

MYTHIC QUALITIES OF SPACE AND TIME
IN PARADISE LOST

**MYTHIC QUALITIES OF SPACE AND TIME
IN JOHN MILTON'S PARADISE LOST**

BY

GARY J. MARTIN, B.A.

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AUTHOR: Gary J. Martin, B.A. (McMaster University)

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ABSTRACT

John Milton's presentation of his epic, Paradise Lost, represents an attempt to extend to the seventeenth-century reader an explanation of a world in need of understanding. In religion, politics and science there was perceived, justifiably, an uncertainty due to transition and innovation. An epic, by definition, purports to relate the decisive, paradigmatic event of human history. Utilising the Bible as his primary source, and with the addition of other forms of discourse as diverse as classical allusion and contemporary science, Milton attempts to render the chaotic calm, the inexplicable explicable, through a belief system proffered in the form of myth. Thus, Paradise Lost can be read as both emerging from a sense of anxiety in the seventeenth century, and as an attempt to alleviate that anxiety.

The extraordinary complexity and density of Paradise Lost would seem to require a careful, close reading of the text. Thus, it is necessary to thoughtfully select representational passages from Milton's epic in order to observe how this seventeenth-century anxiety is being addressed. A consideration of these passages will reveal patterns and strategies delineating how certain devices and aspects of the text can be read metaphorically. In turn, these metaphors can be seen as being in service of the myth which Milton is presenting to assuage the anxiety of the contemporary reader. The two aspects of the text to be discussed in this thesis are space and time.

The metaphorical strategies that John Milton applies toward his creation of myth are evident in any number of the disparate aspects which constitute Paradise Lost. Space and time, while crucial, are representative elements of an overall, comprehensive scheme on the part of the poet. Space, and the definition of this term, undergoes a significant metamorphosis in the text. Paradise Lost is a text which contains cosmic themes, and the historical evolution of the understanding of space as "a distance between two separate points" to space as "the firmament beyond the Earth's atmosphere" is demonstrated in this text. Milton is eager to define knowledge and the limits placed on the acquisition of knowledge in order to provide his reader with a means of understanding reality. Both definitions of space, described above, provide the poet with opportunities for his pedagogy. Time, along with being a concept naturally complementary to space, is of utility for understanding the structure of Milton's myth. How the poet addresses the anxiety inherent in an awareness of human mortality, combined with discussing the importance of linear time in relation with human history, is instructive. The prelapsarian world was one of circular time, with with the possibility of change being viewed optimistically. The postlapsarian world initiates linear time. This concept of human history as linear, and the consequences that this linear time has with respect to man's mortality, are incorporated in Milton's retelling of the Christian myth.

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Introduction:

"Sing heavenly muse" (I.6)¹ is the request of John Milton to the source of his poetic inspiration. This address continues:

... I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly thou O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That to the highth of this great argument
I may assert eternal providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

(I.12-26)

Within this relatively brief passage lies the seed of my thesis: there is a force of necessity underlying the desire to "justify the ways of God to men". With the benefit of historical hindsight the seventeenth century can be understood as a period of extraordinary change and uncertainty. However, it has been argued persuasively that the seventeenth-century reader was learned and sophisticated sufficiently to be cognizant of the transitivity and inconstancy of his milieu². Consider these lines, taken from John Donne's "The First Anniversarie" (1611)³:

And new Philosophy calls all in doubt,
 The element of fire is quite put out;
 The Sun is lost, and th'earth, and no mans wit
 Can well direct him, where to looke for it.
 And freely men confesse, that this world's spent,
 When in the Planets, and the Firmament
 They seeke so many new; they see that this
 Is crumbled out againe to 'his Atomis.
 'Tis all in pieces, all cohaerence gone;
 All just supply, and all Relation:
 Prince, Subject, Father, Sonne, are things forgot,
 For every man alone thinkes he hath got
 To be a Phoenix, and that there can bee
 None of that kinde, of which he is, but hee.
 (205-218)

This theme of uncertainty or "all cohaerence gone" can be traced to factors as varied as religion, politics and science⁴. It is within this environment of uncertainty that John Milton conceived, wrote and presented Paradise Lost. Milton's epic is an attempt to respond to this uncertainty and assuage the anxiety that arises from the seventeenth-century consciousness of the inconstancy of intellectual awareness. This inconstancy of intellectual awareness arose, in part, from the enormous number of scientific and technological innovations that characterised the seventeenth century. Certain basic truths, heretofore unquestioned and accepted, had been called into doubt, and it was in this climate of doubt that saw the presentation of Paradise Lost.

The uncertainty that arose from the calling into question the established, accepted world view of the seventeenth-century reader and the resulting anxiety⁵ that this reader would experience has been discussed in some depth in a number of sources. It is the contention of this thesis that Milton was aware of this anxiety and sought to assuage this feeling through the presentation of Paradise Lost. Milton's

epic addresses the daunting task of attempting "to justify the ways of God to men", offering a belief system which purports to deliver the truth of human existence. The story of Adam and Eve, their temptation by a fallen Archangel, their succumbing to temptation, and the need for Christ to absolve their sins, (sins which had been passed on to Adam and Eve's descendants), represents - for Milton - the paradigmatic event in human history. When Paradise Lost recounts that story Milton is presenting the reader with a means of assuaging the uncertainty which the Donneian sentiment of "all cohaerence gone" expresses.

Milton's epic is a text which utilises a variety of sources in order to present his belief system in mythic terms. At the core of Paradise Lost is the truth offered by Biblical allusion. Various episodes recounted in the Bible - most notably those episodes considered in the Books of Genesis and Revelation - are the central truth that is to be considered by the reader of this epic. "Truth" is an elusive term when one considers Paradise Lost. Milton frequently inextricably intertwines literary elements which are traditionally considered to possess incompatible truth value. Simply put, Biblical events, classical allusion and scientific fact are often conflated in a manner that could be considered arbitrary or even confusing. However, there exists a possible explanation which can account for this intermingling of these (seemingly) discordant literary types. All of the above - Biblical event, classical allusion, and scientific fact - are in service of a greater exigency: the requirement of "myth". For the purposes of this thesis, the definition of myth can be considered to fall within the following parameters⁶:

"myth" is a superior intuitive mode of cosmic understanding... and myths are regarded as fictional stories containing deeper truths, expressing collective attitudes to fundamental matters of life, death, divinity, and existence (sometimes deemed to be "universal"). (Baldick 143)

There is one aspect of myth, implied in the above definitions, which should be made explicit. An extraordinarily important characteristic of a successful, effective myth is the quality of "accessibility". If a myth is the abstract framework which explicates a belief system and, in turn, this belief system delineates and provides perspective for cultural existence, "accessibility" can be understood as the term which defines the probability of acceptance of that belief system. Consider the Sidneyian dialectic characterised by the concepts of gnosis and praxis⁷. The degree to which a myth is internally logical determines the gnosis of the myth as a basis for a belief system. However, unless that belief system has an emotional basis, then the praxis will ultimately fail. A myth has to be compelling on a visceral, even atavistic, level. That is, a myth must be true both intellectually and emotionally.

With the above definition of "myth" as touchstone, at this point an elaboration of the method this thesis will employ may prove useful. Certain selected, representational, passages will be chosen for the scrutiny of a close reading. As a result of this close reading certain patterns, created through the repetition of specific strategies, will point to the fact that John Milton wrote symbolically or metaphorically⁸. These symbols and metaphors are in the service of the need to create a myth which will "express collective attitudes to fundamental matters of life, death, divinity, and existence". However, rather than merely expressing an existing set of attitudes, Milton has set for himself the task of utilising an existing "myth"⁹ -

those events described in the Bible - combined with classical "mythical"¹⁰ allusion and empirically verifiable scientific fact, in order to address the uncertainty of the seventeenth-century reader. Thus, Milton's myth is less a passive, reactive response to an existing belief system than an aggressive, active attempt at assuaging contemporary anxiety. Paradise Lost can be seen as a rebuttal to Donne's lines from "The First Anniversarie":

'Tis all in pieces, all cohaerence gone;
 All just supply, and all Relation:
 Prince, Subject, Father, Sonne, are things forgot,
 For every man alone thinkes he hath got
 To be a Phoenix, and that there can bee
 None of that kinde, of which he is, but hee.
 (213-218)

A close reading is most effective if the scope of the investigation is subject to specific, narrow limits. This is why this thesis will focus on two important aspects of Milton's epic: space and time. A reconsideration of the invocation to Milton's Muse - discussed earlier in this Introduction - reveals the importance of these two concepts:

...I thence
 Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
 That with no middle flight intends to soar
 Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
 Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
 And chiefly thou O Spirit, that dost prefer
 Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
 Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
 Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
 Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss
 And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
 Illumine, what is low raise and support;
 That to the highth of this great argument
 I may assert eternal providence,
 And justify the ways of God to men.

(I.12-26)

With the addition of my emphasis following, one can perceive the importance of spatiality in the epic: Milton intends that his "adventurous song" will have "no middle flight", his muse "sat'st brooding on the vast abyss", and he characterizes his discussion as "the highth of this great argument". These passages illuminate the definition of "space" which underscores the discussion in the first chapter of this thesis: "space" as the distance between two separate points - a distance which is subject to travel and exploration. The second chapter of this thesis will deal with a definition of "space" that the OED ascribes to Paradise Lost as the earliest possible use: "the immeasurable expanse in which the solar and stellar systems, nebulae, etc. are situated". Furthermore, the importance of time also should not be underestimated. Along with the obvious complementary aspect that time enjoys with space - after all, "space" in the sense of the distance between two points is often understood by the time necessary to navigate the distance between those points - time is both a constraint and a defining characteristic which defines the poet's effort. Milton is attempting to assuage the intellectual anxiety of a specific historical period: the seventeenth century and the nihilism that arose from the perceived lack of a constant belief system. However, Milton must also address the paradoxical nature of his undertaking: both the text and the poet are trapped within a specific temporality while attempting to create a text which will overcome this obstacle and create an epic which, by definition, encompasses all of human history. Therefore, this conundrum will be, in part, the subject of the third chapter of this thesis: how

can a poet disengage himself from the bounds¹¹ of time in order to access the necessary "universality" that the desire to "assert eternal providence" denotes? Furthermore, does the Fall affect the perception of history and, if so, how is that new perception communicated to Adam?

**Chapter 1: "Space" as a Distance to be Traversed:
Satan's Travels in Books I to IV**

The experience of reading a text is very much an act of exploration. With Paradise Lost the reader, consequent to the Argument of Book I, begins his voyage with:

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat
(I.1-5)

the reader's voyage of discovery ends with:

They looked back, all the eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Waved over by that flaming brand, the gate
With dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms:
Some natural tears they dropped, but wiped them soon;
The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and providence their guide:
They hand in hand with wandering steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way.
(XII.641-649)

During the course of the reader's passage between these two points a myth is presented. This myth purports to describe the most important moment in human history: the Fall of Adam and Eve. As this myth has already been presented in one form, the Bible, Milton's version of the fundamental story of Adam and Eve

provides an elaboration which serves a purpose peculiar to his contemporary setting¹. This thesis chapter is centered on space as an entity to be traversed or travelled. (Specifically, the movement from point A to point B is the focus of this chapter.) Traditionally, the subject of space as distance to be traversed has been the subject of considerable academic attention².

However, Milton's text contains an element which reflects both the burgeoning science of astronomy and the cosmological concerns of his epic. Thus, Satan's travels, if mentally diagrammed, require more than a two-dimensional representation; the archfiend also travels "up" and "down". Therefore, of particular interest is the "3-dimensionality" of Paradise Lost. Whenever one considers travel literature of the seventeenth century, the distances traversed are normally on the surface of the earth. Allowing for some variance in elevation, most travelling takes place in strictly two dimensions. However, Paradise Lost is a text where the premier traveller, Satan, moves vertically, with the earth only one point of his travels. Notably, there are travels which take Satan through the cosmos and past other planets. As a recent study³ of Paradise Lost points out:

Interpreting an object, it is often argued, may reveal as much about the orientation of the interpreter as about the object he seeks to interpret. Since Kant, even apparently objective conditions like the spatial organization of the world have frequently seemed dependent on the intuitions applied to the world by the perceiver. From such a perspective, an interpreter not only responds to the world's design; he is in one sense responsible for it. (Whitman 21)

Satan's movements through space, his travelling from Hell to Eden and his return, represent a continual shift in perspective. A close reading of these "perspective points" will prove instructive for understanding the importance of Milton's

pedagogical effort; we will be better able to understand the design of Milton's world. The act of travelling as an exercise to further understanding is introduced early in the text. Clearly, "perspective" is an important concept in Milton's epic.

The introductory lines of Paradise Lost contain an image of travelling when, during his invocation to his muse, the poet describes his attempt to characterise the fall of man in terms of a "flight":

Sing heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
Rose out of chaos: or if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
(I.6-16)

Along with the self-congratulatory aspects of describing his "adventurous song" as intending "no middle flight", there is a sense of distance and perspective achieved by the poet. "Middle flight" is the realm of those poetasters above whom Milton intends "to soar". Paradise Lost is a text of extraordinary complexity and density, representing a daunting prospect for any attempt at critical analysis. For the purposes of this thesis a narrowing of the critical focus represents the most appropriate and useful approach. Such a close reading of Paradise Lost would seem to allow for the necessarily specific and exacting analysis that this text requires. A danger present in such a reading is taking a specific element of the text and tendering an analysis which does the text as a whole a disservice. However, Paradise

Lost is a text which is infinitely forgiving of almost any critical miscue. The depth and wealth of the material present in this epic are so intertwined that any close reading of a specific, representative area or theme will provide a relevant commentary on the text as a whole.

At the risk of repeating myself, the particular aspect of Paradise Lost that I have chosen to investigate is the motif of "travel". For the purposes of this essay, the definition of "travel" will be broadly stated as "any movement from one location to another, through space". Even this limited aspect of the text provides an overwhelming abundance of ideas and material with which to work. A further narrowing of my critical scope was necessary. Thus, the subject of this thesis chapter will be the travels of Satan, travels which are characterised throughout the first four Books of Paradise Lost. A close reading of the movements of Satan in Books I to IV will reveal the metaphoric nature of Paradise Lost. The symbolic significance of these metaphors as components of Milton's myth construction will also be discussed. However, unlike earlier scholars⁴ my interest will be less concerned with the sources of Milton's allusions and specific geographical references; instead, the focus of this essay will be the thematic implications of Satan's travels. The centrality of Satan's travels to the symbolic structure of Milton's epic is indicated by the alacrity with which the presence (taint?) of Satan is introduced.

There is a notable comparison to be drawn between Milton's muse, characterised in the following passage of invocation:

Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread

Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss
 And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
 Illumine, what is low raise and support;
 That to the highth of this great argument
 I may assert eternal providence,
 And justify the ways of God to men.

(I.19-26)

and the description of Satan's initial, tentative movements off the burning lake, freeing himself from "adamantine chains and penal fire" (I.48):

Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
 His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
 Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and rolled
 In billows, leave i' the midst a horrid vale.
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air
 That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
 He lights, if it were land that ever burned
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire.

(I.221-229)

Along with similarities between the physical descriptions of the muse, "with mighty wings outspread", and Satan, "with expanded wings ... aloft on the incumbent air", there is the initial association of the word "abyss" with the muse (I.21). However, later uses of this word are associated with Satan; specifically, the word "abyss" is most frequently associated with the gulf between Earth and Hell, the primary locale of Satan's travels. In Paradise Lost at various times the gap between Hell and Earth is described as a "dark unbottom'd infinite abyss" (II.405), a "hollow abyss" (II.518), a "wild abyss" (II.910 and II.917), the "nethermost abyss" (II.956 and II.969), and a "desolate abyss" (IV.936). Just as the word abyss is most frequently used when describing that area between the Earth and Hell, the individual most

frequently associated with this region is its explorer, Satan. Thus, the initial use of the word "abyss" (I.21) in the text creates an expectation in the reader which is not realized. The reader's initial association of this word is with Milton's muse: "... with mighty wings outspread/ Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss". Therefore, the following association of Satan with "abyss" creates a convergence which is jarring to the reader. Consider this description of Satan pondering his voyage in search of Earth:

Into this wild abyss the wary fiend
 Stood on the brink of hell and looked a while,
 Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith
 He had to cross. Nor was his ear less pealed
 With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
 Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,
 With all her battering engines bent to raze
 Some capital city; or less than if this frame
 Of heaven were falling, and these elements
 In mutiny had from her axle torn
 The steadfast earth. ...

