morn:' A Biblical Convention," Harvard Theological Review, Apr. LVI.

[13] Cit. Scott Elledge, Milton's "Lycidas," 1966, p. 298. (OED: III.1.c "the centre of a flower.")

These flowers are the "eyes" of the valleys, but "eyes" so full of vitality and life that they "suck the honied showers." In their edition of the shorter poems, Cleanth Brooks and J.E. Hardy suggest a connection at the symbolic level between these "eyes" and the "blind mouths" of Lycidas, 119, without claiming that there is a conscious contrast between the two.[14] They note that "the yawning mouth resembles an eye, a monstrous sightless eye." Although their interpretation accords with the Elizabethan meaning of "enamelled" as "fresh, lustrous, bright, variegated, with no suggestion of hardness,"[15] a view that considers the flowers to possess "the kind of spiritual life we attribute to a seeing eye" may be reading too much into the conceit. Milton is using a major symbol to effect a local metaphor and, in view of his later development of that symbol in "Paradise Lost," one might consider him to be employing only a small part of its potential. His success in this brief image might be compared with Keats's lighter touch in To Psyche:

'Mid hush'd, cool-rooted flowers fragrant-eyed.
(v. 13)

This appeals to the senses of touch, smell and hearing, while Milton's is primarily a visual image, transformed into a conceit by the next line.

Despite scruples about this last metaphor, one cannot accuse Milton in "Lycidas" of failing to capitalise upon the opportunities offered by the

[14] Poems of Mr John Milton, 1957, p. 181.

[15] Fowler, Complete Poems, p. 617, commenting on P.L. IV, 149: "gay, enamelled colours."

pastoral to convey the "strong web of support provided for human goodness by the very existence of a harmonious order."[16] Yet for a Christian poet, Man's sympathy with Nature is not sufficient. Indeed, the close accord between Man and Nature intensifies the sorrow of human loss. Although Nature mourns Lycidas, the comforting connotations of the flowers are examined and rejected. Similarly, in "Paradise Lost" Nature weeps and Adam's garland withers at Eve's sin. Despite this ultimate inefficacy of her consolatory powers, Nature can still be employed by Milton to convey vitality and wholeness. Perhaps his later virtual acceptance of "the Hebraic identification of soul with body"[17] made the "plant" metaphor intellectually and emotionally congenial to him. As twentieth-century literary criticism has repeatedly insisted, a plant is an organic whole and so, as a metaphor, it would allow Milton to avoid implications of dualism. As Miss Tuve is at pains to point out, for most of Milton's contemporaries (pace Hobbes) metaphor was still a vehicle for truth.

The vitality of natural forces is employed by Milton to produce a very powerful metaphor in "Paradise Lost:"

> So much the rather thou celestial Light
> Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers

[16] Tuve, op. cit., p. 125. Similarly, Miss Isabel MacCaffrey considers that "the imagery of music and rhythmical organic life counterbalances warfare in Milton's poetry" and that "the antithesis of both sea and storm (=destruction) is the 'good dry land' from which spring flowers and fruits, the symbols of nature's creative powers." "P.L." as "Myth," 1959, pp. 100, 125.

[17] J.B. Broadbent, "The Nativity Ode," The Living Milton, 1960, p. 17.

> Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
> Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
> Of things invisible to mortal sight.
> (P.L. III, 51-55)[18]

The unequivocally plain statement of the metaphor: "there plant eyes," emphasised by the three definite stresses, is intended primarily to convey this important belief in poetic inspiration without distracting the reader by an ingenious conceit. As Miss Ferry notes, the "plant" metaphor here suggests a new creation of a new nature.[19] One can regard the inspiration of the blind bard as parallelling the planting of sensitive seeds or bulbs in darkness. The seed in darkness corresponds to the soul of the blind man cut off from distraction through the eyes. Milton would perhaps not consider the blind man as also cut off from a means of temptation through what Donne called "the devil's doore,"[20] for in the invocation to Book Three, he does not think of sight as temptation. It is rather "one entrance" for Wisdom which is taken from him by blindness. Yet, as A.B. Chambers points out, "Book Nine inverts these images of sight by showing that, while vision may be an important source of wisdom, it can also be an entrance for

[18] There is a close parallel to this in Of Reformation: "If our understanding have a film of ignorance over it, or be blear with gazing on other false glisterings, what is that to Truth? If we will but purge with sovrain eyesalve that intellectual ray which God hath planted in us, then we would believe the Scriptures protesting their own plainness." Complete Works, Columbia edn., III, 33.

[19] Milton's Epic Voice, 1963, Chap. I. Compare P.L.VII, 334-7.

[20] Sermon at St Paul's, Easter Day, 1628.

folly and sin."[21] It is not the eye which is evil, but rather the misuse of it. Even though the poet's blindness is not a punishment for sin, his loss of sight may be seen as the fortunate fall writ small, a curse paradoxically accompanied with the blessing of inspiration.

This metaphor fits into a context of "plant" metaphors discussed since that of the "sovereign planter." (P.L. IV, 691) In fact, one may trace a graph of this "Divine Comedy" by linking together instances of this metaphor. This shows its centrality for Milton's thought in "Paradise Lost." The first step is the "planting" of Man by God into the world created for him. This "planting" is consistent with the pastoral "properties of Eden, discussed by Professor Empson.[22] Yet, paradoxically, the word "plant" is also used unmetaphorically by Milton to convey the most literal-minded materialism. Miss Ferry points out that Satan alone calls the Tree of Forbidden Fruit a "plant" and so denies its significance.[23] The two instances where he addresses the Tree are double-edged because, even while he does it reverence, he is stating that it is a mere "plant." In the dream which he puts into Eve's mind, the angelic form addresses the Tree of Knowledge as "O fair plant." (P.L. V, 58) In the actual temptation, this is elaborated as "O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant" (P.L. IX, 679

[21] "Wisdom at One Entrance Quite Shut Out: P.L. III, 1-55," in Milton: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. A.E. Barker, N.Y., 1965, p. 222.

[22] Some Versions of Pastoral, 1950, Chap. V.

[23] Op. cit., Chap. V.

It is therefore fitting that Eve, aping her mentor in idolatry, should make "low reverence,"

> as to the power
> That dwelt within, whose presence had infused
> Into the plant sciential sap.
> (P.L. IX, 835-7)

Here it is the narrator who calls it "the plant." He is not saying that the "tree of prohibition" has lost its taboo after Eve's fall; rather he is telling the reader that she is making an absurd obeisance to a member of the vegetable creation.

Nevertheless, the ironic meanings which Milton expresses through this literal usage do not preclude non-ironic meanings elsewhere. He calls the Tree of Life "that life-giving plant" (P.L. IV, 199), implying that it is not the ordinary plant which Satan the cormorant takes it to be. The phrase is elevating, not diminishing, the importance of this plant.

Thus, the word "plant," which has been used to describe Man's creation by God, is exposed in all its drab literalness when Adam and Eve prefer it to God. Milton abandons the "plant" metaphor itself when sinful Man is removed from Paradise, but he continues to employ variations upon it. When joining in the angelic hymn of praise for Christ's triumph in "Paradise Regained," Milton recalls this metaphor in his summing up of Man's condition

> now thou hast avenged
> Supplanted Adam, and by vanquishing
> Temptation, hast regained lost Paradise.
> (P.R. IV, 606-8)

Since "supplanted" comes from a different etymological 'root' ('sub' + 'planta': sole of the foot = to trip up), this is a pun appropriate to

Adam's fall, overthrown by a plant. Although Adam is "supplanted" from his kingdom, God does not allow Satan any victorious glory. His hellish auditors acclaim him with hisses, and he himself is metamorphosed:

> His arms clung to his ribs, his legs entwining
> Each other, till supplanted down he fell
> A monstrous serpent on his belly prone.
> (P.L. X, 512-14)

There is a submerged "plant" metaphor behind these lines, for Satan's body becomes a stem by the "entwining" of his legs. This must be appreciated along with the pun on "supplanted" as both "tripped up" and "caused to fall from a position of power."

In "Paradise Lost," one notices further illustrations of the ways in which Milton uses variations on the "plant" metaphor to chart Man's destiny. When Adam and Eve fall, they experience a whole spectrum of doubts, despairs and lusts until God the Father vouchsafes His grace. This life-giving grace is so powerful that it can turn the inanimate into the animate:

> Prevenient grace descending had removed
> The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
> Regenerate grow instead.
> (P.L. XI, 3-5)

Milton creates a vivid metaphor by introducing the idea of growth into a passage from Ezekiel: "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh."[24] The repentant sighs of Adam and

[24] Ezek. XI, 19, cit. Fowler, op. cit., p. 981.

Eve, brought about by this grace, fly up to heaven as fragrant prayer, like the odorous "spirits" of the flower in Book Five (478-82). Christ intercedes on their behalf, pointing out how God the Father has given Adam and Eve the grace to pray for forgiveness:

> See Father, what first fruits on earth are sprung
> From thy implanted grace in man.
> . . . . . .
> Fruits of more pleasing savour from thy seed
> Sown with contrition in his heart, than those
> Which his own hand manuring all the trees
> Of Paradise could have produced, ere fallen
> From innocence.
>
> (P.L. XI, 22-23, 26-30)

Here the word "implanted" has a similar metaphorical function to "plant" in the "plant eyes" metaphor (P.L. III, 53). Grace was completely absent from the souls of Adam and Eve until God "planted" it therein, the idea of vigorous organic growth being emphasised by the word "sprung." This passage is replete with overtones from religious discourse such as G. Lawson's A Body of Divinitie in which he states that God's "moral precepts or prohibitions . . . were too deeply implanted in the soul" for the serpent to single out any one for the tempting of Adam.[25] This describes a kind of indoctrination and does not develop the metaphor to include subsequent growth from the precepts. In this part of "Paradise Lost," Christ is

[25] London, 1659, p. 63, cited by Balachandra Rajan, P.L. and the Seventeenth Century Reader, 1947, p. 70. Similarly, Louis Martz cites St Augustine's view that "we must find, in the rational or intellectual soul of man, an image of its Creator planted immortally in its immortal nature." (The Paradise Within, XIV).

deliberately contrasting the literal meaning of fruit with the figurative, to emphasise the superiority of the figurative. Later, in "Paradise Regained," Christ will show that Satan is concerned with literal meanings, being unable or unwilling to comprehend the deeper metaphorical implications of words (such as "food" or "true kingship and magnanimity.")

However, the distinction made by Christ here between "fruits" would seem to qualify some of Miss Ferry's points about the "divine unity of vision." Through His omniscience, Christ can appreciate the fractured vision of fallen creatures. At the same time, this passage reinforces Miss Ferry's statements about Milton's use of key words bearing double meanings in Christian theology: "fruit," "seed," "sown," "root."[26] They function within a common metaphorical context by the use of the pastoral backcloth, against which related meanings from Biblical passages can converge. Dr Fowler demonstrates how Milton in the passage discussed above (XI, 26-30) varies the metaphor from the parable of the sower in Mark IV, 14-20 with the help of a passage from Hebrews: "Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his

[26] A typically Miltonic pun on "root" occurs in the phrase: "the tree / Of prohibition, root of all our woe," (P.L. IX, 644-5), while Adam is called the "one root" of mankind in P.L. II, 383. Fowler (525) notes that the "horticultural" metaphor was very extensively used by the Reformers in their discussions of the doctrine of Original Sin and repeats Rajan's reference to the Westminster Confession: "Adam and Eve 'being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity'." It recurs in a passage on Original Sin within a cluster of metaphors for Adam in Purchas His Pilgrimage or Relations of the World, London, 1613, p. 23, cit. Rajan, p. 76.

name."[27]

Christ continues the "horticultural" metaphor with His plan that God should:

> all his works on me
> Good or not good ingraft, my merit those
> Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.
> (P.L. XI, 34-6)

This also has a Biblical source, alluding as it does to the Pauline allegory of regeneration and incorporation in Christ as a grafting.[28]

The final redemption, expressed in terms of natural growth was foreshadowed in Book Three of "Paradise Lost," After Christ offers to die for Man, God the Father says:

> As in him perish all men, so in thee
> As from a second root shall be restored,
> As many as are restored, without thee none.
> . . . thy merit
> Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
> Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
> And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
> Receive new life.
> (P.L. III, 287-94)

The nature imagery is evident in "virgin seed," "second root" and "transplanted." (284, 288, 293).[29] Dr Fowler points to Romans (VI, 16-24)

[27] Op. cit., p. 983.

[28] Rom. XI, 16 ff., cit. Fowler, p. 983. This technique has been studied at length by James H. Sims in his book, "The Bible in Milton's Epics," Gainsville, Fla., 1962.

[29] Another example of nature imagery is the play on the word "imp" in the phrase describing Satan as "fittest imp of fraud." (P.L. IX, 89) Dr Fowler comments that "an imp is a shoot or slip, so that the serpent is fraud's scion or extension. The image implies that from the little slip represented by the serpent, the Fall will grow and a whole new tree (world) of evil." Op. cit., p. 861.

as an example of the Scriptural authority behind it and notes a close parallel in De Doctrina i, 21: "Of being ingrafted in Christ and its effects:" "Believers are said to be ingrafted in Christ when they are planted in Christ by God the Father, that is, are made partakers of Christ."[30] The verb "transplanted" is used later in "Paradise Lost" to describe God's creation of the Sun:

> Of light by far the greater part he took
> Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and placed
> In the sun's orb, made porous to receive
> And drink the liquid light.
>
> (P.L. VII, 359-62)

This presents light as a living essence, which will wax strong when it is "planted" in the porous orb prepared for it. Once again it has the overtones utilised by Milton in the "plant eyes" metaphor in the invocation to Light, (P.L. III, 53) and displays God in another aspect of his function as the "sovereign planter."

This title for the deity may be looked at once again in order to sum up this discussion. God's nature as "planter" has been shown in various activities - creating both Man and his environment, especially the Sun upon which he is dependent for light and heat. Corresponding to this is God's inspiration of the blind bard in "Paradise Lost." The compound words derived from the verb "to plant" impress upon the reader God's watchful care for Man. He "implants" grace in unrepentant Adam and one day will "transplant" him to a new life in Christ, when man's works shall be

[30] Columbia Milton, XVI, 3-5.

"ingrafted" upon our Redeemer. In this is displayed the healing aspect of the word "sovereign" besides its regal connotations.[31] The metaphor of "planting" Man in the world suggests that freedom which Milton undoubtedly thought men to possess. A plant is given a start in life by the "planter" but it has to grow by its own strength. The importance of the action of planting is emphasised by the "honest Gardener" in a passage in Animadversion where he tells the invading gardener, who represents the bishops, that "it is well knowne to be a matter of lesse skill and lesse labour to keep a Garden handsome, then it is to plant it, or contrive it."[32] However, this "planter" does not restrict himself to the "planting," but acts to save it when the "plant" has gone hopelessly wrong. Here the word "planter" may still be distinguished from a possible alternative - "gardener" - which suggests a constant tending and weeding to forestall any calamity or evil influence.[33]

In the forms used by Milton, this metaphor generally has a verbal force. The single noun metaphor - "planter" - describes "one who plants" and is therefore strongly verbal. Consequently, the verb "plant" and its

[31] One may compare this with the "sovrain eyesalve" in the passage from Of Reformation quoted above. (Col. III, 33) Similarly John M. Steadman suggests that "their sovran Lord" in The Nativity Ode "points the oxymoron of healing might." (The Living Milton, p. 27).

[32] Columbia Milton, III, 158-59.

[33] The "thousands of babes" returning to Spenser's Garden of Adonis are "planted" again, but it is explicitly stated that there is no tending of them by a gardener. (F.Q. III, vi, 42).

compounds reinforce by their own vitality the vigour of organic life, which Milton wishes to harness as metaphor.

Chapter II

THE EYE-IMAGE IN "PARADISE LOST"

"Paradise Lost" is a poem "spangled with eyes." They shine out from the "starry eyes" of the peacock's tail and from heaven awake "with all his eyes."[1] While the eye can express unfallen love in Man, it may lead to temptation and fall if it is not controlled. Paradoxically, loss of the eyes may be attended by inspiration and vision. Like Tiresias, the blind bard is one to whom "profundum caecitas lumen dedit."[2]

However, it is the metaphorical uses of the "eye" which concern one here. In the first chapter, its meaning in the "plant eyes" metaphor (III, 53) was discussed. There it signified the vision or "light" which the poet asked from the Muse. Another use of this figure may be seen in the source of light for Adam's world: the "lordly eye" of the sun (III, 578). Its creation was accomplished by a "transplanting" of light into the "porous orb" (VII, 359 ff.). Before one describes this eye-metaphor for the

[1] P.L. XI, 130; VII, 446; V, 44.

[2] "De Idea Platonica," 25. References which illustrate the diversity of uses of the eye-imagery are as follows: a) Love: IV, 492-3; VIII, 61 ff.; IX, 309-14. b) Temptation: VIII, 306 ff., 532-3; IX, 516-18, 743, 777; XI, 585-6, 619-20. c) Fall: IX, 1013-5, 1031-6. d) Vision: III, 21-6, 47-55; XI, 411 ff., 598-9; XII, 273-4, 276-7. e) False Vision: IX, 861 ff. 984 ff., 1052, 1070 ff.

sun in greater detail, one may briefly notice previous uses of it. Milton used it in his first sonnet: "the eye of day" (v. 5) and in "Comus:" "where day never shuts his eye." (978) It recalls the line in Shakespeare's "King Richard II:" "All places that the eye of heaven visits."[3] In her discussion of the sun, Miss Svendsen quotes from "Speculum Mundi:" "And as touching the brightnesse of the starres, the sun may well be called Oculus mundi, The eye of the world."[4] This metaphor is used by Spenser in a simile for the effect of Una's removing of the veil from her "angels face:"

> As the great eye of Heaven shyned bright,
> And made a sunshine in the shady place.
> (The Faerie Queene, Bk. I, C. III, 4)

In "Spenser and the Numbers of Time," Dr Fowler says that the solar epithet in the Renaissance was regarded as distinctively Orphic. Thus, in De Sole, Marsilio Ficino wrote that "Orpheus called Apollo the life-giving eye of heaven."[5]

In "Paradise Lost" the metaphor recurs in a central position within Adam's Morning Hymn, where he addresses the sun as:

> . . . of this great world both eye and soul.
> (V, 171)

This line will be reconsidered after the other major use of the eye-image in "Paradise Lost" has been discussed.

[3] R II: I, iii, 275, cit. E.A.J. Honigmann, (ed.) Milton's Sonnets, 1966, p. 88.

[4] Kester Svendsen, Milton and Science, 1956, p. 68.

[5] Opera omnia, Chap. VI, p. 968. Fowler,[2] p. 75.

This is the symbol for God: "the eternal eye." (V, 711) Frequent allusions to God's "eye" impress upon the reader His omniscience:

> for what can scape the eye
> Of God all seeing.
> (X, 5-6)

Even the devils acknowledge this fact. In his speech to the assembly in Pandaemonium, Belial says:

> for what can force or guile
> With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
> Views all things at one view?
> (II, 188-90)

The form of the narrative often draws one's attention to God's all-embracing sight:

> Now had the almighty Father from above
> . . . bent down his eye
> (III, 56-8)

Similarly, He guides the Chosen People when "his eye" passed:

> with choice regard
> From Paneas the fount of Jordan's flood
> To Beersaba.
> (III, 534-6)

Thus, in Dr Honigmann's words, "the eye becomes a symbol of God's omniscience and an assurance that false appearances cannot deceive."[6]

Milton obtains an ironic effect by placing Satan's temptation of the angels between references to God's omniscient eye. Thus, twilight comes,

> All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest.
> (V, 647)

[6] Honigmann, op. cit., p. 100.

and Satan draws off a third of God's angels:

> Meanwhile the eternal eye, whose sight discerns
> Abstrusest thoughts from forth his holy mount
> And from within the golden lamps that burn
> Nightly before him, saw without their light
> Rebellion rising . . .
>
> (V, 711 ff.)

The play on the phrase "without their light" reminds the reader that these seven lamps are not needed by God.[7] Just as this stresses God's sight, by the phrase "the unsleeping eyes of God" in the previous passage Milton inserts the eye-image into the Biblical verse: "Behold he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." (Ps. CXXI, 4)

By building up a feeling of God's watchfulness through repeated references, Milton can suddenly obtain an effect of desolation by the simple withdrawing of His eyes. The descendants of irreverent Ham degenerate into vice:

> till God at last
> Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
> His presence from among them, and avert
> His holy eyes.
>
> (XII, 106-9)

The power of His eyes is such that they terrify the forces of Pharaoh by "looking forth" through the fiery pillar and the cloud. (XII, 208 f.)

The irony (noted above) which Milton obtains through this eye-imagery is always present at the moment of sin. The sinner must persuade himself

[7] Dennis Burden, The Logical Epic, 1967, p. 8. Here "without" could also mean "outside," implying that the angels are already in a darkness prefiguring their fall.

that God's "eye" is not all-seeing since, otherwise, his action is foolish and should at least be constrained by fear of inevitable punishment. This delusion of secrecy is common to sinners in "Paradise Lost." Eve falsely thinks that her sin may escape God's notice:

> And I perhaps am secret; heaven is high,
> High and remote to see from thence distinct
> Each thing on earth, and other care perhaps
> May have diverted from continual watch
> Our great forbidder, safe with all his spies
> About him.
>
> (IX, 811 ff.)

The warped language of the last two lines shows that Eve's *reason* is fallen. As Dr Fowler points out, Milton derives this detail from Biblical examples such as "He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it."[8]

There are many Biblical passages to provide precedent for Milton's divine eye-imagery. In Proverbs one reads that "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" and in Psalms that "the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him."[9] Similarly, Milton would certainly read in Chronicles: "the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." J.M. French has shown that the "NB" placed opposite this passage in Milton's family Bible was probably inserted by the

[8] Ps. X, 11. Also Job. XXII, 13 f.; Is. XLVII, 10, cit. Fowler, p. 904.

[9] Prov. XV, 3. Ps. XXXIII, 18, XXXIV, 15.

poet.[10] Another sign of Milton's approval of this passage occurs in the account of his Continental tour repeated almost verbatim from the Second Defence: "I lived free and untouched of all defilement . . . having it ever in my thought, that if I could escape the eyes of men, I certainly could not escape the eyes of God."[11]

Milton is given considerable scope to extend this eye-imagery by its presence in the visions of Ezekiel. Thus, the description of the cherubim who escort Michael combines the Biblical source noted by Addison with two classical allusions:[12]

> all their shape
> Spangled with eyes more numerous than those
> Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,
> Charmed with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed
> Of Hermes, or his opiate rod.
> (XI, 129 ff.)

The Christian outdoes the pagan.

Although Michael is indirectly associated with "eyes" in his role as "seer blest" (XI, 553), the majority of references to an angel's eyes are to those of Uriel, "the sharpest-sighted spirit." (III, 691) Uriel's speech to Gabriel almost insists on his own office by the repetition of verbs of seeing: "described" (567); "marked" (568); "discerned" (570) and

[10] 2 Chron. XVI. 9. French, PMLA (1938) LIII, pp. 363-9.

[11] Pro Se Defensio, Columbia Milton, IX, 179. Second Defence, ibid., VIII, 127.

[12] Spectator No. 363. References are from Ezek. I. 18 and Ovid Metamorphoses, I, 682-4, 671 f.

"Mine eye pursued him still." (572) He is:

> one of the seven
> Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne
> Stand ready at command, and are his eyes
> That run through all the heavens, or down to the earth.
> (III, 648-51)

This is repeated by the disguised Satan in his formulaic address to Uriel:

> as his eye
> To visit oft this new creation round.
> (III, 660-1)

The cherubim described by Ezekiel in his first and tenth chapters (I. 18, X. 12) are the foundation of the "chariot of paternal deity" on which the eye-imagery of "Paradise Lost" is centred. This chariot is so vividly realised that, in Dr Fowler's opinion, it becomes "the central image of the poem."[13]

Whether or not it is theologically appropriate to use an apocalyptic vision in an account of the angels' rebellion, it is certainly justified artistically. Like the circle, symbolic of perfection and eternity, the eye-symbol for God is placed in perspective by forming the wheels of His triumphal chariot. They can never stand for God in the sense of fully supplying the meaning of that which they represent. Yet this chariot-image glorifies the eye-metaphor when the "eyebeams" of fire change from their passive aspect into terrible weapons against His enemies:

> from the fourfold visaged four
> Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels

[13] Ezek. X. 12. Fowler, p. 669.

> Distinct alike with multitude of eyes,
> One spirit in them ruled, and every eye
> Glared lightning, and shot pernicious fire
> Among the accursed.
> (VI, 845-50)[14]

This Biblical background to the eye-imagery coalesces with the traditional iconography behind the divine eye-symbol. The eye-God equation may be seen in the "serio ludere" of Nicholas of Cusa. These were experiments in metaphor and semi-magical exercises by "finding within common experience an unusual object endowed with the kind of contradictory attributes which are difficult to imagine united in the deity."[15] Thus, the motionless eye of God is said to follow us everywhere. In "De Visione Dei," Cusanus notes how the painting of a head, with the eyes fixed on a spectator, seems to follow the spectator throughout the room, or to watch several spectators at once. The divine eye from Horapollo's "Hieroglyphica" is accompanied by the text: "Oculo picto Deum intelligebant, quod ut oculos quicquid sibi propositum est intuetur, sic omnia Deus cognoscit ac videt."[16]

[14] This "pernicious fire" might be compared with the "contagious fire" of Eve's lustful eyes (IX, 1036) and the "propitious fire" which consumes Abel's sacrifice "with nimble glance." Here, according to Dr Fowler, "glance" may mean "flash." This active power of the eyebeam (especially the idea of a kind of fire which flows through the eyes) is consistent with the theories of vision found in Plato's Timaeus (Tim., 45B-46A. Everyman edn., pp. 44-5).

[15] Edgar Wind, Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance, 1967, pp. 222 f.

[16] Paris, 1551. Reprod. in Wind, plate 84. "They understood God by the painted eye, because just as the eye considers whatever is put before it, so God knows and sees all things."

Further possibilities in the eye-symbol for the Deity are seen in Alberti's famous "winged eye."[17] This combines the attributes of omniscience (perfect vision) with swiftness, recalling St Paul's words that the Dies Irae will come "in ictu oculi." (I Cor. XV, 52). Although this "winged eye" is not employed by Milton, the use of the eye-image at the moment of sinning for eschatological overtones of retribution accords with Giehlow's interpretation of this symbol. He says that it signifies "the ever-present possibility of his being called before the judgement-seat of God,"[18] by the question "QUID TUM?"

The eye-image for God may also be traced in emblems. Dr Honigmann refers to the title-page of Sir Walter Raleigh's "History of the World" (1614) which includes an example of this device. Similarly, in Henry Hawkins's Partheneia Sacra, a "hortus conclusus" is watched over by the divine eye, beside which are the words "Oculus Dei respexit illam."[19]

Therefore, the eye-image for God derives from numerous Biblical references. It is possible that it is also influenced by iconographical representations of this eye in medals and emblem-books.

In his discussion of "the eternal eye" of God, Dr Honigmann warns the

[17] Wind, plate 86 and pp. 231 ff.

[18] Karl Giehlow, cit. Wind, op. cit., p. 234.

[19] "The eye of God watched over it." Reprod. in Rosemary Freeman's English Emblem Books, 1948, Pl. 29. The Raleigh title-page is reproduced in the Oxford Jonson, 1947, VIII, p. 177. Another example occurs in Francis Quarles's Emblemes and Hieroglyphikes of the Life of Man (1701 or 1710, same sheets as 1696) Bk. 2, Em. 15. See Appendix A below.

reader against confusing it with "the eye of Day." In "Paradise Lost," however, the sun is another metaphor for God. It is submerged in the lines on how God's glory is expressed in His Son:

> on his Son with rays direct
> Shone full.
> (VI, 719-20)

and

> on the Son
> Blazed forth unclouded deity.
> (X, 64-5)

Professor J.B. Broadbent finds Milton's glorifying of the sun out of place in a poem where God is the source of celestial light.[20] In fact, as Dr Fowler points out, "the Neoplatonic cult of the sun had long been assimilated to Christian mysticism of light. Within the tradition of Christian Platonism to which 'Paradise Lost' belongs, it is natural for dignity and splendour to be attributed to so important an image of emanation as the sun."[21] The sun-god equation may be seen in George Herbert's "The Temple," where he describes the crowd led by Judas to arrest Jesus:

> Alas! what haste they make to be undone!
> How with their lanterns do they seek the sunne.
> (The Sacrifice)

The metaphor has here the added attraction of a possible homophonic pun on "son of God." Herbert employs the sun-allusion again in a reference to the parable of God's word sown in men's hearts:

[20] Some Graver Subject: An Essay on P.L., 1960, pp. 165-8.

[21] Fowler, op. cit., p. 597.

Some till their ground, but let weeds choke their sonne.
(The Church-porch)

The regal implications of the eye and sun-symbols may be seen in Ben Jonson's masque "Love freed from Ignorance and Folly." He describes a world:

Wherein what's done, the eye doth do
And is the light and treasure too
This eye still moves and still is fixed.

The masque[22] is addressed to the court of James I. The riddle is answered by Professor Don Cameron Allen in another context: "In the world of reality the Elizabethan might have different emotional responses to the king and to the sun, but in the world of poetry, he saw them as metaphoric equivalents."[23] Jonson's answer is:

The king's the eye, as we do call
The sun the eye of this great all.

Edgar Wind observes that a disciple of Cusanus would have answered "God" or "an icon of God." In a religious poem such as "Paradise Lost" or "The Temple," the sun, represented by the eye-symbol, would become linked figuratively with God, expressed by the eye and sun-symbols.

The sun-metaphor for God is not only appropriate but is given the additional sanction of the Christian Platonic tradition. In "De Sole," Marsilio Ficino calls the sun the tabernacle of God, and says that, just as

[22] Wind, op. cit., pp. 223 f. It exemplifies the paradoxes of Cusanus mentioned above.

[23] D.C. Allen, The Harmonious Vision, Baltimore, 1954, p. 106.

nothing is more foreign to God's light than unformed matter, so there is nothing more foreign to the sun's light than earth. He compares God's light, penetrating even into darkness, with the sun's power to act below the surface of the earth.[24] This idea, common in Milton's time,[25] is perhaps behind the plea that God's light should "shine inward" to illuminate the poet's darkness. (III, 52) This parallel between God's grace entering the soul and the "arch-chemic sun's" light creating gems under the earth exists in "Paradise Lost," though the connection is not explicitly made. It:

> gently warms
> The universe, and to each inward part
> With gentle penetration, though unseen,
> Shoots invisible virtue, even to the deep.[26]

The sun, being the divine monad, is a symbol of God's oneness and omniscience. Satan turns the metaphor topsy-turvy in addressing the sun as:

> thou that . . .
> Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
> Of this new world.
> (IV, 32-4)

Satan makes the obvious pun from the scheme of symbolic numbers whereby the monad was conferred on "sol." Pythagorean and Orphic thought associated the two symbols because they were both key images for the

[24] Opera omnia, "Comparatio solis ad deum," pp. 1000-01.

[25] Svendsen quotes an example from Batman, op. cit., p. 67.

[26] P.L. III, 583-6. Compare P.L. III, 609 ff.

deity.[27]

Just as the divine eye was represented in His ministers by eye-metaphors for the angels, the sun-symbol for God becomes associated with His "eye," Uriel. Revelation had placed that spirit in the sun, shining with "beaming sunny rays."[28] Appropriately, it is Uriel who defeats the pagan sun-god Adramalec in the war in heaven.[29] The chariot of God corresponds to the sun, Apollo's chariot. (V, 140) The Phaeton-implications which this figure provides are utilised to guide the reader's attitude towards Satan's "sun-bright chariot:"

> enclosed
> With flaming cherubim and golden shields.
> (VI, 100-2)

The symbol is summed up in the phrase, "Idol of majesty divine," (VI, 101) and made explicit by Abdiel:

> That such resemblance of the highest
> Should yet remain . . .
> (VI, 114-5)

It is this "resemblance" that directs the reader to the essential difference between God and Satan.

[27] Valeriano deduces the name from "solitudo" - an etymology which goes back to Cicero's De natura deorum. Fowler,[2] p. 76. The first day of the astrological week of antiquity was the "Dies Solis." Ibid., p. 64.

[28] P.L. III, 625. Rev. XIX. 17. Van der Noodt's Theatre interpreted this sun as "the bright and cleare sunne of righteousnesse, which is Christ Jesu, that amiable and shining morning starre." London, 1569, fol. 67^{v}. Fowler,[2] pp. 66-7.

[29] P.L. VI, 363 ff. Adrammalec from 2 Kings XVII. 31.

The use of these emblems of the sun and Phaeton's chariot is paralleled in decoration and literature. The Phaeton image is less common than that of the sun. In discussing a passage in The Faerie Queene, Miss Jane Aptekar suggests a source in Alciati's Emblemata for the destruction of Phaeton by his father Helios.[30] The emblem, "In temerarios," depicts Phaeton at the moment of his fall from his chariot. Above him is the sun, the "impresa" of Philip II.[31] According to Miss Aptekar, Spenser is using the Phaeton metaphor to conjure up Philip II's "presumably well-known image of himself only to turn it wittily against him." It is possible that Milton remembered this passage from Spenser. Whether he did or not, it serves to illustrate Milton's technique of establishing the true symbol and then introducing a false copy of it.

Again, it has been shown how God is described by the submerged sun-metaphors. Professor Louis Marts refers to the windows of University College which show Abraham and three heavenly guests "between the panel depicting the expulsion from Eden and the two panels showing Adam and Eve with Cain and Abel, in their fallen world of labour. From the upper left-hand corner of the panel of Abraham, the sun of God's grace casts its golden rays diagonally towards Adam and Eve."[32] After incorporating this emblem in the poem, Milton proceeds to develop it.

[30] Emblemata, Paris, 1583, p. 209. Reprod. in Aptekar, Icons of Justice, 1969, fig. 61, p. 81.

[31] Ibid, fig. 17, p. 82.

[32] Marts, The Paradise Within, 1964, p. 147.

Satan is compared to the "radiant sun" in his effect on his followers (II, 492 ff.), yet he resembles only the light of the evening sun, soon to die. He still possesses glory through God's suspension of the effects of sin, but already that glory is fading. In the first book, he is compared to "the sun new risen" when it,

> Looks through the horizontal misty air
> Shorn of his beams.
> (P.L. I, 594-6)

The symbol can shift from God to the devil without becoming blurred in its meaning.[33] It is the "foe of obscurity" because of "a true symbol's profound but stubbornly orderly relation to that which it presents . . . . capable of sustaining almost infinite complexities of meaning without ever producing ambiguity."[34] In fact, the symbol thrives upon these diverse applications. As Miss Tuve points out, "the life of symbols is very dependent on their being constantly met, and their depth is very dependent on constant re-use in varied contexts."[35]

Thus, God is represented by both the eye and sun-symbols. At times, the two are linked in the sun by submerged eye-metaphors, as in Satan's

[33] The sun-symbol is used by Satan of God in "Paradise Regained" when he asks that Christ should be a "shading cool" between him and God's ire. This is heavily ironic in view of Christ's role as "Sol iustitiae." (Mal. IV, 1-2, cit. Fowler[2] p. 67). In "Paradise Lost" it parallels the apocalyptic overtones of the eye-image, prefiguring punishment "in ictu oculi." After his sin, Adam tries to hide from the sun (IX, 1084 ff.).

[34] Tuve, op. cit., p. 153.

[35] Ibid., p. 70, n. 16.

simile quoted above. (I, 594-6) In Satan's address to the sun, he fuses the metaphors in a perverse fashion:

> thou that . . .
> Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
> Of this new world.
> (IV, 32-4)

While the sun is never actually identified with God, Adam's metaphoric address to it as "of this great world both eye and soul" (V, 171) causes all these meanings to interact by combining two of the terms of the triadic metaphor: eye: sun: God.[36] Since the sun represents the divine monad, it is the "soul" of the universe that revolves around it. As Dr Fowler observes, "according to Pythagorean doctrine, all numbers flow from the monad, the originative principle, which is accordingly good, or even above goodness."[37] This "soul" metaphor might be compared with the words of a seventeenth-century Platonist, John Smith, who sees "a living form and soul which, running through all the powers of the mind and actions of life, collects all together into one fair and beautiful system, making all that variety conspire into perfect unity."[38] In the same way, God's providence

[36] I.A. Richards considers that the disparities between the terms of a metaphor are as important as the similarities emphasised by Aristotle: "the whole task is to compare the different relations which, in different cases, these two members of a metaphor hold to one another." The Philosophy of Rhetoric, p. 96. Richards's view is reinforced here by the discrimination that must accompany the reading of this triadic metaphor to avoid naive interpretations such as "the sun is God" or "God is an eye."

[37] Fowler,[2] p. 5.

[38] Cit. Jonathan Raban, New Statesman, 31 July 1970, p. 124.

is the soul of this world, endowing it with meaning and ordering it into a "fair and beautiful system."

Thus, the metaphor of Adam's Morning Hymn only gains its full force when one is conscious that both the "tenor" and the "vehicle" -- sun and eye, respectively -- are traditional metaphors for God. In the metaphorical language of "Paradise Lost," which draws much of its strength from such traditions in the Bible and iconography, one cannot say conclusively that the "lordly eye" of the sun is separate from God's "eternal eye." Through the divine eye-metaphor, the reader is conscious of God's omniscience; while through the divine sun-metaphor, he is made conscious of God's power and magnificence. Through the eye-metaphor for the sun, he is reminded of God's glory and unsleeping vigilance.

Chapter III

FORM AND SUBSTANCE IN MILTON'S LUDLOW MASQUE

Various forms,
Various degrees of substance.

Paradise Lost, Bk. V, 473-4

I

The first two chapters on the "plant" and "eye" metaphors have had to refer constantly to the whole of "Paradise Lost." They would seem to function almost as "stepping-stones" which guide the reader through the work and express important ideas within it. This structural function will be examined at greater length within the epic but it seems advisable first of all to undertake a preliminary study within a more restricted field. The work chosen is "Comus" because the masque-form is basically metaphorical. The structural metaphor under study is that of "form" and "substance."

II

The fascination of "The Tempest" for Milton is obvious. Its influence is noticeable in the magically disappearing banquet of "Paradise Regained." (Bk. II, 337 ff., espec. 401-3) Yet the meaning and structure of this play have an even greater relevance in considering "Comus." There Milton confines himself wholly to that masque form which is vital to Shakespeare's

play.[1] First of all, both works are concerned with the problem of Man's dual nature, or the spiritual and appetitive parts of his soul. In addition, they deal with the Neoplatonic notion of the integrity of form and substance, as well as raising the currently-discredited "doctrine" of virginity.

The dualism of Man's animal and spiritual tendencies is polarised by choosing the masque form, for it is essentially an allegory - that is, an extended metaphor. The allegorist abstracts from life, selecting the black and white, rather than the indistinct grey. Thus, good and evil are separated, just as the spirit of God in the act of creation,

> downward purged
> The black tartareous cold dregs
> Adverse to life.
> (P.L. VII, 237-9)

Creation is "partition firm and sure," whether by dividing "(t)he waters underneath from those above" or by gathering the "waters under heaven / Into one place (to) let dry land appear." (P.L. VII, 267, 268, 283-4) Division is an omnipresent principle that paradoxically complements that greater one of union. As Professor Brockbank points out, the moral law -

[1] Although J.M. Major echoes the reservations of Enid Welsford regarding "Comus" as a masque, John G. Demaray would seem to be correct in stating that Milton has "created . . . a masque that must be placed centrally in the Jonsonian tradition." (Welsford, The Court Masque, 1927, pp. 316-19, cit. Major "Comus and The Tempest," Shakespeare Quarterly, X, 1959, 177-83. Demaray, Milton and the Masque Tradition, 1968, p. 96). For The Tempest as masque, see Kermode's edition, 1966.

dividing and distinguishing - is at one with the universe in which Milton places it.[2] The poet in creating re-enacts this division of good and evil within the disciplines of fiction: plot, character and language. He aligns himself with the Creator by conforming to the principle of integrity of form and substance. In Miss Langdon's words, "(f)or a creative artist the correspondence between inner spirit and tangible manifestation is the measure of perfection in form."[3] In "Paradise Lost" this is one of the metaphors for Man's unfallen state.

While this division into good and evil is especially evident in a masque, it applies also to Shakespeare's distribution of these qualities in the characters of "The Tempest" or, indeed, of any of his plays. There his consciousness of the complex intermingling of good and evil in each man makes him refrain from relying entirely on the clarification (ergo, simplification) of the masque. Nevertheless he finds it ideally suited for dramatically realising the polarities which tug at each character in the moral struggle that is presided over by a rigorous but merciful Providence. At times it is difficult to decide whether a scene may or may not be termed a masque. Why cannot the shipwrecked nobles be said to be participants (qua spectator) of Ariel's feast just as much as the Lady and her brothers during the appearance of Sabrina? The distinction depends upon the absence

[2] "'Within the Visible Diurnal Sphere:' The Moving World of P.L.," Patrides,[2] Approaches to P.L., 1968, p. 213.

[3] Milton's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art, 1965, p. 8.

of actual contact between them: Sabrina frees the Lady but Ariel whisks away his feast before it can be touched. Similarly, while Milton expresses the moral opposites in terms of masque and anti-masque, the scenes in which Trinculo, Stephano and Caliban are led on by Ariel are virtual anti-masques. This "blurring" of the edges of dramatic forms in "The Tempest" corresponds to the absence of easy moral decisions. Like the Duke in "Measure for Measure," Prospero's absolutism is tinged with vindictiveness, while his impulse towards clemency is suggested from without.

In "Comus" and "The Tempest," the characters are judged according to various patterns based upon the contemporary view that hierarchy was not only the foundation of the cosmos (and therefore the state also), but was also desirable as a guarantee of stability. One might call these patterns the x-axis and the y-axis which are provided by the poet as a guide for the reader. With them he can plot the graph of the characters. These scales are complementary: the x-axis begins at the fallen state and tends towards the good; while the y-axis begins at the animal and ascends through the human to the divine. In the Last Romances, Shakespeare also includes the Nature-Nurture graph which is to be considered in relation to the first. Here the x-axis measures education, while the y-axis indicates breeding. Often this graph confirms the results of the other, as in the virtue of Ferdinand and Miranda, or in the vice of Trinculo and Stephano. The second graph helps to explain anomalies in the plays: Caliban's education cannot raise his corrupt nature, while Perdita's nobility compensates for her lack of education and places her high on the y-axis.

However if these graphs alone were an accurate version of reality, one would be forced into accepting a deterministic viewpoint. In fact their static nature is informed with movement through the element of choice between good and evil. According to Shakespeare and Milton, the belief that one is making moral choices is not an illusion. Antonio despite his noble birth has usurped the place of his brother Prospero, "the right Duke of Milan," and tempts Sebastian to do likewise. Nobility and virtue are related but not synonymous.

The movement from good to evil appears on the Scale of Being in terms of metamorphosis. In "The Tempest," this idea is introduced by Prospero in recounting their history to Miranda:

> Thy false uncle . . .
> . . . new created
> The creatures that were mine, I say, or chang'd 'em,
> Or else new form'd 'em.
>
> (I ii 77, 81-83)

The two extremes of the scale are embodied in the figures of Ariel and Caliban. Caliban is

> A freckled whelp hag-born - not honour'd with
> A human shape.
>
> (I ii 283-4)

He is called "thou tortoise" (I ii 318), his bestial form expressing his hopelessly corrupt nature:

> A devil, a born devil, on whose nature
> Nurture can never stick.
>
> (IV i 188-9)

Outer shape corresponds to inner nature: "For soule is forme and doth the bodie make." (Spenser, "Hymne in Honour of Beautie," 1596) This doctrine

of Renaissance Platonism is vehemently expressed by Miranda:

> There's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple:
> If the ill spirit have so fair a house,
> Good things will strive to dwell with't.
> (I ii 460-62)

It is a philosophy of aesthetics.

While virtue is seen as something superhuman, as transcending the human, vice, though it degrades man to the level of animals, is accepted as typically human. Ferdinand feels sure that Ariel's music

> waits upon
> Some god o' th' island.
> (I ii 391-2)

Similarly on seeing Ferdinand, Miranda asks

> What is't? a spirit?
> . . . But 'tis a spirit.
> (I ii 412-14)

while he greets her in typical romance fashion:

> Most sure the goddess
> On whom these airs attend!
> (I ii 424-5)

She has just exclaimed:

> I might call him
> A thing divine; for nothing natural
> I ever saw so noble.
> (I ii 420-22)

The monstrous however is less unusual. In England, Trinculo says, "there would this monster make a man; any strange beast there makes a man." (II ii 30 f.) In the comic scene, the theme of godlike human nature is ironically undercut by Caliban's overestimation of Trinculo and his bottle: "That's a brave god and bears celestial liquor." (II ii 118)

Therefore, the two elementary qualities are set in opposition: Caliban

("thou earth" I ii 316) and Ariel (=Air). Between them stretches the scale against which the human characters are to be measured. Ariel's refined nature is expressed as a Protean flux rather than as any one shape. The disparity between his nature and wickedness is stated by Prospero, who touches on this earth-air opposition:

> for thou wast a spirit too delicate
> To act her earthy and abhorr'd commands.
> (I ii 272-3)

This is the point at which "Comus" begins. We are made aware of the contrast between the Attendant Spirit's nature and the locality to which his task brings him. He has come from

> regions mild of calm and serene air
> Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot.
> (4-5)

forced to

> soil these pure ambrosial weeds,
> With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.
> (16-17)

Throughout the work the imagery insists upon this contrast between purity and impurity, that becomes a metaphor for two opposing states of the soul.[4] Even the enchanter Comus recognizes this spiritual state when it is made sensible to him through the power of music:

> Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
> Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
> (243-4)

The metaphor's significance is central to the masque. Grace and sin are agents of growth and corruption respectively, setting in motion the fixed

[4] Similar chemical metaphors are employed in "Paradise Lost" to convey the purity of essence of the heavenly spirits. P.L. II, 138-41 and 215-6.

points on the Scale of Being. When a soul resists temptation, it is the special care of heaven:

> Till oft converse with heavenly habitants
> Begin to cast a beam on the outward shape,
> The unpolluted temple of the mind,
> And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence
> Till all be made immortal.
> (458-462)

Raphael's description of the Scale of Being in "Paradise Lost" is but a reprise of this earlier statement. While virtue grows by shunning evil, sin upsets the balance of body and spirit by denying the spiritual:

> when lust
> By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
> But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
> Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
> The soul grows clotted with contagion,
> Embodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
> The divine property of her first being.
> (462-68)

The animal ("imbrutes") and the earth ("clotted with contagion") suggestions are present here also.

The metaphor inherent in the figure of Comus and his followers is therefore this "man-becoming-beast" image.[5] Here is the causeway between "The Tempest" and "Comus" - the Circe link between Caliban's dam, Sycorax and Comus. As Professor Frank Kermode notes in his edition of "The Tempest," Circe "figures regularly in allegorized myth as that seductive nature which by working on the senses reduces men to beasts; her son, Comus, in Milton likewise represents that Nature against which Temperance must strive if

[5] J.M. Patrick, "Milton's Conception of Sin . . . in P.L.," Utah, 1960, p. 41.

true civility is to be preserved, and the soul liberated. Sycorax and Caliban represent a Nature antithetical to Spirit and therefore platonically ugly and deformed; but they are aspects of the same thing."[6] The appearance and noise of Comus's rabble on stage would reinforce the descriptions included in the verse:

> night by night
> He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl
> Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey.
> (531-3)

The device of Comus's cup provides both a test of temperance and also a means of outwardly manifesting the inward change caused by intemperance. His

> pleasing poison
> The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
> And the inglorious likeness of a beast
> Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
> Charactered in the face.
> (525-9; cp. 68-78)

The metamorphosis effected by Comus's cup is the principal metaphor in the poem for sin and its results. Grace is expressed by a complementary metamorphosis. In "The Tempest," the miraculous transformation of the materials of nature into art is described in Ariel's song:

> Full fathom five thy father lies
> Of his bones are coral made;
> Those are pearls that were his eyes:
> Nothing of him that doth fade,
> But doth suffer a sea-change
> Into something rich and strange.
> Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell.
> (I ii 399-405)

[6] Kermode, op. cit., p. 26; The Tempest, I ii 258; Comus. 50-3.

Ferdinand's attitude to his father is cancelled out by his supposed death, which substitutes feelings of grief. These are later modified by being transferred to the seemingly-tyrannical father-figure, Prospero, to be finally metamorphosed into "something rich and strange" at the moment of revelation. His prospective father-in-law has truly admirable powers, and, as a man wronged, he can be given wholehearted love. It is Prospero's art which achieves this "sea-change."

Milton derives his metaphor for grace from "The Tempest" yet makes it more recognisably classical by the story of a virgin who escapes from a suitor intent on ravishing her. She is supernaturally aided: an Ovidian theme that lent itself to moralization. The connection between Ariel's song and Sabrina's story is obvious in certain verbal echoes: the "pearls that were his eyes" become the "pearled wrists" of the water-nymphs who receive her before she undergoes "a quick immortal change," like the "sea-change" of Shakespeare's song.[7] Within a work of art, the transformation of nature into art is generally approved since this identity of form and content conforms to the divine principle of integrity. We acquiesce to the words of Yeats the aesthete in "Sailing to Byzantium," just as we reassure Mr Weston when he asks: "I trust you are not one of those who place nature before art?"[8] This "transubstantiation" magically effected by artistic form - adding "the power of some adjuring verse"

[7] Temp. I ii 401, 403; Com. 833, 840.

[8] T.F. Powys, Mr Weston's Good Wine, Chap. X.

(Com. 857) - is a fitting metaphor for the soul's ascent towards the divine. The ideal of art presented by both "The Tempest" and "Comus" is a metaphor for the highest virtue. Thus, the ending of "Comus" is studded by references to precious metals and spices: "tinsel" (876), "gold" (879), "golden ore" (932), "golden tree" (982), "diamond" (880), "agate," "turquoise" and "emerald" (892 f.), "molten crystal" (930), "beryl" (932), "nard" and "cassia" (990). This metaphor might be compared with the cross of Lothar, on one side of which is a heavy encrustation of precious gems, and on the other side a simple but eloquent portrayal of the Crucifixion in silver. It depends upon "the idea that material substances could be made spiritual by art alone."[9] One might say that Milton's metaphor takes the richness of one side of the cross to express the spiritual meaning of the reverse side.

This metaphorical reading of the Attendant Spirit's epilogue treats it as allegory. This is consistent with its genre. However, one metaphorical but non-allegorical interpretation of Cupid and Psyche's marriage (1002 ff.) sees it as the fruition of virginity in marital chastity.[10] Here a distinction must be made between "The Tempest" and "Comus." The preoccupation with

[9] See Sir Kenneth Clark's Civilisation, pp. 26-29, pl. 18, 19.

[10] On Tillyard's argument that Milton's views changed between the 1634 Trinity MS and the 1637 printed version, see Demaray, Chap. VI, pp. 173-4, n. 2. Demaray's point that the epilogue does occur in the Trinity MS lends force to the view that it amplifies what has gone before, not altering the meaning by placing chastity in the context of matrimony.

marriage in the fourth act of "The Tempest" made it obviously suitable for performance before the Elector Palatine on a visit to England to claim his bride, Elizabeth, daughter of James I. Yet the meaning of "The Tempest" should not be read into "Comus." It should be unnecessary to point out that virginity and chastity are not identical. If one substitutes chastity for virginity, the meaning of "Comus" becomes more generally palatable. Thus, J.M. Major[11] says that even at the height of youthful idealism in the "Apology for Smectymnuus" (eight years after "Comus"), Milton never rejected the idea of marriage as incompatible with chastity. This interpretation hinges upon whether the Cupid and Psyche reference is meant to signify a future earthly marriage for the Lady. On the other hand, an allegorical reading would consider that a heavenly marriage between divine love and the virgin's soul is intended. This latter conclusion would be agreeable for any youthful Neoplatonist and would also be consistent with the rest of the masque.

The uncompromising purity of the "doctrine" safeguards its Neoplatonism from being besmirched by the tarnished version current at Queen Henrietta's court.[12] In "Comus," the electrifying assertion of the doctrine of virginity supersedes the dramatic tension of temptation that is central to several of Milton's poems. The Lady's rhetoric of purity fills the fallen reader or spectator with awe and dread:

[11] Op. cit., p. 180.

[12] G.F. Sensabaugh, S.P. xli, 238-49.

a cold shudd'ring dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus
To some of Saturn's crew.
(801-04)

Comus's boast of the refined essence of himself and his followers - "We that are of purer fire" - condenses against the cold glass wherein the Lady shows him their real nature. Too often critics are cut off from the work by an inability to accept virginity as an ideal. The Lady's pessimism foresees this difficulty:

Fain would I something say, yet to what end?
Thou hast nor ear, nor soul to apprehend
The sublime notion, and high mystery
That must be uttered to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of virginity.
(782-86)

Here one should distinguish between the chastity of Ferdinand and Miranda - a discipline to safeguard the blessings of their marriage - and the Lady's chastity which is God-directed, seeking no fruition at the human level. This is no sterile and selfish virtue, for her hatred of luxury verges upon an altruistic socialism that would be anathema to the epicurean Comus.

Since the Lady rejects Comus's verbal onslaught, the agents of heaven save her from being subjected to physical compulsion. Her maidenhood is inviolable because it is removed from the realm of sin. So long as her will remains pure, her substance will not be tainted by corruption. The scorching "sun-clad power of chastity" (781) can suffer no union with mortal mould, only with heavenly essence.

The final words of "Comus" reaffirm the moral order in terms of the

Scale of Being. It is shown to be a kinetic image now that we have the knowledge of God's mercy and care:

> Mortals that would follow me,
> Love Virtue, she alone is free,
> She can teach ye how to climb
> Higher than the sphery chime;
> Or if Virtue feeble were,
> Heaven itself would stoop to her.
> (1017-1022)

Section II

"PARADISE LOST" AND METAPHOR

The first section of the thesis studied the specific metaphors of the plant, the eye and of metamorphosis, tracing them through a whole poem. It was found that they were intimately bound up with the meaning of the work as a whole and performed a major role in expressing that meaning.

The second section studies the way in which extended metaphors can act as structural blocks in a poem. This entails a brief description of a possible theoretical justification of "metaphoric criticism," considering some objections to it and attempting to relate this kind of structural metaphor to metaphor as a figure of speech. After this, the major structural blocks of "Paradise Lost" - those of Hell and Paradise - are considered in detail as extended metaphors. Chapter V concentrates on the interaction of extended metaphor with local metaphor, of "macrocosmic" with "microcosmic" figures. This is continued in Chapter VI, along with a more detailed consideration of Milton's use of his material in constructing the metaphor of Paradise. The section concludes with a brief discussion of the importance of metaphor to the writer of religious poetry.

Chapter IV

METAPHOR AND MYTH

All theories of literature must at some point consider the relationship between art and reality, between the realm of aesthetic experience and the everyday world. This problem forces itself upon one's attention much more insistently in a discussion of literature than, for example, in one of music. Literature is primarily an art of meanings, just as music is an art of sounds.

The meaning of a work of literature is closely tied up with that work's relation to reality. Most theories of literature have put forward some account of this relationship, be it allegoric, mimetic or metaphoric. It is obvious that the term "allegory" in the strict sense describes certain works consciously written for an allegorical interpretation. As Stephen Hawes writes in his "Pastime of Pleasure," the allegorist works by,

> Clokynge a trouthe wyth colour tenebrous,
> For often under a fayre fayned fable
> A trouthe appereth gretely profitable.
> (Pastime of Pleasure, 29)[1]

This more general medieval sense of a kernel of moral truth within the brilliant husk of the poet's fables may be distinguished from its meaning

[1] 1506, cit. D.L. Clark, Rhetoric and Poetry in the Renaissance, N.Y., 1963, p. 127.

in Renaissance rhetoric of an extended metaphor in "dark devised sentences," to use Thomas Wilson's phrase.[2] This more restricted sense of a "metaphor continued" provided pleasure through the simultaneous presentation of two modes of reality.[3] This gives a good account of The Faerie Queene, Piers Plowman and The Pilgrim's Progress but in some cases, it results in Ovide Moralisé in place of Ovid. The more general medieval meaning can produce a simplistic version of a "moral" at the heart of a work. Therefore the term "allegory" is not sufficiently comprehensive to describe all works of art.

However, the other two theories of literature mentioned above do aspire to comprehensiveness. The modern metaphoric theory is a version of mimesis. A bald statement of its view would be that the poem is a metaphor for some aspect of life or some statement about life. Thus, Arthur Barker sees "Paradise Lost" as a "metaphor of spiritual evolution."[4] If this theory is to be at all acceptable, it must offer something other than a new label. If the adjective "metaphoric" is being applied with some accuracy, it will be pointing out some similarity between the nature of a work of art and that of the trope "metaphora."

Before examining this possibility, one may ask what a- prioristic

[2] In his Arte of Rhetorique (p. 176) Wilson only uses this latter sense once. Cit. Clark, op. cit., p. 139.

[3] Tuve, op. cit., pp. 158 ff.

[4] E.C. 28/1949, p. 30.

grounds there are for believing that metaphoric criticism can add something of value to literary theory. An answer may be deduced from the failings of myth-criticism: "myth must always be distinguished from literature, and the insistence that they are the same thing, rather than analogous and related phenomena, is the worst sort of distinction-blurring."[5] When Charles Moorman makes out a case for myth as a literary device (as in Eliot's "Sweeney among the Nightingales"), what he is describing is myth used as metaphor.[6] The metaphoric school of criticism may avoid the errors of myth-criticism for just so long as its exponents, who are extending its "tropical" function to describe a method of organizing the work as a whole, regard metaphor as a literary technique.

The trope 'metaphor' states an identity-relationship between two concepts, and by the act of stating this identity, modifies both concepts[7] in such a way as to create it. By positing the identity-relationship, a new meaning is created. Sigurd Burckhardt employs the term "trinity" to describe this fusion of separate and distinct meanings into a verbal identity.[8]

[5] Stanley Hyman, "Myth, Ritual and Romance," K.R. XI (1949) p. 467.

[6] The Renaissance knew this as typology. Arthurian Triptych, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960, pp. 17-18.

[7] This accords with I.A. Richards's view that metaphor is not just "a shifting and displacement of words" but rather is fundamentally "a borrowing between and intercourse of thoughts." Richards, op. cit., p. 94.

[8] "The Poet as Fool and Priest," ELH, XXIII (1956), p. 282.

What is the corresponding "trinity" in the work of literature? The answer may be found in the relation of particular to universal, a common element in literary theories.[9] For clarity, one might adopt at this juncture Dr Richards's names for the parts of a metaphor. Thus, the "tenor" is the thing described, the "vehicle" the thing describing it.[10] Applying these terms to the work of art, the poem itself might be called the "vehicle" (the particular), while its relevance to the situation of its audience would be the "tenor" (the universal). The work of art, then, exists in the "total metaphoric relation between a good poem and the reality or the many circles of reality to which it refers."[11]

Thus, one might see "Moby Dick" as a metaphor: the pursuit of the whale through sea-perils as "vehicle" for the soul's journey through the trials of life. The artist creates through elaboration of the vehicle in relation to the tenor. In this novel, the tradition of life as a journey "geond lagulāde"[12] is combined with Biblical seafaring metaphors and stories, such as that of Jonah. A rich vein of allusiveness is created by clustering all these references around a nucleus or central idea, in the same way as the literary pastoral from Bion and Theocritus is organized around the

[9] For a historical account, see W.K. Wimsatt, The Verbal Icon, Kentucky, 1954, pp. 71 ff.

[10] Richards, op. cit., pp. 96 ff.

[11] Wimsatt, op. cit., p. 217.

[12] The Wanderer, v. 3.

Biblical pastoral in "Lycidas" and "The Shepheardes Calendar." Having dropped the statement "'Moby Dick' is a metaphor" into the "pool" of the discussion, one sees metaphoric rings spreading out from it within the work like "the circinations and sphaerical rounds of Onyons."[13] Melville is at pains to draw forth the significance of the central symbol, the white whale. Even disregarding the quotations prefixed to the work which create symbolic overtones in the whale-figure,[14] the metaphoric resonances of the tale are activated by Father Mapple's homily. This sermon forces the cluster of figurative overtones on the reader's attention through its fusion of seafaring experience with his situation as spiritual pilot of the souls in his care. The straying eyes of his congregation are met by a plethora of "objective correlatives" to his words. Here, as the memorial tablets inform them, every death is a death at sea. Throughout the novel, one sees a consistently metaphorical method: details, such as the emblematic harpoons on a gate in New Bedford or the lookouts compared to hermits on a pillar, function as "grappling-irons" which hold the seafaring and the religious meanings in a continual metaphorical relationship. A whole chapter is devoted to "the whiteness of the whale" and its significance.[15] This style

[13] Sir Thomas Browne, The Garden of Cyrus, Selected Writings, ed. Geoffrey Keynes, 1968, p. 197.