(II.917-927)

Notice the disturbing effect Satan's absenting himself from off the pool: he leaves "i' the midst a horrid vale" (I.224). The physical effect of Satan on his surrounding geography, demonstrated here, is noted by the narrator:

... for now
 Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down
 The tempter ere the accuser of mankind,
 To wreck on innocent frail man his loss
 Of that first battle, and his flight to hell;
 Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
 Far off and faerless, nor with cause to boast,
 Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth
 Now rolling, boils in his tumultuous breast,
 And like a devlish engine back recoils

Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
 His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
 The hell within him, for within him hell
 He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
 One step no more than from himself can fly
 By change of place...

(IV.8-24)

and, later, by Satan, demonstrating anguished self-awareness:

Me miserable! Which way shall I fly
 Infinite wrath and infinite despair?
 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.

(IV.73-78)

The physical effect of Satan's movements presented with the description "horrid vale" (I.224) is confirmed by the arch-fiend's own awareness of his toxic presence's effect. The importance of perspective as it affects perception of environment is reinforced when one considers that the "wild abyss" is described in conjunction with Satan's viewing of this locale: "Into this wild abyss the wary fiend/ Stood on the brink of hell and looked a while,/ Pondering his voyage..." (II.917-919). Milton's Latinate sentence structure - with its characteristic inverted modifiers, "delayed" verbs, and numerous clauses - allows the reader to question if the hell described (II.917-927) possesses absolute, independent value, or if this environment is a creation resulting from a conjunction with Satan's perception.

The "horrid vale" "with noises loud and ruinous" are descriptive terms which necessitate the presence of an observer. Earlier, a fallen angel observes: "The mind is its own place, and in itself/ Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven" (I.254-

255). If an individual's perspective can have such a profound effect on perception of environment, the pedagogical importance of Paradise Lost is further emphasised. By presenting a belief system which responds to the uncertainties of the seventeenth century, Milton is ensuring that his reader's perception of his reality, as understood through the myth presented in Paradise Lost, will be unfettered and pure. Whatever anxiety the seventeenth-century reader has felt will be answered by the perspective offered by this myth.

A consideration of perspective would not be complete without addressing the figure of the Muse, encountered in the poet's invocation. It would seem that there is a two-fold irony present and, arguably, Satan is being cast as both the figure of Milton's muse and as a metaphor for Milton's act of poetic creation. If the "abyss" over which Milton's muse "sat'st brooding" is one of a dearth of poetic inspiration, then Satan is the figure who ameliorates the condition of poetic banality. Significantly, the first figure we see on Milton's "stage" is Satan: he painfully and doggedly gathers together his resources and travels, by flight, to the shore of the burning lake (l.221-241). It is Satan's decision, based upon his personal will for revenge, which provides the impetus for him to move off the burning lake:

So stretched out huge in length the arch-fiend lay
 Chained on the burning lake, nor ever thence
 Had risen or heaved his head, but that the will
 And high permission of all-ruling heaven
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,
 That with reiterated crimes he might
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
 Evil to others, and enraged might see
 How all his malice served but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shown

**On man by himself seduced, but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance poured.
(I.209-220)**

However, without this initial decision to travel from the burning lake, and the later decision to seek out Eden, the sequence of events that inevitably leads to Adam and Eve's fall would not have been initiated. Since Milton is at pains to insist that free will exists, Satan's desire for vengeance and his assertion, "So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,/ Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost;/ Evil be thou my good..." (IV.108-110), provides a further impetus and creates the titular subject of this epic. A symmetry is created between the figure of Milton's muse brooding over the abyss of the absence of poetic inspiration, and the figure of Satan brooding over the abyss of that space between Hell and Earth. Therefore, not only do Satan's travels bridge the gap between Heaven and Earth, but Satan's travels also bridge the gap between Milton's non-inspiration and inspiration. In this interpretation Satan can be characterised as acting as Milton's Muse, solving the apparent incongruity of the similarities between the passages which describe both figures.

A more immediate convergence can be drawn between the figure of Satan and Milton's personal act of creation. The amorphous qualities of the landscape through which Satan travels frequently defy definitive description. Satan's movements through the quintessence - "Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,/ But all these in their pregnant causes mixed" (II. 912-913) - are deliberately described in a manner that circumvents traditional visual imagery by nullifying the accepted paradigms of description through paradoxical obfuscation. For example, try to

visually imagine the following description of Satan's mode(s) of travel:

... so eagerly the fiend
 O'er bog or steep, through straight, rough, dense, or rare,
 With head, hands, wings or feet pursues his way,
 And swims or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.
 (II.947-950)

Consider, too, the following descriptive passage in which Satan, having returned from his explorations, is recounting - in a self-aggrandizing manner - his voyage to the fallen host:

...Long were to tell
 What I have done, what suffered, with what pain
 Voyaged the unreal, vast unbounded deep
 Of horrible confusion, over which
 By Sin and Death a broad way now is paved
 To expedite your glorious march; but I
 Toiled out my uncouth passage, forced to ride
 The untractable abyss, plunged in the womb
 Of unoriginable Night and Chaos wild,
 That jealous of their secrets fiercely opposed
 My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
 Protesting fate supreme; thence how I found
 The new created world...

(X.469-481)

Here, too, linguistic certainty is "deconstructed" through a series of negative descriptions: "unreal", "unbounded", "uncouth", "untractable", and "unoriginable". Not only does this passage continue the circumvention of traditional imagery recounted above, Satan is also insuring that his fellow fallen angels are denied the specific "hard" information he obtained during his voyage. With the conveyance of such linguistically null perspective, Satan continues to maintain his hierarchically superior position of power through his unique knowledge. Furthermore, consider how Satan's use of description reveals his own fallen state. From Satan's perspective

his environment is best characterised by negative description. Paradoxically, Satan's voyage of discovery is conspicuously negative in aspect. Apparently, Milton's act of creation, as a blind poet, depends on his describing a vision that only he can perceive. Admittedly, this process is common to all poets, but Milton's communication of a personal vision takes on a certain piquancy when one considers the oxymoronic aspects of a description of Satan's landscape of darkness:

... for now the thought
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
 Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes
 That witnessed huge affliction and dismay
 Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate:
 At once as far as angel's ken he views
 The dismal situation waste and wild,
 A dungeon horrible, on all sides round
 As one great furnace flamed, yet from those flames
 No light, but rather darkness visible
 Served only to discover sights of woe,
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
 And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
 That comes to all; but torture without end
 Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed:
 Such place eternal justice had prepared
 For these rebellious, here their prison ordained
 In utter darkness, and their portion set
 As far removed from God and light of heaven
 As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.

(I.54-74)⁵

Notice that Satan's landscape is illuminated by "darkness visible", just as Milton's darkness is "illuminated" by his personal act of creation. As described above, the figure which illuminates and propels the epic is Satan. The following decree represents God's punishment of Satan, but certain overtones of theological speculation are certainly evident:

Under [the Son's] viceregent reign abide
 United as one individual soul
 For ever happy: him who disobeys
 Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day
 Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
 Into utter darkness, deep engulfed, his place
 Ordained without redemption, without end.
 (V.609-615)

Through this passage Milton's act of writing the epic, Paradise Lost, can be viewed as an act which publicly affirms his faith; perhaps it is even a simultaneous confession and penance for sin. It is significant to note that Milton's darkness is illuminated by his poetic imagination, with his epic being the result. Ironically, the catalytic figure of this illuminating act of poetic creation is a figure of comprehensive darkness: Satan.

The act of travel, or movement from point A to point B, entails the acquisition of experience through observation. Thus, travel, especially exploratory travel, can be defined as an act of learning. Considering that the seventeenth-century reader would perceive his world through a hierarchical mode of understanding⁶, the greater the body of knowledge acquired by an entity, the more powerful that entity would be. (Consider, for example that God alone possesses foreknowledge.) Satan's understanding of the equation "knowledge = power" motivates his actions. Specifically, Satan can be seen to use travel and exploration as a means of acquiring and maintaining power. In order to establish his preeminence among the fallen angels, Satan volunteers to explore for Earth, described by Beelzebub as "another world, the happy seat/ Of some new race called Man" (II.347-348). It is interesting to note the almost Machiavellian complexity of

the political maneuvering that Satan undertakes in order to guarantee his ascendancy among the fallen angels⁷. First, Beelzebub, acting as Satan's stooge, introduces the possibility of exploring for this other world while simultaneously warning of the dangers involved, stating that only the bravest could possibly undertake such a mission:

...But first whom shall we send
 In search of this new world, whom shall we find
 Sufficient? Who shall tempt with wandering feet
 The dark unbottomed infinite abyss
 And through the palpable obscure find out
 His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight
 Upborne with indefatigable wings
 Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
 The happy isle; what strength, what art can then
 Suffice or what evasion bear him safe
 Through the strict sentries and stations thick
 Of angels watching round? Here he had need
 All circumspection, and we now no less
 Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send,
 The weight of all and our last hope relies.

(II.402-416)

However, none are eager to undertake this mission and "all sat mute" (II.420) until Satan, after a suitably dramatic pause, offers to be the explorer and undertake this voyage:

But I should ill become this throne, O peers,
 And this imperial sovereignty, adorned
 With splendour, armed with power, if aught proposed
 And judged of public moment, in the shape
 Of difficulty or danger could deter
 Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume
 These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
 Refusing to accept as great a share
 Of hazard as of honour, due alike
 To him who reigns, and so much to him due
 Of hazard more, as he above the rest

High Honoured sits?

(II.445-456)

Note how Satan's offering of his service is characterised in terms which assume a dominant position. He is now "transcendent" (II.427), "monarchal" (II.428), and has acquired a consideration of self as being of "highest worth" (II.429). Furthermore, by making these assumptions, Satan utilises a flawed form of rhetorical argument: his premises assume the conclusion of the argument - he argues in a circle. When Satan agrees to "assume/ These royalties" and "not refuse to reign" he defines the task as one worthy of an individual fit to rule; with this assumption, he argues, this proves he is fit to rule the fallen angels. Significantly, this flawed form of argumentation is effective with the fallen host. Having been swayed by Lucifer's rhetoric in Heaven, the fallen angels are still vulnerable to Satan's skillful rhetoric. Their reaction to Satan's offer of being their exploratory envoy confirms and renews their obeisance to the wrong deity. This reverence for a figure described "as a god" [emphasis mine] is based on the erroneous assumption that Satan acted from selfless motives; supposedly he is selflessly concerned with the welfare of the fallen host over his own safety:

Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
With awful reverence prone; and as a god
Extol him equal to the highest in heaven:
Nor failed they to express how much they praised,
That for the general safety he despised
His own. (II.476-482)

It is useful to remember that Satan's initial enthusiasm for exploration was predicated on an awareness of a possible threat to his dominance of the fallen host.

Thus, notice how Satan continues with this use of travel for purposes of self-aggrandizement when he returns from the seduction of Adam and Eve. Satan simultaneously describes his efforts in painstakingly immodest detail while giving the impression that he is being brief and succinct. Once again, Satan's version of events is designed to promote himself and to warrant his superior status among the fallen host:

... Long were to tell
 What I have done, what suffered, with what pain
 Voyaged the unreal, vast unbounded deep
 Of horrible confusion, over which
 By Sin and Death a broad way now is paved
 To expedite your glorious march; but I
 Toiled out my uncouth passage, forced to ride
 The untractable abyss, plunged in the womb
 Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild,
 That jealous of their secrets fiercely opposed
 My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
 Protesting fate supreme; thence how I found
 The new created world...

(X.469-481)

Satan continues with his Machiavellian strategies; he has plans within plans. Even the seemingly selfless act of refusing to endanger another by insisting on travelling alone is a useful strategy. Having defined the requirements of rule as being based on his own actions, Satan is quick to eliminate the possibility of any competition by refusing to "share the risk". Therefore, Satan quickly dismisses all of the fallen host for two reasons: first, Satan doesn't want a companion to share the glory of this expedition because this companion would threaten to usurp the favoured place that the arch-fiend has created for himself and second, more subtly, Satan doesn't wish to allow for the possibility of any discourse. Satan fears a

competitor's volunteering because this competitor would have the full expectation of not being accepted for this task but would gain the praise and glory of merely making a public gesture. The hypocrisy of such an empty offer of exploration rests on the awareness that such an offer has little realistic chance of being accepted - although the reflected glory of such an offer would be readily accepted. The following passage describes the Machiavellian machinations of Satan as he addresses the fallen host:

... Go therefore mighty powers,
 Terror of heaven, though fallen; intend at home,
 While here shall be our home, what best may ease
 The present misery, and render hell
 More tolerable; if there be cure or charm
 To respite or deceive, or slack the pain
 Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch
 Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad
 Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek
 Deliverance for us all: this enterprise
 None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose
 The monarch, and prevented all reply,
 Prudent, lest from his resolution raised
 Others among the chief might offer now
 (Certain to be refused) what erst they feared;
 And so refused might in opinion stand
 His rivals, winning cheap the high repute
 Which he through hazard huge must earn...

(II.456-473)

Ironically, Satan has fallen victim to the malady most often suffered by plotters and conspirators: paranoia. While his attempt to prevent any of the others from volunteering is based on the strategy of preventing any false offers of assistance, all of the fallen angels are too cowed to make such an offer: "but [the fallen host]/ Dreaded not more the adventure than his voice/ Forbidding" (II.473-475). Satan is

busily thwarting enemies that do not exist: his enemies are mere creations of his own imaginative paranoia.

As stated above, Milton's myth utilises various sources which are considered to possess different, even incompatible, levels of truth. One such source is classical myth. Specifically, Satan's travels can be seen to be a parodic form of the myth of Orpheus⁸. The myth of Orpheus can be read as an archetypal depiction of the heroic search for knowledge. The heroic protagonist leaves home, descends into the underworld, achieves wisdom (usually at some cost), and ascends home, sadder but wiser. In Paradise Lost the journey of Satan begins from below, in the underworld, and then travels up, towards wisdom⁹. Unfortunately, Satan does not learn during his voyage. The failure to learn can be traced to Satan's monomaniacal, exclusionary perspective. As long as he continues to believe "Which way I fly is hell; my self am hell" (IV.75), Satan is unable to adapt to the change in his circumstances that saw him lose everything which defined his reality: even his name was stripped from him. Lucifer, the Son of Morning, has become Satan, the Usurper. Milton's parody of the Orpheus myth serves as a pedagogical tool for those who are traversing his own myth, Paradise Lost. The reader must cleanse himself or herself of preconceptions which will cause him or her to see "through a glass darkly" and be prepared to learn the lessons that Milton's myth provides in understanding the past, the present, and the future.

A careful reading of certain passages which describe the desired ends of the fallen host's exploration reveals criticisms of specific aspects of colonialism¹⁰. Both

Beelzebub's description of the desired result of his proposed mission of exploration, and the metaphors used to describe Satan's travels reveal a criticism of the mercantile aspects of colonialism. Note the following plan of revenge against the "puny inhabitants" of the Earth suggested by Beelzebub:

... here perhaps
 Some advantageous act may be achieved
 By sudden onset, either with hell fire
 To waste his whole creation, or possess
 All as our own, and drive as we were driven,
 The puny inhabitants, or if not drive,
 Seduce them to our party, that their God
 May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
 Abolish his own works.

(II.362-370)

In this scheme of revenge suggested by Beelzebub there is a hierarchy of desired vengeance: first, total destruction - the fallen host will "waste [God's] whole creation"; second, usurpation of these lands - the rebel angels will "possess/ All as our own, and drive as we were driven/ The puny inhabitants"; and third, conversion of the natives - the arch-fiends will "seduce them to our party". The instrument who initiates this act of vengeance will be the volunteer explorer, Satan. Significantly, there are a number of instances where Satan is characterized as an explorer or voyager: "voyage" (II.426) and (II.919), "his sea should find a shore" (II.1011), "like a weather-beaten vessel" (II.1043), and the Earth as a mercantile isle of destination:

Satan with thoughts inflamed of highest design,
 Puts on solitary wings, and towards the gates of hell
 Explores his swift flight; some times
 He scours the right hand coast, some times the left
 Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
 Up to the fiery concave towering high.

**As when far off at sea a fleet descried
 Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
 Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
 Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
 Their spicy drugs: they on the trading flood
 Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
 Ply stemming nightly to the pole...**

(II.630-642)

Associating Satan and the rebel angels with mercantile colonialism defines this pursuit as a fallen act. Furthermore, since the peoples of these new found lands are represented by Adam and Eve, colonialism is an act which represents a loss of innocence for these people. The colonists are seen as a literally and figuratively destructive force which seduces the innocent inhabitants of a land to corruption. This criticism raises a question: does Milton intend the reader to see the prospective colonial depredations of the fallen angels as representative of the zealous Spanish colonialism, with its association with missionary Catholicism?

Satan's travels within the text of Paradise Lost provide an ironic commentary on the reader's own act of exploration. Just as Satan travels from point A to point B to acquire knowledge, the reader travels from point A (the beginning of the text) to point B (the end of the text). The scheme suggested by Beelzebub for conquering the "puny inhabitants" of the earth lists "[seducing] them to our party" (II.368) as the most effective of a number of heinous options. Just as Satan explores in order to ascertain the existence of this new creation, heretofore known only through "ancient and prophetic fame in heaven" (II.346), the reader explores the text of Paradise Lost. Surely, Beelzebub's scheme of intellectual seduction must act as a warning to the reader to beware of the dangers inherent in accompanying such

dubious companions on this journey. Thus, the act of reading Paradise Lost is an act of exploration with the aim of acquiring knowledge¹¹. It would be a mistake to assume that Milton intended the experience of reading Paradise Lost, "voyaging" from Book I to Book XII, to be a seamless, steady, inexorable act. The complexity of the text, the extraordinary denseness of the various allusions and literary devices, ensures that the reader must allow for diversions in his "itinerary". Of the many such diversions I could have chosen, a personal favourite is one aspect of Paradise Lost rarely discussed: Milton's subtle, even esoteric, sense of humour. He tends to employ various literary devices in a manner best described as abstruse. Since humour is a matter of personal definition the following could be considered a self-indulgent aside. However, I believe that the moment between Beelzebub's asking for volunteers for the perilous mission of exploration, and Satan's putting himself forward to act as that explorer has an intentionally comic effect. While Milton's Paradise Lost is not noted for its jocularity, the following description of the deafening silence that greets Beelzebub's requests for volunteers does lend itself to a humorous reading:

... Here [our explorer] had need
 All circumspection, and we now no less
 Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send,
 The weight of all and our last hope relies.
 This said, he sat; and expectation held
 His look suspense, awaiting who appeared
 To second, or oppose, or undertake
 The perilous attempt: but all sat mute,
 Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each
 In other's countenance read his own dismay
 Astonished: none among the choice and prime
 Of those heaven-warring champions could be found

So hardy as to proffer or accept
Alone the dreadful voyage.

(II.413-426)

One has a mental picture of the fallen host collectively shuffling their feet, shamefacedly avoiding each other's gaze, while (metaphorically) nervously tugging at shirt collars suddenly too constrictive. However, it would be a mistake to dismiss the humorous aspects of this scene as being unworthy of "serious" investigation. Clearly, as readers, we are meant to laugh at, not with, the fallen host. The collective failure of this assembly of fiends to meet the requirements of courage necessary to undertake the mission of exploration neatly undercuts the awesome and awful aspects of these beings, previously described in the following grandiose terms:

... in even balance down they light
On firm brimstone, and fill all the plain;
A multitude, like which the populace north
Poured never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands.
Forthwith from every squadron and each band
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
Their great commander; godlike shapes and forms
Excelling human, princely dignities
And powers that erst in heaven sat on thrones

(I.349-360)

The following passage describes Satan in a similar fashion. While it could be argued that Satan, as fallen archangel, is greater than his fellows and the following description is inapplicable to the other rebel angels, the confusion evident in the fallen angels initial attempts to identify each other (I.84) argues for a similarity in appearance.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate
 With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
 That sparkling blazed, his other parts besides
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large
 Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
 As whom the fables name as monstrous size,
 Titanian, or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
 Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
 By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
 Leviathan, whom God of all his works
 Created hugest that swim the ocean stream:
 Him haply slumbering on the Norway foam
 The pilot of some night foundered skiff,
 Deeming some island, oft as seaman tell,
 With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
 Moors by his side under the lee, while night
 Invests the sea, and wished morn delays:
 So stretched out huge in length the arch-fiend lay
 Chained on the burning lake...

(I.192-210)

Finally, while the silence that greets Beelzebub's request for a volunteer is humorous, it also indicates the relative domination over discourse that Satan possesses over the fallen host. This group is described as "all [sitting] mute" (II.420), only communicating (non-verbally) by reading each other's countenance (II.421). Satan is quick to offer a balm to the "deep silence" of his fellows. This silence is broken by the carefully contrived, strategic rhetoric of Satan. He first compliments the others as "progeny of heaven, empyreal thrones" (II.430) and then he describes the pusillanimity of the others as being based on "reason". Satan is a master manipulator; he manages to turn the others' consciousness of a failure into a belief that this weakness is really a strength. His reinforcing of the others' cowardice as a strength foreshadows his skillful use of rhetoric that will bring about the fall of Adam and Eve as well as explaining how the fallen angels were initially inveigled to

rebel.

The following passage also demonstrates Milton's sense of humour; there is present a convoluted ironic play on words that clearly reveals Milton's love of language. Furthermore, the concept of the text as physical space for the reader to traverse (presumably with a discriminating, approving eye) is introduced through the repetition of a key phrase:

... Into this wild abyss,
 The womb of nature and perhaps her grave,
 Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
 But all these in her pregnant causes mixed
 Confusedly, and which thus might ever fight,
 Unless the almighty maker them ordain
 His dark materials to create more worlds,
 Into this wild abyss the wary fiend
 Stood on the brink of hell and looked a while,
 Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith
 He had to cross.

(II.910-920)

When Satan is described as having "stood on the brink and looked awhile" the structure of the text follows the sense of these words. Just as Satan pauses, immobile, so too does the description of the temporal procession of events. The text describes Satan's movement "into this wild abyss" (II.910) that doesn't immediately happen. Several lines later the narration repeats the line "into this wild abyss" (II.917) in much the same manner as an offstage prompt hissed at a forgetful actor. This hesitation is ascribed to the lack of fortitude on the part of Satan: "the wary fiend/ Stood on the brink and looked awhile,/ Pondering his voyage" (II.917-919). Therefore, just as the character is described as hesitating, creating a break in the linear flow of the action, the text "hesitates", creating a break in the linear flow of

the language which necessitates the repetition of a key line. This hesitation also provides a further commentary on Satan's courage. Compare the uncertainty and hesitation of this moment with the certainty and confidence he expressed when originally volunteering for this task (II.430ff). Even the narrator intrudes at this point of hesitation, describing Satan's eventual voyaging into the abyss with some impatience: "At last his sail-broad vans/ He spreads for flight" (II.927 emphasis mine).

A further demonstration of the text of Paradise Lost as geography to be traversed is demonstrated through Milton's use of acrostics, embedded sonnets¹², and hymns¹³. The use of these literary forms allows the reader to "travel" in several senses of the word. The text becomes a landscape which tests the perceptivity of the reader. According to Moseley examples of Milton's use of acrostics include the following. (Note the phrase after the comma at (IX.512)):

S cipio the height of Rome. With tract oblique
 A t first, as one who sought access, but feared
 T o interrupt, sidelong he works his way.
 A s when a ship by skilful steersman wrought
 N igh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
 (IX.510-514 emphasis mine)

Samuels comments on the following use of the embedded sonnet¹⁴:

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime
 Said then the lost archangel, this the seat
 That we must change for heaven, this mournful gloom
 For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
 Who now is sovereign can dispose and bid
 What shall be right: furthest from him is best
 Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme
 Above his equals. Farewell happy fields
 Where joy for ever dwells: hail horrors, hail

**Infernal world, and thou profoundest hell
 Receive thy new possessor: one who brings
 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.
 (I.242-255)**

If Samuels' definition of "sonnet" is too broad for comfort, consider Milton's incorporation of the literary form of the hymn. Examples of his incorporation of this form include III.372ff, IV.724ff, V.153-208, and at the end of Book VII.

For the typical reader, failure to note the incorporation of these literary devices does not diminish enjoyment of the epic. However, Milton's inclusion of these devices does invoke issues of accessibility. Certainly the acrostic form, the sonnet form and the hymn were familiar to the seventeenth-century reader. Recognition of these devices would reassure such a reader in much the same manner as encountering the familiar reassures a traveller in exotic climes. When Milton subsumes these familiar literary devices, he is both providing a familiar touchstone for his reader, and asserting his own, personal, power as poet. Rather than having the presence of these acrostics, embedded sonnets, and hymns dominate (or, at least, compete) with the substance of the poem, Milton (seemingly) off-handedly incorporates these forms in a manner which suggests a diminution of the importance of these literary devices.

However, of far greater importance is the myth which these literary devices serve. Recognition of these devices by an astute reader serves the need for accessibility. Failure to recognise these devices does not diminish a reader's ability to appreciate and apprehend the epic, but a reader who does recognise these acrostics, embedded sonnets, and hymns will realise an increased feeling of intimacy

to Paradise Lost. If the poem is the delineation of a belief system, then a reader with the perspicacity to recognise these devices will consider himself especially worthy. As Paradise Lost is representative of a hierarchical structure¹⁵ such a reader might consider himself or herself to be one of the chosen, elected to receive an exclusionary message. A belief system which affirms an individual's conviction in his own ascendancy through his ability to discern encoded messages only he is clever enough to decipher is one that appeals to a very human sin: pride.

While the accessibility of specific literary devices in the text acts as a means of reinforcing a reader's sense of his own election, the overall scheme of Satan's travels serves a much more prosaic purpose. One function of a successful myth is the degree to which that myth is accessible to the reader. A myth necessarily must overcome skepticism concerning the truth of its message: "the myth, far from being a symbolic version of some distant truth, is itself the model of which every day reality is in some sense the symbol" (McColley 16). Thus, a reader must be able to relate to a myth on an emotional level. Therefore, Satan's travels also serve the purpose of creating a sense of anticipation and tension in the reader. The text alternates between scenes of Adam and Eve, enjoying the halcyon setting of Eden, and the ominous approach of Satan. Despite the fact that all readers know the eventual outcome of this story, there is still an anticipation of how this outcome will be described. Also, in a larger sense, Satan's immediate presence in this text acts as a warning to the reader. The first scene described after the poet's invocation to his muse is Satan and the rest of the fallen rebel angels in adamant chains on the

burning lake. This initial and continual awareness of the presence of Satan in the reader's understanding of Paradise Lost acts in much the same manner as the allegorical representation of Death seen in medieval paintings. Frequently, death would be depicted in one of the corners of the painting engaged in a danse macabre. Satan's continual presence in the reader's consciousness serves a similar purpose of warning the reader to be aware of the sin of hubris through complacency. Thus, Satan, the figure of evil who is a constant presence in this text, acts as a reminder of our postlapsarian state. The taint of evil is an inescapable presence in this text, just as it is in our lives. Milton, the poet, must immediately include the figure of Satan in his account of the fall of Adam and Eve. As a postlapsarian poet it is impossible for him to describe a prelapsarian state without including the figure of Satan in the corner of our consciousness. Paradise Lost is a text that is written with a postlapsarian awareness of evil, and the continual presence of Satan, constantly approaching Adam and Eve in order to (inevitably) destroy their innocence acts as a warning to the reader. Evil is a constant taint in the text, just as evil is a constant taint in our postlapsarian lives, and we must exercise eternal vigilance.

The presence of Satan as a figure in a landscape is made clear through a shift in perspective. Until now, Satan's travels have been described by a narrator. Compare the following description of the archfiend as seen from God's perspective:

...[God] then surveyed
 Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
 Coasting the wall of heaven on this side night
 In the dun air sublime, and ready now
 To stoop with wearied wings and willing feet
 On the bare outside of this world that seemed

Firm land imbosomed without firmament,
 Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
 Him God beholding from his prospect high,
 Wherein past, present, future he beholds,
 Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake.
 Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage
 Transports our adversary, whom no bounds
 Prescribed, no bars of hell, nor all the chains
 Heaped on him there, nor yet the main abyss
 Wide interrupt can hold; so bent he seems
 On desperate revenge, that shall redound
 Upon his rebellious head. And now
 Through all restraint broke loose he wings his way
 Not far off heaven, in the precincts of light,
 Directly toward the new created world,
 And man there placed, with purpose to assay
 If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
 By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert
 For man will hearken to his glozing lies
 And easily transgress the sole command
 Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall,
 He and his faithless progeny: whose fault?
 Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
 All he could have; I made him just and right,
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
 Such I created all the ethereal powers
 And spirits...

(III.69-102)

Never let it be said that Milton is incapable of efficiency of expression. Consider how neatly God's superior perspective - both literal and figurative - is characterised in the following couplet: "Wherein past, present, future he beholds,/ Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake" (III.77-78). God's vantage point, "prospect high", is reminiscent of the poet's invocation to his Muse. Like Milton's "adventurous song/ That with no middle flight intends to soar" (I.13-14), God is "beholding from his prospect high". Any reader who has felt a certain grudging admiration for Satan's determination and effort perceives how ineffectual and, ultimately, doomed to

failure the archfiends are destined to be. Again, note how efficiently God, speaking to His Son, recounts Satan's efforts:

Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage
 Transports our adversary, whom no bounds
 Prescribed, no bars of hell, nor all the chains
 Heaped on him there, nor yet the main abyss
 Wide interrupt can hold; so bent he seems
 On desperate revenge...

(III.80-85)

However, any glimmer of respect that Satan's determination might engender is immediately dashed by the final phrase of this description of the archfiend's future: "... that shall redound/ Upon his rebellious head" (III.85-86). Finally, consider how the following lines recount the nefarious scheme suggested by Beelzebub (II.362-370):

...And now
 Through all restraint broke loose he wings his way
 Not far off heaven, in the precincts of light,
 Directly toward the new created world,
 And man there placed, with purpose to assay
 If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
 By some false guile pervert...

(III.86-92)

Interestingly, God considers the succumbing to "false guile" worse than destruction. Apparently, succumbing to the wrong belief system, assigning your faith in an inappropriate manner, is a fate worse than death. (Actually, technically speaking, according to Christian doctrine's requirements for redemption and resurrection, it is death.) Finally, consider the ambiguity in the pronoun reference in III.95ff. When God wonders "... so will fall,/ He and his faithless progeny: whose fault?/ Whose but his own?" (III.95-97), man is clearly the reference for "he" and "his". However, God's disassociation from the standard temporal continuum renders

the identity of the "ingrate" (III.97) ambiguous. This ambiguity serves a purpose. Rather than engaging in speculative wrangling concerning towards whom that pejorative term is directed, consider how this ambiguity can serve the needs of myth. By being equally and simultaneously applicable to both the past actions of Satan and the rebel angels, and the future actions of Adam, Eve and their progeny, this passage is meeting the needs of accessibility in the form of "universality"¹⁶.

The uncertainty of the antecedent to these pronouns demonstrates the importance of myth in a microcosm. The past fall of the rebel angels prefigures the future fall of Adam and Eve which, in turn, prefigures the fallen state of the contemporary reader. We, the readers of Paradise Lost, can understand our fallen state through this repeated cycle. However, as the archangel Michael later explains to Adam, this cycle is not eternal: the Son of God's sacrifice will redeem us if we believe and accept the validity of the Christian myth. This is the myth that is the basis for Milton's epic, written for his seventeenth-century readers.