[14] That is, implying "a whole system of traditional and publicly known correspondences," Tuve,[3] A Reading of George Herbert, 1951, p. 104.

[15] Chapter XLII. The emblematic mode is essential to the metaphoric writer. One might compare Melville's technique with that of Milton or other Renaissance poets. D.C. Allen has an interesting article on "Symbolic Colour in the Literature of the Renaissance," P.Q. XV (1936), pp. 81-92.

embraces not only the seafaring-religious comparison, but even within the seafaring "vehicle," where one is struck by details such as Ahab's wrinkled face, which resembles the lines on the chart he is studying.

In "Moby Dick," therefore, a nautical search is the metaphor for man's metaphysical quest. This example of quest-themes in literature which express man's search for the ideal, may help to answer an important objection to metaphoric criticism - namely, that it does not take account of the time-element in a work of literature. If one accepts that a fictional search may be a metaphor for an archetypal quest, then the work of art must contain the element of time. One might argue that, while any plot is based on a sequence of events, a metaphor is a static entity. Against this, one may point out that the trope "metaphor" exists in the time taken to read and mentally create it, just as a plot is gradually apprehended by a reader. Both metaphor and poem exist in the temporal dimension. Yet a fuller discussion of this seems required in the context of a consideration of time in "Paradise Lost."

Professor Jackson I. Cope and Miss Rosalie L. Colie hold opposing views on this topic.[16] Professor Cope is influenced by Father Walter J. Ong's theory of a shift from the temporal to the spatial dimension in

[16] Cope, The Metaphoric Structure of P.L., John Hopkins, 1962; Colie, "Time and Eternity: Paradox and Structure in P.L.," JWCI 23/1960, pp. 127-138, repr. in Milton: Modern Judgements, (ed.) Alan Rudrum, 1968.

Renaissance Man's view of his conceptualisations,[17] and also by various manipulations of time-scheme in the modern novel, notably "Finnegan's Wake." As a result, he is concerned to assert the primacy of space rather than of time in "Paradise Lost." His emphasis on space is supported by the reader's experience of the fall through Chaos and journeys from Heaven to Eden.[18] Yet the tremendous realization of space does not exclude time from the poem. In a review of Professor Cope's book, R.M. Frye points out that the traditional epic is "inextricably bound up with time and plot sequence" and that the Hebraic-Christian tradition had a "consistent, characteristic, and distinctive emphasis on history and the significance of time."[19] Acceptance of Professor Cope's views would therefore mean assuming "on the basis of assertion rather than of evidence, that Milton was at once violating the narrative core of the epic form which he thought he was following and the temporal emphasis of the Biblical faith which he thought he held."[20] Indeed, Milton's carefully-planned departures from the strict chronology of the Redemptive Scheme, like Conrad's less successful dislocation of time-scheme

[17] Ong,[2] "System, Space and Intellect in Renaissance Symbolism," Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance, 18 (1956), 222-239.

[18] This accords with the view of Professor David Masson in his lectures at Edinburgh that "Shakespeare lived in a world of time, Milton in a universe of space." Professor Marjorie Nicholson discusses the tremendous feeling of space in "Paradise Lost," but considers that he did not there "reach such a conception of the infinity of space as Bruno, nearly a century earlier, nor such an idea of infinite fullness as evidence of Deity as did Leibnitz, not much later." Science and Imagination, N.Y., 1956, pp. 98 ff., espec. 105-6.

[19] Frye,[2] JEGP 62 (1963), pp. 390-4.

[20] Ibid., p. 394.

in "Nostromo," serve not to transcend time, but instead to concentrate the reader's attention even more strongly upon time. This "hasting into the midst of things" removes the narrative from the realm of reality to that of art and introduces events at the juncture where they possess the maximum significance. Thus, Raphael presents the War in Heaven in such a way that this rebellion prefigures that of Adam and Eve. Here one sees one of the metaphoric "rings" rippling through the epic: the War in Heaven exists on another plane for Raphael who translates it into exemplary metaphor (or "translatio") for Adam and Eve. The narrating of the War in Heaven after the Creation of Man does not abolish the time-scheme of the poem.[21] Milton can introduce events out of strict chronological sequence without causing confusion, because of the cause-effect chain of motivation that he has established. The rebellion of the angels occurs as event before the opening of the poem and as narrative in the centre of the poem. In exactly the same way, Biblical history occurs as event after the "poem" has finished, and as narrative at the end of the poem. Just as Raphael points the moral from the War, Michael (as stagemanager-cum-commentator in Book XI and as narrator-cum-commentator in Book XII) prepares Adam for fallen life by lessons drawn from the history of postlapsarian man. The meaning of each event has been deepened by its position: it not only occurs but is significant.

In this way, Milton creates eternity (the work of art) out of the temporal (the flux of history). Nevertheless, this material used by Milton

[21] For a table of the events in "Paradise Lost," see Fowler, op. cit., p. 444.

is not discarded but remains the structure of the finished work. In reading the poem, one recreates the eternal out of the temporal. Milton's careful provision of motives for each step in the pattern of Fall and Redemption is an aspect of the important role time plays in the poem. It is Christ's elevation which arouses Satan's jealousy, tempting him and leading him to seduce those around him. This painstaking plotting of motivation is turned to further account when Satan is shown as imputing to God spiteful motives for His creation of Man. Therefore one's admiration of the power with which Milton communicates the vast vistas of space in the cosmos of the poem should not blind one to the importance of time, for "the narrative art which he practised in "Paradise Lost" is necessarily governed by chronology."[22] The most accurate response is Thomas Gray's twofold eulogy:

> He pass'd the flaming bounds of Place and Time.[23]

Assuming then that time is an important factor in "Paradise Lost," one may see what light this throws on the objection to metaphoric criticism mentioned above. The search for the whale in "Moby Dick" was said to represent the soul's journey through life. One might venture a similar paraphrase to describe "Paradise Lost" in its simplest terms. The fall of Adam and Eve represents everyday falls from whatever moral standard one sets oneself, the constant lapses from innocence to experience. Milton could place all this significance in this story because, as Stanley Fish observes,

[22] Colie, op. cit., p. 130.

[23] The Progress of Poesy, III. 2. 98.

for him "all history is a replay of the history he is telling, all rebellions one rebellion, all falls one fall, all heroism the heroism of Christ."[24] Among the paradoxes of Christian doctrine noted by Miss Colie is "the notion that Adam is, and is in, every man." She illustrates this from the work of Ralph Venning, a contemporary of Milton: "The Christian knows that he was not when Adam was, and yet he believes that he sinned when Adam did."[25] Miss Ferry calls this equation between Adam and Everyman "a special kind of metaphor."[26]

The fall from Eden to an imperfect world renders the inevitable failures in one's moral life, after which one starts afresh in the continual struggle towards the good.[27] The time taken to read "Paradise Lost" is the temporal dimension of the "vehicle" (the poem) expressing the time-dimension of the "tenor" (roughly described by the above paraphrase). It is the time during which one falls from hoping to live up to a standard into disillusionment on failing to do so. However, "Paradise Lost" does not re-create the unfallen state merely to re-enact the fall from innocence to experience.

[24] Surprised by Sin, 1967, p. 35.

[25] Orthodox Paradoxes, 1650, p. 12, cit. Colie, op. cit., p. 133.

[26] Milton's Epic Voice, Harvard, 1963, p. 95.

[27] Professor Cope sees both Finnegan's Wake and Paradise Lost as developing this metaphor in spatial terms: they "obtain a primary structure by expanding the metaphoric definition of their mutual theme, a fall and subsequent arising and resurrection, into literal movement, once again merging a central tenor and vehicle in such a way that scene continually acts as mimesis of argument." Cope, op. cit., p. 76.

The poem also points in the direction of a hope that one will be aided from outside in these struggles until eventually one attains to some permanent state of happiness. This hope is, in Jeffrey Hart's words, "an awareness of the possibility of recovering the 'paradise within.'"[28]

The Biblical story is a remarkable metaphor because it is both an archetype (symbolic of all later falls) and the hypothetical or explanatory cause of these later falls. The anti-Pelagian doctrine of original sin in "Paradise Lost" makes its story not only literary metaphor but also literary myth. Because of Adam's sin, all men inevitably fall from innocence to the knowledge of evil. It is only by taking myth into consideration that one can answer the vexed question of belief with regard to Milton's epic. Why does the poem affect the reader so strongly? I.A. Richards attempts to solve the difficult question of belief in the poem by making distinctions. According to him, there are at least four possible modes of interpretation: "We can extract the tenor and believe that as a statement; or extract the vehicle; or, taking tenor and vehicle together, contemplate for acceptance or rejection some statement about their relations or we can accept or refuse the direction which together they would give to our living."[29] Although this may be philosophically accurate, it does not take account of the special nature of religious art. While any modern reader can only hope to approximate to the poem Milton wrote, a non-Christian misses an important part of

[28] "P.L. and Order," College English, 1964, p. 576.

[29] Richards, op. cit., p. 135.

the meaning of the poem. The religious artist is conscious of being set apart as one of the faithful. Does the universality of religious art depend upon nothing "more than a readiness to feel and will and live, in certain respects, in accordance with the resultant meaning in so far as we apprehend that meaning - or rather in so far as that meaning apprehends, grasps, takes hold of us?"[30] If this is so, the description falls far short of the full import of "Paradise Lost" for a Christian. Professor Malcolm Ross points out that the whole of traditional Christian theology is "imaginative without, to the Christian, being imaginary. It derives ultimately not from a primitive or poetic guess at the nature of things but from a divine revelation of the nature of God."[31]

It is obvious that the term "metaphor" will not suffice as a solution to this problem of belief. A possible description would be "mythic metaphor,"[32] - "metaphor" being the term for its structure as a work of art; "mythic" pointing out its unique nature which draws upon basic beliefs in the reader. Milton regarded Genesis as historically accurate (so far as Truth can be revealed to man). His recreation of Genesis is poetically true and his supplementing of the original story with fictional episodes

[30] Ibid.

[31] Poetry and Dogma, New Brunswick, 1954, p. 213.

[32] An alternative("sacramental metaphor")has already been fairly widely used to describe the fusion between sign and meaning in a symbol. Malcolm Ross sees a disjunction in the symbol caused by Reformation criticism of the Transubstantiation dogma. (Ibid.)

is analogous to God's accommodation of His nature to man's understanding when He reveals Himself in the Bible.

Chapter V

THE METAPHOR OF HELL

The consequences of the special nature of poetic truth affect not only the Genesis story in "Paradise Lost" but also the settings. Milton sees Hell and Paradise as actual places even while he is creating them. This he does by enriching Biblical and traditionally Christian references with a mosaic of pagan legend and literature. This technique will be studied in detail in Milton's creation of Paradise. Here the use of everyday references in building up his version of Hell are to be examined.

Each of these places is a metaphor for a state of the soul, just as the whole poem is a metaphor for the soul's progress from one of these states to another. Heaven and Hell are the ethical choices for Man situated in Paradise. The indefiniteness of Milton's outline of Heaven is due to a more important reason than the practical difficulty that Biblical visions of a heaven paved with gold and filled with precious stones can never separate themselves from implications of earthly riches. The real reason is that it would run counter to Milton's view that heaven is still to be attained by man for him to try to convey the experience of heaven, as he does for hell and paradise, thereby allowing the reader to experience and therefore attain

it, even if only temporarily.[1] Through his experience of Paradise, Man can have some idea of the incomparable joys of heaven, but he chooses Hell instead.

In reading the poem, one returns to a prelapsarian state via the fallen condition of Hell. It is fitting that the poem should begin in Hell because that is the reader's fallen state. Then, with Satan he ascends through the Chaos of experience to a regenerated vision, variously known as the Golden Age, Arcadia, childhood or simply Eden. As Professor Louis Martz says, "the action moves from the world we know toward the inward Light by which man is enabled to see a Paradise that lies within the center of the poem and within the center of the mind and memory."[2] In studying the composition of these extended metaphors, one encounters a paradox (similar to the creation of eternity out of time, mentioned in Chapter IV) that not only Hell but Paradise also is created out of one's chaotic fallen experience. At the same time, Heaven, Hell, Chaos and Paradise may be regarded as "notable images" of spiritual states. This doubleness of the metaphor's reference is well summed up in Professor Martz's account of Hell: "Literally, we may say, these images from the fallen world are used to describe Hell and the fallen angels, to give them body and actuality. But essentially this

[1] J.B. Broadbent considers that the sun-poetry (discussed above in Chapter II) accomplishes "the contrast with Hell and Paradise that Heaven only suggested." Broadbent,[2] Some Graver Subject, 1960, pp. 165-8.

[2] Martz, The Paradise Within, 1964.

whole fiery setting in Hell becomes a vast metaphor by which Milton interprets the actions of the world we know."[3]

Milton's belief in this Hell he creates is carefully phrased by Professor Merritt Y. Hughes: "in the first two books of 'Paradise Lost' he felt himself to be representing an actual Hell not untruthfully."[4] Most commentators see two kinds of hell in "Paradise Lost:" the psychological and the local. Although Joseph E. Duncan sees four hells in the poem,[5] a more usual view is that of Ernest Schanzer, who distinguishes the geographical hell from the spiritual one. Professor Hughes traces these two viewpoints as they appear separately in other writers. Thus, Antonio Rusca gave a scholastic treatment to the geographical hell. Horrific treatments of hell, such as Henry Greenwood's "Tormenting Tophet, or, A Terrible Description of Hell, Able to Break the Hardest Heart, and Cause It Quake and Tremble,"[6] caused a reaction against such literal interpretations of the place of punishment. Samuel Pordage became hopelessly confused in his attempt to deny the physical tortures of hell.[7] As

[3] Martz, op. cit., pp. 115-6.

[4] Hughes,[2] "Myself am Hell," M.P. 54/1956-57, p. 85.

[5] These four hells are (a) the external hell that is a place of punishment; (b) the external hell that is the seat of sin and a base of operations for the propagation of evil; (c) the hell-on-earth, and (d) the psychological hell. "Milton's Four-in-One-Hell," H.L.Q. 20/1956-57, 127-36.

[6] London, 1614.

[7] Mundorum Explicatio, London, 1663.

Professor Hughes points out, Milton's hell should be compared not with Marlowe's, but rather with Bishop John Hall's, seen in his warning against despair, "wherein what have they gained, but to that hell which was within them, a second hell without?"[8] This dual concept is summed up by J.B. Broadbent: "Hell is not in this poem just a scene, but a state of being which overtakes different characters wherever they are all through the story."[9] Similarly, R.M. Frye observes that these fires and torments are metaphors for the anguish of a chosen isolation from God. In his Institutes, Calvin wrote that "It is not a question of a real fire; anguish and torment are figuratively represented to us under corporeal images."[10] Therefore, Milton's hell is a figurative representation of the neurosis and "angst" which men know in the world.

If one regards the local Hell as a metaphor for fallen Man's misery, the psychological hell of Satan may be viewed as a "shorthand" metaphor depending upon, and referring back to, the larger metaphor. This is the typical metaphorical structure of "Paradise Lost:" a macrocosmic metaphor subsumes other microcosmic metaphors within itself, rather like a "nest of boxes" one inside the other, or, to use an organic metaphor, like Browne's

[8] Heaven upon Earth and Characters of Vertues and Vices, cit. Hughes,[2] p. 87. Marlowe's Mephistopheles implies that Hell is only the deprivation of the beatific vision (Dr Faustus, I iii 78-81).

[9] Broadbent,[3] "Milton's Hell," ELH 21 (1954) pp. 169-70.

[10] Institutes, III, xxv, 12, cit. Frye, God, Man and Satan, 1960, p. 40.

description of the "Onyon," mentioned in Chapter IV.[11]

The relation between the geographical and the spiritual hells is a major source of irony, in the same way as the local irony employed by the fallen angels (as in the punning in the War in Heaven) recoils against them in the overall context of the poem. When Satan reaches the burning shore, he tells Beelzebub that he possesses:

> A mind not to be changed by place or time.
> The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.
> What matter where, if I be still the same . . .
> (I, 253-56)

The irony is that his mind is influenced by place, for his inner hell burns even more strongly in the presence of good: "as from the hateful siege / Of contraries," (IX, 121-2) This interior hell is "an extreme that is ultimately inexpressible but can be approached by myth and metaphor."[12] Milton first creates the extended metaphor of a local hell, expressing a state of being in Man. As Miss MacCaffrey observes, "Milton's 'classical' Hell has proleptic force in 'Paradise Lost' as a forecast of the woes of humanity."[13] After creating it, he then compresses it to convey the inner turmoil of characters within the poem. For Satan, it is "the hot hell which always in him burns:"

[11] Another example of the macro-microcosmic metaphors would be the tears wept by Adam and Eve: "a world of tears;" "another flood;" "a troubled sea of passion" (XII, 626-7; XI, 756 ff.; X, 718; IX, 1121 ff.)

[12] Arnold Stein, Answerable Style, Minneapolis, 1953, p. 53.

[13] I.G. MacCaffrey, p. 85.

> Which way I fly is hell; my self am hell;
> And in the lowest deep a lower deep
> Still threatening to devour me opens wide,
> To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.
> (IX, 467; IV, 75-8)

This external hell is created out of references to everyday experience. It is both political and military. Satan's demeanour is that of an aging, careworn and corrupt politician, his face expressing "considerate pride / Waiting revenge" (I, 600 ff.), mirrored in his deputy (and "yes-man") Beelzebub. (II, 302 ff.) He acts out the role of the exiled leader, sorrowful at the losses sustained by his faithful followers. (I, 609 ff.) The Hellish Council, carefully channelled to give the decision which the leader wishes, is closely modelled on earthly ones. Satan's speeches are a tissue of political half-truths, introduced in parentheses and meekly accepted by his auditors in the flow of rhetoric. He alleges that God was secure on the throne of heaven before their rebellion, whether "upheld by old repute / Consent or custom." (I, 639-40) One has no time to interject that, if the fallen angels are ultimately invincible, so too are the ones in heaven, and so victory is impossible. Even then, one has been tricked into arguing on his false premise that sin does not bring corruption to their essence.

An obvious example of Satan's skill as a politician is the manner in which he forestalls any last-minute volunteer for the mission he has claimed. (II, 467 ff.) In raising his followers' spirits, he supplies ideas that are easily recognisable as Neo-stoical, recalling the philosophic stance of

the Elizabethan tragic hero.[14] At these points, the roles of politician and military leader coincide. Books One and Two are almost tacitly constructed on the military metaphor made explicit by Raphael in the prologue to his account of the War in Heaven:

> . . . what surmounts the reach
> Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
> By likening spiritual to corporeal forms,
> As may express them best.
> (V, 571-4)[15]

However, the levels of metaphor are subtly varied: the language of the extended metaphor is seventeenth-century with contemporary military terms, while that within the similes is archaic. (I, 579 ff., I, 763 ff.)

There is perhaps a hint of irony in Milton's version of the "ouerpreisunge" tradition. In accordance with this, Satan's forces are said to dwarf the mightiest on earth, both Giants and heroes, making them seem by comparison the "Infantry" of pygmies. Milton indulges in a similar pun in the magic reversal of this statement, undercutting his former praise:

> Behold a wonder! they but now who seemed

[14] See Helen Gardner's classic statement of this in her essay "Milton's 'Satan' and the Theme of Damnation in Elizabethan Tragedy," A.E. Barker (ed): Milton: Modern Essays in Criticism, N.Y., 1965, pp. 205-217.

[15] His further speculation that earth may be a "shadow of heaven" is recognisably Platonic. Milton's heaven does not depend on localised metaphor. By allowing the reader to hear God and Christ speaking (by a poetic "accommodation"), he comes close to the beatific vision and has a foretaste of heaven. To provide the reader with more (by appealing to the senses more strongly, perhaps) would be making the path to heaven seem shorter and easier than Milton thought it to be.

> In bigness to surpass Earth's giant-sons
> Now less than smallest dwarfs in narrow room
> Throng numberless, like that pygmean race . . .
> Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
> Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,
> Though without number still amidst the hall
> Of that infernal court.
>
> (I, 777-792)

Thus, Milton uses material drawn from the reader's experience of literature or life.

Some references are very carefully developed. While Satan's spear is compared to a Norwegian pine, his followers acclaim his banner with "A forrest huge of spears," their "serried Shields in thick array / Of depth immeasurable" suggesting its undergrowth. (I, 547-9) This "forrest," formed by angels previously compared to fallen leaves, is in fact bare, scathed by Heaven's fire. (I, 692 ff.) The similes are double-edged and employ disparaging overtones to guide the reader in his evaluation of the tenor. Earlier the fallen angels were compared to the flotsam and jetsam of Pharaoh's forces, in the "fallen-leaves" simile. Now, when Satan uplifts his spear, they arise like a plague of locusts summoned by Moses' rod to obtain from Pharaoh the freedom of the Israelites to depart from his land.

Similarly, careful preparation is made for the powerful, yet accurate, simile for Satan's cheering effect on his cohorts. First of all, their looks are "downcast and damp" with signs "obscure" of "some glimpse of joy." (I, 522) This has the slightest suggestion of dull, misty weather with the occasional ray of sunshine. Then, Satan is compared to the weak, newly-risen sun when it "Looks through the horizontal misty air" or when in

eclipse.[16] (I, 594) Finally, when the Hellish Council has come to a decision and Satan has offered to undertake the arduous mission, his followers, as it were, "brighten up," just as when the evening sun shines through dark clouds, it is greeted by birdsong and the bleating of animals. Here a strict application of the simile would discover at least some ambivalence towards this worship rendered by the fallen angels to their leader; while the "clouding" of Satan's glory through sin precludes a comparison with the noon-day sun.

All these comparisons make a virtue out of the necessity that hell must be described in earthly terms. Yet Milton does often remind the reader that hell is an extended metaphor. The fallen army march to music in the Dorian mood "such as raised / To highth of noblest temper heroes old" (I, 551 ff.) and assemble "in guise / Of warriors old with ordered spear and shield." (I, 564-5) Simile becomes almost interchangeable with disguise, both because of the devils' habit of assuming shapes now they have lost their true identity and also because of the overall context of extended metaphor.

[16] See Chapter 2 for Satan's imitation of the sun-symbol for God. Dr Fowler comments on this passage that "the ominous solar eclipse presages not only disaster for creation but also the doom of the Godlike ruler for whom the sun was a traditional symbol." If Toland was correct, the sun-king equation was made by Charles II's Licenser for the Press. Fowler, op. cit., p. 497. Fowler's interpretation is reinforced by the language describing Adam and Eve when they first appear "Godlike erect . . . / In naked majesty seemed lords of all." Even the sun-metaphor is submerged in this eulogy: "for in their looks divine / The image of their glorious maker shone" (IV, 289-92). The metaphors are portents of their doom.

There is a continual flux between metaphorical levels. Extended metaphor merges into local metaphor, just as simile shades into disguise later in the poem.[17] In the extended metaphor, the devils are described as occupied in mining and within this, are compared with a party of men digging ditches and ramparts. (I, 675 ff.) Again, within the mining episode, a sudden metaphor - "ribs of gold" (690) - equates man's idolatrous pursuit of gold with a perverted view of God's creation of Eve, suggesting that fallen man's lust for women treats her as an object to be coveted, not as a person. In the ensuing description of the construction of Pandaemonium, the comparison with organ-music suddenly becomes literal. The devils' work is actually accompanied by music.

Within the extended metaphor, comparison can thus become actuality. Similarly, the verse moves slowly from the onomatopoeic description of the air inside Pandaemonium as "Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings" (I, 768) to the traditional bee-simile. It is as if the intense aural realization pressurized the poet's imagination into the concreteness of simile. Within this bee-simile, the political metaphor - "expatiate and confer / Their state affairs" (I, 774-5) - reappears from the extended metaphor of Hell, reminding the reader of similar jocular metaphors in Virgil's Georgics IV.

[17] Disguise becomes fallen simile, when Satan sits "like a cormorant" (IV, 196) and stalks in the garden like a ferocious tiger. (IV, 403 ff., espec. 406-8) One holds the ideas of simile and disguise in suspension, since they change into one another when one attempts to categorize them.

Another instance of the macrocosmic metaphor appearing within the microcosmic one is found in Book Two where the military games of the devils prefigure the War in Heaven, particularly in their ripping up of hills. (II, 533 ff.) Their play[18] is itself a metaphor for their serious occupation as soldiers. The metaphor is reversed by Raphael's paradox that this serious occupation of the devils made human war seem "a civil game" by comparison. (VI, 667) In this way, metaphor encloses metaphor in such complex patterns that "Paradise Lost" might justifiably be called not "Nature's nest of boxes," in Donne's phrase, but Art's nest of boxes.

[18] E.M.W. Tillyard sees "the world of vague mental chaos" found by the exploring parties of devils as "the reality underlying the precise human occupations with which the devils have been trying to solace and drug themselves." Studies in Milton, 1961, p. 61.

Chapter VI

THE METAPHOR OF PARADISE

I

This metaphor of Paradise may be considered in the light of Ruskin's distinction between "composition" and "imaginative creation."[1] Yet this theory rests on the doubtful assumption that originality is valuable per se since the phrase "imaginative creation" implies that it is superior to "composition" because of an originality lacking in the poet who arranges materials to hand. J.L. Lowes' classic study The Road to Xanadu[2] shows Coleridge's poetic imagination at work in a way similar to Milton's when recreating Paradise. However, the rhetorical division of creation into "inventio" and "dispositio" successfully resolves this question.[3] "Inventio"

[1] Modern Painters, Part IV, especially Chap. XIV, cit., Broadbent,[2] p. 172.

[2] 2nd edn., 1930 rev. 1951. In dealing with a sacred subject, Milton's choice of materials is more strictly governed by decorum than Coleridge's in order to avoid heresy and to enjoy the continued confidence of his readers.

[3] See Cicero's definition of the five procedures from De Inventione 1. 7. 9, cit. W.S. Howell, Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500-1700. D.L. Clark defines "inventio" as "the art of exploring the material to discover all the arguments which may be brought to bear in support of a proposition and in refutation of the opposing arguments," and "dispositio" as "the art of arranging the material gathered for presentation to an audience." (Rhetoric and Poetry in the Renaissance, N.Y., 1963, p. 27) The distinction between merely re-ordering sources and intelligently discovering something new, is not lost: Aristotle distinguishes between artistic and non-artistic proofs: "The one has merely to be used, the other has to be invented." (Rhetorica, cit. Howell, p. 68) Once these two stages are complete, the poet's work is just beginning for he has still to tackle the "elocutio" or style. In practice, each stage merges into the other.

is the searching for material within one's imagination or one's sources. According to Puttenham, the good poet will have many alternatives from which to choose. "Dispositio" is the arranging of the materials in the best possible order.

It may be deduced from this that literary detective-work, or source-study, can throw valuable light on a work of art. The author's major source is his personal experience. Thus Sainte-Beuve went so far as to say that a critic should first learn everything possible about a work and its author, including not only data about sources, but also about the writer's life and environment. After this, the critic has still to make the imaginative leap into the work.

A study in this manner of the hexameral sources[4] shows Milton making choices about what to reject and what to include. From these choices one can see a pattern emerging. There is a rational spirit at work in his rejection of the more fanciful details of the Jewish commentators.[5] He only includes the literal tip of the iceberg of allegory. This is consistent

[4] Sister Mary Irma Corcoran, Milton's Paradise with reference to the Hexameral Sources, Washington, 1945. According to Professor Harold Fisch, Milton had no direct access to the Zohar or to the classical rabbis. ("Hebraic Style and Motifs in P.L.," Language and Style in Milton, (eds) Emma and Shawcross, N.Y., 1967, p. 34.)

[5] Corcoran, op. cit. Chap III, conclusion. Thus, Midrashic commentators said that the paradisal trees could converse with each other and with man. Not all Jewish commentators were fanciful. The eleventh century writer, Rashi, excludes the esoteric and the allegorical.

with his interpretation of "the spirit that giveth life" as faith and not as figurative commentary on the Bible.[6] Miss MacCaffrey refers to St Augustine to illustrate Milton's attitude: "these and suchlike (interpretations) may be lawfully understood by paradise taken in a spiritual sense, provided that the history of the true local one be as firmly believed."[7] The literal truth of Scripture is primary. Details such as the four rivers of Paradise are included without indicating any particular allegorical interpretation. Nearly all the plants mentioned in the garden have an emblematical meaning, but it is seldom made explicit. One may attribute this not only to Milton's theological standpoint, but rather to his instinct as a poet - the explicit is so often prosaic.

The sacred poet is conscious of a special responsibility as the vehicle of truth. He purports to communicate an ordered and meaningful view of the world. As a result, he must be particularly scrupulous in his choice of images. One way of exerting control over them is "the use of images with known significances like those of myth."[8] While the fountain may have

[6] H.R. MacCallum, "Milton and Figurative Interpretation of the Bible," U.T.Q. XXXI, 1961-2, pp. 397-415. This essay raises the important question of how far Milton's views on the interpretation of the Bible enter into his use of metaphor in poetry and, in particular, religious poetry. MacCallum rightly says that one must be cautious about using Milton's views on Scripture as a guide to his views on literary theory. This topic is discussed in Chapter Seven.

[7] Cit. MacCaffrey, op. cit., p. 22. (City of God, Bk XII. Ch. 22. II. 18).

[8] Tuve,[2] Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery, Chicago, 1947, p. 47.

various symbolical meanings (sometimes standing for Christ), it always has the mythical meaning of fruitfulness in the gushing water.

A desire for such artistic control over the meanings of images results, for Milton as well as for the Elizabethans, in a "stress upon the ideational element even in sensuous images."[9] When a writer pays greater attention to the implications of each image, he tends to particularise its significance. Thomas Parkinson has described this process taking place in Yeats's use of the sun and moon symbols in his early poetry.[10] Against the diversity of meanings which may still be expressed through the developing symbol one may set the growth of emblems which become the repository of a single meaning.

The emblematic image provided Milton with materials imbued with this "ideational content." Even while Milton renounced explicit allegorization of the garden, he reaped the fruits of centuries of hexameral exegesis that invested his garden with more than sensuous overtones. In Milton's Paradise, the pagan and Christian gardens unite in a dance of Spring and Autumn. The "hortus conclusus" from the Song of Solomon fuses with the Hesperian garden. Milton's Eden is a Golden Age metaphor, in the tradition of Saint Bonaventure, where there "is no plantation save of eternal causes . . . And the soul is a paradise in which is planted the Scripture. And it has innumerable sweetnesses and beauties, whence it is written 'An enclosed garden, sister

[9] Ibid.