**Chapter 2: "Space" as Cosmology:
The Dialogue on Astronomy in Book VIII**

This chapter of my thesis will continue to examine the importance of "space" as a metaphorical device in Paradise Lost. Just as the subject of the first chapter, Satan's travels, is representative of one definition of space - any distance which separates point A from point B - this chapter will examine a second, commonly understood, definition of space: astronomy¹. The role that Milton had in introducing this definition of the term should not be underestimated². For Milton to feel the need to coin a new meaning for the word "space", a meaning that has entered into common, accepted use, reveals the importance that space plays in the poet's "metaphorical strategies". By my use of this term, I refer to the overall effect of Milton's use of the trope of astronomy. At this point it may be useful to reintroduce the main structure of this thesis's argument: a close reading of Paradise Lost will reveal that Milton wrote strategically, with the intention of creating specific metaphorical structures. These structures, while delightful and instructive in themselves, also serve a greater overall purpose: contribution to Milton's attempt at creating myth. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is threefold: first, to identify some of the strategies used by Milton to create metaphorical structure, second, to delineate the pedagogical effect of these metaphors, and third, to identify how these metaphorical structures aid in the creation and explication of Milton's myth.

It has been said that "Shakespeare lived in a world of time, Milton in a universe of space" (Nicolson 1956 96)³. This comparison continues:

The distinction [between time and space] is the distinction between two worlds - the old and the new; and the profound difference arises from the seventeenth-century awareness of the immensity of space. How valid the distinction is will be clear to to any student of Shakespeare and Milton, who, considering them merely as reflectors of the thought of their respective periods, observes their obsession with certain dominant conceptions. Of Milton's fascination with space, to which Paradise Lost bears witness in nearly every book, there is no indication in Shakespeare. And yet that was not because Shakespeare's imagination was not influenced by abstract conceptions. Time with Shakespeare is equally an obsession. The use of actual words is perhaps misleading; yet it is at least as interesting to observe that the word space - according to concordances - occurs in Shakespeare only thirty-two times, always with an obviously limited meaning; space to him was little more than "the distance between two objects." The same concordances list more than eight columns of the use of time. (Nicolson 1956 96-97)

With "space" being of such importance to Paradise Lost that the text "bears witness in nearly every book" it becomes necessary to limit this examination to a representative section of the text. Book VIII seems an appropriate choice due to the overtly didactic nature of the exchange between the two primary interlocutors: Adam and Raphael. Adam can be seen to represent the evolving consciousness of the seventeenth-century reader, who, like Adam, has questions and uncertainties arise whenever gazing at the firmament overhead. While gazing overhead, a literate, thoughtful individual could not help but be aware of the astounding changes that had been wrought in terms of man's understanding of himself, and his place in the universe. The older, accepted means of understanding the cosmos had given way to new, disconcerting scientific theories⁴. Seventeenth-century man was left to wonder: "How much, and what, are we meant to know?".

That there are limits placed on man's knowledge is made clear in the

following admonishing reproof of Raphael to Adam:

Think only what concerns thee and thy being;
 Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
 Live, in what state, condition or degree,
 Contented that thus far hath been revealed
 Not of earth only but of highest heaven.

(VIII.174-178)

Clearly, in Paradise Lost, "knowledge" is not mere **information** - a collection of facts - instead, knowledge clearly has moral and spiritual implications. There exists knowledge which is proper, and there is knowledge which is improper: thus, there are things which man is not meant to know. In fact, as Raphael states earlier, there is knowledge that is reserved for God, and man should not attempt to investigate those proscribed areas:

And for the heaven's wide circuit, let it speak
 The maker's high magnificence, who built
 So spacious, and his line stretched out so far;
 That man may know he dwells not in his own;
 An edifice too large for him to fill,
 Lodged in a small partition, and the rest
 Ordained for uses to his Lord best known.

(VIII.100-106)

Of any number of notable examples I have chosen these two examples because of the type of knowledge being discussed and characterized: astronomy. As discussed earlier, a useful approach to a text as intricate as Paradise Lost is to narrow one's focus of interest to a single, specific area of investigation, and examine that area in a thorough and rigorous manner. Such a close reading of the text is amenable to an approach Mildred Gutkin characterises as a "return once again to New Critical strategies and a fresh look at the text itself" (283). As in Gutkin's essay, the specific

aspect of Paradise Lost which will be investigated in this chapter is "space". Furthermore, like Gutkin's essay, which considers generally how the definition of the physical limitations of space can be considered as a metaphor for the limits of man's knowledge, my interest also lies in that more specific definition of "space" that is associated with the science of astronomy. Specifically, Milton's depiction of that area that lies beyond the earth's atmosphere, the solar system, will be the subject of this chapter. By focussing the "glass" of our interest on this single metaphorical device, it will be possible to identify and define a number of important issues. Within this one metaphorical device of cosmological knowledge, I will argue, limits are placed on man's pursuit of "overly 'curious' philosophical and theological knowledge" (Summers 161)⁵. Also, there is a certain ironic appeal in choosing this particular image as the subject of examination: astronomy is an empirical science in which the physical act of sight (through a telescope) is of great importance, but Milton, during his composition and dictation of Paradise Lost, was blind. His "vision" was entirely internal; his "illumination" was entirely one of the imagination⁶.

The method that I have chosen to apply towards a better understanding of Milton's use of "space" as a metaphorical device rests on the assumption that the poet wrote strategically. My interest in metaphor is similar to the method characterized below⁷:

... with an eye to the function rather than the nature of metaphor: especially at those moments when tenor and vehicle draw so closely together that language becomes an immediate structural clarification, rather than a signatory betrayal, of experience (Cope 1962 4-5).

Thus, any image or figurative device utilised by Milton in his epic is a multi-valued one, possessing a variety of levels of meaning and significance which occur simultaneously. Identifying how astronomy or "space" acts as a metaphor for "knowledge" will suggest how such a metaphoric relationship creates an "immediate structural clarification"⁸. A reader who identifies and considers this variety of levels, all of which have as a basis the concept of "space", will have a basis for appreciating the intricacy and complexity of Paradise Lost. When Samuel Johnson⁹ wrote about the Metaphysical poets he complained:

The most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together; nature and art are ransacked for illustrations, comparisons and allusions; their learning instructs and their subtlety surprises, but the reader commonly thinks his improvement dearly bought, and though he sometimes admires, is seldom pleased (Johnson 12).

While Milton is not a Metaphysical poet, his method of addressing the figure of astronomy could, if misread, be assessed in a fashion similar to Johnson's. Milton deliberately incorporates the two main¹⁰, competitive and mutually exclusive, cosmological views of his time: the Ptolemaic and Copernican¹¹. Simply put, the Ptolemaic system argues for a geo-centric universe while the Copernican system hypothesises a helio-centric system. Clearly it is fundamentally impossible for these two systems to be reconciled. However, in Paradise Lost, Milton's cosmological descriptions frequently refuse to reconcile these two competing views and, frequently, both systems are introduced and described with equal credibility. Is this an example of two "heterogeneous ideas, yoked by violence together", or is the validity of the specific cosmological system less important to Milton than some other purpose? The latter choice is the one I am prepared to defend. In my view, Milton

is less concerned with presenting a definitive, irrefutable depiction of the cosmological composition of the solar system. His reluctance does not stem from ignorance: whenever he does present information in a definitive matter, the factual accuracy is scrupulous. Instead, Milton is using astronomy as a metaphoric strategy; he wishes to utilise the device of space as a representative figure for certain issues of epistemology: astronomy becomes representative of knowledge, both proper and improper. Furthermore, the acquisition of such improper knowledge at an immediate human level, the microcosm, is seen to have effects on a cosmological level, the macrocosm.

That there is an overall strategic plan at work in Paradise Lost seems evident when certain recurring patterns of imagery are noticed. These patterns would seem to indicate that there is an overriding strategy which would subsume the needs of "straight" storytelling to a higher purpose. One such pattern is considered by Kristin P. McColgan when she notes "the recurrence of visual and spatial (or vertical) imagery at the beginning and ending of each book of Paradise Lost" (90). In Book VIII we see this pattern repeated with a special emphasis on cosmological concerns. Adam begins the Book with questions to Raphael about the nature of the heavens:

When I behold this goodly frame, this world
Of heaven and earth consisting, and compute
Their magnitudes, this earth a spot, a grain
An atom, with the firmament compared
And all her numbered stars that seem to roll
Spaces incomprehensible...

(VIII.15-20)

and the Book ends with the two interlocutors separating: "So parted they, the angel

up to heaven/ From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower" (VIII.652-653). This physical separation parallels the difference in the respective hierarchical position which each, the archangel and the man, enjoys. Raphael rises towards Heaven and God, while Adam is left behind in the "thick shade" of his relative ignorance. In this particular book, the pattern of "spatial (or vertical) imagery" serves to emphasize the differing levels of knowledge that each entity is allowed to possess about the true nature of the cosmological construction of space: astronomy.

The importance of the cosmological system on a seventeenth-century individual's concept of self should not be underestimated. There was a significant readjustment in the spiritual and theological concepts of man and his relationship to God which took place with the replacement of the Ptolemaic system with the Copernican system. As stated earlier, the Ptolemaic system is a geo-centric cosmology, the earth is the centre of a concentric series of circles. Thus, man is the literal and figurative centre of the universe. Furthermore, his place in that universe is assured. God created the universe for man; his preeminence in that scheme of creation, bolstered by the physical composition of the universe, is assured. Thus, as described by Nicolson, the Ptolemaic universe had the following effects:

For centuries the accepted Ptolemaic astronomy had been man's supreme proof that the universe, like the world and the soul of man, was spherical. From the primum mobile to the round earth, one sphere nestled into another, the whole an elaborate yet readily comprehensible series of circles within circles designed for man, who lived at the centre upon the innermost circle of all. At the Creation, when God had imposed upon chaos and bade the sun and moon and planets to take their places in the celestial hierarchy, the heavenly bodies began to move in circular form (Nicolson 1960 50-51).

The effect of the helio-centric Copernican system was considerable. No longer was

the universe a carefully constructed device specifically designed to encompass the preeminence of man. The Earth was not the centre of existence, orbited by every other celestial body. Now that the Earth circled the sun, the figurative position of dominance of man's Earth was no longer supreme and, by extrapolation, the favoured position of man was now problematic. Nicolson explains the effects of this radical change in cosmological structures:

Copernicus and his immediate followers sowed a wind; the next generation reaped a whirlwind. The complete shattering of the circle was the result of an old idea that came back with new meaning and apparent proof: the idea of the infinity of the universe and an infinity of worlds (Nicolson 1960 158-159).

The effect inherent in these conflicting cosmological theories is clear: an individual's understanding of cosmology defined his relationship to God and his personal system of theology. An inability to accept the Copernican system with its inherent lessening of the prominence of man reveals a significant anxiety concerning issues of hierarchy and psychological security. The Ptolemaic system is so much neater and explicable in terms of defining the universe. Some people balked at the inherent uncertainty evident in the Copernican system. Thus, astronomy has the metaphoric significance of defining a concept of self. Whichever cosmological concept of the solar system you chose to accept defined how you believed you related to God, and how God perceived humanity. During Raphael's response to Adam concerning questions of matters celestial (VIII.1-178), the archangel mentions both of these competing theories only to dismiss the resolution of this cosmological dilemma as being of secondary importance:

Whether the sun predominant in heaven

Rise on the earth, or earth rise on the sun,
 He from the east his flaming road begin,
 Or she from west her silent course advance
 With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps
 On her soft axle, while she paces even,
 And bears thee soft with smooth air along,
 Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid ...
 (VIII.160-168)

Instead of resolving the question of which of the two cosmological systems is accurate, the archangel points to something which is of the greatest importance: Adam's acceptance of his place in a hierarchical system based upon knowledge. This passage foreshadows the ultimate Fall of Adam and Eve; Adam is curious to explore areas of knowledge which are proscribed.

Considerable academic scrutiny¹² has been expended on the question of the specific nature of the cosmos presented in Paradise Lost. However, as interesting as this debate concerning Milton's sources may be, the metaphoric effect of the cosmos in Paradise Lost is the primary concern of this thesis. Thus, the specific nature of the cosmos depicted is not as important as the fact that Milton's cosmos is characterised in such a manner as to invite such debate. Continued speculation about the nature of Milton's cosmos is particularly ironic when compared to Adam's reply to Raphael's admonition to cease his cosmological speculation:

How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure
 Intelligence of heaven, angel serene
 And freed from intricacies, taught to live,
 The easiest way, nor with perplexing thoughts
 To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
 God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares
 And not molest us, unless we ourselves
 Seek them with wandering thoughts and notions vain.
 But apt the mind or fancy is to rove

Unchecked, and of her roving is no end;
 Till warned, or by experience taught, she learn
 That not to know at large of things remote
 From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
 That which before us lies in daily life,
 Is the prime wisdom, what is more, is fume,
 Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
 And renders us in things that most concern
 Unpracticed, unprepared, and still to seek.
 Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
 A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
 Useful, whence haply mention may arise
 Of something not unseasonable to ask
 By sufferance, and thy wonted favour deigned.
 (VIII.180-202)

The fascination and anxiety that the seventeenth-century reader possesses concerning this cosmological speculation is proof of the fallen nature of man. Such an individual is consumed by "intricacies", "perplexing thoughts", and "fond impertinence". Furthermore, the modern reader is also plagued by these vexing conundrums. Such is the consistent nature of fallen man. However, there is a certain ambiguity in Adam's agreement to discontinue this cosmological debate. When he characterises this change in subject as "from this high pitch let us descend/ A lower flight" (VIII.198-199), Adam seems to be registering regret at the less-than-elevated turn to this conversation. Recall the poet's invocation to his Muse, describing his efforts as possessing "no middle flight" and his intention "to soar" (I.14). A clear connection between the artistic ability and intellectual curiosity seems to be being drawn. Also of interest is the feminine pronoun used to describe "the mind or fancy". Surely the following lines, with their mention of the necessity of curtailing knowledge either through warning or direct experience, are foreshadowing Eve's succumbing to

Satan's blandishments:

**But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
 Unchecked, and of her roving is no end;
 Till warned, or by experience taught, she learn
 That not to know at large of things remote
 From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
 That which before us lies in daily life,
 Is the prime wisdom...**

(VIII.188-194)

Milton's identification of the roving fancy with a female pronoun is understandable when one considers that his Muse is a female entity. This does raise an interesting question: does Milton consider his own "roving" intellect to be a female characteristic? Having examined the conclusion of this dialogue between Adam and Raphael, a consideration of the specifics of that exchange also will prove useful.

One aspect of Milton's use of the figure of space concerns the question and answer session of Adam and Raphael regarding the construction of the cosmos (VIII.1-204). This passage indicates that there are limits to the knowledge that man was meant to possess. These queries of Adam's are the result of Raphael's somewhat patronizing question: "... if else thou seek'st/ Aught, not surpassing human measure, say" (VII.640). In "The Argument" preceding this Book, this exchange is characterized in the following manner: "Adam inquires concerning celestial motions, is doubtfully answered, and exhorted to search rather more things worthy of knowledge" (VIII Argument). The ambiguity of the subject modified by the word "doubtfully" is interesting; does "doubtfully" characterize the nature of the answer, or does it characterize the nature of the answerer? Literally, "doubtful" means "full of doubt", and if Raphael's answer is thus characterized, then Milton, as the voice

of the Argument, could be warning the reader of his text to view the comments of Raphael with suspicion. Thus, even an Angelic report of the cosmos must be viewed provisionally. However, if the word "doubtfully" characterizes Raphael's attitude toward the process of answering the questions posed by Adam, then there is a reinforcement of the premise that there exists knowledge that man was not meant to know. Furthermore, it becomes evident that Adam is to be discouraged from even speculating¹³ about certain questions regarding the cosmos. Thus, Adam's questions pertaining to celestial phenomena, including a speculation about the specifics of cosmological construction (VIII.15-38) provoke a warning from Raphael which states that there are proscriptions to knowledge:

Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid,
 Leave them to God above, him serve and fear;
 Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
 Whatever placed, let him dispose: joy thou
 In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
 And thy fair Eve; heaven is for thee too high
 To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
 Think only what concerns thee and thy being;
 Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
 Live, in what state, condition or degree,
 Contented that thus far hath been revealed
 Not of earth only but of highest heaven.

(VIII.167-178)

Raphael's admonishment seems to be recommend that Adam accept his place in a hierarchical state. When the angel suggests that Adam "be lowly wise/ Think only what concerns thee and thy being" (VIII.172-173) the sense of a man's place in the Great Chain of Being is definitely emphasised (Lovejoy 160ff).

The specific mechanics of the figure of space is not the focus of this essay at

this time, rather the strategic importance of this metaphoric figure. In fact, "Milton is using astronomical controversy as a symbol of all enquiry into knowledge beyond the verge of man's capacities and capabilities" (Fowler 30). Milton introduces "the hottest controversy stirred up by the new cosmology - plurality of worlds" (Tanner 268), only to avoid any direct speculation. Milton may speculate about the possibility of other worlds, but, finally, he must remain satisfied "with what concerns thee and thy being". Many readers might be surprised to consider Paradise Lost as science fiction. Admittedly, this definition is more provocative than justified, but the repeated speculation in the text about the possibility of life on other planets is a fascinating footnote to Milton's speculations about the plurality of worlds. See, for example, Raphael's description of the earth:

Witness this new-made world, another heaven
 From heaven gate not far, founded in view
 On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;
 Of amplitude almost immense, with stars
 Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
 Of destined habitation...

(VII.617-622)

Another example of this alien speculation occurs during Satan's journey to this world from Hell:

Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
 Stars distant, but nigh hand seemed other worlds,
 Or other worlds they seemed, or happy isles,
 Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,
 Fortunate fields, and groves and flowery vales,
 Thrice happy isles, but who dwelt happy there
 He stayed not to enquire...

(III.565-571)

Thus, Milton is accomplishing two seemingly contradictory strategies at once. He is

demonstrating a knowledge of a number of cosmological systems which in turn demonstrates his erudition, while simultaneously avoiding definitive claims which would subvert his text. Any specific, definitive conclusion to this speculation would undermine the angelic assertion of Raphael that there are matters that are not appropriate subjects of man's interest. On a more pragmatic level, any definitive statement concerning the cosmos forwarded by Milton ran the risk of becoming obsolete due to new scientific discoveries. It seems to me that the one word of description Milton was loath to have applied to his epic would have been "quaint".

A final observation should be made concerning this question and answer exchange between Adam and Raphael. Specifically, there is the person who is conspicuous by her absence: Eve. Earlier, Eve had expressed curiosity concerning the firmament, wondering why the stars continued to shine even after Adam and Eve were asleep and unable to appreciate the heaven's beauty: "But wherefore all night long shine these, for whom/ This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?" (IV.657-656). The reason that she leaves the site of this discussion between Adam and Raphael is described in the following passage:

Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
 Delighted, or not capable her ear
 Of what was high: such pleasures she reserved,
 Adam relating, she sole auditress;
 Her husband the relater she preferred
 Before the angel, and of him to ask
 Chose rather; he she knew would intermix
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
 With conjugal caresses, from his lip
 Not words alone pleased her.

(VIII.48-57)

Note how Milton is at pains to point out that Eve is fully capable of understanding Raphael's discourse; instead Eve prefers Adam's more ... intimate method of communication. In terms of textual strategy, Eve's choice to absent herself from this discussion acts as a foreshadowing of the Fall. Thus, Eve is revealed as someone for whom discourse is associated with seduction; her absence from this discussion means that Raphael's warnings concerning knowing one's place in the hierarchical scheme and his proscription of certain kinds of information are messages that Eve does not hear. In fact, it is Adam's responsibility to communicate these warnings to Eve.

A second strategy applicable to the figure of space utilised by Milton is how this figure represents one half of an argument from analogy. The influence of Paracelsus (pen name of Theophrastus Bombastus Von Hohenheim, 1493?-1541) is evident in the depiction of the trope of the human body to nature argument from analogy standard to the Renaissance. Rattansi characterizes Paracelsus' emendation of this trope in the following manner:

The Book of Genesis said man was made from limus terrae. All the constituents of the universe were therefore to be found in him, and he could understand, say, the secret workings of plants and herbs by an act of sympathy between the outside object and the inner representation within him. Viewing man as a "quintessence" of the universe gave a new meaning to the ancient concept of man as microcosm. Man was at the centre of a web of correspondences and was as capable of influencing the stars as they were of influencing him. By tracing the correspondence between the macrocosm of the universe and the microcosm of man it was possible to learn about the functioning of the human body and the nature of diseases (Rattansi 208).

The specific aspect of this analogy that interests me is the correspondence drawn between the bodies of Adam and Eve and the cosmos as a result of the Fall. The immediate physical effects of the progenitors' actions are evident on a cosmological

level. The effect of the disobedience of tasting the forbidden fruit on nature is an immediate one:

Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
 Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
 Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then
 To teach, and feed at once both body and mind?
 So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
 Forth reaching for the fruit, she plucked, she ate:
 Earth felt the wound, and nature from her seat
 Sighing all through her works gave signs of woe
 That all was lost.

(IX.776-784)

Later, the Son of God descends from Heaven and metes out punishments to both Adam and Eve:

And to the woman thus [the Son's] sentence turned.
 Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
 By thy conception; children thou shalt bring
 In sorrow forth, and to thy husband's will
 Thine shall submit, he over thee shall rule.
 On Adam last thus judgement he pronounced.
 Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife,
 And eaten of the tree concerning which
 I charged thee, saying: Thou shalt not eat thereof,
 Cursed is the ground for thy sake, thou in sorrow
 Shalt eat thereof all the rest of the days of thy life;
 Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
 Unbid, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field,
 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,
 Till thou return unto the ground, for thou
 Out of the ground wast taken, know thy birth,
 For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.

(X.192-208)

Notice how one effect of these punishments is to reduce Adam and Eve to mortality, "for dust thou art, and shalt to dust return." Along with the corporeal selves of Adam and Eve, the figure of space suffers a similar effect of an introduction of a

cyclical existence (X.651-714). Some of the specifics of the effects of the Fall on a cosmological level include the creation of seasons and inclement weather. No longer are Eden and the earth in a season of perpetual spring; instead, at the Son's bidding,

... the sun
 Had first his precept so to move, so shine
 As might effect the earth with cold and heat
 Scarce tolerable, and from the north to call
 Decrepit winter, from the south to bring
 Solstitial summer's heat.

(X.651-656)

Also of interest is the specificity of the cosmological information that Milton utilises in order to describe the effects of the fall on the nature of the earth. Rather than merely describing the effects of Adam and Eve's transgressions in purely metaphorical terms, Milton introduces "hard" scientific information to emphasise the scale of this disaster. Of course, it is notable that this information is qualified by the phrase "some say". Milton is "hedging his bet" at this point, refusing to commit himself or his text to a definitive statement which would exclude a specific cosmological system in favour of another. The following describes the effects of the Son's punishments on a planetary level:

Some say he bid his angels turn askance
 The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more
 From the sun's axle; they with labour pushed
 Oblique the centric globe...

(X.668-671)

The planetary effects of the Fall are a mere reflection of the immediate physical effects on Adam and Eve. Their immortality has been lost, and they are now

participants in the cyclical nature of life that we take so much for granted. In a similar fashion, the planet is now entering a cyclical existence, with the seasons replacing the "immortal" spring that typified the prelapsarian earth. By utilising the argument from analogy between the corporeal forms of Adam and Eve and cosmological structure Milton ensures that the reader will fully appreciate the enormous significance of Adam and Eve's transgression. A direct comparison between the loss of paradise of Adam and Eve and certain disquieting revelations evident in Galileo's telescope now becomes explicable. The evidence of sunspots as seen through the telescope now has an explanation: sunspots are a result of the corruption of paradise.

A third metaphoric strategy that utilises the figure of space concerns the uncertainty of absolute knowledge. With the invention of Galileo's telescope, astronomy was a so-called "hard" science based upon direct empirical evidence (Rattansi 202ff). This type of information could be described as "fact". However, along with these cosmological facts is information of a very different type. Paradise Lost incorporates literary allusions (fiction), Biblical references (history), and scientific data (fact) in order to describe a paradigmatic event of Christianity: the Fall of Adam and Eve. If the triumvirate of fiction, history, and fact are used in literally the same breath, then the truth aspect of each of these terms is subject to revision. An example of this act of mingling of three forms of information a twentieth-century reader might consider distinct and dissimilar is the description of Satan's movement to the shore of the "oblivious pool" in Hell:

He scarce had ceased when the superior fiend
 Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield
 Ethereal temper, massy large, and round,
 Behind him cast; the broad circumference
 Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
 Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
 At evening from the top of Fesole,
 Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
 Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
 (I.283-291)

First, there is the poetic device of the epic simile, associated with a form of communication considered to be fiction. Here Satan's shield is compared to the moon (as seen through Galileo's telescope.) Second, there is the context in which this simile makes its appearance: an epic devoted toward the retelling of the Biblical story of Genesis. Milton and his contemporaries viewed the Bible as the word of God. Thus, any episode described in its pages was history, and should be considered as Truth. Milton's decision to, in effect, elaborate and paraphrase the Bible is not necessarily the act of heresy that such a view of the Bible might suggest. There was a long history of "translating" - read paraphrasing - other passages in the Bible¹⁴. Finally, in this epic simile there is the specific allusion to Galileo, "the Tuscan artist", and one of his discoveries - the specifics of the lunar landscape as seen through his telescope. The "spotty globe" of the moon as seen through Galileo's telescope foreshadows the effect of Satan's presence as the archfiend lights on a landscape. This effect of the Satanic presence is described with an image which utilises another of Galileo's discoveries the sunspot (III.588-590). Of course, this evidence of the sun's imperfection is incorporated into a description of Satan's appurtenances. It is appropriate that the description of the sun's corruption be

applied to the description of one who was once named Lucifer - the Morning Star. Hanford points out two other scientific discoveries associated with astronomy (and the observations of Galileo and his telescope) included in Paradise Lost¹⁵: the true nature of the Milky Way (III.580-590), and the topographical features of the moon (V.261-263). A text that utilises the very different concepts of fiction, history and fact at once without making any effort to differentiate between the three is making some very interesting claims about the uncertainty of absolute knowledge. When Milton chooses to describe Satan's shield using an image derived from the world of astronomy he is juxtaposing elements that would seem to be contradictory. A solution to this contradiction is possible if the Bible is viewed as historical fact. If this is the case, then a description of Satan's shield that incorporates confirmed scientific fact would act as a validation for those aspects described which are impossible to verify. In effect, the incorporation of scientific fact acts as a means of validating information which could be seen as problematical. Milton's "liberties" with the Biblical account of the Fall are supported by his use of contemporary empirical science. However, an opposite effect to the one described above is also possible. Instead of validating fiction and history, the use of scientific fact could be a means of calling into question the whole scientific endeavour. Milton's use of the figure of astronomy is always carefully contrived so that neither the Ptolemaic or the Copernican system is fully excluded. An amalgamation of fiction, history, and scientific fact could call into question whether the latter has any more validity than either of the former. Raphael's proscription of knowledge to Adam could be at work

with this strategy of melding these disparate elements.

In conclusion, the metaphoric strategies which can be ascribed to Milton's use of the device of astronomy do seem to follow a pattern. Epistemological concerns seem to be the overriding theme of Milton's utilization of this particular device. Beginning with the proscription of Raphael to Adam: "be lowly wise:/ Think only what concerns thee and thy being" (VIII.173-174), there is an admonishment to Adam of the necessity of understanding one's proper station and the propriety of accepting that position in the hierarchy. Next there is described the effects of that attempt to acquire knowledge that has been forbidden through an argument from analogy: the microcosm of Adam and Eve's bodies is representative of the macrocosm of the cosmos. When Eve bites the forbidden fruit all of nature reacts: "Earth felt the wound, and nature from her seat/ Sighing all through her works gave signs of woe,/ That all was lost" (IX.782-784). The specifics of these "signs of woe" involve effects on the microcosm of Adam and Eve's bodies; she and her descendants are destined to submit to their husbands' will for all of eternity (X.193ff) while he and the future generations of humanity are now mortal. On the macrocosm side of this analogy, the earth is literally knocked askew from its axis, causing the creation of the seasons and inclement weather (X.651ff). The change in the structure of the cosmos from an idyllic constant to the mutable cycle of the seasons is the logical analogous result of the loss of Adam and Eve's immortality.

Along with defining the limits of the knowledge man should attempt to secure, and the effects of acquiring that knowledge as seen through the body to

universe argument from analogy, Milton also raises questions concerning the existence of absolute knowledge. The structure that assigns greater veracity to scientific fact, less to history, and still less to fiction does not seem to be evident in Paradise Lost. Milton uses all three of these different perceptions of reality or truth at once, in the same breath. Is this the creation of a new paradigm or an acknowledgement of the existence of the older hierarchical fact over history over fiction? In the latter instance, the commingling of the three different values of truth can be seen as an attempt to legitimize history by the presence of fact. And, finally, fiction becomes the language of history because Milton is eager to more than merely recite event in a pleasing manner: he is eager to create a myth.

**Chapter 3: "Time" and Mortality:
The Fall of Man as Instigator of Human History**

The second aspect of Paradise Lost subject to the investigation of this thesis is Time¹. "Time" is a concept which is complementary to "space" due to the necessarily overlapping, correlative natures of these two concepts. A distance from point A to point B is frequently characterised by the amount of time necessary to traverse said distance. (A destination can be said to be a three hour flight, or four days travel, and so on.) Time can be seen as distance, as well. Many of the measurements assigned to time are cyclical in nature; therefore, when we consider the specific moment we are occupying on that cycle we do so in relation to the rest of the cycle, and the means of temporal comparison frequently utilise spatial conceptualizations. For example, at noon we might exclaim, "Look, half of the day is gone already!", or a student working on his thesis might wonder at how a deadline can approach² so fast.

Certainly, the apprehension of the cyclical nature of time is appropriate to the study of myth. The definitions of myth offered earlier in this thesis³ refer to the "universality"⁴, or the recording of "a prehistoric event, from which all later realities in history are descended, and by which they are influenced ... the myth, far from being a symbolic version of some distant truth, is itself the model from which

everyday reality is in some sense the symbol" (MacCaffrey 14-15). If, as I have argued, Milton offered Paradise Lost as a means of assuaging the anxiety experienced by the seventeenth-century reader, then "time", as an agent which contributes to the general anxiety, must be addressed in such a manner as to become explicable. Time can be understood to be such an "anxiety agent" in the following manner: first, time as a means of defining an individual's mortality - death and anxiety are hardly mutually exclusive concepts; and second, time as eternity, without beginning or end. (The lack of explicable boundary to the concept of "eternity" can be seen as adding to the confusion and uncertainty an individual might already be experiencing while trying to understand himself.) These uncertainties, and the anxieties they produce, can be addressed by a myth which purports to offer a belief system which renders explicable the inexplicable, certain the uncertain. As Isabel Gamble MacCaffrey asserts, "a cyclical conception of life characterizes almost all mythological thought" (25). She continues:

We are familiar with one of its expressions in particular, the dying and reborn god whose life cycle merges with that of the changing yet changeless year. Augustine's formulation⁵ makes clear the way in which, in the Christian version of the "monomyth," all slighter cycles, of seasons, Great Years, or individual lives, melted into a single gigantic circle comprising the whole of human time. The Creation, the Fall of Man, the Redemption by Christ, and the Last Judgement: these were the key points on the circumference, joined by images of patience and faith, of warfare and victory, of death and life. Thus the Christian view of history repeats, on a grand scale, more primitive life patterns (25).

In a myth, the repetition of these "more primitive life patterns" creates recognition and familiarity for the reader. A myth is a tale which will offer the reader an explanation for the incomprehensible, described in such a manner as to reinforce or

reawaken feelings and beliefs that have already been culturally inculcated in the reader⁶.

The theory, described above, which suggests the complementary concepts of space and time, is implied by Milton at a number of points in his epic, with one concept being used to define or characterise the other:

...Him the almighty power
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky
With hideous ruin and combustion down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamant chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf
Confounded though immortal...