[10] "The Sun and the Moon in Yeats's Early Poetry," M.P., L. (1952), pp. 50-58.

my bride.' A garden in which are sacramental mysteries and spiritual intelligences, where flows a fountain of spiritual emissions; but the garden is enclosed and the fountain sealed, for it does not lie open to the sinful, but to those of whom 'God knows that they are his.'"[11]

The perfection of the garden figures forth the pristine purity of soul possessed by our first parents. The Neoplatonist would invert Verlaine's metaphor "Votre âme est un paysage choisi . . ."[12] In Peter Sterry's "A Catechism," the reply to the question 'What is Paradise?' is:

> Paradise was the Similitude and Presence of God in the whole Creation. The Creation was a Garden: All the Creatures were Divine Flowers in this Garden, animated with a Divine Life, cloth'd with a Divine Beauty, breathing a Divine Sweetness. Every one did bear the Figure of, and answer to a Glory in the Face of God: The Face of God was a Sun, shining with all its glories upon those Flowers, distilling its own Influence upon them, attracting their Sweetnesses to itself; descending into them, drawing them up into itself. Thus was the Divine Similitude, and the Divine Presence in the Creation, the Earthly Paradise; In the midst of Man stood this Paradise; In the midst of this paradise Man walk'd.[13]

Here are the microcosmic and macrocosmic paradises. While Sterry allegorises the macrocosmic Paradise, Milton achieves a comparable effect through the "sovran Planter" metaphor, through the emblematic tasks of Adam and Eve, and through the sun-symbol for God. Milton's creation of the extended metaphor

[11] Sermon XVII, p. 110. An example of this popular metaphor is seen in Henry Vaughan's Mount of Olives: "let thy spirit blow upon my garden, that the spice thereof may flow out." Cit. Ruth Wallerstein, Studies in Seventeenth Century Poetic, Wisconsin, 1950, p. 242.

[12] 'Clair de Lune' The Poetry of France, ed. Boase, p. 95. (Vol. III)

[13] Cit. Martz, The Paradise Within, p. 33.

of Paradise restored us temporarily to the unfallen state, while the conditional tense (the 'if only' of Satan's presence, of God's prophecy in Book III that man will fall, and one's experience of the fallen world) removes it from the realms of fantasy. Once the unfallen is restored to us by the inspired narrator, the garden opened, the fountain unsealed - like our falcon-eyes blinded by sin - Milton, by the progress of his fable, compresses the extended metaphor into microcosmic metaphor: the unattainable Paradise without is lost, but the paradise within may be attained, the 'hortum parvum in mente deliciosum' of Bonaventure's Hexaemeron.[14] In Professor Martz's words, "the action moves from the world we know toward the inward Light by which man is enabled to see a Paradise that lies within the center of the poem, and within the center of the mind and memory."[15]

Consistent with the non-allegorical nature of Milton's Paradise is his use of details from contemporary books on travel and discovery. This would add overtones of immediacy for his contemporaries. Paradise, like the Bermudas, is within reach. This of course creates the additional problem of properly distancing Paradise. However the belief in Genesis as a historical document would mean that this use of accounts of voyages of discovery would be less startling to the seventeenth-century reader than it seems to a reader of the twentieth century. In the introduction to his edition of the sonnets, Dr Honigmann notes that "the poet's contemporaries

[14] Wallerstein, op. cit., p. 240-1.

[15] Martz, op. cit., pp. 115-6.

took their Paradise more seriously, debated its geographical location, studied its animal and vegetable population in bibles and scientific books, and, perhaps at the very time when Milton worked on Book IV, visited an exhibition modelling God's 'pleasant garden.'" (p. 33) This exhibition, "Paradise Transplanted" by I.H. Gent (London, 1661) was shown in Shoe Lane, probably only minutes away from Milton's house.

Most early histories opened with a summary of the events cited by Moses. Josephus' Antiquities of the Jews[16] sometimes disagreed with the strongest trends of hexameral thought. More conventional in spirit was Raleigh's History of the World which went through nine editions from 1614 to 1652. Similarly, the early atlases concerned themselves with the location of Paradise. Thus, Ortelius' Theatrum orbis terrarum, 1570, had a section on sacred geography which discussed this problem and also speculated on the extent of Eden. Mercator's Atlas[17] has a detailed commentary on the creation and the fall. According to Dr Corcoran, Mercator's views were the same as Milton's sixty years later. There are verbal parallels between Milton's Paradise and travel-books such as Samuel Purchas' Purchas his Pilgrimage 1613, and Peter Heylyn's Microcosmos. It was thought possible to find the actual site of Paradise. Milton carefully specifies the location of Paradise, agreeing with the majority of

[16] Translated by Thomas Lodge. There were seven editions from 1602 till 1640.

[17] Or a Geographicke Description of the Regions, Countries and Kingdoms of the World, first published 1595. Corcoran, pp. 16 ff.

commentators by placing it near the Tigris-Euphrates basin: "this Assyrian garden" (IV, 285). The 'sand of gold' in Paradise refers both to traditional descriptions and to the recent finds of gold prospectors. Professor Broadbent cites Mandeville's phrase 'gravelle of Gold' in the 'Paradys terrestre.' However Milton's Paradise does not contain the fabulous beasts that Mandeville describes. In common with Milton, he says that "In the most highe place of Paradys, evene in the myddel place, is a welle, that casteth out the four Flodes, that rennen be dyverse londes."[18] The river Ganges is said to have the 'gravelle' mentioned by Mandeville. Thus, Purchas mentions 'sand mingled with Gold' in the Gulfe of Arabia. (The margin has 'Golden Sand'). All these factual details serve to make the 'topoi' of Paradise convincing as a background to the moral struggle.

At the same time, these geographical facts are subdued so that Paradise does not become merely a contemporary foreign land. The four rivers flowing through Paradise suggest the irrigation of towns in Morocco, but no more.[19]

As the reader approaches Paradise in Satan's company, he is told that Eden "now in his view / Lay pleasant", and again that "in this pleasant soil / His far more pleasant garden God ordained." Some versions of Scripture translated Eden as "a place of pleasure". Thus the Vulgate and the Latin translation of Onkelos Targum read "voluptatis" (Gen. 2: 8),

[18] Voiage and Travaile, 1725, repr. J.O. Halliwell 1839, p. 304. Cit. Broadbent, p. 175.

[19] John Leo (Africanus), A Geographical History of Africa, translated by John Pory, London, 1600.

Milton is "opening out" the nature of Eden as a preacher might, and is consequently laying claim to the truth of his statements. He is asserting that his description of Eden is "analytic" by virtue of his privileged position as inspired by the Christian muse. It is analytic in the same way as "Eden is pleasant" is an analytic statement in the light of the etymology mentioned above. Using traditional materials, he will differ from his predecessors only in order to conform more closely to the truth revealed to his inner eyes. Milton, therefore, shows that "composition" is a higher mode than "imaginative creation," because the inspired poet is the vehicle of the Word, setting down in order what has been revealed to him. The "inventio" is performed by his muse; his task is the responsibility of "dispositio." Thus, the "composition" of the sacred poem is superior to the lying fables of "ignorant poetasters."[20]

By demonstrating that the new coincides with the old, Milton rebuts any objection that he is innovating or diverging from the ancient story: his "delicious Paradise" (IV, 132) echoes not only Purchas's "delicious Land" but also Walton's translation of the Septuagint, "paradisum deliciarum." Similarly, as G.W. Whiting shows, the "without thorn the rose" is no mere Italianate conceit, but derives from St Basil and St Ambrose.[21] The figure of the flower and fruit simultaneously on the same tree is also a common feature of commentary on Genesis.

[20] The Reason of Church Government Bk. II, introd. Hughes, p. 670.

[21] "And Without Thorn the Rose," R.E.S. X, 1959, pp. 60-2.

Two of the streams that run through the metaphor of Paradise have been illustrated: the commentaries on Genesis and the travel-books. Two streams (and their tributaries) remain to be described: the organic metaphor and the interweaving emblems. They flow from the fountain of inspiration by diverse ways to arrive through their windings at the unity of the extended metaphor of Paradise.

II

In discussing the world of myth, Professor Frye observes that "the world of mythical imagery is usually represented by the conception of heaven or Paradise in religion, and it is apocalyptic, in the sense of that word already explained, a world of total metaphor, in which everything is potentially identical with everything else, as though it were all inside a single infinite body."[22] In fact the "total metaphor" of Milton's mythical paradise is expressed in the very terms chosen by Frye to illustrate its living, organic unity: the body.

As one sees the hill of Paradise over Satan's shoulder - not through his eyes[23] - it strikes one as more than just another hill of truth[24] to be

[22] Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, p. 136.

[23] Irene Samuel, "Paradise Lost as Mimesis," Approaches to P.L., p. 20.

[24] I.G. MacCaffrey, P.L. as Myth, p. 37. Donne tells how "On a huge hill / Cragged and steep, Truth stands, and he that will / Reach her, about must and about must go, / And what the hill's suddenness resists win so." (Satire, III, 79-82) Also Tetrachordon, Works IV, 85: "(To God) wisdom is as a high towr of pleasure, but to us a steep hill, and we toyling ever about the bottom." Banks, Milton's Imagery, cites "Lady That in the Prime" and Reason of Church Government, Works, III, 261: "this hill top of sanctity." Banks, pp. 73-4 and n. 10 (which cites Psalms 24:3 and 43:3). See also note 25 below.

ascended by the anti-hero on his perilous quest; it is an anatomical metaphor for "Man's capital seat" since it has "the likeness of a kingly crown." This three-tiered crown is almost like a wedding-cake for their honeymoon in Paradise,[25] where sexual love is "the crown of all our bliss" (IV, 728). The description surges upwards in this regal metaphor: "Insuperable highth . . . / Yet higher than their tops . . . / And higher than that . . ." (IV, 138, 142, 146). The visually accurate metaphor of "a woody theatre / Of stateliest view" (IV, 141-2) which recalls the open theatres of the Mediterranean countries, echoes passages in Spenser and Purchas.[26] Dr Corcoran comments on the scene, "These passages (IV, 132-147; VI, 543 ff.) reflect the 'delicious land' and the 'naturall Amphitheatre' of 'woodie hills' described by Purchas and pictured in Blaeu's atlas, the single ascent of Heylyn's Amara, the plateaus crowning the peaks described by Purchas, Heylyn and others, the insuperable mounts of Ceylon and Amara, the 'precipitous crags,' 'overhanging lofty rock' and 'unapproachable cliffs' of Diodorus and the plots of Ortelius, the alabaster gates of

[25] For Paradise as a honeymoon, see E.M.W. Tillyard, Studies in Milton, p. 68. The three circles resemble the Tablet of Cebes. There the three circles are high walls; the inner circle, true learning, is approached up a steep path. The Tablet influenced Milton (Of Education, Hughes, p. 633, n. 27) and Bunyan. For the Tablet as the first use of a picture to enforce a moral truth, see E.N.S. Thompson, Literary Bypaths of the Renaissance, 1924, pp. 40 ff.

[26] Belphoebe's home is set "In a pleasant glade / With mountaines round about environed, / And mighty woods, which did the valley shade, / And like a stately Theatre it made, / Spreading it self into a spatious plaine." (The Faerie Queene, III, v, 39, cit. Fowler, 616.)

Heylyn's Meroe, and the exotic fruit and evergreen trees that ornamented every description of a distant Paradise."[27] It is a theatre where we, the spectators, watch the drama of the Fall being acted by Adam and Eve, stagemanaged by God.

The metaphor of biological wholeness is detailed by Professor Summers in his essay on "Grateful Vicissitude"[28] a phrase which describes the cyclical nature of Paradise. As Miss Ferry points out, the natural cycle is both an emblem of order for prelapsarian Adam and Eve, and a reminder for fallen readers of the impermanence of the world. Another physical metaphor for that order is that of digestion and concoction.[29] It becomes subsumed into the all-encompassing metaphor of the body.

That such a metaphor was required is pointed out by Professor Arnold Stein - paradise "can only be known through the metaphorical creation of an image that will awaken our memories."[30] He notes two important metaphors in Milton's paradise: the fountain and the richness itself that is achieved through the use of literary associations. The fountain is seen by both Arnold Stein and Jeffrey Hart as expressing order: "the stream thus becomes an emblem of God's intention, which orders nature and man's fate despite the

[27] op. cit., p. 20.

[28] The Muse's Method, 1962.

[29] Noted by Professor Kranidas in P.L. V, 491-501. He compares Milton's fondness for this metaphor in the prose. The Fierce Equation, 1965, pp. 153-4.

[30] Answerable Style, 1953, p. 53.

superficial disorderliness of appearances."[31] In the unfallen state, the stream's error possesses a rightness in its wandering.[32] This stream-metaphor combines with the organic metaphor noted above, for "l'élément liquide entretient la vie comme en un organisme vivant normal."[33]

The undoubted metaphor of the body that Milton uses to express Paradise[34] structures it according to the Art of God - Nature. In the eighteenth century, it was pointed out that Milton's garden was not constructed upon ideas of human order, but upon that of natural order. In 1709, Shaftesbury observed that "Wild nature is superior to the artificial labyrinths and wildernesses of the Palace and formal mockery of Princely Gardens," and it was this Romantic fashion that led Sir Walter Scott, over a century later to recognize that, "Milton has anticipated the schemes of later designers of natural gardens."[35] The terms of art are used to describe it, (IV, 236) but the order is that of Nature. The dynamic growth of nature in Paradise distinguishes it from Milton's Revelation heaven, where eternity is expressed by the irregular regularity of the planetary

[31] "Paradise Lost and Order," College English, 1964, p. 579.

[32] Stein, op. cit., p. 67.

[33] Jacques Blondel, "Le merveilleux dans le paradis miltonien," Etudes Anglaises, 20/1967, pp. 348-56. This is from p. 351.

[34] "Head;" "hairy sides;" "Shaggy;" "veins;" "thirst," (IV, 134, 135, 224, 228, 229) See C.S. Lewis, A Preface to Paradise Lost, p. 47; Complete Poems, ed. Fowler and Carey, p. 616.

[35] Shaftesbury, The Moralists; Scott, Quarterly Review, 1828. Both cited in Blondel, op. cit., p. 350 n.

spheres. Art and Nature are combined in Paradise in a way that defies logical analysis, summed up in the seeming paradox "vegetable Gold." While this was a phrase for the elixir of life, its primary meaning here is the fusion of mineral and vegetable substances.

The eighteenth century was of course reacting against the "nice art / In beds and curious knots" (IV, 241-2) and prefiguring the Romantic love of "nature boon" (IV, 242). Yet Adam and Eve are not out-and-out Romantics - the order that they are going to impose upon Nature is a discipline that will enable it to become more fruitful (continuing the metaphor of God's care for men).

The life of Adam and Eve within Paradise is of course structured on the literary metaphor of pastoral, which "was in fact a version of the theme of the Golden Age, which looked back, for Christian poets, to life in Paradise." It "restates symbolically" the experience of innocence.[36] Professor F.L. Huntley suggests that it is possible to make a tentative categorisation of the tasks of our first parents: Eve is mainly concerned with flowers, while Adam is occupied with fruit. At the fall, these positions are reversed - when Eve moves from plants to the forbidden fruit, Adam has stopped pruning to weave a garland of flowers.[37] This may be at most a parallelism for, in Adam's case, there can be no moral disapproval

[36] MacCaffrey, op. cit., p. 27.

[37] "Before and After the Fall: Some Miltonic Patterns of Systasis," Approaches to 'Paradise Lost,' ed. C.A. Patrides.

of his pastime. Milton the puritan who respected hard work, did not regard it as a necessary virtue in the unfallen state, when labour is but a pleasant exercise which "serves to recommend cool zephyr."[38] According to Dr Corcoran, most commentators thought that Adam's days were "filled with unarduous and delightful labour, which provided salutary discipline and employment, with enough pleasant exercise to give him an appetite. Though this view appeared long before the Reformation, it was very popular among Protestants. Thus in the Geneva Bible, one finds 'God would not have man idle, though as yet there was no need to labour.'" It is only after the Fall that sweat of the brow is necessary for anything good to be accomplished. Milton is more concerned than his predecessors with reconciling man's labour with the fecundity of Paradise, without overemphasising the zeal to work. Adam corrects Eve's excess of zeal that does not take enough account of God's providence. (IX, 235 ff.) In the Christian Doctrine, Milton wrote that "No works whatever were required of Adam" (XV, 113), yet the labour and responsibility of tending and dressing the garden showed man's superiority over the beasts. (IV, 618 ff.)

In fact there is a different kind of division of labour which is important to the poem. In hexameral commentary, Eve was generally thought

[38] For Philo Judaeus, Paradise represented virtue, and the placing of man there meant he could devote his time to cultivate it undistracted by physical labour. Augustine saw God as cultivating man in grace. The combination of man's labour with the fecundity of nature was for him a symbol of the combined workings of the grace and the will in the cultivation of the garden of the soul.

to share equally with Adam in manual labour. According to certain of the pseudo-epigrapha, God divided the garden between Adam and Eve, one part to be the responsibility of one to till and dress. Milton absorbs this idea into his poem by using it as a symbol of disunity. They place themselves in an occasion of sin through Adam's failure to assert his authority. Eve leaves his side, and this division of labour leads to their ruin.

Professor Huntley, recognizing that the fruit-flower schematization of their tasks is not systematically applied by Milton, suggests that these tasks become a metaphor for the whole poem: "Paradoxically Satan lops away their innocence that God's grace may burgeon. And the punishment for disobedience is that mothers create fruit within their wombs and fathers support the children with the sweat of their brows, while it is Death who holds the pruning shears. Yet, after the Fall, the Father and Son enter into a kind of husbandry that did not exist before."[39] This is the "engrafting" of the divine onto the human in the Incarnation of the Son.

It is within this enveloping metaphor that one sees the heightened force of the gardening emblems used by Milton. The metaphor that expresses the redemptive history (vide supra) recalls the emblem that portrays a hand from heaven holding a pruning-tool. The motto is "Virescit Vulnere Virtus."[40]

[39] Approaches to P.L., p. 5.

[40] Central panel of one of the Oxburgh Hangings, cit. Digby, Pl. 72. The vine-emblem recurs in Ashren or The Grove of Beatitudes, 1665: eighth beatitude ("those that suffer persecution") has the motto "Sterilis nisi falce putetur." This links the vine-emblems for their fruit with God's "pruning."

Thus the tasks of Adam and Eve, the binding-up of weak shoots, the pruning of branches so that a tree may be more fruitful, resound through the poem. These simple tasks are given even more complex meanings when the various emblematic meanings of the flowers are taken into consideration. How many mythological echoes stir the reader's memory in the list, "Pansies, and violets, and asphodel / And hyacinth." (IX, 1040-1) Hyacinth, killed accidentally by Apollo when he was showing him how to throw the discus, is an appropriate parallel to Adam's love leading to his downfall. The asphodel, associated with the underworld, was often linked with Persephone (Proserpina-Eve parallel)[41] and was also supposed to be a remedy against poisonous snake-bites. This opens up tiny veins of ethical allegory running through the poem and in particular, through the body-metaphor for Paradise. Just before the crisis of Paradise Lost, the careful gardening of Eve is contrasted with the carelessness of both towards themselves:

> . . . them she upstays
> Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while,
> Her self, though fairest unsupported flower,
> From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
> (IX, 430 ff.)

One more instance may suffice. After their Morning Prayer, their tasks are mentioned:

> . . . where any row
> Of fruit-trees over-woody reached too far
> Their pampered boughs, and needed hands to check
> Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine

[41] Empson, Some Versions of Pastoral, p. 173. Cf. IV, 268 ff. with IX, 432 ff.

> To wed her elm; she spoused about him brings
> Her dower the adopted clusters, to adorn
> His barren leaves.
>
> (V, 212-219)

It is easy to relate the pruning to discipline as a means towards fruition; the second part describes the common emblem for the marriage-state: the vine and elm. This latter emblem has already been adumbrated in the description of their hair (IV, 301-308), where the relative status of husband and wife is drawn from the plant-symbol. Professor Stanley Fish uses this to illustrate his thesis that stock reactions are evoked from the reader so that they can be corrected by the poet-psychiatrist. He refers to Bishop Joseph Hall's symbol for fallen man's waywardness - "a loose lock erring wantonly over her shoulders." Similarly, as Dr Fowler points out, a woman crushing grapes commonly symbolised Excess. Both of these occur in Milton's description of Eve. Her nakedness is clad "in a garment woven of adjectives traditionally associated with the scarlet woman of so many sermons and moral harangues." By this, one is reminded that such pejorative overtones exist only within the mind of the fallen reader; in this sense, "there are no implications in Paradise."[42]

Therefore, in order to discuss any single one of these emblems, one must relate it to the whole structure of the poem. The emblems are closely integrated into the poem's meaning, and both add force to, and derive strength from, the significance of the total metaphorical context.

[42] S.E. Fish, Surprised by Sin, 1967, p. 92. Fowler, op. cit., p. 696.

III

Paradise is the balance between "these two forms of metaphorical organization (that) we call the apocalyptic and the demonic."[43] It is therefore appropriate that one of the central metaphors of the poem should be that of the scales - the constellation Libra, God's scales which are hung out in heaven to avoid battle in Paradise, and which are implicit in the test of temptation. Professor Broadbent points out the "scalar imagery of the poem's theology" in a passage from Paradise Lost which exemplifies the austere metaphor used by Milton when relating the words of God:

> . . . no Decree of mine
> Concurring to necessitate his fall,
> Or touch with lightest moment of impulse
> His free will, to her own inclining left
> In even scale.[44]

In a similar image, God exonerates Himself from blame for the fall of the angels: "without least impulse or shadow of fate." (III, 120)

Paradise is the meeting-place of the "two contrasting worlds of total metaphorical identification, one desirable and the other undesirable" - heaven and hell.[45] Professor Cleanth Brooks sees Eden as poised between two cities, Pandaemonium and the City of God.[46] From this juxtaposition

[43] Frye, op. cit., p. 139.

[44] Cit. Broadbent, p. 193.

[45] Frye, op. cit., p. 139.

[46] "Milton and Critical Re-estimates," PMLA, LXVI (1951), 1045-54.

the pastoral derives much of its force.[47]

Before one sees Paradise, one is warned that hell is about to invade it in the shape of Satan, for, like Mephistopheles, "within him / Hell he brings" (IV, 20-1). In soliloquy, Satan declares that he is a microcosmic metaphor - "myself am hell" - and Eden's beauty provokes a curse. (IV, 75, 358). Yet Satan's presence heightens its beauty for, as Blondel points out, the marvellous is that which is about to be destroyed, whether it be Venice or Abu Simbel. The metaphors of paradise are a whirlpool into which Satan feels himself being sucked. They open out as he enters each circle of hell, their centres yawning into another abyss:

> And in the lowest deep a lower deep
> Still threatening to devour me opens wide,
> To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.
> (IV, 76-78)

In this last line, there is a typical debasing of metaphor by Satan. "A heaven on earth" is a fitting metaphor used by the narrator for Paradise. (IV, 208) On the other hand, it is a logically inaccurate use of that trope (though permissible as poetic hyperbole) to call hell a "heaven," even in comparing one state of misery with much greater tortures. In fact, the strictures of Hobbes, Sprat (author of The History of the Royal Society, 1667) and Wilkins are applicable to Satan's use of metaphor.

[47] Eve can be presented as the innocent milkmaid glimpsed by a city-dweller visiting the country. Milton uses plosive consonants to convey the imprisonment of Satan/city-dweller, then opening out into fricatives: "As one who long in populous city pent . . . / Forth issuing on a summer's morn to breathe . . ." (IX, 445 ff.)

Hobbes lists metaphorical language as second among the abuses of language,[48] for it uses words "in other senses than that they are ordained for; and thereby deceive others." It is interesting that Wilkins should link metaphor with Satan's disguises. He says that metaphors "may seem to contribute to the elegance and ornament of speech; yet like other affected ornaments, they prejudice the native simplicity of it, and contribute to the disguising of it with false appearances." These warnings are related to more general warnings against rhetoric as the natural weapons of the devil - the "false appearances" and "disguises" are his weapons.

Satan's attempt to fabricate metaphor through paradox (and thereby invert the whole moral order) is accurately described by Bunyan's words: "metaphors make us blind."[49] Thus his catchphrase "Evil be thou my good" (IV, 110, IX, 171-2) is destined to cannon back against him, as do all his stratagems. This is related to the "unofficial policy (of the devils) of making a heaven of hell."[50] At the same time, they want to make a hell of

[48] Leviathan, Fontana Lib., p. 75. Thomas Wilson's The Arte of Rhetorique had answered Hobbes' points a century before: "A Metaphore is an alteration of a worde, from the proper and naturall meaning, to that which is not proper, and yet agreeth thereunto by some likenesse, that appereth to be in it." Cit. Madsen, From Shadowy Types to Truth, 1968, p. 66. This means that for a Ramist such as Milton, a metaphor is an "argument;" i.e. "any word having the capacity to relate one thing to another and thereby to advance an idea." Bernard S. Adams, "Milton and Metaphor: the Art of Logic and the imagery of the shorter English poems," p. 5.

[49] Cit. W.C. Curry, Milton's Ontology, Cosmogony and Physics, 1966, p. 13.

[50] Stein, op. cit., 51.

Paradise. Satan converts the beautiful around him into the hideous within himself, just as the fragrant scents of Paradise are for him the disgusting "fishy fume." He is in an existentialist hell within Paradise, as if he had wandered in from Sartre's Huis Clos. The sweetness of this "pure now purer air" that sweeps past, (comparative displacing positive), is accurately qualified - "able to drive / All sadness but despair." It cannot relieve Satan's despair. Such perfumes refresh sailors off the Eastern coast: "Suddenly a puff faint and tepid and laden with strange odours of blossoms, of aromatic wood, comes out of the still night - the first sigh of the East on my face."[51] In Milton's simile, the fact that the offshore winds would delay the ship from reaching the coast is conveyed metaphorically, by explaining at the same time how the sailors are happy to prolong their journey. Just as the perfume becomes a noisome odour for Satan, the patience of the sailors contrasts with Satan's later impatience to finish his task. In Paradise Regained, Satan continues this journey-metaphor:

> I would be at my worst; worst is my port,
> My harbour and my ultimate repose,
> The end I would attain, my final good.
> (P.R. III, 209-211)

Here in the now unconsciously-ironic "good," one sees the terminus of Satan's attempt to change good into evil, and the hollow triumph of his

[51] Joseph Conrad, Youth.

fallen experience that "all good to me becomes / Bane."[52] Satan's paradisal hell is being torn between the logical opposites, good and evil:

> . . . the more I see
> Pleasures about me, so much more I feel
> Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
> Of contraries; all good to me becomes
> Bane . . .
>
> (IX, 119-123)

In Satan's speeches, one sees the gradual warping of the narrator's metaphor for Eden ("A heaven on earth" IV, 208) that is itself derived from the angelic hymn on the first Sabbath: "Witness this new-made World, another heaven / From heaven gate not far." (VII, 617-8) In his soliloquy on Mount Niphates, Satan takes this up, elaborating it in a bitter jest:

> this high seat your heaven
> Ill fenced for heaven to keep out such a foe
> As now is entered.
>
> (IV, 371-73)

Satan is deceived by his own metaphor of "Terrestrial heaven" (IX, 103), seeing it as "how like to heaven, if not preferred / More justly, seat worthier of gods, as built / With second thoughts" (IX, 99-101). The heaven-metaphor is debased even further by Satan the troubadour, addressing Eve, "Thy looks, the heaven of mildness". By this means, of course, Milton can include poetry in a secular mode within his epic, even while asserting the superiority of his religious poetry. His metaphor for the happy marital state of Adam and Eve amazes us by its sheer poetry:

[52] This link between the two epics may be compared with the use of "supplanted" in both. (P.L. X, 513; P.R. IV, 607)

Thus these two
Imparadised in one another's arms
The happier Eden.
(IV, 505-07)[53]

This hyperbole would be accepted by the young, pagan Troilus but not by a sadder, wiser Christian translated to the stars. The circle of the lovers' arms is self-centred, not God-centred. Satan's fallen interpretation of the scene fills him with jealousy - a fallen passion. Just as Donne contracts all the world into the lovers' bed in The Sunne Rising, Satan compresses all of Paradise into the ring of their arms. Yet this is unnecessary, since unfallen nature is at one with their love. Here the pathetic fallacy is true, and Nature is benevolent. Nevertheless the undoubted force of Satan's metaphor derives from the accumulated vision of Paradise. It gains its impact from the previous five hundred lines of Book Four. As Martin Foss points out, "metaphor is a process of tension and energy, manifested in the process of language not in the single word."[54] In the same way, it has been shown how the metaphor of heaven for Paradise is developed and debased by Satan's applying it to Eve.

Finally, one may notice certain consequences of this "world of total metaphor" on aspects of the language and meaning within it. The theory of

[53] This compound is also used by Dante: "Che imparadisa la mea mente." Paradiso, (Canto XXVIII, line 3).

[54] Symbol and Metaphor in Human Experience, 1949, p. 61. Professor Brooks noted that "Sometimes Milton's decisive metaphor is embedded even more deeply in the context, and is even more dependent upon a large context for its full power . . . Mass has to be integrated with movement." "Milton and New Criticism," S.R. LIX (1951).

Miltonic simile enunciated by Professor Rajan is that it holds two objects up for comparison, pointing out a similarity between them but without identifying the two: "The Shakespearian simile . . . is continually tending to the formula: A is identical with B. The Miltonic simile on the other hand is best described by the formula: A resembles B in certain respects which I shall now expound to you."[55] Yet can these objects remain apart in the context of Paradise, that draws its strength from myth - "an art of implicit metaphorical identity?"[56] When Satan's progress is obstructed by the impenetrable bushes outside Paradise, he nonchalantly leaps over them. By means of this narrative detail, Milton sets a whole series of echoes in motion within the reader's mind. Then the narrator shows his skill by expressing all these references in a series of echoing similes (that also ensure that none of these echoes have been missed):

> . . . As when a prowling wolf,
> Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
> Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve
> In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
> Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold.
> (IV, 183 ff.)

Applying this to the person of Satan, the fallen reader immediately recognizes the words "wolf," "Shepherds," "flocks," and "fold" as possible ecclesiastical metaphors. Yet Milton delays making this explicit by providing an alternative simile that adds another level to our appreciation

[55] Rajan, p. 119.

[56] Frye, op. cit., p. 139.

and guides our attitude towards Satan:

> Or as a thief bent to unhoard the cash
> Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors
> Cross-barred and bolted fast, fear no assault,
> In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles.

Dr Tillyard sees this as the humorous deflation of Satan after the Elizabethan-type soliloquy of Mount Niphates, lowering the stature of Satan to prepare for the tranquillity of Eden.[57] It is a fallen simile for a fallen creature. Simile becomes metaphor, and the separating particle is dropped:

> So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold

And as the simile is resolved, the traditional ecclesiastical comparison is made:

> So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.