(I.44-54)

In the preceding passage time is defined directly by space, with one "day" defined as "the space that measures day and night", and the fallen angels lying, stunned, for a duration of nine such space-periods. In the following passage, a typical Miltonic paradox which attempts to describe the indescribable, namely, the specifics of Satan's voyage through the firmament to Eden, the stars are depicted as the determining agents of time's duration. Significantly, that duration is determined by the "dance" or movement of the stars. Although not explicitly stated, there is the sense that these stars are moving in regular cycles (i.e. in order for the durations these stars determine to be regular). Therefore, the dance described is reminiscent of the ritualistic, cyclic movement of the days, seasons and other temporal indicators:

... thither his course he bends
 Through the calm firmament; but up or down
 By centre, or eccentric, hard to tell,
 Or longitude, where the great luminary
 Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
 That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
 Dispenses light from far; they as they move
 Their starry dance in numbers that compute
 Days, months, and years...

(III.573-581)

This idea of time as a spatial concept is described explicitly in the following passage. In fact, as MacCaffrey explains: "time is, of course, a function of all created beings because they, unlike their Creator, the Unmoved Mover, live by motion, which is measured by time" (73). Thus, only the truly eternal, that which is without end or beginning, can be said to be unaffected by time. Clearly, in the realm of existence inhabited by God, the concept of time only has meaning when applied to motion:

As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
 Reign'd where these heavens now roll, where earth now rests
 Upon her centre poised, when on a day
 (For time, though in eternity applied
 To motion, measures all things durable
 To present, past, and future) on such a day
 As heaven's great year brings forth...

(V.577-583)

The degree to which time is an effective instrument for measuring motion seems to be directly correlated to the hierarchical position enjoyed by an entity on the Great Chain of Being. Thus, in the following passage, the archangel Uriel is described as "gliding through the even/ On a sun beam"⁷, a form of travel which equates "even" or "evening", a time of day, as a location through which one can travel. Notice how the speed and ease of Uriel's passage is emphasised:

Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even
 On a sun beam, swift as a shooting star
 In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fired
 Impress the air, and shows the mariner
 From what point of his compass to beware
 Impetuous winds...

(IV.555-560)

However, as swift and smooth as Uriel's travel is, it does not compare to the swiftness of travel enjoyed by the Son: "Down he descended straight; the speed of gods/ Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes winged" (X.90-91). However, the ultimate negation of time is reserved for God. Milton, as poet, must wrestle with describing the actions of the Almighty using our fallen language. In effect, there is no appreciable "time lag" between the speaking of the Word of God and the effect which that Word is meant to achieve. Ironically, any attempt to describe this result requires the use of language which, in turn, requires some time for understanding to take place. This process of communication is contrary to the nature of God, who is immediate and eternal. Milton neatly acknowledges this problem when he characterises the ultimately indescribable speed and power that the Word of God possesses:

So spake the almighty, and to what he spake
 His Word, the filial godhead, gave effect.
 Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
 Than time or motion, but to human ears
 Cannot without process of speech be told,
 So told as earthly notion can receive.

(VII.174-179)

Notice, too, that God views time as His creation. As the author of time, and being exterior to linear time, He possesses a perspective which affords Him a vantage point

that is denied to all other lesser entities. Satan's travels are observed by the Almighty: "God beholding from his prospect high/ Wherein past, present, future he beholds" (III.77-78). Certainly Belial is aware of this perspective, as he advises the other fallen angels:

War therefore, open or concealed, alike
 My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
 With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
 Views all things at one view? He from heaven's highth
 All these our motions vain, sees and derides.
 (II.187-191)

This ultimate position of perspective, above all else on the Great Chain of Being, is reminiscent of the position occupied by the Muse in the poet's invocation, and of the position (described in terms of flight) the poet wished for himself (I.6-26). Like the poet and the poet's Muse, God possesses a superior perspective - ultimately superior, in fact - which allows Him to describe all of human history in the space of one sentence. It is interesting to note that this description occurs in temporal order, while simultaneously conveying the ultimate possible ending of this scenario. This speech of God's manages to convey both the consciousness of history unfolding (for the benefit of our fallen perspectives, no doubt), and the consciousness of eternity being perceived simultaneously (God's perspective):

... I can repair
 That detriment, if such it be to lose
 Self-lost, and in a moment will create
 Another world, out of one man a race
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
 Not here, till by degrees of merit raised
 They open to themselves at length the way
 Up hither, under long obedience tried,
 And earth be changed to heaven, and heaven to earth,

One kingdom, joy and union without end.
(VII.152-162)

The effect of the passage of time as an agent of anxiety is addressed in Paradise Lost. Seventeenth-century readers and the contemporary reader both face the anxiety produced by the unknown that is represented by the future. There is an awareness of self as being inextricably caught up in the "stream" of linear time, and the uncertainty which the future holds for us is a daunting prospect. Time is seen as an agent of constraint⁸ by both seventeenth-century and contemporary readers. In Paradise Lost, the constraints of time are described as being a result of the Fall of Adam and Eve. Before the fall the passage of time was merely a means of delineating the difference between two equally pleasant activities. There was no uncertainty concerning these activities due to the cyclical nature of time. The certainty possessed by an awareness that all events experienced are part of an eternally repetitive cycle allows for a delight in change. The awareness of the passage of time as a benign phenomenon is explicitly experienced by the angels, as in this description of day and night in Heaven offered by Raphael: "...Evening now approached/ (For we have also our evening and our morn,/ We ours for change delectable, not need)" (V.627-629). Later, Raphael repeats this image of angelic delight derived from the diurnal cycle:

... There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through
heaven
Grateful vicissitude....

(VI.4-8)

The paradoxical delight that the angels derive from temporal change as affirmation of certainty can also be applied to the potential possessed by Adam and Eve. Before the Fall there is angelic speculation about the exact degree of correspondence between Earth and Heaven:

...Yet for thy good
 This is dispensed, and what surmounts the reach
 Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
 By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
 As may express them best, though what if earth
 But be the shadow of heaven, and things therein
 Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?
 (V.570-576)

Along with this angelic speculation concerning the degree of correspondence between Earth and Heaven, there is also the prevailing sentiment that change can only be beneficial. Through the passage of time, man has the potential to improve his status to a remarkable degree. Specifically, as one critic has stated: "time was an agent of progressive evolution" (Colie 463). Consider the following passage, previously discussed, in terms of the passage of time as an optimistic measurement of potential:

... I can repair
 That detriment, if such it be to lose
 Self-lost, and in a moment will create
 Another world, out of one man a race
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
 Not here, till by degrees of merit raised
 They open to themselves at length the way
 Up hither, under long obedience tried,
 And earth be changed to heaven, and heaven to earth,
 One kingdom, joy and union without end.
 (VII.152-162)

This sentiment of "progressive evolution" was introduced earlier, during Raphael's discussion of the hierarchy of worth - a hierarchy alternatively known as The Great

Chain of Being⁹. Along with placing Adam on this hierarchy, Raphael holds out the potential for improvement:

Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
 If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
 To proper substance; time may come when men
 With angels participate, and find
 No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare:
 And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
 Improved by tract of time, and winged ascend
 Ethereal, as we, or may at choice
 Here or in heavenly paradises dwell
 (V.491-500)

This depiction of time as spatial structure, a structure accompanied by varying degrees of constraint, is an affirmation of a source of anxiety for the seventeenth-century reader. The sentiment which is typified by Donne's phrase¹⁰ "all cohaerence gone" is confirmed by such a view of time. A reader who felt anxiety and uncertainty regarding the future would realise that his uncertainty is a result of the postlapsarian structure of time. Before the fall time was not an enemy and the future was regular, predictable, and benevolent. In fact, the only change associated with time was beneficial. For Man, time could be viewed as an upward spiral, with each revolution of that spiral raising Man closer to God and Paradise. Now, however, in this postlapsarian world, time can be seen as a linear structure, rendering the future grave and full of doubt. It is reasonable to suppose that both the seventeenth-century reader and the contemporary reader are not unique in feeling that the past was better than the present, and the future, while still unknown, is viewed with alarm and despair. This, then, is the self-appointed task

set before Milton, a task he intends to address with the redemptive message encoded in his version of the Christian myth: Paradise Lost.

Perhaps the most profound effect of the Fall is the end of the cyclical nature of time as described above. Instead, time becomes linear and man becomes mortal. Along with man's mortality there also is the result that human history begins¹¹. It is important to note that time was not responsible for the Fall; the direct actions of Adam and Eve are to blame: "There was a place,/ Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the change" (IX.69-70). Thus, the Fall is not an inevitable event, dictated by time; instead, it is a result of the free will actions of Adam and Eve. One effect of this Fall is that change, once "delectable", now becomes consonant with mortality. Death becomes a presence to be reckoned with by Adam and Eve, and nature. Sin describes to Death the bounty that awaits due to the effects of time's mortality:

Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and flowers
Feed first, on each beast next, and fish, and fowl,
No homely morsels, and whatever thing
The scythe of time mows down, devour unspared,
Till I in man residing through the race,
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect
And season him thy last and sweetest prey.
(X.603-609)

Earlier, Death had sensed the introduction of mortality and reacted in anticipation, in a manner characteristic of a carrion bird:

... with delight he snuffed the smell
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote
Against the day of battle, to a field,
Where armies lie encamped, come flying, lured

With scent of living carcasses designed
 For death, the following day, in bloody fight.
 So scented the grim feature, and upturned
 His nostril wide into the murky air,
 Sagacious of his quarry from so far.

(X.272-281)

Further evidence of the introduction of mortality in nature is seen in the altered behaviour of the lesser creatures. No longer do they live in the peace and harmony of the prelapsarian Garden; instead, through their current vulnerability to Discord, first daughter of Sin, the lesser creatures turn on each other:

... Discord first
 Daughter of Sin, among the irrational,
 Death introduced through fierce antipathy:
 Beast now with beast gan war, and fowl with fowl,
 And fish with fish; to graze the herb all leaving
 Devoured each other; nor stood much in awe
 Of man, but fled him, or with countenance grim
 Glared on him passing...

(X.707-714)

In the following passage, Christ passes judgment on the actions of Adam and Eve, declaring that Adam must now become mortal. When Christ decides that the easily accessible bounty of Eden will be replaced by the necessity of hard, physical labour, Adam is also informed of his mortality or, in Christ's words, "the days of thy life". However, consider Christ's reaction to his own pronouncement; He pities Adam and Eve and the mortality, or "change"¹², that they face:

Cursed is the ground for thy sake, thou in sorrow
 Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life;
 Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
 Unbid, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field,
 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,
 Till thou return unto the ground, for thou
 Out of the ground wast taken, know thy birth,

For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.
 So judged he man, both judge and saviour sent
 And the instant stroke of death denounced that day
 Removed far off; then pitying how they stood
 Before him naked to the air, that now
 Must suffer change....

(X.201-213)

Another consequence of the Fall is the heightened awareness that Adam now feels toward time as "a marker of the passage of event". Thus, Adam becomes aware of himself as participant in history¹³. Consider these words from his final speech in the epic, as he considers the world outside the Garden: "beyond is all abyss,/ Eternity, whose end no eye can reach" (XII.555-556). However, before the Fall, the situation was different, especially considering the use and meaning of language:

Except for the forbidden tree itself, everything in Eden was what it appeared to be. Sign and signifier were the same. Except for the tree, the things that looked good and tasted good and felt good were good. The literalness with which Adam could understand language and his experience in Eden is no longer appropriate after the fall. (Kellogg 261)

Another critic¹⁴ calls the reader's attention to a unique circumstance: Milton's one use of the "epic repetition" convention when Adam asks:

What better can we do, than to the place
 Repairing where he judged us, prostrate fall
 Before him reverent, and there confess
 Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
 Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek.

(X.1086-1092)

and the normally judgmental, intrusive narrator merely repeats:

So spake our father penitent, nor Eve
 Felt less remorse: they forthwith to the place
 Repairing where he judged them prostrate fell

Before him reverent, and both confessed
 Humbly our faults, and pardon begged, with tears
 Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek.

(X.1097-1104)

Taylor offers the following commentary on this use of epic repetition:

In Milton the repetition has an artistic as well as theological function: not only do the narrator's words place a doctrinal seal upon this stage in the process of repentance, they also, for a significant moment, narrow to nothing the artistic gap between on one hand, narrator (and reader) and, on the other hand, Adam and Eve. Before we begin the last books, that is, we are permitted a moment of stasis in which we all see things the same way, a situation that will not reoccur until the end of the epic, the last lines of which are calculated to extend the moment of artistic oneness throughout all time. But meanwhile the reader must take up the burden of his separateness, knowing more than Adam and Eve but unable to help them in their struggle to understand the true meaning of the "mysterious terms". (84)

Thus, the Fall of Man and the beginning of human history can be understood as being more than the cessation of cyclical, spatial time and the resulting commencement of linear time. The prelapsarian reality is one where the understanding of the world, and the language which renders the world explicable, were in perfect harmony. However, after the Fall, the education of Adam becomes a necessity due to his loss of this prelapsarian perfect understanding. Significantly, this didactic process Adam experiences is described in the text of Paradise Lost in order that the reader of the text can participate in this pedagogical process. Paradise Lost is meant not only to describe the education of Adam; it is meant to educate the postlapsarian reader¹⁵. This educational process can be more fully understood through following Adam's increased awareness of the linguistic significance of a single metaphor¹⁶, introduced by Christ during His pronouncement of the

punishments (X.163ff) which arise as a consequence of the Temptation and Fall.

It is interesting to delineate the postlapsarian education of Adam and, in turn, the reader by following Adam's growing understanding of the metaphoric characterization of the enmity between Satan and Man which was first introduced by the Son during His pronouncement of punishments:

Upon thy belly grovelling thou shalt go,
 And dust shalt eat all the days of thy life.
 Between thee and the woman I will put
 Enmity, and between thine and her seed;
 Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.
 (X.177-181)

Initially, Adam's understanding of the metaphor begins with his realization that the "serpent's head" is meant to be understood not as the actual reptile, but as Satan himself:

.... then let us seek
 Some safer resolution, which methinks
 I have in view, calling in mind with heed
 Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise
 The serpent's head; piteous amends, unless
 Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe
 Satan, who in the serpent hath contrived
 Against us this deceit: to crush his head
 Would be revenge indeed...
 (X.1028-1034)

However, note that Adam still considers the revenge to be enacted on Satan, as represented by the serpent, in literal, physical terms: "... to crush his head/ Would be revenge indeed". Fortunately, Adam's understanding of the metaphorical content of Christ's decreed punishment increases upon reflection. After a night's sleep he realises that if revenge is to be enacted, Man must continue to exist as a race, (in the

immediate, physical sense of Adam's own offspring):

... peace returned
Home to my breast, and to my memory
His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe;
Which then not minded in dismay, yet now
assures me that the bitterness of death
Is past, and we shall live.

(XI.153-158)

Later, in Book XII, Michael explains the true dimension of the metaphor; it can be understood as a reference to all future descendants of Adam and Eve; that is, all of us, the participants in human history, can be understood by this reference.

Michael traces the battle between Satan and Man from Abraham:

This ponder, that all nations on the earth
Shall in [Abraham's] seed be blest; by that seed
Is meant thy great deliverer, who shall bruise
The serpent's head; whereof to thee anon
Plainer shall be revealed...

(XII.147-151)

to the wandering Twelve Tribes:

God from the mount of Sinai, whose grey top
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
In thunder lightning and loud trumpets' sound
Ordain them laws; part such as appertain
To civil justice, part religious rites
Of sacrifice, informing them, by types
And shadows, of that destined seed to bruise
The serpent, by what means he shall achieve
Mankind's deliverance...

(XII.227-235)

Since this is a conflict, and eventual outcome, which are phrased in metaphorical terms, and Adam needs to be instructed in this new gap between signified and signifier, Michael gives Adam instruction in how to interpret this metaphoric use of

language. Adam believes he understands the basis of Christian history as it pertains to himself and Eve, but he still remains confused by the "bruise" meant to be inflicted on the serpent. In response, Michael clarifies this confusion:

... Dream not of their fight
 As of a duel, or the local wounds
 Of head or heel: not therefore joins the Son
 Manhood to Godhood, with more strength to foil
 Thy enemy; nor so is overcome
 Satan, whose fall from heaven, a deadlier bruise,
 Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound:
 Which he who comes thy saviour, shall recure,
 Not by destroying Satan, but his works
 In thee, and in thy seed: nor can this be,
 But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,
 Obedience to the law of God, imposed
 On penalty of death, and suffering death,
 The penalty of thy transgression due,
 And due to theirs which out of thine will grow:
 So only can high justice rest apaid.

(XII.386-401)

This process of education is at the centre of the argument of my thesis. The description of Christ's punishment of the Fallen as utilising "mysterious terms" (X.173) which "plainer shall be revealed" (XII.153) through this educational process represents the mythic paradigm I have been trying to illustrate. And, if "law" (XII.497) is a metaphor for the Word of God, then Adam must gain an understanding of this use of metaphor in order for language to become explicable. Finally, consider this description of Mosaic Law as a metaphor for Christian history:

So law appears imperfect, and but given
 With purpose to resign them in full time
 Up to a better Covenant, disciplined
 From shadowy types to truth...

(XII.300-303)

If the reader's process of education had been as successful as our fallen progenitor's, that reader can echo Adam's following exultant claim¹⁷:

How soon hath thy prediction, seer blest,
 Measured this transient world, the race of time
 Till time stand fixed: beyond is all abyss,
 Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
 Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
 Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
 Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;
 Beyond which was my folly to desire.

(XII.553-560)

Along with instructing Adam, Michael is also educating the reader in the proper manner to read Paradise Lost. The text, like the description of the enmity between Satan and Man, is meant to be read metaphorically. Furthermore, the (seemingly) confusing mixture of various forms of discourse - most notably, Biblical event, classical allusion, and scientific fact - is rendered explicable. The varying degrees of veracity, or truth, ascribed to these disparate forms of textual source material is in service of the ultimate Truth which is presented by the myth which is Paradise Lost. The form of allusion, or literary reference, which best communicates this ultimate Truth of the myth is, by definition, the most appropriate allusion or literary reference to incorporate at that textual moment. For example, consider the choice of renaming the fallen angels using the names of heathen gods as a form of didactic tool, remembering that the typical seventeenth-century reader was much better versed in classical mythology:

In Book I the poet asks his muse to say the names of the fallen angels who roused themselves at Satan's summons from their nine-days slumber. He tells us first that their true, original names have been blotted out of heavenly records. So the muse must list them instead by the names they took on later, as false deities throughout

the heathen world. The effect of the catalogue that follows, which contains little thumbnail stories of the heathen gods, is to blend history and myth, to suggest a whole world of story in which the worst results of the fall appear as mythic and historical images of sin (Kellogg 261).

Along with the prosaic aspect of incorporating literary references familiar to his readers, Milton's utilization of classical allusion is in keeping with literary tradition. Despite the fact that such classical allusion is of doubtful veracity, a "lie" in other words¹⁸, this inclusion of classical allusion serves a higher artistic purpose: first, the employment of such classical allusion provides the seventeenth-century reader with a familiar structure of literary comparison, necessary for the efficacy of metaphor; second, the appearance of this classical imagery represents an appropriation or subsummation of literary history, an act which effectively communicates the paradigm importance of the myth, Paradise Lost; and third, classical allusion acts as a pedagogical tool for educating the reader in how to read Paradise Lost. Another form of education present in the text, and derived from the metaphoric use of time, is the conflicting manner in which Adam and Eve view their daily activities.

A interesting parallel can be drawn between the dialogue on astronomy (VIII.5ff), discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis, and the reaction towards time as "a definition of activity"¹⁹. (That is, the manner one chooses to "spend" one's time, or the attitude one possesses toward how one's time is spent.) In both instances Eve's behaviour foreshadows her being the partner who succumbs to Satan's blandishments and initiates the Fall. During the dialogue on astronomy, Eve wanders off, preferring to hear Raphael's account from the lips of her husband (VIII.49-63). Her preference for Adam's discourse, and her subsequent withdrawal

from the presence of Raphael, caused her to fail to hear Raphael's warning which repeated the sentiment that there are limits ascribed to man's knowledge (VIII.167-178). Furthermore, Eve's preference for Adam's discourse reveals her weakness for seductive rhetoric. In a similar fashion, Eve's attitude toward the work that defines the time spent by Adam and Eve carries ominous overtones which foreshadows both the Fall and the nature of time (as definition of activity) in our postlapsarian state.

Consider this description of Adam and Eve together in the Garden of Eden:

So hand in hand they passed, the loveliest pair
That ever since in love's embraces met,
Adam the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
Under a tuft of shade that on a green
Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain side
They sat them down, and after no more toil
Of their sweet gardening labour than sufficed
To recommend cool zephyr, and made ease
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell
(IV.321-331)

Notice how their physical togetherness is emphasised (IV.321), implying that the work they share is done together. Furthermore, examine the degree of work that the couple concludes. Once Adam's and Eve's labour is sufficient "To recommend cool zephyr, and made ease/ More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite/ More grateful" (IV.329-331), they discontinue. The implication is that work is an activity which is associated with pleasure, presenting a contrast with an equally delightful leisure time²⁰. However, Eve expresses dissatisfaction with this arrangement; she wishes for a division of labour. She feels, that because of Adam's presence, the amount of work that is being accomplished is insufficient:

Adam, well may we labour still to dress
 This garden, still to tend plant, herb and flower,
 Our pleasant task enjoined, but till more hands
 Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
 Luxurious by restraint; what we by day
 Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
 One night or two with wanton growth derides
 Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise
 Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present,
 Let us divide our labours, thou where choice
 Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
 The woodbine round this arbour, or direct
 The clasping ivy where to climb, while I
 In yonder spring of roses intermixed
 With myrtle, find what to redress till noon:
 For while so near each other all day
 Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
 Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
 Casual discourse draw on, which intermits
 Our day's work brought to little, though begun
 Early, and the hour of supper comes unearned.

(IX.205-225)

Eve's decision, and the reason for her actions, have been sharply criticized as
 indicative of the hubris which will eventually cause the Fall:

Rather than trusting in God's bounty, Eve here betrays a more personal and
 aggressive attitude toward time and life. She senses herself measured by what she
 does, and feels guilty when she does not earn her supper. However laudable her
 home economics, her "husbandry", these arguments imply that need for personal
 mastery and independence which will later aspire to absolute independence, or
 Godhead (Quinones 464-465).

Certainly, there is a marked degree of contrast between Eve's concern for the state
 of the Garden and Adam's more laissez-faire attitude:

Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
 Compare above all living creatures dear,
 Well hast thou motioned, well thy thoughts employed
 How we might best fulfill the work which here
 God hath assigned us, nor of me shall pass
 Unpraised: for nothing lovelier can be found

**In woman, than to study household good,
 And good works in her husband to promote.
 Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed
 Labour as to debar us when we need
 Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
 Of looks and smiles, for smiles from reason flow,
 To brute denied, and are of love the food,
 Love not the lowest end of human life.
 For not to irksome toil, but to delight
 He made us, and delight to reason joined.
 These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands
 Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide
 As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
 Assist us: but if much converse perhaps
 Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield.**

(IX.227-248)

If, as I have argued, an acceptance of Eve's attitude toward work is representative of a postlapsarian consciousness, then the "anxiety" which is the subject of this thesis may be seen as a result of the Fall. Adam's acceptance and satisfaction with the work activities which defined the time spent by Adam and Eve, as well as providing their sustenance, are indicative of a concept of "work" as "enjoyment". Milton's depiction of paradise, the Garden of Eden, is of a setting where work adds to the enjoyment of living. However, Eve's feelings of anxiety toward that work, her sense of inadequacy in terms of accomplishment, are analogous to the postlapsarian consciousness of the reader. Thus, for Adam, work accentuates pleasure; while for Eve, work is an agent of anxiety. Ironically, Eve's attitude toward work foreshadows the punishment dictated by Christ to Adam:

**Cursed is the ground for thy sake, thou in sorrow
 Shall eat thereof all the days of thy life;
 Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
 Unbid, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field,**

**In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread
Till thou return unto the ground...
(X.200-206)**

This depiction of the painful difficulties in the mere sustaining of human life would be relevant to any seventeenth-century reader who ever wondered: "Why is life so hard?". The answer to this question, representative of the angst which typifies the human condition, is found in the text of Paradise Lost:

**... and thence shall come,
When this world's resolution shall be ripe,
With glory and power to judge both quick and dead,
To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward
His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
Whether in heaven or earth, for then the earth
Shall all be paradise, far happier place
Than this of Eden, and far happier days.
(XII.458-465)**

Thus, the difficulty and anxiety of this world is merely indicative of our temporal location on the cycle of "Paradise - Temptation - Fall - Exile - Redemption - Resurrection - Paradise"; this is a cycle which acts as a test to determine those who are worthy: the faithful. Therefore, acceptance of the message of Milton's mythic epic will result in an alleviation of anxiety. The uncertain becomes certain; the unknown that was the future is replaced by the certainty of Redemption through belief in the ordered structure of the Christian faith as represented by John Milton in Paradise Lost.

Conclusion:

This thesis was introduced with a quotation from John Donne's "The First Anniversarie". Written at the beginning of the seventeenth century, this poem offers a bleak, even nihilistic, view of the world, far in excess of the expected elegiac tone of mourning. The following lines, repeated from the Introduction, are representative of the anxiety which runs through Donne's elegy:

And new Philosophy calls all in doubt,
 The element of fire is quite put out;
 The Sun is lost, and th'earth, and no mans wit
 Can well direct him, where to looke for it.
 And freely men confesse, that this world's spent,
 When in the Planets, and the Firmament
 They seeke so many new; they see that this
 Is crumbled out againe to 'his Atomis.
 'Tis all in pieces, all cohaerence gone;
 All just supply, and all Relation:
 Prince, Subject, Father, Sonne, are things forgot,
 For every man alone thinkes he hath got
 To be a Phoenix, and that there can bee
 None of that kinde, of which he is, but hee.
 (205-218)

These lines, well-known and representative of the text as a whole, capture the necessity of Paradise Lost. In the preceding pages, the phrase that I returned to, again and again, is "all cohaerence gone". This captures the anxiety and uncertainty which is representative of the seventeenth-century reader. "All cohaerence gone" is a tripartite reference to the disorder which typified the world view of Milton's

contemporary reader. First, the cohesiveness, of the medieval world view, typified by the Chain of Being and the geocentric concept of existence have fallen victim to the advancement of science, such as the telescope: the "new Philosophy calls all in doubt". Second, the interrelationship between these mutually dependent, complementary forms of theological dogma, masquerading as scientific certainty, is strained by any empirical, verifiable, technological innovation which calls into doubt any part of the organic whole. Notably, the telescope created an awareness of the sheer space of the cosmos: "When in the Planets, and the Firmament/ They seek so many new". Third, the awareness derived from this empirical observation, such as through a telescope, negates and displaces the sense of self. Fundamental personal meaning becomes displaced. The Chain of being and the geocentric universe provide limit and structure for an individual. The existence and awareness of such a structure alleviate any sense of uncertainty, or anxiety, associated with the absence of personal, structured limit derived from the inculcation of a comprehensive world view. There is validity to the aphorism which states: "Man is afraid of the unknown". We need structure and certainty in our lives. Without such certainty we are adrift, searching for a means of rendering the inexplicable explicable, the unknown known, and the uncertain certain: "The sun is lost, and th'earth, and no mans wit/ Can well direct him, where to look for it".

In response to this uncertainty, Milton offered Paradise Lost. Within this erudite translation of the Biblical myth, Milton offers a solution for the angst and confusion of the seventeenth-century reader. The certainty of "place" that was

offered by the world view typified by the Great Chain of Being and the geocentric "nexus" is replaced by a different metaphor of conceptual space. God still delineates space, but that concept is more figurative than literal. Regardless of what contemporary science determines, the paradigmatic travels of an individual are travels of the soul; and the spiritual voyage from the postlapsarian state to the aggressive discovery and incorporation of the Christian promise of the soul's resurrection are of primary importance. Along with this delineation of spiritual location, or "space", Milton's myth also addresses the anxiety caused by "time". Paradise Lost is a text which looks to the past, characterising the beginning of human history through the utilization of literary allusions which encompass the postlapsarian continuum. Simultaneously, Milton's epic looks to the future, describing the ultimate end of the linear structure of time, so much in contrast to the cyclical prelapsarian temporality enjoyed before Adam and Eve succumbed to Temptation. Having addressed both the past, subsuming all human history in the service of his myth, and the future, definitively illustrating the ultimate cessation of human history, Milton has used time as space, delineating a mythic structure to assuage the anxiety of both the seventeenth-century and contemporary reader.

The method Milton employed is simple in gnosis, breathtakingly complex in praxis. Basically, he attempted to incorporate all knowledge available to a seventeenth-century reader, subsuming this knowledge in service of his epic. Utilising various forms of discourse such as Biblical event, mythological and classical allusion, and contemporary science, Milton amalgamated these diverse forms into

a single, coherent structure: Paradise Lost. This myth in the form of epic purports to describe the paradigm event in human history: the Fall of Man. Considering the comparison between the prelapsarian Paradise of the Garden, and the postlapsarian fate of Adam and Eve is a didactic exercise for the reader. The description of the prelapsarian world acts as a balm for the uncertainty and anxiety which underscores the reality of the seventeenth-century reader. (And, I suspect, the contemporary reader as well). This depiction of Paradise is the reward offered to the reader if he adopts the belief system explicitly encoded in Milton's epic.

However, this act of encoding an existing, prevalent myth, the Biblical account of Christianity, raises a question: why was it necessary for Milton to paraphrase, or interpret, the Bible? Along with the self-aggrandizing aspects of presenting a text which demonstrates a personal, intimate relationship with the Word of God, there is another possible impetus which could explain Milton's act of composition. Just as there was a milieu which prompted the original recording of the myth which is the Bible - the specifics of which are lost to antiquity - contemporary seventeenth-century society required a retelling of this myth. Thus, the composition and presentation of Paradise Lost is almost a "litmus test" for a reader. Milton's epic is, on some level, accessible to any reader - freshman English students' disbelief aside - but it is doubtful that any reader can claim "ownership" of the concepts and ideas expressed. The text is a voyage of infinite discovery, and the daunting complexity of the text is representative of the daunting complexity of the changing world of the reader. As long as the reader does not exceed the limits of the wealth

of allusion and reference contained in the text, Paradise Lost offers a solution of sorts to the anxiety of an uncertain world. Along with the fundamental Christian myth encoded in his text, Milton offers an "anatomy" of recorded Western literary history. By his doing so, all other, "lesser", forms of literature are placed in the service of his myth. Thus, Adam's final speech, addressed to the archangel Michael, the messenger who carries the Word of God, is equally appropriate when applied to the reader's "seer blest" (XI.553), Milton. For he too has "Measured this transient world, the race of time,/Till time stand fixed" (XII.554-555):

How soon hath thy prediction, seer blest,
 Measured this transient world, the race of time,
 Till time stand fixed: beyond is all abyss,
 Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
 Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
 Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
 Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;
 Beyond which was my folly to aspire.
 Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
 And love with fear the only God, to walk
 As in his presence, ever to observe
 his providence, and on him sole depend,
 Merciful over all his works, with good
 Still overcoming evil, and by small
 Accomplishing great things, by things deemed weak
 Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
 By simply meek; that suffering for truth's sake
 Is fortitude to highest victory,
 And to the faithful death the gate of life;
 Taught this by his example whom I now
 Acknowledge my redeemer ever blest.

(XII.553-573)

Finally, there are two questions, not addressed in this thesis, which are worthy of consideration. First, how does the archangel Michael characterise the

nature of time after the postlapsarian world is redeemed by Christ's sacrifice? Is this post-redemption concept of time an alteration of the existence of linear time? If there is such an alteration, does Michael suggest a return to the prelapsarian circularity of time? The second question arises from the central argument of this thesis: Milton wrote Paradise Lost in order to assuage the anxiety of the seventeenth-century reader. This thesis argues that he accomplished this goal. However, it should be noted that Paradise Lost could exacerbate a reader's anxiety. The reader could find himself or herself identifying with the first character seen "on-stage": Satan. This reader identification would have the effect of manipulating the reader's anxiety in such a manner as to create an identification with the text for that reader. The introduction of God, as character, in Book III of Milton's epic reveals a deity who is, quite frankly, unlikeable. Perhaps this is the central argument of Paradise Lost: God and Christianity are not meant to be "likeable" and "easy". Instead, the heightened anxiety of the reader, combined with effort involved in rejecting Satan's seductive portrayal, is meant to provide an impetus to complete the difficult task of accepting the Christian myth and the redemption it promises.