Yet the train of allusion does not end there. The subsequent cormorant-simile glances at this theme of satire on church abuses. Like the wolf, the cormorant was an image for wicked clerics. Sir Thomas More uses it in his Utopia to describe covetous churchmen. He is discussing the shepherd-metaphor becoming reality in the wrong way. The clergy are sheep-farmers who are turning tillage-ground into pasture land:

> They enclose all into pastures . . . and leave nothing standing but only the church to be made a sheep-house . . . these good holy men turn all dwelling-places and all glebeland into desolation and wilderness. Therefore that one covetous and insatiable cormorant

[57] "Or O'er the Tiles," Studies in Milton, pp. 71 ff., especially pp. 74-5.

> and very plague of its native country may encompass about and enclose many thousand acres of ground together within one pale or hedge, the husbandmen be thrust out of their own . . .[58]

Dr Corcoran suggests as a possible source for Milton's image Thomas Scot's Philomythie, or Philomythologie (London, 1616) which is a series of crude animal allegories. The cormorant is an unscrupulous bird symbolizing "Law-State-Church Pyrats." It escaped the vengeance of various birds and beasts by claiming to be under the jurisdiction of some other species. Finally they all repudiated him and being determined to exterminate him, surrounded him where he had taken refuge: "in a hold / A hollow tree, whose strength made braggard bold."[59]

Thus, by the first two similes, the wolf and the thief, the reader's mind is immediately turned to the common "tenor" of which these are normally the "vehicle." Thus Satan too becomes the "vehicle" for ecclesiastical satire. This makes the Eden-church link possible and so it is hinted that Eden is the true church invaded and corrupted by the intruder. At the same time, the ecclesiastical abuses are added to the portrait of Satan just as the devils were earlier described in terms of the future exploits of their wicked followers.

Since the terms of a simile are identified in Paradise, they must plainly be drawn from the fallen world when applied to Satan. Satan's disguises are postlapsarian:

[58] J.M. Dent & Sons, p. 26.

[59] Corcoran, op. cit., p. 38; Scot, p. 61.

> About them round
> A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
> Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied
> In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
> Straight couches close, then rising, changes oft
> His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground
> Whence rushing he might surest seize them both
> Gripped in each paw.
>
> (IV, 401-8)

Here the identification is complete - the "gentle fawns" are an appropriate metaphor for the innocent Adam and Eve. This simile prefigures the hunting-emblem that tells Adam of the possible effects of the Fall - that "Sheer anarchy is loosed upon the world:"

> Nature first gave signs, impressed
> On bird, beast, air, air suddenly eclipsed
> After short blush of morn . . .
>
> (XI, 182 ff.)

Just as the overall metaphorical context affects the similes in Eden, so too one finds an alteration in the language of Paradise. Professor William Madsen has pointed out how "the special nature of Milton's subject and the unique qualities of his language have called forth theories about his use of metaphor and about the relationship of language in general to reality that find no support in Renaissance conception of metaphor or in Milton's own theory and practice." He then proceeds to discuss the respective theories of Miss MacCaffrey, Miss Ferry and Miss Tuve.[60] Miss MacCaffrey's would deny the presence of metaphor in the poem because of the mythic nature of its subject. By taking this standpoint, she cannot

[60] From Shadowy Types to Truth, p. 55. See Chap. III, "Metaphor: Sacred and Profane."

accept the metaphors in the poem as metaphors. Professor Cope would seem to have shown that the epic is in fact highly metaphorical.[61]

Miss Ferry's theory suggests a fairly strict schematization of metaphor. She isolates the kind of metaphor which unites the concrete and abstract meanings of a word.[62] Like Adam and Eve, the inspired narrator uses "sacred metaphor" to express the unity of divine truth. Many of these metaphors are scriptural in origin: "The language spoken by Adam and Eve before the Fall reflects the special kind of metaphorical vision that also characterizes the narrative voice. Both they and the narrator speak in the language of Scripture, which assumes that because the world is an expression of the divine intelligence of its Creator, all the individual creatures in that world and all that happens to them express meanings."[63]

However, she admits that at times the narrator's voice separates facts and values, as in the description of Hell-gate.[64] Professor Madsen shows defects in the theory: although Satan is usually a dogged realist, he too can employ sacred metaphor.[65] Similarly, most of Miss Ferry's examples come from Books I and II, while no "sacred" metaphors are found

[61] The Metaphoric Structure of 'Paradise Lost,' 1962.

[62] Ferry, p. 97. This fusion resembles Owen Barfield's theory of the history of language: at the beginning, each word had both a metaphorical and literal significance; later, they broke apart.

[63] Ferry, p. 116.

[64] Ferry, pp. 121-2.

[65] Madsen, p. 58 cites "Imparadised."

in the description of Creation in Book VII.[66] It might also be noted that the inspired narrator's vision is different from that of the unfallen Adam and Eve. Like the fallen readers, he sees implications in words such as "error," "wandering," and in Eve's dream or her wish to garden separately. These implications are not in Paradise, where the stream's wandering is as innocent as the serpent's "unheeded" guile. They are both as yet unperverted.

In fact, Milton's tactic is the one that he adopts on so many other occasions: by providing both Satan and our first parents with metaphor, he forces the reader to distinguish between right and wrong uses of it. As Professor Madsen acutely remarks, "the whole notion of sacred metaphor might almost be called a Satanic fallacy, since . . . both Adam and Eve are ensnared because they fail to realize that even a sacred metaphor is, when all is said and done, only a metaphor."[67]

The perception by Adam and Eve of metaphorical meanings is brought about by their being placed in a world of unfallen Nature where the pathetic fallacy is not fallacious. In attempting to give an account of her experiences immediately after her creation, Eve is forced into metaphor: the lake is "a liquid plain," "Pure as the expanse of heaven," and "to me seemed another sky." (IV, 455 ff.) This corresponds to the narrator's use of the pathetic fallacy, telling how the lake:

[66] Madsen, p. 59.

[67] Madsen, p. 58. See pp. 67-9 on "Flesh of my flesh" metaphor.

> . . . to the fringed bank with myrtle crowned,
> Her crystal mirror holds. (IV, 262-3)

This animated Nature is used by Adam as an encouragement to Eve to waken and enjoy the day:

> the morning shines, and the fresh field
> Calls us . . .
> the flowers
> . . . open now their choicest bosomed smells
> Reserved from night and kept for thee in store.
> (V, 20-1; 126-8)

It contributes towards the poetry of their Morning Prayer. Venus is the star "that crown'st the smiling morn / With thy bright circlet" and the sun is "of this great world both eye and soul". (V, 168-9, 171)

These metaphors contrast with the (often cheap) metaphors and puns after the Fall. Words are seen from the double perspective of good and evil. Before their regeneration, the two levels are the real meaning and the perverted meaning. Thus Adam describes physical love in terms of food. (IX, 1017-20; taste-sapience) Eve's jealousy is roused by the thought of being replaced by another Eve: "A death to think." (IX, 830) This is one of a series of metaphors on death that have suddenly entered Arcadia. This results in confusion as to the literal meaning of Death which has to be explained to Adam and Eve.

Nevertheless, metaphor is not the exclusive property of Satan. The oracular prophecy of Redemption is phrased metaphorically: "Thy seed shall bruise / The serpent's head" (X, 1031-2). Satan's literalistic irony - "A world who would not purchase with a bruise" (X, 500) - will rebound against him, a reversal that is suggested by the echo of Scripture

"What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul." The Incarnation is expressed by the gardening image that is central to the poem: it is the "ingrafting" of Christ on to the human race. (XI, 34-6)

Adam's renewed understanding can see in metaphor the consolation of philosophy: "suffering / Is fortitude . . ." (XII, 567 ff.) and his knowledge of death enables him to perceive that "to the faithful death (is) the gate of life" (XII, 571) Metaphor has been rescued for the forces of Truth.

Chapter VII

METAPHOR AND RELIGIOUS POETRY

Milton's "Paradise Lost" is therefore built upon its central structural metaphors of hell and paradise, and within these, upon such metaphors as those of war and politics in hell, of domestic life in paradise, and of personality in heaven. Similarly, the narrator's viewpoint is expressed by means of the metaphor of inspiration.[1]

Having discussed what is the strategy of the poem, one may go on to ask why it should be so. Milton's professed intention is, of course, to "justify the ways of God to men." (I, 26) Yet it is obvious that the human brain cannot fully comprehend divine infinitude. The only solution is the use of analogy: by comparing the unknown with the known. In his "Theological Treatises," Calvin says that while we are on earth, "we need symbols or mirrors to exhibit to us the appearance of spiritual and heavenly things in a kind of earthly way."[2] The Muse inspires the poet

[1] John T. Shawcross sees a sexual metaphor underlying the description of the bard's inspiration, God being the dynamic male, and Man the receptive female. According to Shawcross, the bird-poet metaphor, discussed by Miss Ferry, continues this sexual metaphor by which flying signifies erection, and the danger of falling signals anxiety and temptation. Shawcross,[2] "The Metaphor of Inspiration in P.L.," Th' Upright Heart and Pure, (ed) A.P. Fiori, 1967.

[2] Trans. and ed. J.K.S. Reid, 1954, p. 131, cit. R.M. Frye, God, Man and Satan, 1960, pp. 9-10.

to perceive analogies between human experience and that which is outside it.

Nevertheless, the analogy cannot hope to render a full account of the unknown, although it can direct one nearer to an understanding of it.[3] As J.F. Bethune-Baker says, "all attempts to explain the nature and relations of the Deity must largely depend on metaphor, and no one metaphor can exhaust these relations. Each metaphor can only describe one aspect of the nature or being of the Deity."[4] The Christian tradition uses the metaphor of personality to "accommodate" God's nature to Man's understanding.[5] The Father-Son relationship is a metaphor for the relative positions of two persons of the Trinity. An interpretation which fails to take account of its metaphorical status can easily err either by denying the metaphor's accuracy since it cannot be true of a divine being or by saying that the Son must be subordinate to and dependent upon the Father. This kind of error is anticipated by John Calvin who says that "there is no need for the reality to agree at all points with the symbol,

[3] Dr Patrides (see n. 11) quotes Louis A. Reid's description of the characteristic of religious poetry as "forever attempting to express the trans-phenomenal or the transcendent and forever failing to do so." Yet its limited success is still valuable. Reid, Ways of Knowledge and Experience, 1961, pp. 117-18.

[4] Cit. I.T. Ramsey, Religious Language, 1957, p. 164. The converse of this is Karl Barth's view that "the demonic can be intelligently treated only through fantasy and poetry." Otto Weber, Barth's Dogmatics, p. 196, cit. Frye, p. 23.

[5] See F.L. V, 571-6 and De Doctrina, Columbia edn, Vol. XIV, pp. 31, 33.

if only it suit sufficiently for the purpose of symbolizing."[6] Similarly, a literalistic reading of the metaphor of God's anger leads to the view that God is vindictive or that His feelings are not under control. This view is founded on a fallacy similar to that underlying Moloch's desperate hope that God in a rage will annihilate the fallen angels against His better judgement. (II, 94 ff.) This anger stands for something trans-phenomenal.[7]

According to Calvin, such metaphors or symbols do not show us "what God is in himself, but what he is to us."[8] This theory of "accommodation" is taken to its ultimate conclusion by R.M. Frye who considers Christ to be "the ultimate accommodation of the divine to human need and understanding, the final and unique culmination of all the lesser accommodations."[9] However H.F. MacCallum denies that Milton viewed Christ as some such "ultimate accommodation."[10] Even if one does qualify this concept with

[6] Theological Treatises, p. 112, cit. Frye, p. 10.

[7] While this at first seems to invalidate many of Empson's criticisms of Milton's God, Empson might justifiably retort that this theory would make the poem immune from criticism. In fact, once the metaphorical nature of Milton's description of God is acknowledged, this portrayal may be said to be at fault if the metaphors for God do not succeed in inspiring awe, love and reverence in the "fit" reader.

[8] ". . . non quis sit apud se sed qualis erga nos." The Institutes of Christian religion, trans. John Allen, cit. Frye, p. 10.

[9] Op. cit., pp. 75 ff.

[10] Op. cit., p. 403.

the words "ultimate," "unique" and "supreme," such a description of Christ might seem to suggest that the rationale of Christ's existence is the explaining of God's nature to Man or, as Frye says, "the supreme gesture by which God introduces himself to man." This is permissible for a literary examination of the work from the outside: not for a study of the action within the poem which assumes the characters and events to be real. There Christ's dual nature as God-Man is a means of ransoming Man.

H.F. MacCallum is similarly cautious in applying this "invitation to consider as metaphors all statements concerning God."[11] Having noted that this theory implies that the descriptions of God in Scriptures have "no metaphysical validity outside the sphere of human perception," he goes on to show from Milton's theological prose that he was more severe than the average Reformer on metaphorical modes of thought.[12] Yet MacCallum's use of Milton's "Christian Doctrine," which in his view "reveals a quest for exact and literal definitions and a distrust of deductions based on metaphorical statements"[13] is undermined by his reservations about the use of a prose theological treatise in explicating the poetry.[14] Similar scruples are voiced by Dr Patrides who considers that Milton's treatise failed to

[11] Patrides, C. "P.L. and the Language of Theology," in Language and Style in Milton, (eds) Emma and Shawcross, p. 107.

[12] MacCallum, op. cit., pp. 401, 411.

[13] Ibid., p. 400.

[14] The method of Maurice Kelly in This Great Argument, Princeton, N.J., 1941.

make sufficient use of the figurative language essential to any theological discussion.[15]

This use of figurative language in religious discourse is traditional. Egidia da Viterbo, an Augustinian preacher, wrote that "As Dionysius says, the divine ray cannot reach us unless it is covered with poetic veils."[16] In the "Summa Theologica," St Thomas Aquinas points out the need for metaphor in both poetry and theology: "poetry uses metaphors to depict, since men naturally find pictures pleasing. But sacred doctrine uses them because they are necessary and useful."[17] In the religious epic, those two aims coincide and so Milton employs the one method appropriate to both. By the use of the symbol or metaphor, the poet can achieve "that odd behavior of a language that is always more in intention than it is in existence and constantly points to something beyond itself."[18]

In Chapter VI, it was noted that such contemporaries of Milton as Hobbes, Sprat and Wilkins viewed truth and metaphor as mutually exclusive. In his History of the Royal Society (1667) Sprat advocated a scientific matter-of-factness in language, while Hobbes listed metaphorical language

[15] "Not only is it strikingly unoriginal, but it is also utterly lacking in the two qualities which are . . . the very essence of theological language: an appropriate 'oddness' combined with a certain logical behavior." Patrides,[3] p. 105.

[16] Cit. Wind, op. cit., p. 14.

[17] Sum. Theol. I, Q1 Art. 9.

[18] Patrides,[3] p. 108.

as second among the abuses of language, since it uses words "in other sense than that they are ordained for; and thereby deceive(s) others."[19] Yet from Milton's serious uses of metaphor in "Paradise Lost," it would seem that he would incline more towards the viewpoint of the sixteenth century Reformer, Amandus Polanus, that the true and genuine "is not opposed to the figurative but to the false."[20] Although the metaphors of God as planter, eye or sun can never fully convey that which they represent, they can direct the reader's mind towards the transcendent meaning. Gregory of Nyssa speeks of "metaphors which contain a deeper meaning than the obvious one."[21] The accuracy and depth of the metaphor depend upon its appropriateness and the skill with which its connotations and deployed in the poem.

In exactly the same way, the extended metaphors of hell and paradise are created out of human experience to express spiritual states which are profoundly relevant to Man's predicament. Dr Fowler acutely observes, that the metaphorical activity of the poem, is such that "angels, devils and even Sin and Death - not to say the divine persons - all convey insights into

[19] Leviathan, (1651) Fontana Lib., 1962, p. 75. In contrast, the modern philosopher Max Black points out how essential metaphor is to philosophical discourse. "Metaphor" in Philosophy Looks at the Arts, N.Y., 1962, op. cit., pp. 218-235.

[20] Heinrich Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, Set Out and Illustrated from the Sources, 1950, p. 638, cit. Frye, op. cit.

[21] Cit. Patrides[3], p. 107.

the psychology of man."[22] This is the double reference of the successful metaphor.

In pointing out how the metaphorical 'mode of approach to truth' was habitual to men such as Herbert or Milton, Miss Tuve declares that "what we take from his poetry is not chiefly his experience, nor even his meaning for it, but thoughts and feelings which will carry all the meaning our own lives and selves make us capable of relating to them." She sums up by stating that "this perception of all things in their metaphorical dimension is the greatest single discovery we can make concerning the quality of life by reading the poetry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries."[23]

Thus, Milton's presentation of an ordered view of the world is accessible to the modern reader because it is expressed in living metaphors. This fact demonstrates that Milton deserves to receive the final accolade of Aristotle: he is truly a "master of metaphor."

[22] Fowler, op. cit., p. 450. In Satan's disguises metaphor is used by evil to disguise itself as goodness and thereby complicate moral decisions. Svendsen, op. cit., p. 233.

[23] Tuve, A Reading of George Herbert, 1952, p. 104.

Appendix A

Part I

MILTON AND EMBLEM-BOOKS

An emblem is, quite simply, a small allegorical picture combined with a verse explaining its meaning. It often has a proverbial title. It gives advice on both worldly and spiritual problems, its general intention being didactic in a quietly entertaining way.

Schopenhauer says that "the name of 'emblems' is usually given to simple allegorical designs accompanied by an explanatory motto and destined to teach in an intuitive form a moral truth."[1] The emblem is not merely the childish amusement which it had become in Bunyan's time,[2] for it employed learning from many fields of knowledge and often presupposed such

[1] Die Welt etc. Vol. I Bk. III Par. 50, cit. Praz, Studies in Seventeenth Century Imagery, Vol. 1, London, 1939, p. 12.

[2] This final stage of the emblem can be deduced from Bunyan's title: A Book for Boys and Girls. The emblem's history is described by Ruth Wallerstein, as first of all presenting a "fairly simple and obvious moral truth in fable, in parable, or in the patent allegory of bestiary or of armorial symbol" and later representing "metaphysical truths in symbols that use the world of appearance . . . to drive our thoughts into theology and speculative cosmology." Its subject-matter progressed from ethics, aesthetics and court etiquette until it became a "compendium of philosophical and theological instruction." Studies in Seventeenth Century Poetic, Wisconsin, 1950, pp. 75, 76-7.

knowledge in the reader. Andrea Alciati, whose Emblemata were the first popular collection of emblems, was himself a prominent jurist. It is therefore ironical that Abraham Fraunce, a later devotee of the genre, should comment on "thease fine University men" who "have beene trained up in such easie, elegant, conceipted, nice and delicate learning, that they can better make new-found verses of Amyntas death, and popular discourses of Ensignes, Armory Emblems, Hieroglyphikes, and Italian Impreses, than apply their heads to the study of the Law which is hard, harsh, unpleasant, unsavoury, rude and barbarous."[3] This shows us that emblems were not solely the pastime of the uneducated. Indeed, the uneducated would often be unable to interpret the pictures and mottoes with any accuracy.

In attempting to relate the emblem to "Paradise Lost," one enters a fairly well-tilled field of literary history. These studies may be divided up into those discussing the emblems which have supplied a writer with material,[4] and, on the other hand, those attempting to show that the emblem had an influence on the development of the conceit. The latter can use as evidence the metaphysical conceit's dependence upon the principle of analogy

[3] The Lawiers Logike, par. 2, cit., A.J. Smith, RES VII (1956) p. 357.

[4] Broadbent[2] sees in P.L. connections with emblem-books in "bits of machinery" (compasses, scales, ladders), all gems, most living things, especially exotic ones, (halcyon, crocodile, myrtle) and larger entities such as chaos, light, the fall of Satan. He notes that many of the classical myths would be more familiar to some readers as emblems rather than as literature. Op. cit., p. 205, n. 1.

applied to the outside world, just as "the hieroglyphic-emblem movement seems to have been in part a continuation of the tradition of medieval exemplarism, especially zoological exemplarism."[5] The more naive versions of this theory (seen in Austin Warren's Richard Crashaw, 1939) generally point to the emblem's influence as centring upon the visual element of an image. It is nearer to seventeenth-century theory of the conceit,[6] to see the emblem, the "impresa" and the conceit as arising from the same tendency to view objects as symbols.

This essay is more concerned with the study of specific emblems in a poet's work than with the metaphysical conceit. The aim will be to isolate and discuss possible emblems in "Paradise Lost" rather than to find specific sources for them in emblem-books, as in Green's study of Shakespeare.[7] It is unlikely that one will be able to approach the degree of probability which attaches to Josef Lederer's essay on Donne,[8] or the degree of certainty concerning Spenser's acquaintance with emblems.[9]

The evidence for Milton's possession of emblem-books is really non-

[5] J.A. Mazzeo, M.P. L (1952), pp. 89 and 94 n. 12.

[6] Mazzeo, ibid., p. 92 cites Emmanuele Tesauro's Il Cannochiale Aristotelico, 2nd edn. 1663, chaps. xiv, xv.

[7] Henry Green, Shakespeare and the Emblem Writers, London, 1870.

[8] "John Donne and the Emblematic Practice," RES XXII (1946), pp. 182-200.

[9] In The Shepheardes Calendar, each month has an appropriate woodcut and "embleme." Todd prints the emblem-book A Theatre of Voluptuous Worldlings, 1569 in his edition (Variorum Spenser, II, 273). Miss Aptekar's bibliography refers to several doctoral dissertations on Spenser and emblems.

existent, since "his library was so completely dissipated after his death, and even before, that the bare handful of surviving books once owned by him scarcely represents his relatively huge holdings."[10] The only connection one can make between Milton and emblem-books would seem to be the mention of 'Alciati Emblemes Alciats Emblema' in the accounts of Joseph Mead, a tutor-fellow at Cambridge, who may have acted as a sort of bookseller to his students.[11] The related subject of heroic emblems also appears on the list: Nicholas Reuśner's "Symbola" and Gerard Legh's "Accidence of Armorie." Yet even though emblem-books in England never achieved the popularity which they had on the Continent, it seems unlikely that a man of Milton's learning would not have known at least the most popular emblem-books.

The significant details in the topoi of "Paradise Lost" are largely emblematic. Unfallen and fallen nature are signalled respectively by tame and predatory animals. Adam and Eve's noble nature is indicated by their upright stature, their relative status by the lengths of their hair, and the breakdown of their relationship by the unclasping of their hands. Dr Fowler has noted many other examples in his edition of "Paradise Lost:" the square table in Eden indicating perfect equality; the dew-simile for Satan's followers, symbolic of transience (V, 745-7); Eve's tending of the rose and myrtle instead of the ivy and woodbine, signifying the danger

[10] H.F. Fletcher, The Intellectual Development of John Milton, Urbana, Ill., 1956-61, Vol. II, p. 376.

[11] Ibid., II, 374. Also Appendix I, Vol. II, pp. 553 ff.

to her marriage.[12]

Heroic "impreses" are employed for a specific purpose. The fallen angels lie "with scattered arms and ensigns." Here "ensign" could mean "heraldic arms or bearings" (OED 4) Satan's standard is studded with "seraphic arms and trophies." "Trophy" here seems to mean "A painted or carved figure of a memorial (of victory)." (OED 5b 1b transf.) Since the heraldic art depends upon worldly pride, Satan's army may be appropriately associated with it. Marching against God, they carry "shields / Various, with boastful argument portrayed" (VI, 83-4). The same pejorative overtones attach to the "emblazoned shields / Impreses quaint" of traditional epic heroes censured by the narrator in the prologue to Book Nine (IX, 34-35).

Thus Milton found the emblem and "impresa" of great value in deepening the significance of details of his poem. Their figurative meaning seldom becomes uncontrolled since the emblem is "allegorical in a confined and seemly way."[13]

[12] Fowler, 869, 881. Other examples are the fallen army's "perfect phalanx," ostensibly illustrating a perfect virtue that is later shown to be false by their "hollow cube" (I, 550; VI, 552-3); the Gate of Eden; the Chain of Concord; Sin's voluminous tail; God's scales in heaven; the flowers of Paradise. (Fowler, 644-5; 557-8; 538; 673; 654.) Satan's adamantine shield is problematical since its meaning (Fortitude) clashes with his character. (VI, 255)

[13] Tuve, op. cit., p. 56.

Part II

"PARADISE LOST" AND THE EMBLEM

Although it is impossible to prove any direct influence of the emblem-books on Milton, there is certainly an overlapping of subject-matter between them. In this essay, it is hoped to illustrate this area of common knowledge by citing examples of emblems which parallel references in "Paradise Lost." From this, it may be seen to what extent Milton drew on the same material as the emblem-writers. Most of the examples chosen are not merely references to stories from the Bible and classical literature. Emblems based on mythology are too numerous to mention. A typical example is the story of Narcissus.[14] After the details common to "Paradise Lost" and the emblem-books have been enumerated, there will be a brief comparison of the means by which each represents various qualities (such as hypocrisy). Then, with this accumulated evidence, it will be possible to speculate, as far as one dares, upon resemblances between details in Milton's long epic and the emblems - resemblances which might appear to be more than accidental.

This common area of reference between Milton and the emblem-writers extends to the most pervasive image in "Paradise Lost:" the circle. It

[14] For Narcissus, see Alciati Emblemi (1626) LXIX, p. 98 and compare P.L. IV, 460-71 where it serves as an ironic anticipation of Eve's subsequent sin of self-love.

occurs in the first three emblems of Théodore de Bèze's Icones (Geneva, 1580). Emblem I is a circle, emblem II a circle with diameters intersecting at right angles, and emblem III a cube within a circle. The significance of the circle is clearly stated in Cesare Ripa's Iconologia (Padua, 1611). Under the heading Perfettione (p. 416) is an illustration of a lady drawing a circle with compasses, her body being ringed by a large circular band on which are inscribed the signs of the zodiac. Since the circle symbolised perfection, "One of the most convenient Hieroglyphicks of God is a circle, and a circle is endlesse; His Sun and Moone move circularly."[15] As Professor Marjorie Nicholson points out, Milton took for granted the fact that circular motion was native to the elements. In his morning hymn, Adam addresses:

> Air, and ye elements the eldest birth
> Of nature's womb, that in quaternion run
> Perpetual circle, multiform.
> (P.L. V, 180-2)

Although Milton was not so obsessed with the circle-symbol as other learned seventeenth-century writers (such as Donne and Browne), he includes it in his description of heaven. The angels assemble,

> in orbs
> Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
> Orb within orb.
> (V, 594-6)

and celebrate the elevation of Christ to be vicegerent of the heavenly

[15] Donne's Devotions, cit. Nicholson, The Breaking of the Circle, 1960, p. 47.

hosts:

> In song and dance about the sacred hill,
> Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere
> Of planets and of fixed in all her wheels
> Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
> Eccentric, intervolved, yet regular
> Then most, when most irregular they seem.
> (V, 619-24)

Milton's heaven itself, however, is neither square nor circular.

The circle as an emblem of perfection is often linked with the compasses-device (not surprisingly) as in the example from Ripa's Iconologia. The compasses, familiar to the reader of Donne and Milton, also occur in George Wither's A Collection of Emblemes.[16] In this context, the compasses are emblematic of the constancy required for any achievement. However clumsy the verse, the meaning is clear:

> Good Hopes, we but accomplish may,
> By lab'ring in a constant-Way.

A favourite form of the circle emblem is the serpent eating its tail, as in Vicenzo Cartari's le Imagini de i Dei de Gli Antichi.[17] The text is as follows: "Martiano descrivendo Saturno lo fa che porge con la destra mano un serpente, quale si morde la coda, mostrando in questa guisa che per lui s' intende il tempo: e dice che ei uà con passo lento, e tardo." A more accessible example occurs in Wither's A Collection of Emblemes (Bk 2, p. 102). The picture shows the serpent-circle around a flower. The symbolism is

[16] London, 1635. Bk 3. Em 9. p. 143. Also Freeman, pl. 23.

[17] Venice, 1571. pp. 42,47.

explained by the motto:

> Time, is a Fading-flowre, that's found
> Within Eternities wide round.

Similarly, an emblem in Henry Hawkins's Partheneia Sacra (1633) shows a lily encircled by the serpent-emblem.[18] Here the serpent is purely decorative.

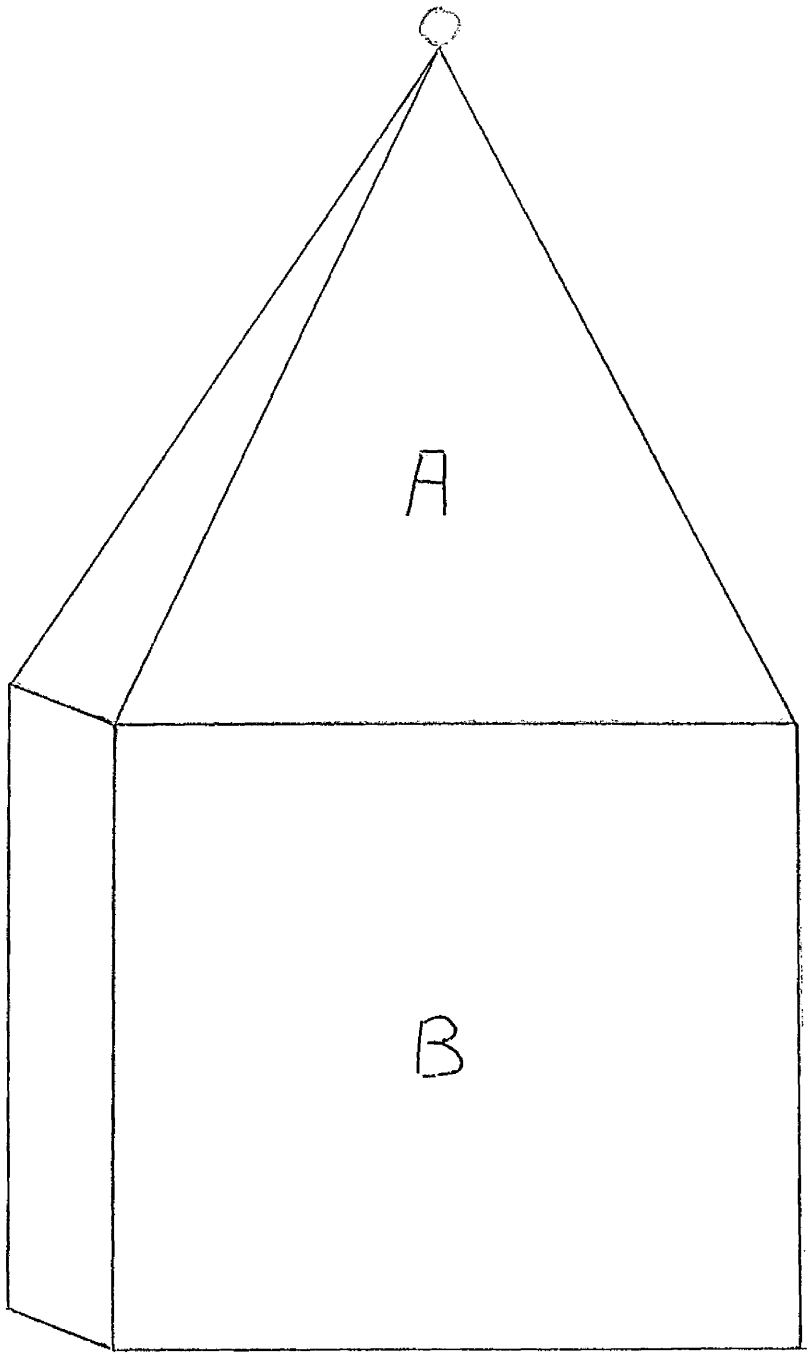
Other basic geometrical symbols used in "Paradise Lost" are the square and the cube. Adam and Eve's table is an "ample square" (V, 393) which is, as Dr Fowler notes, a "shape emblematic of virtue and particularly of temperance."[19] Dr Fowler also contrasts the "mighty quadrate" of the faithful angels (VI, 62) with the "perfect phalanx" of the rebels (I, 550), imitating as always their former companions. Yet the hollowness of the devils' formation is exposed by the false square concealing the cannon. (VI, 552-5) An example of the cube-emblem has already been cited from Bezaϕ's Icones. In Wither's book[20] the cube is an emblem of steadfastness: "The forme and firmnesse of an honest-minde." The significance is painstakingly explained:

> This Cube, which is an equall-sided square,
> Doth very well, in Emblem-wise, declare
> The temper of that vertuous minded man,

[18] Freeman, pl. 27.

[19] Fowler, p. 699. His note to P.L. I, 550 (p. 494) cites R.C.G.i 6 (Yale i 789): "as those smaller squares in battel unite in one great cube, the main phalanx, an embleme of truth and steadfastnesse."

[20] Op. cit., Bk 4 Em 20, p. 228.


A
B

Whose resolutions nothing alter can
For, as the Cube, which way soever plac't,
Stands ever in one posture, firmely fast,
And, still, appeares the same in forme and size,
Upon what side or part soe're it lyes.

The cube-emblem recurs in Achille Bocchi's Symbolicae Quaestiones in conjunction with the pyramid.[21] The pyramid is supported upon the cube as illustrated opposite. The verse relating to the cube is as follows:

In Quadrato Inferiori B.
Heroi merito sedes quadrata dicatur
Rectus enim semper constitit ille sibi.

The pyramid-figure also occurs in "Paradise Lost" where Satan, after asking directions from the ruler of Chaos,

With fresh alacrity and force renewed
Springs upward like a pyramid of fire.
(II, 1012-13)

The pyramid[22] commonly symbolised desire for glory. The verse in Bocchi expresses this sense of striving upwards:

In Fronte Pyramidus A.
Nescia fortunae virtus cessisse, subactis
Sensibus, excelso vertice summa petit.

Another example of the pyramid-symbol is found in Ripa's Iconologia.[23] The illustration shows a beautiful lady with her left arm round a (spire-shaped) pyramid as tall as herself. The text describes the picture,

[21] CIII-CV. Lib. 11. Symb. XLVIII.

[22] Shaped like our spire - see Leslie Hotson's Mr W.H. 1969, p. 86.

[23] pp. 244-5, under the section on "Gloria de' Principi" (Nella Medaglia d' Adriano).

explaining its significance in terms of glory, and citing other examples: "Terrà con la sinistra mano una piramide, la quale significa la chiara, é atta gloria de i Principi, che con magnificenza fanno fabriche sontuose, e grandi, con le quali si mostra essa gloria." This symbolic meaning clearly reinforces Milton's upward-thrusting imagery that conveys Satan's aspirations against God by the movement from hell up to heaven in the first three books.

A similarly successful use of an emblem within "Paradise Lost" is the linked hands symbolic of faith. This is found in Alciati's Emblemi (Padua, 1626) where a picture of a man and woman joining hands is given the motto "In fidem uxoriam." The verse elaborates this topic:

> Ecce puella, viro quae dextra iungitur . . .
> Haec fidei est species.
> (Em. CXCI, p. 284)

This recurs in George Wither's A Collection of Emblemes,[24] with a picture of two hands joined beside a cornucopia. Wither's motto expounds the same symbolic meaning as Alciati's:

> The Hand-in-hand, which Plighted faith implies.

In "Paradise Lost," the breaking of this link exposes Adam and Eve to temptation and leads to their eventual downfall.

Moving up the chain of being from human to divine, the symbols of the deity are the hand and eye. Belial talks of God's "red right-hand." (II, 174)

[24] Bk 3, Em. 32, p. 166.

The eye-image was discussed in Chapter Two.[25] These twin symbols of the deity are found together in Emblem XV of Andrea Alciati's Emblemi, where a hand, with an eye in its palm, is shown in the sky.[26] A hand from heaven is shown watering the well-tended garden in George Wither's A Collection of Emblemes. It is interesting to compare such emblems with the metaphor of God the "sovereign planter" in "Paradise Lost." In his book on Elizabethan Embroidery, G.W. Digby notes an example of God's hand issuing from a cloud. This is the central panel of one of the Oxburgh Hangings.[27] This hand grasps a pruning-tool with which it cuts back the vine in order that it may become more fruitful. The motto is "Virescit Vulnere Virtus": virtue flourishes in adversity. Part of the gardening in Milton's Eden consists of pruning. (IX, 210)

A similar lesson is taught by the vine emblem in Ashrea or The Grove of Beatitudes (London, 1665). In this work, each emblem corresponds to one of the eight beatitudes. Since the vine emblem is the eighth, it refers to "those that suffer persecution," applying this to the Catholic Church. It is not surprising that the vine emblem "Sterilis nisi falce putetur" should occur among a group of tree emblems, but the potential poetic symbolism may be glimpsed in the prose commentary: "Now if the Vine, to secure it self, extend here and there a winding tendrel that clasps about the neighbouring

[25] Above, pp. 24 ff., espec. 29-30.

[26] See references on p. 30 and Chap. II, n. 19.

[27] Digby, plate 72. Silk on canvas.

boughs, a devout Christian wants not the like, while, for his support, and constant perseverance, he produceth (like so many tendrels) several acts of Faith, Hope and Charity." Here one may see how the reaching out for support may be signified by the vine's tendrils feeling their way out from the plant. In his description of Eve's hair, Milton is creating both a vivid visual image and, at the same time, an emblem of her need for marital support from her spouse. Eve's waist-length hair,

> in wanton ringlets waved
> As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied
> Subjection but required with gentle sway.
> (IV, 306-8)

By hinting at a pun on the swaying of the vine, and by balancing the detail of Eve's tendril-like locks with Adam's hair "clustering" like grapes, Milton, as always, refines upon the crude materials of the didactic emblem-writer.

The wood-bine, another emblem possibly employed by Milton for the marriage-state, (IX, 215-6) occurs as the subject of the preceding beatitude in Ashrea.[28] The illustration shows two young trees held erect by the encircling wood-bine. The motto for this Seventh Beatitude ("Blessed be the peacemakers . . .") is "Pacis coniunctio firma." After a general peroration on the woodbine as peacemaker, the commentator gives it a more particular application: "Love must be like a pair of Wood-Bind shoots, issuing from the same stock which lay hold of two neighbouring boughs or

[28] p. 74. Freeman, pl. 31.

branches. If by love I unite my Heart and Soul to God, by Love I must likewise by united with my neighbour." (pp. 104-5) This emblem may lead us to see a submerged emblem of the marriage-state in Eve's apparently random choice of tasks which she mentions. (IX, 215 ff.) One's suspicion that a deeper meaning is intended is reinforced by her use of the ivy as her second example. The ivy, along with its elm, was of course an emblem of true love.

Thus by comparing Milton's symbolisms with those of the emblem-books, one has a guide (albeit a fallible one) to hidden significances behind details in the poem. These details are always chosen with care since they are used to form the descriptions of archetypes such as Heaven, Hell and Paradise.

Before leaving Ashrea, it is interesting to note a minor parallel between the third emblem and "Paradise Lost." In Book XI, Michael shows Adam a depressing picture of the ills in the world, representing all diseases metaphorically by a lazar-house. (P.L. XI, 477 ff.) In Ashrea, the commentator asks rhetorically: "What then is this wretched world, but an Hospital for the sick, and a House of Lazars; with which, what sutes better than mourning?" (p. 34) Thus, Adam cannot restrain his sorrow at such a terrible vision:

> compassion quelled
> His best of man, and gave him up to tears
> A space . . .
>
> (XI, 496-8)

The fact that many devices are common to Milton and the emblem-writers

helps to substantiate the use of emblems to elucidate seemingly significant details or "implicit emblems" in the poem. Thus, in George Wither's book, one finds an emblem of the hand of God holding out a pair of scales in the heavens. This closely parallels the incident in "Paradise Lost" where God predicts the outcome of the imminent struggle between Satan and the angelic guards of Paradise. (Homer, of course, provided epic precedent for this.) In both Wither and Milton (P.L. IV, 997), the scales represent God's providence. However, Wither, less concerned than Milton with the difficulties of reconciling free-will and predestination within an epic, is less scrupulous in phrasing his motto:

> What ever God did fore-decree
> Shall, without faile, fulfilled be.

In "Paradise Lost," God is showing Satan what will be the outcome of whichever course of action he chooses. Satan predictably follows the one which seems most advantageous to himself and his plans.

An emblem whose concreteness typifies its genre may be hinted at in the line from "Paradise Lost:"

> Let us not slip the occasion
> (I, 178)

Although it usually passes unnoticed as a figure of speech, the long tradition of its use as an emblem might be glanced at in this line. There are several examples of it in Milton, generally uttered by the opportunist Satan, such as:

"Occasion smiles" and "Occasion's forelock."[29]

The frequency with which it occurs in emblem-books demonstrates its popularity. It is found in Alciati, Wither and Whitney, as well as in Achilli Bocchi's Symbolicae Quaestiones.[30] "Occasion" is depicted as a female figure with a peculiar hair-style: she had a long forelock, while the back of her head was completely shaved. In Alciati, she holds a razor in her left hand and stands on a winged ball. Whitney places a similar figure on a wheel amid the sea, and explains the meaning in a series of questions and answers:

> What meanes longe lockes before? that such as meete,
> Maye houlde at firste, when they occasion finde.
> Thy heade behinde all balde, what telles it more?
> That none shoulde houlde, that let me slippe before.

Besides minor resemblances such as this, there are parts of the poem where Milton clearly draws upon the tradition that also provided inspiration for the emblem-writers. The idea of the hive representing a political state is seen in Homer's Iliad and Virgil's Georgics.[31] Although they do not refer back to this literary tradition as obviously as Milton does, Alciati, Whitney and Wither all employ the hive-image. Milton's description allows

[29] P.L. IX, 480; P.R. III, 173. In Samson Agonistes, the Semichorus says:

> let but them
> Find courage to lay hold on this occasion.
> (1715-16)

[30] Alciati Em. CXXII, p. 179; Wither, Bk 1, Em. 4; Whitney A Choice of Emblemes, 1586, Em. p. 181, reprod. in Freeman pl. 2.

[31] Il. ii, 87-90; Georg. IV, 170 ff.

the reader to draw a clear mental picture of the hive:

> As bees
> In spring time when the sun with Taurus rides,
> Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
> In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
> Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
> The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
> New rubbed with balm, expatiate and confer
> Their state affairs.
>
> (P.L. I, 768-775)

Some details are given: it is made of straw and has a wooden platform before it. The hive represented in the emblems varies from the rather strong one in Alciati's Emblemi,[32] to the more tattered-looking one in the edition of the same author's Emblemata.[33] Geoffrey Whitney's emblem "Patria cuique chara" (p. 200) shows bees flying round the hive and crawling upon its platform. Although the hive looks straw-built, the platform seems to be made of stone. The Lyons edition of Alciati seems the closest to the poem. However, if Milton were aware of these pictures, it is more probable that an amalgam of them was impressed upon his memory, rather than any particular one.

The most significant point, however, is that the comparison of a bee-hive with a political state is common to both. Thus, Whitney's fourth stanza, accompanying his emblem, explains that:

> A Comon-wealthe, by this, is right expreste:
> Bothe him, that rules, and those, that doe obaye:
> Or suche, as are the heads aboue the rest,

[32] Padua, 1626, p. 220.

[33] Lyons, 1614, p. 148. "Principis clementia."

Whom here, the Lorde in highe estate dothe staye:
By whose supporte, the meanor sorte doe liue,
And unto them all reuerence dulie giue.

While Dr Fowler[34] notes that Milton in the First Defence rebutted this analogical argument used by Salmasius in favour of the monarchy, he does not point out that Milton remains consistent to this viewpoint. Thus, in "Paradise Lost," the bee-comparison is used of the forces of Satan, who give allegiance to a leader unworthy of it.

Thus, resemblances to Milton's poem have been noted not only in the pictures of the emblem, but also in the idea behind it as expressed in the verse. In this way, one may compare the devices worn on their shields by Satan's followers ("with boastful argument portrayed" P.L. VI, 83-84) and the description accompanying Whitney's "Furor et rabies" (p. 45):

Within their sheildes, they dreadefull shapes deuise,
Some Griphins feirce, some ramping Lions beare,
Some Tygers foll, or Dragons like to weare.

All which bewraye, their inwarde bloodie thoughte.
(11. 4-7)

This idea of course is not unknown to a reader of The Faerie Queene and Sidney's Arcadia. In such instances, the debt which emblem-books and Milton owe to classical and Renaissance writers, makes it impossible for one to say that Milton has borrowed an idea from the emblems. In most cases, it would have been easier for him to borrow from previous writers. Nevertheless, instances such as these bring home forcibly the fact that

[34] Op. cit., 506.

Milton and those emblem-writers shared the same ideas, and were influenced by the same writers. It is possible to argue that this would make borrowing by Milton from them even more likely.

Two examples of this tradition of ideas may be seen in close proximity in Whitney's A Choice of Emblemes.[35] It is made even more obvious by Whitney's habit of providing classical texts to reinforce his lesson. The first emblem, "Usus libri non lectio prudentes facit," shows one learned man regarding another who is reading. The idea behind it is expressed by Christ in Paradise Regained:

> who reads
> Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
> A spirit and judgement equal or superior,
> (And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek)
> Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
> Deep-versed in books and shallow in himself.
> (P.R. IV, 322-7)

This may be compared with Whitney's verse:

> The volumes great, who so doth still peruse,
> And dailie turnes, and gazeth on the same,
> If that the fruicte thereof, he do not use,
> He reapes but toile, and neuer gaineth fame:
> First reade, then marke, then practise that is good,
> For without use, we drinke but Lethe flood.
>
> Of practise long, experience doth proceede,
> And wisedome then, doth euermore ensue:
> Then printe in minde, what we in printe do reade,
> Els loose wee time, and bookes in vaine do vewe:
> Wee maie not haste, our talent to bestowe
> Nor hide it up, whereby no good shall growe.

In passing, one may remark the Biblical talent-metaphor, also used by Milton

[35] pp. 171 and 173.

in On His Blindness (Sonnet XVI). The Milton and Whitney passages are not saying exactly the same thing: Whitney is exhorting people to put into practice what is read, otherwise it is useless; Christ is saying that reading must be accompanied by critical judgement, if it is to result in wisdom. Nevertheless, there is a basic similarity between the two passages in their assertion that mere reading is insufficient. Professor Kermode,[36] suggests that Seneca's Epistle lxxxviii may be among Milton's sources. It is therefore interesting to note that Whitney quotes part of the same work under his verse.[37]

Of course, the resemblance between the passages from Paradise Regained and Whitney is probably the result of their common source in Seneca, and in the absence of verbal parallels little more may be asserted. Yet an almost

[36] "Milton's Hero," R.E.S. IV, 1953, p. 328, cit. Fowler, p. 1152. He seems to be referring to the passage in the Epistulae Morales (LXXXVIII, 36): "Plus scire velle quam sit satis, intemperantiae genus est. Quid? Quod ista liberalium artium consectatio molestos, verbosos, intempestivos, sibi placentes facit et idea non discentes necessaria, quia supervacua didicerunt." ("This desire to know more than is sufficient is a sort of intemperance. Why? Because this unseemly pursuit of the liberal arts makes men troublesome, wordy, tactless, self-satisfied bores, who fail to learn the essentials just because they have learned the non-essentials." Trans. R.M. Gummere, 1934, Loeb. lib. Vol. II, 373.)

[37] "Lectio multorum voluminum, & omnis generis auctorum, habet aliquid vagum & instabile: certis ingeniis immorari & innutriri oportet, si velis aliquid trahere, quod in animo fideliter sedeat." (Senec. I. Epist. 2.) ("This reading of many authors and books of every sort tends to make you discursive and unsteady. You must linger among a limited number of master-thinkers, and digest their works, if you would derive ideas which shall win firm hold in your mind." Gummere, ibid., p. 7.)

identical situation recurs with regard to Whitney's emblem on page 173. This portrays a learned old man standing beside a fruit tree in whose branches there is a child.[38] The emblem is based on a comparison between life and the growth of a fruit. It is a figure of speech used by the archangel Michael to explain old age and death to Adam:

> So mayst thou live, till like ripe fruit thou drop
> Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease
> Gathered, not harshly plucked, for death mature.
> (P.L. XI, 535-7)

Whitney's verse (close to Richard II's proverbial "The ripest fruit first falls"[39]) gives a more particular application to the metaphor:

> The fruicte that soonest ripes, doth soonest fade awaie.
> And that which slowlie hath his time, will not so soone decaie.

Dr Fowler cites De Senectute, 19 as the source for Milton's idea. The relevant passage discusses dying, which it compares to an apple plucked from a tree: "quasi poma ex arboribus, cruda si sunt, vix evelluntur, si matura et cocta, decidunt, sic vitam adulescentibus vis aufert, senibus

[38] A Blakean incident. The poet-engraver may have been influenced by emblems. (Freeman, op. cit., pp. 26-28) The frontispiece to The Gates of Paradise shows a caterpillar on a leaf beside a child in swaddling-clothes, and the first illustration shows a woman taking a child from the ground beneath a tree. This resembles not only Whitney's emblem (p. 173) but also the "amygdalus" (almond-tree) emblem in Alciati, (Padua, 1626) where a man discovers a child in swaddling-clothes under a tree. Beside the child is a skull and a book.

[39] R II: II i 153. Arden ed. refers to Tilley, R 133.

maturitas."[40] Whitney acting as both poet and commentator cites Cicero's Pro Caelio: "Omnis profectus ex lectione & meditatione procedit quae enim nescimus lectione discimus: quae didicimus meditatione conseruamus." This is not a source for Whitney's verse, but, rather, a relevant passage which happens to come from another work by the author of his source.

On the basis of these passages, one could not possibly argue that Whitney may have been Milton's source, yet they do serve to emphasize the fact that Milton and the emblem-writers are drawing upon the same fund of knowledge. However, there are illustrations in the emblem-books that may be considered as possible sources for details in "Paradise Lost." The figure of Sin, half-woman, half-serpent, has a considerable number of analogues. Thus, Alciati has an emblem of Impudentia[41] represented by Scylla as a winged woman whose lower half consists of monsters. Again in Cartari[42] one finds an illustration of two such women whose lower half is that of a serpent. One of them has a man caught in her coils. Similarly, in Jacob Zetter's Speculum virtutum et vitiorum (Frankfurt, 1618) there is a picture of a female figure with a serpent's tail. She is hailing an old

[40] De Sen. XIX, 71: "Just as apples when they are green are with difficulty plucked from the tree, but when ripe and mellow fall of themselves, so, with the young, death comes as a result of force, while with the old it is the result of ripeness." (Trans. W.A. Falconer, 1938, Loeb. lib., p. 83.)

[41] Em. LXVIII, p. 97.

[42] Op. cit., p. 294.

man who is passing by.[43] However a parallel to the monsters breaking out from Sin's womb is found in Theodore de Bèze's Icones (Geneva, 1580). Emblem XXXII shows young serpents escaping from the side of a large serpent. The verse describes how the serpent's offspring gnaw her bowels:

> Viperei exedunt ceu matris viscera foetus,
> Sic quos ipsa suo fouit alumna sinu,
> Roditur heu! nimium sanctorum Ecclesia multis,
> At non euentu nec ratione pari.
> Vipera nam salua infelix prole interit, illis
> Haec contra extinctis non peritura manet.

While such a close parallel to Milton's figure of Sin may be found, there would seem to be no such source for his personification of Death. This is doubtless due to the fact that a figure:

> that shape had none
> Distinguishable in member, joint or limb,
> . . . that shadow seemed.
> (P.L. II, 667-9)

is the very opposite of the almost naively literalistic visual imagination of the emblematist. The epithets applied to Death are abstract. Milton equips this shapelessness with a crown and a dart, but the image again dissolves into ambiguity:

> what seemed his head
> The likeness of a kingly crown had on.

The emblem-writers had an image for death ready to hand - the skeleton. It fulfilled their aims, being immediately and efficiently translatable into the concept, death. It was both vivid and horrifying. At the same

[43] "Das monsters Vunderthier Sphynx," p. 40.

time, it carried on a graphic tradition established in the Dance of Death and similar paintings. With such an image available, why should they devise a new one? It would be equally illogical to invent a new figure to represent Love, when Cupid (and the heart) were to hand. An emblem containing the skeleton figure forms the frontispiece to Rosemary Freeman's English Emblem Books. It comes from Francis Quarles's Hieroglyphikes of the Life of Man (1638). In different editions of Alciati, Death is represented by a skeleton or emaciated corpse, which is almost a skeleton. The former may be seen in the emblem "In formosam praereptam,"[44] while, in the Frankfurt edition of 1583, the same emblem has a skeleton figure with tufts of hair. In the emblem "De Morte et Amore," Death is an emaciated figure with long streaming hair and a bestial visage.[45] The emblem, which follows immediately in this edition, is a picture of Death and Cupid shooting arrows at young and old men. (They unwittingly exchange quivers, with predictable results.) In this emblem "In formosam fato praereptam," the body of Death is again mid-way between emaciation and complete fleshlessness, although the head and body are slightly closer to that of a skeleton.[46] The same illustration is used in Whitney, (p. 132). The appearance of a skeleton Death and Cupid on equal terms within an emblem suggests that they

[44] Emblemi, Padua, 1626, p. 166.

[45] Emblemata, Lyons, 1614, p. 154.

[46] In the Emblemi, Padua, 1626, the titles of these emblems are applied to other pictures.

had equivalent positions (or status) as conventional symbols. In Cesare Ripa's Iconologia (pp. 361-2) "Morte" is an emaciated figure (almost a skeleton) clad in rich garments and with a mask tied over his face.

All the portrayals of Death in emblem-books would seem to confine themselves to the skeleton-symbol. The first emblem in Wither has the motto:

> By Knowledge onely, Life wee gaine
> All other things to Death pertaine.
> (Bk 1. Em 1)

The picture shows a man sitting occupied with worldly goods on one side of a tree, while on the other side the skeleton Death has a table of crowns, sceptres and jewels. The eighth emblem of Wither's first book exhorts:

> This Ragge of Death, which thou shalt see,
> Consider it; and Pious bee.

while a hand from the clouds holds a skeleton in a dish. As a final example, one may cite the picture from Fabianus Athyrus's "Stechbüchlein" where a skeleton Death is using a sickle to break into a pot of gold inside the heart.[47]

In this part of the essay, the manner in which qualities and abstractions are made concrete in emblem-books will be discussed in order to compare and contrast it with Milton's method in "Paradise Lost." It has been shown that his allegorization of Death differs in its nature from the method

[47] p. 134, Em. XXXIX.

employed by emblem-writers.[48] Indeed the only parallel to his Death was found in a piece of verse quoted by Valeriano in his Hieroglyphica:

Con trista ombra atra notte il capo auuolge

A horrific description of a skeleton, in the manner of D'Aubigné, would be a rather crude concretization of the invisible terror of death: an unvisualised Death would convey this more effectively.

On the other hand, the emblem-book comes closer to Milton's method where it has no ready-made symbol available and when the subject would seem to preclude any such device. Thus, the picture of Chaos in Whitney (p. 122) resembles Milton's so closely as to have been printed in Professor Merritt Hughes' edition as an illustration of a half-allegorical scene similar to that in "Paradise Lost." He also points out that, in the emblem, the maelstrom "is being blown into ever greater confusion by a being who seems to be both its personification and its ruler."[49] This emblem "Sine Iustitia, confusio" is accompanied by a fifty-line poem giving a history of Chaos, Creation, Paradise and the Fall. The Fall leads to ambition and pride, and so,

into the worlde, an other Chaos came.
(v. 37)

[48] After comparing Milton's "Death" with the skeleton figure of popular woodcuts of the Dance of Death and emblems, Broadbent considers that Milton did not succeed in his new approach: "I think Milton had inklings of what more could be done with it; but he failed, largely because the cartoon treatment was congenial to him." (Broadbent,[2] p. 131.)

[49] Hughes, pp. 180-1.

Whitney employs the concepts Chaos and Paradise as microcosmic metaphors for states of man's soul. Thus, when God sees this new Chaos after the Fall, He sends down Justice:

> Who, so survay'd the world, with such a heuenly vewe:
> That quickly vertues shee advanc'd: and vices did subdue.
> And, of that worlde did make, a paradice, of blisse.
> (vv. 41-43)

Another representation of an abstraction, in a manner similar to Milton's, is found in Whitney's portrayal of Adam's shame and guilt. In the emblem "Dominus vivit et videt" (p. 229) Adam is shown hiding himself behind a fig-tree in shame, while the words "UBI ES" appear in the sky in a sun-like representation of God. The sun metaphor for God is implicit in "Paradise Lost."[50]

It is relevant to note at this point a significant discrepancy between Milton's symbolic use of the Indian banyan-tree when Adam and Eve feel shame, (IX, 110 ff.) and the symbolic meaning explicated in Ashrea's section of tree emblems. The Indian fig-tree[51] has good overtones, as must all the trees in Ashrea, since they are symbolising a beatitude. In this case, the emblem describes the meek of heart. Nevertheless, it would not have been chosen unless the author thought it could appropriately represent meekness. This may be judged from the verse:

[50] See Chap. II, pp. 31, 33-4.

[51] Emblem II "Sic iuvat esse tenacem."

So do the Meek, to fix their Roots,
Humbly let down as many Shoots,
As good Desires, which spring from Love,
Take root in Heaven, the Land above.

In Ashrea, the tree signifies unity in diversity, while, according to Dr Fowler, the "proliferating tree is a tree of error: it is an objective correlative of the proliferating sin that will ramify through Adam's and Eve's descendants." (p. 920) He cites an allegorization of the fig-tree by Thomas Becon which confirms his reading at this point. In this passage it may be seen how an emblematic meaning must be tested in the context of the poem. Yet perhaps Dr Fowler underestimates the feeling of a "deep interior sanctuary" which Svendsen perceives.[52] If one denies this reading, one is surely excluding the emotive meaning of Milton's description:

a pillared shade
High overarched, and echoing walks between;
There oft the Indian herdsman shunning heat
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
At loop-holes cut through thickest shade.
(P.L. IX, 1106-1110)

This expresses a sentiment similar to that in Ashrea's prose commentary which adds: "Another thing commonly observ'd of these Trees is, that they afford a secure retreat, not only to the wild Boars, and other Beasts, but also to the Inhabitants of those Countries where they grow, who, having garrison'd themselves within them, defie all Enemies." This seems to be the same feeling of security introduced by Milton into the simile to provide a temporary respite from the hot sun of guilt, that suddenly

[52] Op. cit., p. 135.

blazes out to dazzle us:

> those leaves
> They gathered, broad as Amazonian targe,
> And with what skill they had, together sewed,
> To gird their waist, vain covering if to hide
> Their guilt and dreaded shame.

The author exclaims on the irony of the emblem:

> O how unlike
> To that first naked glory.

The realisation that the herdsman is primitive and pagan is only introduced after the temporary deceptive lull of the simile. Milton then shows the reader how he has fallen into the trap of welcoming the cool bower of the savage, and corrects him by placing the costume in its proper context:

> Such of late
> Columbus found the American so girt
> With feathered cincture, naked else and wild
> Among the trees on isles and woody shores.

It is at this point that the inner paradise of Adam and Eve breaks down into chaos, with its usurping rulers:[53]

> For understanding ruled not, and the will
> Heard not her lore, both in subjection now
> To sensual appetite, who from beneath
> Usurping over sovereign reason claimed
> Superior sway.
>
> (P.L. IX, 1127-31)

Thus, it has been shown that Milton did not have to restrict himself to the visual symbols of the emblem-books, but could also appeal to the imagination in non-visual terms, as in his figure of Death. Yet, even

[53] Corresponding to the semi-allegorical figures of Chaos and Night, P.L. II, 959 ff.

though Milton's art is much less crude than that of the emblem, there are similarities in method. His portrayal of Satan's hypocrisy is made vivid by the series of disguises which he makes him adopt, thereby placing the serpent-tempter tradition within a consistent context. With all Satan's changes of persona and costume - leviathan, cherub, toad, serpent, cormorant, military general, tragic hero, Don Juan and civil rights leader for downtrodden man - simile, metamorphosis and disguise merge into one another like a kaleidoscopic "role-call." Satan is condemned to an eternity of flux and re-flux, never remaining prince or frog for long. This is ensured by the sentence that Satan and his followers ("some say" X, 575) will re-enact his fateful disguise on every anniversary of the Fall. Thus, in "Paradise Lost," hypocrisy is the essence of evil, and is the means which God allows to evil in order to tempt man - for God alone can pierce its deceit - "Abhominatio Domino est omnis illusor."[54]

This association of disguise with evil is forcefully presented by emblems in Whitney and Wither. Wither's twenty-first emblem from Book 4 (p. 229) shows a beldam holding a mask before her face.[55] This part of the "choice of Hercules" inspires Wither to some lively lines:

> You, through her youthful vizard, may espy
> Shee's of an old Edition, by her Eye:
> And, by her wainscot face, it may be seene,
> She might your Grandams first dry-nurse have been.

[54] Peacham's emblem "Deceit."

[55] Freeman, pl. 1.

This is an Emblem, fitly shaddowing those,
Who making faire, and honest outward showes,
Are inwardly deform'd; and, nothing such,
As they to bee suppos'd, have strived much.

Whitney's emblem "in Hypocritas" (p. 226) has an almost identical import:

A Face deform'de, a visor faire doth hide,
That none can see his uglie shape within;
To Ipocrites, the same maie bee applide,
With outward showes, who all their credit winne.

A similar emblem on "Deceit," shown as a respectable man with serpent-tails instead of legs, is reproduced in Freeman from Henry Peacham's Minerva Britanna (1612, pl. 16). The emblem-books are packed with hoary adages about "a friend in need" and warning against false friends, as in Wither's "Amicitia fucata vitanda" (124). In Whitney the serpent, as the traditional emblem of deceitfulness, is employed as a warning against dissimulation and hypocrisy - "theise vipers vile." This emblem "Latet anguis in herba"[56] shows the serpent encircling a strawberry plant, and, owing to the arrangement of the shoots, the serpent is rising:

not with indented wave,
Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear,
Circular base of rising folds, that towered
Fold above fold a surging maze,
(P.L. IX, 496-99)

It is interesting to speculate what effect the many pictures of the serpent coiling itself may have had on Milton, and whether it may have suggested this vivid description that incorporates and ironically debases the circle,

[56] Whitney, p. 24. G.W. Digby notes that it is used in the Shepherd Buss coverlet and also in the Oxburgh hangings. Digby, pl. 50.

symbol of perfection in the poem.[57] A similar picture may be found in Whitney's emblem "Naturandum" (p. 188) where an inverted serpent is coiled round an arrow. In his essay on the iconography of the Fall, J.B. Trapp notes an early picture of the Fall[58] which represents Adam and Eve on either side of the fatal tree, which is encircled by the serpent. This is in fact the arrangement of the first emblem in Quarles. (Emblemes, 1635) Since the accompanying poem is based on Genesis, it has some inevitable similarities to Book IX of "Paradise Lost." The Serpent asks Eve:

> Or canst thou think that bad which Heav'n call'd Good?

and uses similar arguments:

> Heav'n knows and fears the virtue of this Tree:
> 'Twill make ye perfect gods as well as He.

However, the circle-symbol introduced at this point of "Paradise Lost" in conjunction with the serpent might remind the reader of the emblem of eternity mentioned above: the serpent devouring its tail. These "circling spires" of the serpent's coils might be regarded as symbolising "the helix that still enlargeth" (Browne) of the history that Man will have to suffer

[57] Mario Di Cesare comments on Satan's soliloquy from the Tree of Life (P.L. IV, 375-85) that "the very rhythm coils and recoils, mimicking both the logical structure and the metaphor. The loosely associated images of relatedness - political, domestic, affective - become a metaphor for the straitened concentricity of Satan's nature." (Language and Style in Milton, (eds) Emma and Shawcross, N.Y., 1967, p. 8.)

[58] In the chapel of Varallo. (Patrides,[2] p. 224) See also the Concordantia caritatis (fig. 13) and Michelangelo and Raphael's Fall of Man (figs. 18 and 19).

for this act of sin, to be contrasted with the eternity of bliss for the just.

Therefore, one might hazard certain suggestions concerning the influence of emblems in general on Milton's "Paradise Lost." This influence would be a methodological one - showing ways of treating a subject, and of imaging qualities and emotions. Thus, in Eve's dream, she flies with her guide above the earth, and after Adam and Eve have eaten the fruit, they.

> fancy that they feel
> Divinity within them breeding wings
> Wherewith to scorn the earth.
> (IX, 1009-11)

The emblem-books in their representation of such aspirations use the wing-symbol, yet they are always realistic in including also man's enchainment to the earth. Thus, Alciati's emblem "Ignevi"[59] shows an eagle flying above a boy who has wings instead of arms. The commonest emblem is that of a man striving towards heaven with a winged wrist, while he is held to the earth by a heavy weight round his feet. By this crude means, the twin poles of man's nature were effectively symbolised.[60] Two examples of similar emblems occur in Quarles.[61] In the latter, (Bk 5 Em XIII) the desire to rise to the heavens is represented by a picture of someone flying

[59] Em. LXXIV, p. 118.

[60] Wither Bk 3, Em 42, p. 176; Whitney, p. 152; Reusner Emblemata, 1581, Em LXXIV.

[61] Bk 2, Em 15, p. 120; Bk 5, Em XIII, p. 296.

to the heavens, while near a cliff another person is striving upwards by means of wings. The latter's impotent striving is ironically contrasted with the dove (just as Alciati contrasted the aspiring figure with the soaring eagle). Quarles quotes Psalm 55.6: "O that I had the wings of a Dove, for then I would flie away and be at rest." The aspiration, therefore, is not necessarily evil as it is in Eve's wish for godhead. Thus, Wither's emblem showing Ganymede being taken up to heaven by Jove's eagle, symbolises the soul's striving towards heaven.[62] This is the striving of God's creatures towards Him which is celebrated in Adam's morning hymn. Thus, he tells the birds:

> That singing up to heaven gate ascend,
> Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
> (P.L. V, 198-9)

The emblematic device of wings is used to represent the wrong kind of aspiration in Eve. Similarly, a parallel to Eve's impatience about gardening may be found in Wither.[63] Wither's emblem shows a hand from heaven watering the well-tended garden. This may be compared with God the "sovereign planter" of Paradise. The motto tells the reader that:

> Things to their best perfection come,
> Not all at once; but some and some.

The verse expands the analogy of the garden:

[62] Bk 3, Em 22, p. 154.

[63] Bk 2, Em 95, p. 107. Cp. P.L. IX, 214 ff.

> When, thou shalt visit, in the Moneth of May,
> A costly Garden, in her best array;
> And, view the well-grown Trees, the wel-trimmed Bowers,
> The Beds of Herbs, the knots of pleasant flowers,
> With all the deckings, and the fine devices,
> Perteyning to those earthly Paradises,
> Thou canst not well suppose, one day, or two,
> Did finish all, which had beene, there, to doe.

It seems almost like a warning for Milton's Eve. Yet Eve, of course, is not only the temptress of Adam, but also his beautiful helpmeet, adored and reverenced by the lower animals. Satan uses this circumstance to approach Adam and Eve closely, and later to flatter Eve. Whitney's emblem "Pulchritudo vincit" (p. 182) shows creatures doing reverence to a lady. They include a bird, a horse, a lion, a hare, and a fish. Behind the lady is Cupid. The emblem says that the lady was given her beautiful face as a gift and as a protection:

> Which makes the boulde, the fierce, the swifte, to stoope
> and pleade for grace.

These emblems help to show us how Milton's poem is rooted in the seventeenth century, for they incorporate the religious thought, the everyday proverbs and the conventional symbols of the time, being couched in a more explicitly didactic form than he would use in "Paradise Lost." One is therefore led to wonder whether the emblem-books can be of any assistance in helping to clarify difficult or obscure parts of the poem. It has been shown how (with some exceptions) the significance given to objects by emblem-writers is consistent with their meaning in the immediate context within "Paradise Lost." Therefore, it would be an interesting experiment to see if any help will be given by emblem-literature in a

celebrated crux, such as the "ploughman" simile at the end of Book IV.

As the passage stands, the "hopeful sheaves" are a vivid visual image for the "ported spears" of the angelic squadron crowding round Satan. The passage is in no way ambiguous here. The problem would seem to enter with the mention of the "careful ploughman" who,

> doubting stands
> Lest on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves
> Prove chaff.
> (IV, 983-5)

The "ploughman" is unlikely to be Satan, and there seems no necessity to introduce Adam and Eve as the "hopeful sheaves." For the moment, therefore, it would seem fair to equate the "careful ploughman" with God, and the "hopeful sheaves" by metonymy with the spear-carriers. Biblical parallels spring to mind to support the "ploughman" metaphor[64] for God (who appears in parables as sower and reaper) and, in this light, it seems both traditional and appropriate. At this point, it is relevant to mention an emblem by George Wither, which shows God's hand coming from a cloud, and grasping a threshing-stick with which he beats a sheaf of wheat. The motto is:

> Affliction, dothe to many adde
> More value, than, before, they had.
> (Bk II, Em 96, p. 108)

[64] In R.C.G., the bishops are seen as the winter frost restricting both weeds and flowers, whereas in Spring "the Sunne shall scatter the mists, and the manuring hand of the Tiller shall root up all that burdens the soile . . ." Columbia Milton, III, p. 214.

The act of "threshing" represents God's trial of His creatures through suffering and temptation.[65] Returning to the poem with this in mind, one would ask whether the angels are being tested in any way at this point. They are presented with a terrifying spectacle:

> On the other side Satan alarmed
> Collecting all his might dilated stood,
> Like Teneriff or Atlas unremoved:
> His stature reached the sky, and on his crest
> Sat horror plumed.
>
> (IV, 985-89)

Since their strength to resist this is "but given" from above, as Gabriel says afterwards, this is a temptation of their trust in God. Milton would think it absurd to deny that angels can fall, for this would be to deny their free-will. Therefore, God is watching whether Satan's display of strength will betray the angelic guards into distrust of God's providence. It is this, and not the fight, which is the test.[66] Milton makes this plainer by deliberately introducing what seems at first to be an anticlimax

[65] Dr Fowler (p. 669) points out that "threshing" was a very familiar metaphor for divine judgement and cites Emile Mâle's The Gothic Image 1961, (p. 31) for the iconographical background. Its Biblical source is Jer. li 33 and Hab. iii 12, etc.

[66] Similarly, Stanley Fish notes that Abdiel and his fellow warriors "all fight a battle they know to be pointless, under conditions that can justly be described as humiliating, for a leader who could do very well without them." He links it with the temptation of the good angels guarding Paradise: "Gabriel is heroic here because he admits that, in the conventional sense, he cannot be." He considers that the forestalling of these encounters creates the psychological need for the War in Heaven. (Fish, pp. 190, 176)

when God shows Satan the results of battle or flight. The real struggle occurred just before this in the trial of the good angels. When one remembers that the battle in heaven is really Raphael's metaphor for the struggle between good and evil, the lack of heroic action (which the narrator was "Not sedulous to indite . . ." IX, 27) at this point may be seen as a more "truthful" account by the inspired narrator. He has not given his "fit audience" a horrific battle-scene to convince them that a struggle has taken place. A similar feeling of "shadow-boxing" is conveyed by the poet's relation of the struggle of wills between Death and Satan in Book II, a struggle on this occasion halted by Sin's intervention.

Having suggested that the angelic guards are tempted at this point, one may return to the simile itself. The angels are compared to "hopeful sheaves" which are "ripe for harvest." This is the condition of the sheaf of corn depicted in Whitney's emblem "Nihil pondera luxus" (p. 23). Whitney's verse explains its meaning clearly:

> When autumne ripes, the frutefull fieldes of graine,
> And CERES doth in all her pompe appeere,
> The heavie eare, doth breske the stalke in twaine,
> Wherebie we see, this by experience clear:
> Hir owne excesse, did cause her proper spoile,
> And made her corne, to rotte uppon the soile.

In Milton's passage, the "ripe grain" is appropriate to the angels because its very ripeness is a danger. This might be an accurate description of the state of those angels who fell self-tempted (unlike Adam and Eve). It was Satan's already glorious station which made him wish to be the highest. In the same way, the angelic guards are exposed to the danger of their own high

state.[67]

Therefore, a consistent interpretation of the simile directs us to the real meaning of the confrontation between Satan and the angelic guards. Although the interpretation was reached with the help of emblems, it is obviously independent of them. At the same time, the interpretation is strengthened and enriched by reference to the commonsense wisdom encapsulated in emblem literature.

Thus, the study of emblem-books can aid one's interpretation and study of Milton, not by supplying definite sources, but by acting as a repository of seventeenth-century knowledge which Milton shared. It is not necessary to hold that Milton used the emblem-books, for they partake in the same tradition of learning. The emblem-books are often clearer (even if less subtle) than Milton, by reason of their frequently crude symbolism and overtly didactic purpose, and so can provide us with some of the raw materials that Milton transformed into art.

[67] It is to "confirm" their "firm" state. (P.L. XI, 71) In the Christian Doctrine, Milton describes a "good temptation . . . whereby God tempts even the righteous for the purpose of proving them, not as though he were ignorant of the disposition of their hearts, but for the purpose of manifesting their faith or patience." (Yale Prose, III, 209)

Appendix B

IMAGERY, METAPHOR AND THE DATING OF "SAMSON AGONISTES"

Since Professor William Riley Parker pointed out that the established dating of "Samson Agonistes" had no real historical basis, critics should have been more cautious in their theories of Milton's development as a poet.[1] Any critic basing his theory on Jonathan Richardson's chronology of the works[2] should be conscious of treading on rather soggy quicksands. This uncertainty will be beneficial if it makes him scrutinize every step of his reasoned guess-work, forcing him to acknowledge the limited scope of his conclusions. He should also be less apt to plunge into rash declarations concerning the link between Milton's personal experience and his work.

Having said this, one must ask oneself whether there are any other grounds on which to base a chronology of the works. The only alternative evidence would appear to be that of stylistic analysis - a perilous task even when one does possess historical evidence to guide one's conclusions.

[1] This point was also made by H.F. Fletcher in 1941 and by Allan H. Gilbert in 1947. Balachandra Rajan's recent book "The Lofty Rhyme" takes this uncertainty into consideration in his critical remarks. See p. 130.

[2] Parker biog. II, 905.

However stylistic analysis in a "vacuum" may be less subject to the danger of finding what one wishes to find. In the absence of any other definite clues, one might attempt to discover whether any hypothesis may be formed on the grounds of style. The danger here will be to avoid unreasonably reacting against, or adhering to, the established chronology.

A brief statement of the historical clues may introduce the discussion. The ignorance of Edward Phillips concerning its date in his 1694 "Life" implies that he was absent from Milton's household at the time of its composition. He says that:

> It cannot certainly be concluded when he wrote his excellent Tragedy entitled "Samson Agonistes," but sure enough it is that it came forth after his publication of "Paradice Lost" together with his other Poem call'd "Paradice regain'd," which doubtless was begun and finisht and printed after the other was publisht, and that in a wonderful short space considering the sublimeness of it.[3]

It is notable that Phillips comments on the speed of composition required to complete "Paradise Regained" in the three years between the 1667 edition of "Paradise Lost" and the 1671 edition of "Samson Agonistes" and "Paradise Regained." Perhaps Phillips (unlike Ants Oras[4]) would then regard it as incredible that "Samson Agonistes" should also be completed at this time.

This is the only "solid" indication one possesses. The sketchiness of parts of Phillips's account referring to the late 1640's and after, suggests that he was absent from Milton's immediate neighbourhood. His tuition and

[3] "The Early Lives of Milton," (ed.) Helen Darbishire, 1965, p. 75.

[4] "Blank Verse and Chronology in Milton," 1966, p. 3.

residence probably ceased about 1646, according to Professor Parker, which leaves Milton time to begin "Samson" in 1647, and possibly to work on it again in 1664-5 while Phillips was living at Sayes Court near Deptford as a tutor to John Evelyn's son.[5]

Milton's interest in the story of Samson can be dated approximately. It is evident in the frequent references throughout the English and Latin prose of the 1640's.[6] There are also three entries in the Trinity College Manuscript of 1640, referring to Samson in order: "Samson mariing or (inserted above) in Rameth Lechi Jud. 15." followed immediately by "Dagonalia. Jud. 16." and with "Samson pursophorus / or Hybristes, or /" in two lines to the left ending to read on with "Dagonalia".[7]

Another piece of evidence which might be loosely termed "historical" is the number of discrepancies between the final version of the tragedy and its prose argument. These are noted by Allan H. Gilbert, who would wish to place the word "final" here in inverted commas.[8] He points out that the dialogues of Samson with Dalila and Harapha occupy one third of the work, while the argument barely mentions them. When Manoa is elsewhere, it says, Samson "in the meanwhile is visited by other persons."

[5] "The Date of S.A.," P.Q. 28/1949, 145-166. Also Parker biog., II, 901, 906 and I, 158.

[6] The Reason of Church Government, Bk. II, Concl., Hughes, p. 688.

[7] "Works," (ed.) Fletcher, Vol. IV, Part I, p. 11. For Trinity M.S., see Fletcher, Vol. II:18.

[8] "Is S.A. unfinished?" P.Q. 28/1949, 98-106.

This might describe a project in the author's mind rather than a major part of the drama which he has completed. Similarly, the prescriptive definition of tragedy in the Argument explicitly excludes comedy, yet Harapha, boastfully back-pedalling from Samson's challenge, is a near relative of Plautus's military buffoon. Even if the Philistine champion is not "trivial and vulgar," he can still be comic. Professor Rajan's fine distinction between a comic character and a character whose discomfiture provokes laughter does not charm away the "comic stuff" which provides relief at this juncture in "Samson Agonistes."[9] Indeed it would not be far-fetched to see the pathetically bustling activity of Manoa as an instance where the play's irony shades into comedy. And who can restrain a smile at his mild reproach: "I cannot praise thy marriage-choices, son."? (420) Milton's own inconsistency here is in accordance with his praise of those who follow nature "which in them that know art and use judgement, is no transgression but an enriching of art."[10]

Other differences between the argument and the work itself include the order of topics in Manoa's speech, the duration of Samson's debate with himself before his momentous decision, and the position in the play of the messenger's appearance. All these points lead Gilbert to conclude that the argument was rather "an outline for a proposed play, which the author modified as he worked." Since everything one knows about Milton would lead

[9] Op. cit., p. 139.

[10] R.C.G., Hughes, p. 668.

us not to suspect him of intellectual laziness or carelessness, it would seem that one has to accept Gilbert's conclusion or postulate substantial revisions of the text subsequent to the writing of the argument. It would seem that the dialogues of Samson with Harapha and Dalila may have been considerably amplified, that Samson's internal debate may have been expanded, and a Chorus added after the Messenger's speech. These speculations will be reconsidered in the light of a close reading of the text later in the essay.

These clues, therefore, do not force us to place "Samson Agonistes" after 1667 and, in fact, may incline us to an earlier date. The stylistic evidence may be brought forward now. We have already mentioned the inclusion of comedy which seems to contradict the literary theory of the Argument. Another indication would be the approximate date of Milton's interest in Greek drama, which is the model for "Samson Agonistes" - a basically psychological drama, which employs the conventions of choric commentary, the narration of the disaster by a messenger and the use of monostrophic verse-patterns.[11] His love for the high-flown and artificial Italian drama was a youthful enthusiasm.[12] As Professor Parker observes,

[11] See W.R. Parker[3], "Milton's Debt to Greek Tragedy in S.A.," 1937. In "Milton, Andreini and Galileo," John Arthos says that "the arrangement of scenes in (S.A.) is devised more to represent the progress of the life within the soul of Samson than to imitate action." Approaches to P.L., ed. Patrides, p. 166. See also Parker biog., I, 320.

[12] Milton's sketches for a "sacra rappresentazione" show the influence of Andreini's "L'Adamo." In The Italian Element in Milton's Verse, Professor F.T. Prince discusses the relation of this work to "Paradise Lost," as well as the formative influence of Tasso, Guarini and others on his early verse forms.

his sketches in the Trinity Manuscript show the influence of neo-classical or neo-Senecan drama, with obvious traces of Italian (but not of Greek) influence. He assumes, therefore, that "Samson Agonistes" could not have been written "until a re-study of Greek tragedy overcame his strong preference for the Italianate form." While Milton does not seem to have held Aeschylus in high regard before 1645, his duties as tutor to the Phillipses may have re-introduced him to Greek drama around 1646, "and he may then have recognized, not only the importance of Aeschylus, but also the superiority of the Greek over the neo-classical form."[13]

Milton's note on the verse of "Paradise Lost" may provide another stylistic clue to the dating of his tragedy. He is at pains to draw attention to his disavowal of "the jingling sound of like endings" or "the troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming" as he terms it. The viewpoint could hardly be expressed more vehemently than this. Even if this were an outburst of exasperation against obtuse critics, could Milton later justify, to himself as well as to others, his inconsistency in employing rhyme in the choruses of "Samson Agonistes" after he had called it "the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame metre."?[14] The only explanation would seem to be that the composition of the choruses antedated the manifesto for the verse of his epic. Otherwise surely Milton would

[13] Parker biog., II, 907.

[14] The infrequent rhymes in P.L. do not amount to a contradiction of his theory. Rhyme there does not function as the major structural device that it is in S.A.

feel obliged to explain his inconsistency in publishing such a work barely four years after his disavowal of rhyme. Would he be "carried away by custom" knowing full well the "vexation, hindrance and constraint to express many things otherwise and for the most part worse than else he would have expressed them."? Yet in spite of his renunciation, the patterning of the Choruses of "Samson Agonistes" is based on rhyme, as in the speech beginning "Just are the ways of God."[15] Rhyme shades into assonance to prepare for the unrhymed verse at the entrance of Manoa.[16] F.T. Prince points out that, while there is an impression that the stanzas are rhyming, there are in fact few instances of full rhymes, although they are generally placed in prominent positions in the choruses and surrounded by lines linked by assonance.[17]

Rhyme is employed to obtain a flexible stanza structure in Samson's soliloquy which begins: "O that torment should not be confined . . ." (606) Rhymes such as "intense" / "sense" (615-16) are echoed by "reins," "accidents" (609-12) or, in the same way, "rage" / "assuage" (619, 627) by "raise," "despair" (625-631). In the chorus, "Just are the ways of God" (293), a four-line rhyming unit is tightened up by enclosing the verbal rhyme "-lved" with the corresponding substantive form "-ution." The close

[15] See ll. 293 ff., 297-8. 303-6.

[16] See the "-pt" consonantal combinations at line-endings in the third stanza of this chorus. Also in fourth and fifth stanzas: "means," "free," "unclean" (315, 317, 324); "Nazarite," "bride" (318, 320).

[17] Prince, 156-7.

binding together achieved by the rhymes parallels the plight of those:

> Regardless of his glory's diminution;
> (Who) by their own perplexities involved
> . . . ravel more, still less resolved,
> But never find self-satisfying solution.
> (303-6)

The Chorus who can spot the aimlessness of others, are God-centred and know the truth. This knowledge of a "solution" is signalled by the rhyme which satisfyingly completes the sentence. Other "-tion" formations, such as "mortification," "desertion" (622, 632), occur in Samson's speech discussed above, along with "-ble" and "-ing" endings, such as "innumerable," "immedicable," (608, 620) and "stings" / "descending" (623, 635). These half-rhymes and assonances are often reinforced at other positions within the line.[18] Thus, full rhymes are integrated into a context of assonance and chiming polysyllables. Often the assonance seems unconscious: "disease" / "gangrene" (618, 621) linked also by a sense-rhyme; "loss" / "remediless" (644, 648) reinforced by the quasi-symmetrical placing of "helpless" and "hopeless" within each line. A similar device to that of assonance is the recurrence of echoing polysyllables, noted above, at the end of lines. His use of repetition augments the impression of a free-flowing inspiration, more firmly controlled than the similar bardic utterances of Whitman. The repetition of "enemies" at the end of lines 640 and 642 maintains the sense of form without imposing a structure too

[18] "-tion:" "inflammation," "petition" (626, 650); "-ing:" "swoonings," "nursling" (631, 633): "-ble:" "answerable," "irreparable" (615, 644).

highly disciplined for a dramatic lyric.[19]

Through these devices which appear disarmingly "unpremeditated," the inspired scop, hero or chorus can convey his insights without descending to an empty virtuosity that obtrudes between muse and audience. The bard must abjure the self-displaying rhetoric that is vulnerable to Herbert's reproof: "How wide is all this long pretence" ("Jordan II") English rhyming couplets would press themselves too insistently upon the reader's attention. Yet devices such as intermittent rhyme, combined with assonance and repetition, can be used in lyric passages to create an impression of a more intensely structured language and, consequently, of a higher level of inspiration.

The use of polysyllables (ending in "-ble," "-tion," "-ing," etc.) may be an approximation to the Italian method of rhyming where a plethora of possible rhymes results from the abundance of such endings. These rhymes are less obtrusive in Italian poetry because of their commonness. Since Milton does not wish to suggest a too intellectual shaping of his material, he can parallel the Italian rhyming practice by employing polysyllables of

[19] Shakespeare can defy this relation between dramatic lyric and flexibility as in the formally-constructed lines at the first meeting of Romeo and Juliet, where mannered images control and convey a depth of emotion in the characters. (R. & J. I v 91 ff.) (Allan H. Gilbert points out many examples of repetition of vocabulary and imagery in S.A. but does not consider them to be functional. From it he derives his theory of the allegedly unfinished state of the tragedy.)

this type without rhyming them fully.[20]

One might recapitulate on the techniques mentioned above by examining them within the next chorus, "Many are the sayings of the wise." (652) The technique is intermittently dazzling, calling attention to the formal elements without carrying them out so strictly as to belie the spontaneity of the utterance. The "mute" / "brute," "rout" / "about" rhymes (672-75) are a further development of the rhyming technique by vowel progression (which Wilfred Owen later made his own). This is linked by the "fly" / "glory" rhymes (676, 680) to a triad of assonance - "remembered," "elected," "adorned" - the bareness of which sets off the sugared sweetness of the preceding quatrain. Feminine rhymes (whose endings suggest Italian rhymes, as mentioned above) occur in "dismission" / "omission" (688, 691) and "various" / "contrarious" (668-9). As well as rhymes in adjacent lines, such as "sought" / "thought" (658-9), one's eye, if not one's ear, begins to notice rhymes at wider intervals - a device noted by Sprott - such as "fortitude" / "multitude" (654, 696). There are two alternative explanations; the rhymes may be accidental or they may be the traces of an earlier draft shifted by revision, rather like houses after an earthquake. However, in view of the seemingly random, but actually painstaking organisation of these choruses, perhaps it is not fanciful to see such connections, which draw the reader's attention to the construction of larger units than rhyme

[20] Prince, 156. He notes that Italian dramatists, such as Tasso in his "Aminta," reserved the use of rhyme for highly-charged lyric passages, just as Milton employs this mixture of rhyme and assonance only in choruses and soliloquies. Prince, 150 ff.

normally encompasses. In fact, there is a parallel situation in "Lycidas" where the rhyme directs the reader to the structure of verse paragraph, and ultimately, by repeating these rhymes and using rhymes linked to them by assonance, encompassing the entire structure of the elegy.[21] This explanation of an unusual rhyme technique accords with other technical innovations in "Samson Agonistes," illustrated below.

The high-flown sentiments of the Italian dramas which appear to have provided the model for Milton's partly rhyming choruses, would be more likely to appeal to the youthful than to the middle-aged poet. This is confirmed by the rhythmic affinities which many critics see in "Samson Agonistes." Although Professor Prince accepts the traditional dating of Milton's works, he makes several observations of this nature and then seeks to reconcile his insights with the chronology. Commenting upon the sentiments of the Italian pastorals, he says that he considers it "not at all unlikely that Milton felt their peculiar charm intensely in his youth" and then suggests that the style, even if not the subject-matter, would be remembered by the aging poet.[22] Similarly he admits that his "metrical

[21] See A. Oras[3], M.P. LII, 12-22, on the influence of the Italian madrigal on Lycidas's verse paragraphs. The rhyme "graze" (44, 46, 70, 72, 74, 77) is linked by assonance with "caves" (39, 173, 175); "shade" (65, 68, 97, 99, 129); "care" (64, 69); "swain" (92, 110, 111); "lake" (109, 112, 114, 116). While, on the one hand, the placing of unrhymed lines corresponds to the general disharmony after the death of Lycidas, the concluding octet, once the poet has become reconciled to his loss, recapitulates previous rhymes in a pattern that, like a major chord in music, suggests affirmation and optimism. (For Sprott, see Oras[3], p. 12.)

[22] Prince, 147.

analysis of the choruses . . . brings out that they have something in common with some of Milton's very early experiments," although he qualifies the last phrase by the words "written perhaps, thirty years before."[23] Prince's metrical analysis had pointed out how Milton imitates the rhythmic variety of the Italian hendecasyllabic line by using a variety of lengths of line. This technique is compared with Milton's strategy in the early poems, "At a Solemn Music" and "On Time." Professor Prince also notes in the tragedy a debt to Spenser, Milton's early master, and compares the variety of lengths of line used in the dirge in the "November Eclogue." This similarity of technique is problematical because the Milton who had found his rhythmic voice in his two epics had no need to return to his old master. These early affinities which Prince notes in "Samson Agonistes" are asserted even more strongly by Professor Parker who sees in it the anarchic rhythms of the "Ode to Rouse" and the "Psalms" 1-8, written after 1645.[24]

Some of the elements which make up the rhythmic patterns of the tragedy have been studied in detail by Professor Orae.[25] His findings appear at first reassuringly conclusive in maintaining the traditional chronology. However Professor John T. Shawcross pointed out that the statistics can be rearranged to support Professor Parker's chronology just

[23] Prince, 162.

[24] Parker biog., I, 315 f., II, 907.

[25] "SAMLA Studies in Milton," Gainsville, Fla., 1953, pp. 128-197.

as well, if not better than the traditional scheme.[26] In his later study, "Blank Verse and Chronology in Milton," Professor Oras castigates his critic for a too-mechanical adherence to arithmetical evidence. Some of his points would seem to indicate a later date for the tragedy, or at least caution one from seizing too rashly upon the early date. Thus, the syllabized "-ed" ending is used in the first seven books of "Paradise Lost" as in the early poems, but there is only one example of this in "Samson Agonistes." One may wonder whether this metrical device would be as important when the poet was not always aiming for a regular number of syllables in the line. Similarly in considering the discrepancy between the number of polysyllables in "Comus" and "Samson Agonistes," one must take into account factors such as the occurrence of very short lines and the peculiar partly rhyming stanzas discussed above. Both Milton and T.S. Eliot employ polysyllables to add weight to the verse. The use of polysyllables in the choruses has been illustrated above.

Professor Oras notes that the abruptness which characterizes "Samson Agonistes" does not allow the smooth flow of sentences over several lines, which is a feature of both "Comus" and "Paradise Lost." Yet the uneasy and disturbed state of the protagonists may preclude this smooth style, in accordance with the "conventionalized realism" that Milton employs in the drama. Against the figures which differentiate "Samson" from "Comus" one

[26] "The prosodic statistics derived from Milton's blank verse . . . rearranged by progressive or regressive development from the dated Comus, indicate that the traditional chronology . . . is incorrect." Shawcross, PMLA LXXVI, p. 352.

might adduce a common factor in their frequent use of feminine and pyrrhic endings.

Nevertheless, there seem to be some stylistic indications to link "Samson Agonistes" with the later parts of "Paradise Lost." The abrupt rhythms, noted above, can be seen in Adam's lamentation after the Fall. In the same way, Professor Oras connects the mellifluous pyrrhic endings in Dalila's scene with Samson with those in Satan's temptation of Eve.[27] The contrary pull of much of this evidence might suggest that the poem could not have been composed in its entirety at either an early or a late period, but that it was substantially revised when the poet's techniques had developed in other directions. This theory will be tested against the other stylistic evidence to be brought forward.

"Samson Agonistes" is unusual in that it permits a rare colloquialism (such as "blab" in 495). This would be anathema to the epic poet. Although infringements of Dr Johnson's decorum (such as the use of the word "draff" in 574) might be viewed as closer to the dramatic tradition of Shakespeare,[28] "Samson Agonistes" has none of "Comus"'s Spenserian archaisms and few verbal echoes of Shakespeare. However, the greater range of register in the tragedy might link it with the rumbustious prose pamphlets of the period 1641-47. These in fact provide a number of close parallels to phrases used

[27] Oras, "Blank Verse . . ." p. 37.

[28] Broadbent[2], p. 102 n. 2. For "blabbing," see Com. 138; for "draff," see D.D.D. introd., Hughes, p. 698.

by Milton in "Samson Agonistes." The examples cited by Professor Parker[29] suggest that Milton's right hand was not altogether inactive at this time. Many of these resemblances relate to the central images of the work, including "the pervasive dialectic of disease and remedy" that is probably his favourite prose image.[30] Samson's cry that "My griefs . . . / Nor less than wounds immedicable / Rankle, and fester" (617-21) parallels the "immedicable disaffection" in Colasterion (4.251) and the phrase "inwardly fester with repining and blasphemous thoughts" from the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce (3.510). The mention of "Thy fair enchanted cup" (934) and of "spells / And black enchantments" (1132-3), returning to the imagery of "Comus," parallels the description of "men inchanted with the Circaean cup of servitude" in Eikonoclastes (5.204) and the phrase "without inchantment or spell us'd" from the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce (3.386). The scorpion image (S.A. 358-60; 997-8) is found in Tetrachordon (4.84), while the controversial coin image applied to friends (S.A. 189-90) is again used in Tetrachordon with a similar play on the word: "wee must either new stamp our Coine, or we may goe now stamp our Foreheads with the superscription of slaves" (4.142). The compound "Tongue-batteries" (404, like the "Tongue-doughty Giant" of 1181) resembles the "masters of tongue-fence" of the

[29] Parker biog., II, 911-17. References to Columbia edition of works.

[30] K. Svendsen, Milton and Science, p. 175. For images derived from the body, see Svendsen, pp. 174-210. Also see A.F. Price, "Incidental Imagery in Areopagitica," M.P. 1952. Examples in S.A. are 184-6; 594 ff.; 626-8; or "death's benumbing opium" (630). Contrast Samson's stinging thoughts with the "healing words" of 605.

Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce (3.503). The central image of marriage as a joint voyage (1044-5) recurs in the Doctrine and Discipline, and in other prose works: "two persons ill imbarkt in wedlock" (D.D.D. 3.418); "lest an over-tost faith endanger to shipwrack" (D.D.D. 3.400); (an unfortunate marriage) "turns all to shipwrack . . . to a ransomless captivity." (Tetr. 4.90). This last quotation also exemplifies the military metaphors which Samson uses to describe the "siege" which he suffered from Dalila, and to which, she alleges, the priests subjected her. (S.A. 235-6; 403-5; 845 ff.) These parallels will gain even greater impact if one takes into account the many other examples cited by Professor Parker which are not introduced here. He also puts forward extracts which closely resemble the Argument to the tragedy. This might incline us to place its composition in the 1640's, without ruling out the possibility of extended revision after the Argument had been completed.

In the light of this correspondence between images in the tragedy and phrases in the prose, it is interesting to note the closeness between Milton's political philosophy worked out in these pamphlets and that of the characters. This may be seen from Samson's answer to Dalila's "grounded maxim" "that to the public good / Private respects must yield." (865-68)

In the use of strands of imagery to bring out the central meaning of the work, Milton seems closer to Shakespeare than in any other of his works. Apart from the commemorative sonnet of 1632, Milton's witness to his name is most obvious in the early dramatic works such as "Arcades" and

"Comus."[31] Just as in Shakespeare's plays, each thread of the imagery contributes to the whole web of meaning, "Samson Agonistes" is shot through with key images: marine, fire, serpent, blindness, prison and wood, disease and military images.[32] If it is possible to establish connections with images in other poems by Milton as well as the prose parallels cited above, some kind of cumulative evidence might be assembled to suggest the date or "strata" of composition.

These points may be made in the process of indicating how key images carry the meaning of the poem and interact with each other to produce patterns of implication, reflecting on the characters and the action. One is impelled to believe that Milton was fully conscious of this "Shakespearian" mode by the appearance in Samson's opening soliloquy of all the central images, such as that of fire (25 ff.), the sea (13), military terms, the sting of hornets, along with the worm (=serpent 74 ff.), imprisonment, his blindness, hair, and the light-darkness dichotomy. Already in the metaphors the lines become alive with echoes of this imagery. The final goal of the tragedy, Samson's sepulchre, which is a shifting theme throughout, is applied

[31] Professor Broadbent[2] says that "Much of Comus might actually be the Shakespeare of A Midsummer Night's Dream and The Tempest. The point is not that these are occasional spurts of the true poet in Milton, but that he had to work very hard to escape from the domination of Shakespeare's genius and write for himself."

[32] L.S. Cox, "Structural and Thematic Imagery in S.A. and P.R." Doct. Diss. Indiana Univ., 1962; Duncan Robertson, "Metaphor in S.A.," U.T.Q. July, 1969. Carey's introduction to the poem in the Carey-Fowler edition gives a convenient summary of the imagery. (pp. 339-343)

to his blind body: "Myself, my sepulchre, a moving grave." (102) Similarly, the metaphor "The tread of many feet steering this way" (111) broaches the marine metaphor that is employed at the entrances of Dalila, resplendent in her flowing robes, and of the gigantic Harapha. This first speech also introduces the major themes of the work: Samson's role as Israel's champion chosen from birth by God; his weakness in succumbing to female wiles; the consequent loss of freedom and eyesight that has brought about a living death for him. The care with which parts of this speech are later articulated may be seen from the progress from Samson's lament for his eyesight to his mental anguish. Both are consequences of his fault. He is punished by his blindness because that gift is confined to the delicate membrane of the eye; while he suffers unbearable agony by self-reproaches since the pain is not merely physical. The parallel is brought out by the repetition of "confined." (93-4, 606-7)

Dr Carey notes how the frequency of abstract words in the drama gives greater power to the sensuous images that plot the course of the main character. His mental anguish is conveyed in this first speech through the "hornets" image. As one would expect, Samson's mental torture is expressed in physical imagery of stings and wounds. (19-20, 184-6, 608) It has many connections throughout the drama in images of the scorpion (360), poisonous snake and the thorn (1037). In fact, as Lee Sheridan Cox observes, the dramatic strategy is in accord with the medical formula of "like curing like" which is Milton's version of catharsis in the Argument to the poem.[33] It is the

[33] Cox, 61.

"sting" of Dalila's reproaches (besides "the secret sting of amorous remorse" 1007), of Harapha's insults and of the good intentions of the tactless Manoa, which draw Samson from self-accusations and the apathy of despair. According to Manoa, God's gift has been scorpion-like (360). Similarly, Dalila is called a scorpion by the Chorus since her sting is "discovered in the end" (997-8). The application of the terms "viper," "serpent" and "snake" to her by Samson and the Chorus (763, 997, 1001) endows Dalila with Satanic overtones, thereby enriching Samson's fall with the typological resonances of Adam's sin. This prepares for the Christ-like rising of Samson, as the symbol is transformed from the terrible evening dragon through the noble eagle to that "secular bird," the eternal phoenix. (1707) After applying to Samson the metaphorical language that is later used to describe other characters in the drama,[34] Milton shows Israel's champion once again distinguished from those around him until his final self-sacrifice proves him to be truly "The Image of God's strength" (706). The amoral tempestuous force of nature, evinced in Harapha and Samson's strength, becomes moral when it is employed in God's service as Samson tugs

[34] Cox, 17 notes that "Milton repeatedly uses for Samson the references, the allusions, the metaphorical language, the image, that he later applies to other characters in the drama. "Samson is called a "blab," Dalila a "voice," Harapha a "tongue." Samson is termed a "plant" (362-3) and Dalila a flower (728) and a thorn (1037, 1039). Samson is an adder and God's scorpion-like gift (936, 360) and Dalila a serpent and sting (997-8). Samson is a "pilot" (198-200) and Dalila a stately ship (714 ff.) and a "steersmate" (1070-2), while Harapha is a ship (1075, 1237-9). Samson and Harapha are tempests (960-1, 964, 1061). Samson and Dalila are magicians (819, 934-5, 937, 1132-4) and traitors (401, 725).

down the pillars "As with the force of winds and waters pent, / When mountains tremble" (1647-8) Dr Carey[35] considers that the imagery in such a case is working against the poem's explicit scheme of values. However Milton is continually concerned to show us that an action may not be wrong in itself (such as loving one's wife) but is governed by the context: whether it is directed on the side of good or evil. It is then that Satan's valour is evil, or his patience in his temptation of Christ is folly, as meaningless as "surging waves against a solid rock, / Though all to shivers dashed." (P.R. IV, 18-9) In the same way, the natural imagery[36] of "Samson Agonistes" is governed by the value-judgements inherent in the poem.

In Chapter Two, it was shown that Milton in "Paradise Lost" employed the eye-sun symbol for God and for fallen Satan "Shorn of his beams" (I, 596). Therefore, it is appropriate that this "Image of God's strength", Samson, should be linked with the "hairy sun symbol" in D.C. Allen's phrase. Besides the obvious references to Samson's hair (such as 1496-7), parodied in Harapha's "pile high-built" (1069) that collapses "Crestfallen," the sun-figure is emphasised by the linking of Samson with noon: the time of Samson's rest from labour and the beginning of his labour at the feast. This is surrounded by many references to fire (27, 262, 1433-5, 1690-1). That aspect of his nature is summed up in the alternative title "Samson

[35] Carey, 340.

[36] It is not enough to say that Samson possesses "the compelling glamour of natural good, of things that grow and the powers that make them grow." (Robertson) Comus can claim these things also.

pursophorus" (Trinity M.S.).

Nor is the eye-sun symbol absent. In a moment of despair, Samson presages a "double darkness" that is soon to come upon him. (593) In fact, it is only after Samson has triumphed over the darkness of despair that he can join the select band of inspired seers. At the climax of the poem, the literal blindness of the hero is paradoxically transferred to the Philistine lords in their "blindness internal" while Samson "though blind of sight" is "With inward eyes illuminated." (1687-89) In Dr Cox's words, Milton "selects a figure rich in associations and then evokes every possibility in the image relevant to his purpose."[37] At the same time, several images can be employed to convey different aspects of his meaning. The abundance of figures in the Semichorus's celebration of Samson's triumph both draws our attention to the climax and serves to introduce the idea of regeneration. Milton would know the Greek meaning of dragon - "the seeing one". The regeneration of the eagle's sight after gazing on the sun has an obvious relevance to the fate of Samson, blind but illuminated by God.[38] The commonest image of rebirth is probably that of the phoenix. Its immolation is the culmination of the fire imagery. This is explicit a few lines earlier: "His fiery virtue roused / From under ashes into sudden flame".

[37] Cox, 11.

[38] Compare this with the passage on the eagle renewing its feathers and sight by flying into the sun and then plunging into a fountain. (For water imagery connected with Samson, see Robertson, op. cit.) The immediately preceding sentence in Areopagitica compares a nation with a strong man shaking his locks on awakening. Hughes, p. 745 n.

(1690-1) Thus, Samson whom others thought "extinguished quite" rises triumphant.

From such examples, one can deduce the web-like structure of imagery in "Samson Agonistes," where related figures define Samson's fallen state and chart his emergence once more as a feasible champion. While one may agree with Professor Ricks's statement of Milton's intentions, the preceding may cause us to disagree with his conclusion that "Milton was provoked by dramatic tradition to embark mistakenly on the Shakespearian type of metaphor."[39] (my italics)

The imagistic strategy so far described does not involve any technique unknown to Shakespeare. Yet there is at least one image pattern which does not conform to the normal patterning. This is the coin-image for friends which Professor Ricks picks out as a failure of metaphor. Dr Carey on the other hand points out that it is by no means an isolated metaphor, citing the instance of Dalila as Danae in the shower of gold. (388-91, 831) This coin-image leads one into patterns that seem to yoke ideas together in defiance of the rules of logic. The basic idea is that of a number of people whose faithlessness injures their friend. (S.A. 187-93) Samson talks of a "swarm" of friends who are "two-faced" like a false coin. The metaphors of "coin" and "swarm" direct us to other figures. Through this figure, "thoughts" and "friends" are linked as Samson's twin punishments.

[39] On metaphor in "Samson Agonistes," see Ricks, Milton's Grand Style, 49-56.

In his first soliloquy, his thoughts are "a swarm of hornets" (19-20)[40] and later he calls them "my tormentors armed with deadly stings" (606). It is Manoa's recommendation of the "healing words" of friends which gives rise to this soliloquy. (605-6) Similarly, Dr Carey notes how Samson's strength - like the lion's carcase - attracts Dalila's "honied words" and a "swarm" of friends. Samson uses the coin-image to pun on the Philistinian deceitfulness which he outwits: "I used hostility, and took their spoil / To pay my underminers in their coin" (1203-4). Their coin was counterfeit, so he paid them falsely.

The use of this pattern of coin-imagery may seem to have no great relevance to Samson's story outwith the particular examples, but it is only when one looks at another strand which Ricks finds problematical that its importance begins to emerge. This is the "tame wether" image for the "shorn" and sexually humiliated Samson. (535-40)[41] In this sense, Samson is a "lost sheep", brought back by the care of the Good Shepherd, but finally "tangled in the fold of dire necessity" in his service. (1665-6) The collocation of the coin and sheep figures and a major theme of the tragedy seems to point to the triad of parables from the fifteenth chapter

[40] Compare "O what a multitude of thoughts . . . in me swarm" P.R. I, 196-7, suggesting a later date or re-reading of S.A.

[41] Here Ricks criticises the metaphor "disarmed" for the shaving of Samson's hair, but it is justified in as much as his hair is the basis of his miraculous strength, and may therefore be termed a weapon. It also glances at his lost virility ('wether') with a sexual pun on weapon. The verbal violence deliberately attracts attention to the metaphor.

of Luke's Gospel: the lost piece of silver; the lost sheep and the Prodigal Son. All these are instances of something or someone lost who is found through the vigilance (or mercy) of his guardian. The Prodigal Son is an underlying theme of Milton's drama. It is somewhat ironically presented in Manoa's activity - "a father's timely care" - to ransom Samson, and his willingness to use up his patrimony in sacrifice for his son. (1462 ff. and Chorus) Just as Dalila's false contriteness before Samson contrasts with Samson's uncompromising repentance before God, Manoa's charity contrasts with the claustrophobic mothering which she offers her husband. Manoa's unselfishness is a human and imperfect manifestation of God's care: "His eye / Gracious to readmit the suppliant." (1172-3)

The connections between ideas in these figures are not based primarily on logic. The coin figures are largely punning - an "act of verbal violence" in Sigurd Burckhardt's phrase. He notes that the pun, like rhyme and metre, establishes an a-logical link between ideas, in defiance of their referential meaning. A similar process seems to take place with this yoking together of individual images. The conventional link is that between "thoughts like hornets" and "thoughts . . . armed with deadly stings". The innovation is the linking of thoughts with friends via the word "swarm," or coins to friends via the word "heads." Similarly, the word "disarmed" fuses the concepts of hair, strength and virility in the underlying metaphor of a weapon. The play on words by repetition, pun and metaphor serves "to release words in some measure from their bondage to meaning, their purely referential role, and to give or restore to them the corporeality which a

true medium needs." By linking "thoughts" with "friends," Milton brings into being a new verbal identity by fusing separate and distinct meanings. Imagery is therefore functioning as metaphor - that is, as a "semantic pun."[42]

At this point, it is intended only to discuss the images which may be relevant to the dating of the tragedy. Prose parallels have already been adduced for many of these figures, such as the military metaphors for marriage, and disease images for mental ills. The sailing images for the marital state may also indicate Shakespearian and Fletcherian influences which are especially apparent in the early period before Milton found an individualised "organ-voice." Miss Barbara K. Lewalski suggests that the description of Dalila's stately entrance may have a source in the figure of Lady Presumption (in Giles Fletcher's "Christ's Victory on Earth") who, in

> her so proud array;
> Her waving streamers loosely shee lets play,
> And flagging colours shine as bright as smiling day.

The winds which seem to court Dalila's "sails" remind us of Enobarbus's well-known speech on Cleopatra in her barge, with perhaps a hint of the ridiculous spectacle of the Nurse in "Romeo and Juliet."[43] Professor

[42] Sigurd Burckhardt, "The Poet as Fool and Priest," E.L.H. XXIII (1965), p. 283. Other quotations from page 281.

[43] B.K. Lewalski, "The Ship-Tempest Imagery in Samson Agonistes," N.Q. Oct., VI (N.S.). A. & C., II ii 197 f.; R. & J., II iv 98. In his study "Milton and Vondel," George Edmundson puts forward a similar metaphor for love as a dangerous sea-voyage, pp. 176-7; Vondel's Samson, ii, 241.

Gilbert points to the tradition of the comic overdressed woman compared to a fully-rigged ship.[44]

Fletcher and Shakespeare are the poets who can be traced in the Elizabethan ornately-smooth beauty of "Comus." There also looms large in that early work the wood and the claustrophobic sense of its imprisoning darkness. In "Samson Agonistes," the equivalent symbol is this blindness as his own dungeon - this "prison within prison". (68 f., 156, 153) Already in "Comus" the two symbols are interchangeable, for the Second Brother calls the mazy wood "this close dungeon of innumerous boughs" (Com. 348) while the Elder Brother might almost be describing Samson in despair at the outset of the tragedy:

> But he that hides a dark soul, and foul thoughts
> Benighted walks under the midday sun;
> Himself is his own dungeon.
> ("Comus," 382-84)

Thus, aware of his own unworthiness, Samson cries out:

> O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon.
> (S.A. 80)

The Wood of Error is a symbol which Milton would meet in his early poetical mentor, Spenser, (F.Q. I i 7) and returned to when describing how Adam first experiences the guilty fear of light. (P.L. IX, 1088 f., 1100; X, 100-01)

[44] Gilbert, 100-01, cites Iago's sexual jest on "land-carrack" (Oth. I ii 50) and Milton's "Of Reformation": "They would request us to indure still the russling of their silken cassocks, and that we would burst our midriffs rather than laugh to see them under sayl in all their lawn and sarcenet, their shrouds and tackle, with a geometrical rhomboides upon their heads." (Columbia Milton, III, 74.)

The sun and the wood-dungeon form the twin symbolic poles that maintain the equilibrium between light and darkness, of good and evil in Milton's work. Both are combined in the paradoxical symbol of blindness and its corollary, inspiration. Appropriately, it is the central symbol in "Samson Agonistes" since human blindness is the foundation of all tragedy.

While this tracing of the many veins of imagery running through the tragedy could be continued at much greater length, the present purpose requires one to concentrate upon those images which offer some indication of the dating of the work. By the previous discussion, it was intended to show that Milton's imagistic technique owed much to Shakespeare, his early model.

This method of dating is of course subject to the fatal flaw of all such stylistic information: the artist can call upon whatever technique is fitted for the work in hand, sometimes returning to a device which he has not employed for a number of years. Against this, one sets the likelihood that the interests of the author at a particular time will show themselves in his work, and that a preoccupation may recur in works composed around the same period. This is the justification for citing parallels from prose works, as above. By the same theory, images such as those of music and rebirth in Shakespeare's Last Romances, may be especially prominent in works composed around the same period. One may attribute this repetition of images to a similarity of subject-matter. The author is, as it were, testing different solutions to a problem by expressing his subject again and again in terms of this imagery.

Both these theories may be applied to Dalila's tempting of Samson. Here the serpent-image for Dalila has an obvious parallel in the anti-hero of "Paradise Lost," Satan. This "poisonous bosom snake" (763) approaches in a devious manner: "With doubtful feet and wavering resolution" (732), just as Satan approaches Eve "With tract oblique / At first, as one who sought access, but feared / To interrupt, sidelong he works his way." (P.L. IX, 510-12) Dalila is the woman-serpent, a true daughter of Satan like Sin: "a manifest serpent by her sting / Discovered in the end." (997-8) Yet she can easily assume like Sin the pose of fallen Eve, telling "what assaults . . . what snares besides, / What sieges girt (her) round", skilfully transferring the role of tempter to "the priest . . . ever at (her) ear". (S.A. 845-6, 857-8) Her "circling wiles" (871) correspond to Satan's emblematic "circling spires" (P.L. IX, 502) since her rhetoric[45] employs his technique of a circling accumulation of reasons for acting which hypnotise the ratiocinative faculty. At the same time, the "fit" reader reacts against the excessive ingenuity of a rhetoric that eschews logic, merely providing the sin-inclined will with an ample choice of rationalisations or excuses for its actions. This is the dialectical advance of the temptations of Satan and Dalila over that of Comus. Comus has a fairly consistent epicurean standpoint which can be cogently refuted by the Lady. It is much more difficult to refute these more mature tactics

[45] Rajan[2] says that Dalila "combines a lawyer's intelligence with the kind of rhetoric that has to be called serpentine." (p. 132)

because of the number of points of attack. Yet Samson, like Christ in "Paradise Regained," manages to do so because he is committed to a definite position which he can outline and from which he can spot weaknesses in the opposing arguments. Nevertheless, like Satan, Dalila paradoxically is undermining her own case. As in "Paradise Lost," the wealth of reasons for sinning detracts from the force of each individual reason. The brain is muddled and the real struggle takes place between the will and Samson's sexual desire or Eve's egotism.

Even though the ship imagery for Dalila appears to be early, all the indications here point to a later date for this passage of "Samson Agonistes." J.B. Leishman implies this in summarising Milton's "dramatic power," which is that "of fully comprehending and fully presenting arguments and attitudes with which he disagrees." This he "has revealed still more strikingly in his later poems: in the arguments of Satan and the rebel angels and in Adam's failure to subordinate love of Eve to love of God; in the arguments used by Satan to tempt Christ in 'Paradise Regained,' those superbly presented and superbly illustrated arguments which seem unanswerable until they are answered by the Son of God; in the speeches of Dalila in 'Samson Agonistes,' of which Goethe exclaimed when Crabb Robinson was reading the poem to him: 'See the great poet! he putt her in right.'"[46]

This is therefore an instance where stylistic evidence points to a

[46] Leishman, Milton's Minor Poems, p. 228. Remark of Goethe was communicated by Crabb Robinson to Masson and from him to Ker. See W.P. Ker, "The Art of Poetry," p. 65.

period around, or later than, the composition of the ninth book of "Paradise Lost" (a book which Professor Shawcross considers one of the earliest completed). It is perhaps significant that this Dalila episode is not biblical. Milton is employing the potential dramatic structure implicit in Samson's name: "There-the-second-time."[47]

In this discussion of the temptation by Dalila, it may be seen that both the subject-matter and the imagery were of weight in considering the possible date of composition. This leads one on to consider images which derive their intensity from Milton's personal experience, sublimated into or expressed as, art. This raises the vexed question of the relation between such personal experience and the work of art. Certain of the more naive uses of this inter-relationship are obviously abuses of critical theory. The fact that sections of "Samson Agonistes" can be easily identified with the author's experiences leads Allan H. Gilbert to the damning conclusion that "it seems as though Milton had written various passages on topics of interest to himself - such as temperance - and suitable for the theme of "Samson Agonistes", but had not carefully articulated them."[48] Professor Gilbert picks out this less important example of the link between life and work. Professor Rajan observes that from Samson's lesson to Dalila on the limits of civil power when it conflicts with the laws of nature, it is apparent "that this particular Samson has done some of his

[47] For seventeenth-century etymologists, that is. Carey, 340.

[48] Gilbert, 103.

thinking in the 1640's."[49] The political morality of nations also enters into Samson's overgoing of Harapha. (1181-1220)

Yet the two topics which are the principal examples of such a link - blindness and marital faithlessness - are of essential, not peripheral importance to the story of Samson. Both of these present opposing problems as possible hints for dating passages. Milton's unhappiness in his marriage with Mary Powell was a thing of the past by the late 1640's, but his former injured feelings could be summoned up by the artist to provide him with an intense, though not uncontrolled, insight into the situation of the betrayed Samson. This is most tactfully expressed by Professor Parker who considers that a "man writing a tragedy on a subject which has peculiar interest for him will inevitably express many of his own views; but if he is any sort of dramatist at all, he will also draw upon emotions which he has felt once and outgrown, ideas which he has held and since discarded, emotions and convictions which he has known vicariously in the writings of others or in the speech of friends - not to mention the attitudes which his creative ability enables him to imagine for appropriate characters and situations."[50] Professor Parker goes on to admit that "it may well be that the shock and indignation and wounded pride which Milton experienced in 1642 when Mary deserted him were recollected in tranquillity for dramatic purposes." At the same time, it must be emphasised that the intensity of feeling against

[49] Op. cit., 2 141.

[50] Parker biog., I, 316.

marital betrayal never usurps more than its proper position in the plot.

A similarly central position is occupied by the topic of blindness which Professor Parker sees as the pervasive metaphor of the tragedy.[51] It is an "objective correlative" to Samson's "fortunate fall," for it results from his weakness and through it, he rises again. The question facing the biographical critic is whether the searing soliloquy: "O dark, dark, dark, . . ." could have been written by someone who had not experienced blindness. Could his imagination attain to this "as he faced the threat - by then terribly real - of approaching blindness"?[52] It would be rash to deny Milton's power to do so, yet one may feel that these anguished passages on blindness were written nearer to 1652 around the time of Sonnet XVI[53] and the sonnet addressed to Mr Cyriack Skinner. The most that one can assert with such biographical speculations is that his personal experience was available to him at any time in his life <u>after</u> these events happened. It is not necessary to place the composition of a passage on blindness or unhappy marriage closest to the date of the actual experience. In fact, the Wordsworthian dictum of the "recollection of emotion in tranquillity" would militate against this probability. All that one can do is to present the

[51] Parker biog., II, 909.

[52] Ibid., II, 910.

[53] Dr Honigmann adduces reasons for a possible dating around 1644 for this sonnet. He notes that Milton's anxiety about loss of ability seems to have been dispelled by Nov. 1651 when he wrote in a friend's album: "I am made perfect in weakness." Op. cit., pp. 172-4.

accumulation of evidence which would permit an early date of composition along with any hints that might incline one to such a date.

The evidence may appear to suggest an early attempt at a tragedy by the ambitious young Milton who sought to achieve the triple triumph of tragedy, epic and brief epic.[54] It showed strong traces of Shakespearian influence in its use of imagery and was modelled upon the Greek form as a psychological drama. Its use of rhyme and assonance would seem to be influenced by the Italian dramas of Tasso and Guarini. Discrepancies between the argument and the final version of the tragedy suggests that portions have been amplified after the composition of the plot summary. This possibility is given added weight by the closeness between Dalila's temptation scene and the tempting of Eve by Satan in "Paradise Lost." Was Milton struck by his early serpent imagery when he re-read the play around 1667-70 before publication, and did it stir him to display his skill in disputative dialogue which he had employed in "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained?"

The conclusion that the tragedy may have been composed around 1647 and later revised for publication around 1667 if not before, is neither conclusively proved nor disproved by Professor Oras's findings. However the weight of his evidence would point to a date later than 1647 for parts of the drama.

Were the passages with supposedly biographical interest composed near the time of the experience or were they recollected by the mature poet

[54] "The Reason of Church Government," Hughes, p. 668.

looking back objectively on them? One can only say that if their intensity were due to personal involvement, it adds to the overall meaning of the drama, never distorting it to follow some psychical red-herring. The themes of false friends or of the champion unappreciated by his countrymen[55] are kept carefully subordinate to the human drama of a man struggling towards his redemption by understanding his past failures and surpassing them by his final self-sacrifice.

Any critic of the play has to judge the work which he has before him without imagining what it might have been if "properly finished." One might compare this situation with Michelangelo's unfinished figures of Slaves for the tomb of Pope Julius II. One appreciates them not as they might have been, but as they are. The capturing of the moment when Chaos emerges in Creation and the conveying of a tremendous energy struggling into form is aesthetically valuable to us (though John Pope-Hennessy would regard this as Romantic). Similarly, the critic should not pause in his discussion with provisos about the repetition of words and images allegedly showing the unfinished state of the work. Rather he should study the functions of this repetition to see whether it fails or succeeds. Dr Carey points out how much of the repetition consists of rhetorical figures.[56] All

[55] On 14th December 1647, fifty London Presbyterian ministers signed a document condemning twenty-two errors (of toleration) among them Milton's attitude towards divorce. Parker biog., I, 314.

[56] Carey, 337 notes that epizeuxis is rare (80, 928), that there are many examples of ploce (36, 73-4, 80-1, 90-1 etc.), antimetabole (423-5, 462-3, 686 etc.), anaphora (361, 394-5, 445-6, 449, 487, 493, 890 etc.), and anadiplosis (17-8, 247-8, 376-7, 878-9 etc.) Traductio is very frequent (39-40, 113-4 etc.).

these serve to structure the language of the poem within the blank verse. Similarly, it has been shown how much of the repetition of key words links images together, at times across the boundaries of logic.[57] It seems improbable that this repetition should be a sign of incompletion since it tightens the structure of the language and the imagery. The critic should take the dating of the work into consideration to guide his conclusions, but he has to judge the poem, be it "Samson Agonistes" or the "Aeneid," as a finished work.

The preceding cannot be more than a rough theory of the composition of "Samson Agonistes." Its basis is no more tenuous than the widely accepted dating for the tragedy.

[57] Oras[2] p. 6 says that "the widely dispersed figures of speech and images may not always immediately rise to the level of full awareness in the reader but they appear to be effective enough at a deeper level, not unlike the 'iterative imagery' of Shakespeare analyzed by Caroline E. Spurgeon."

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IV ABBREVIATIONS OF PERIODICALS

ELH	English Literary History.
HLQ	Huntingdon Library Quarterly.
JEGPh	Journal of English and Germanic Philology.
JWCI	Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute.
KR	The Kenyon Review.
MP	Modern Philology.
NQ	Notes and Queries.
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America.
PQ	Philological Quarterly.
RES	Review of English Studies.
SP	Studies in Philology.
SQ	Shakespeare Quarterly.
SR	The Sewanee Review.
UTQ	Toronto University Quarterly.