NOTES

Introduction:

1 Paradise Lost. ed. Alastair Fowler. New York: Longmans, 1971. All citations from Paradise Lost are from this edition and will be identified parenthetically.

2 See, among others, Alexander Koyre, From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe; Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being; Marjorie Nicolson Science and Imagination and The Breaking of the Circle; C.A. Patrides and Raymond B. Waddington, The Age of Milton; George Wesley Whiting, Milton's Literary Milieu; Victor Harris, All Coherence Gone; and Douglas Bush, English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century 1600-1660.

3 John Donne. "The First Anniversarie: An Anatomie of the World". The Complete Poetry of John Donne. ed. John T. Shawcross. New York: New York U.P., 1968. 270-285.

4 I would especially recommend the relevant chapters to be found in Patrides and Waddington, The Age of Milton. For religion see C.A. Patrides, "The Experience of Otherness: Theology as a Means of Life"; for politics see G.E. Aylmer, "Political Theory and Political Practice", 34-71; and for science see both Samuel I. Mintz, "The Motion of Thought: Intellectual and Philosophical Backgrounds", 138-169; and P.M. Rattansi, "The Scientific Background", 197-240.

5 I use the term anxiety in the common, lay manner. Simply put, I mean feelings of angst, disquietude, foreboding, and trepidation.

6 I chose Chris Baldick's definition primarily due to an admiration for his succinctness. However, the following definitions, while similar in tone may provide the reader with a more comprehensive understanding of the definition of myth:

Chris Baldick, The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms:

A myth is "a kind of rudimentary narrative sequence, normally traditional and anonymous, through which a given culture ratifies its social customs or accounts for the origins of human and natural phenomena, usually in supernatural or boldly imaginative terms. The term has a wide range of meanings, which can be divided roughly into "rationalist" or "romantic" versions: in the first, a myth is a false or unreliable story or belief (adjective: mythical), while in the second, "myth" is a superior intuitive mode of cosmic understanding (adjective: mythic). In most literary contexts, the second kind of usage prevails, and myths are regarded as fictional

stories containing deeper truths, expressing collective attitudes to fundamental matters of life, death, divinity, and existence (sometimes deemed to be "universal") (143).

Needless to say, the "romantic" definition of myth is the subject of my interest.

Isabel MacCaffrey, Paradise Lost as 'Myth':

As a "narrative resurrection of primitive reality," the myth records a prehistoric event from which all later realities in history are descended, and by which they are influenced. The reality of occurrences in time - "imperishable because of its eternally repeated rebirths" - no longer depends on their recurrent manifestations; rather their existence is made to depend on the prior reality of a metaphysical condition that is their cause. The myth, far from being a symbolic version of some distant truth, is itself the model of which everyday reality is in some sense the symbol (15-16).

Mircea Eliade, Myth and Reality:

Myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event which took place in primordial Time, the fabled time of the "beginnings". In other words, myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence, be it the whole of reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment of reality - an island, a species of plant, a particular kind of human behaviour, an institution. Myth, then, is always an account of "creation"; it relates how something was produced, began to be. Myth tells only of that which really happened, which manifested itself completely. The actors in myths are Supernatural Beings. They are known primarily by what they did in the transcendent times of the "beginnings." Hence myths disclose their creative activity and reveal the sacredness (or simply the "supernaturalness") of their works. In short, myths describe the various and sometimes dramatic breakthroughs of the sacred (or the "supernatural") into the World. It is this sudden breakthrough of the sacred that really establishes the World and makes it what it is today. Furthermore, it is as a result of the intervention of Supernatural Beings that man himself is what he is today, a mortal, sexed, and cultural being (5-6).

7 See Sir Philip Sidney, A Defence of Poetry (39), for the first explicit use of these terms, derived from Aristotle. For Sidney's conceptual use see (29ff). For the purposes of this thesis, these terms, notoriously ambiguous, can be understood to mean the following: gnosis is the theoretical, "drawing board" aspect of a concept, while praxis is the practical, "real world" application of that idea. Thus, the gnosis of a myth is the abstract idea underlying the belief system that the myth purports to explicate, while the praxis is the degree to which a myth is internalized by an individual, and utilised by that individual in his attempt to understand his cultural

reality.

Also, consider the following definition of poetry offered by Sidney: "Poesy therefore is an imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in the word mimesis - that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth - to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture - with this end, to teach and delight" (25).

8 My primary concern is identifying those repeated patterns or strategies and identifying the "hidden" or encoded literary figures that these strategies represent. Others have done similar work in this area, choosing to label these encoded literary figures with a bewildering variety of labels: metaphor, symbol, imagery and allegory. See, among others, Kenneth Borriss, "Allegory in Paradise Lost: Satan's Cosmic Journey"; Jackson I. Cope, "Time and Space as Miltonic Symbol" and The Metaphoric Structure of 'Paradise Lost'; Mildred Gutkin, "Knowledge Within Bounds: The Spatial Imagery of Paradise Lost"; Isabel MacCaffrey, Paradise Lost as 'Myth'; Joseph Summers, The Muses' Method; Jon Whitman, "Losing a Position and Taking One: Theories of Place and Paradise Lost"; and Elizabeth Jane Wood, "'Improv'd by Tracts of Time': Metaphysics and Measurement in Paradise Lost".

9 Referring to Chris Baldick's definition: this use of the term "myth" is in the "romantic" sense.

10 Referring to Chris Baldick's definition: this use of the term "myth" is in the "rationalistic" sense.

11 Mildred Gutkin points out that "the word Milton uses most frequently in Paradise Lost to denote the limits of a given territory is 'bound', with its relevant alternate meanings of 'fettered' and 'compelled'. Additionally, 'bound' as adjective means 'directing one's course' or 'destined,' and as noun or verb it means 'spring' or 'leap.' OED locates all these latter senses in sixteenth and seventeenth-century citations, so that presumably all would be available to the poet." (295)

Chapter 1: "Space" as a Distance to be Traversed

1 Presumably, the Bible was originally written to fulfill a set of needs unique to another time and place. However, speculation concerning Biblical hermeneutics is beyond, well beyond, the scope of this thesis.

2 For commentary on "space" as a distance to be traversed, and the implications of that space as limit, see, among others, Kenneth Borriss, "Allegory in Paradise Lost: Satan's Cosmic Journey"; Robert Ralston Cawley, Milton and the Literature of Travel, 3-41, Jackson I. Cope, "Time and Space as Miltonic Symbol"; Alastair Fowler, "Forward to Paradise Lost", 28-32. (Fowler's annotations to the text itself are also extraordinarily useful.); Mildred Gutkin, "Knowledge Within

Bounds: The Spatial Imagery of Paradise Lost"; James Holly Hanford and James G. Taaffe, A Milton Handbook, 183-200; Jules David Law, "Eruption and Containment: The Satanic Predicament in Paradise Lost"; Isabel MacCaffrey, Paradise Lost as 'Myth', 179-206; Kristin P. McColgan, "'Light out of Darkness': The Interlocking Pattern of Spatial and Visual Imagery in Paradise Lost"; Jon Whitman, "Losing a Position and Taking One: Theories of Place and Paradise Lost"; and Elizabeth Jane Wood, "'Improved by Tracts of Time': Metaphysics and Measurement in Paradise Lost".

3 Jon Whitman, "Losing a Place and Taking One: Theories of Place in Paradise Lost".

4 See Robert Ralston Cawley, Milton and the Literature of Travel; and Allan H. Gilbert, A Geographical Dictionary of Milton. The latter text is a useful concordance of geographic references, including a brief explanation or description of the source of every term.

5 During the course of submitting various drafts of my thesis chapters to Dr. Graham Roebuck he questioned the use of the pronoun "these" in the following line: "For these rebellious, here their prison ordained" (I.71). Naturally, I checked my text in preparation of correcting my error and discovered that the version of Paradise Lost I had been using, the one edited by Alistair Fowler, did use this pronoun. However, I cross-checked this line against other versions of the text, edited by Stephen Orgel and Jonathon Goldberg; Scott Elledge; and Merritt Y. Hughes. All three of their versions of the text contain the following reading of the line: "For those rebellious, here their prison ordained" (I.71) What is interesting about this pronoun dichotomy is how perception is involved. Consider the relatively intimate connotation of "these", as opposed to the relatively distancing effect of "those". The former lacks a distance I believe is conveyed by the latter.

6 For a better understanding of the hierarchical world view see, among others, Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being, passim; and C.A. Patrides and Raymond B. Waddington, The Age of Milton, passim; Kester Svendsen, Milton and Science, 137-173.

7 For insight into this convocation in Hell consider the following: J. B. Broadbent, "Some Graver Subject": An Essay on Paradise Lost, 110-120; Robert Crosman, Reading Paradise Lost, 43ff; and Marjorie Hope Nicolson, John Milton: A Reader's Guide to his Poetry, 203-214.

8 For a practical source guide to classical myth in general, and the Orpheus myth specifically, see the following: Mark P.O. Morford and Robert J. Lenardon, Classical Mythology.

9 For an insightful discussion of repeated pattern in Paradise Lost, particularly concerning the cyclical rise and fall of action seen at the beginning and end of each of the twelve Books, see Kristen P. McColgan, "'Light out of Darkness': The Interlocking Pattern of Visual and Spatial Imagery in Paradise Lost". For a study on the repeated patterns of temporal reference, see Albert R. Cirillo, "Noon-Midnight and the Temporal Structure of Paradise Lost".

10 Unfortunately, despite my efforts, specific information linking this passage to Milton's views on colonialism was not forthcoming.

11 For a penetrating study examining the effect of rhetoric in Paradise Lost, particularly as a means of educating the reader, see Stanley Fish, Surprised by Sin: The Reader in Paradise Lost.

12 For a more complete discussion of acrostics and embedded sonnets in Paradise Lost see, respectively, C.W.R.D. Moseley, "A Note on Possible Acrostics in Paradise Lost"; and Peggy Samuels, "Milton's Use of Sonnet Form in Paradise Lost". Other examples of acrostics mentioned by Moseley include: WOE (IX.1003-1005), ADAM (II.302-5), and THOTH (I.36-40). Moseley explains the significance of the presence of THOTH:

"When Satan is first mentioned as the deceiver in I.34ff., immediately after the word "deceiv'd" (35) the initial letters name the Egyptian god Thoth, identified by the Greeks with Hermes Trismegistus, and the patron of the sort of speculative thought that the devils indulge in - "Vain wisdom all, and false Philosophie" (II.565) (162).

13 I am indebted to Drs. Mary Silcox and James Dale for suggesting I pursue this particular aspect of the text.

14 Peggy Samuels, "Milton's Use of the Sonnet Form in Paradise Lost", utilises a definition of "sonnet" which is more concerned with function than with metrical structure. Discussing Milton's use of the embedded sonnet she states:

"The simplest way of looking at the function of the embedded sonnet is as a variation of the verse paragraph. While Milton's immediate precursor, Spenser, used stanzas to help build his epic poem, Milton uses the verse paragraph, and the most intensified, controlled verse paragraph that he uses is the sonnet" (141-142).

Concerning metrical structure, Samuels adds:

"Milton, building on the Italian heroic sonnet tradition, roughens the form: he enjambes lines, overshoots the volta, frees the caesura, overturns normal syntax, and plays off syntax against rhyme" (142).

She concludes:

"Thus, in whatever ways Milton transgresses or corrects sonnet form in Paradise Lost..., his major alteration of the sonnet is not accomplished within the embedded form but by embedding it" (142).

15 See note 6, this chapter.

16 For the importance of "universality" in myth, consider the definition of "myth" offered by Chris Baldick The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms:

A myth is "a kind of rudimentary narrative sequence, normally traditional and anonymous, through which a given culture ratifies its social customs or accounts for the origins of human and natural phenomena, usually in supernatural or boldly imaginative terms. The term has a wide range of meanings, which can be divided roughly into "rationalist" or "romantic" versions: in the first, a myth is a false or unreliable story or belief (adjective: mythical), while in the second, "myth" is a superior intuitive mode of cosmic understanding (adjective: mythic). In most literary contexts, the second kind of usage prevails, and myths are regarded as fictional stories containing deeper truths, expressing collective attitudes to fundamental matters of life, death, divinity, and existence (sometimes deemed to be "universal") (143).

Chapter 2: "Space" as Cosmology

1 For the purposes of this chapter I will assume that this definition is synonymous with "astronomy". During the primary subject of this investigation, the dialogue between Adam and Raphael in Book VIII, Adam reveals his interest is in that area of his reality which is beyond the Earth's atmosphere. He indicates his awareness of the earth as planet (VIII.15ff) and enquires into cosmology. Thus, for the purposes of this chapter, the reader can assume the following terms to be synonymous: "space", "astronomy" and "cosmology".

2 The importance of space, as synonym for astronomy, to Paradise Lost should not be underestimated. Mildred Gutkin, "Knowledge Within Bounds: The Spatial Imagery of Paradise Lost"; remarks on the oft-observed fact that the OED:

"... gives Paradise Lost as the earliest recorded use of "space" to mean "the immeasurable expanse in which the solar and stellar systems, nebulae, etc., are situated", citing "Space may produce new Worlds" (I.650), and "this which yields or fills/ All space" (VII.89-90)" (Gutkin 295).

3 See Marjorie Hope Nicolson, Science and Imagination, 80-109, for an

elaboration of the effect that the telescope had on the seventeenth-century consciousness in particular, and Milton, specifically.

4 For insight into the effect contemporary science had on the seventeenth-century reader see, among others, Alexander Koyre, From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe, *passim*; Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being, *passim*; Marjorie Hope Nicolson, The Breaking of the Circle, *passim*; and P.M. Rattansi, "The Scientific Background" from C.A. Patrides and Raymond B. Waddington, The Age of Milton, 197-240; Kester Svendsen, Milton and Science, *passim*.

5 Joseph H. Summers, The Muse's Method, elaborates on this idea of limits placed on specific types of knowledge:

"Man must learn to live happily with the fact that he does not know everything, and he is absolute in neither knowledge or power. He must not be haunted by the fear that the universe or his own individual world will go to wrack unless he consciously understands all its details. There is more evidence here that Raphael is warning against the pursuit of overly "curious" philosophical and theological knowledge than he is warning against a too anxious devotion to scientific inquiry. Astronomical theory was, of course, the place where all three realms met; but the matter is larger than astronomy. We are concerned with "useless" and debilitating "knowledge" (Summers 161).

6 However, it should be noted that Marjorie Hope Nicolson argues persuasively that Milton had an opportunity to see through Galileo's telescope during a visit to Italy. Even if he had not visited with Galileo she notes:

"Telescopes were common both in Italy and in England, and Milton must have had many opportunities to survey the heavens at night, before his blindness made vision impossible" (Nicolson 1954 89).

My argument is that Milton was blind during the composition of Paradise Lost, and the landscapes Satan travels as well as the heavens above Adam and Raphael were only visible to Milton through his mind's eye.

7 Jackson I. Cope, The Metaphoric Structure of Paradise Lost, provides a complex and useful reading of the structures employed by Milton in his composition of Paradise Lost.

8 When Jackson I. Cope refers to a "signatory betrayal" of experience I take him to mean that the two poles of a metaphor act together to increase understanding through the comparison. Thus, a metaphor will not interfere or disrupt understanding through the specific language chosen for illustration.

9 Samuel Johnson, The Lives of the Poets: (A Selection). My decision to include this quote is based on the an awareness of the possibility of misreading Paradise Lost. The abundance (overabundance?) of imagery and allusion present in Milton's text, I believe, serves the higher purpose of myth. As I will explain later, these varied references serve a number of purposes, including pedagogy.

10 Although, according to Kester Svendsen, Milton and Science (48), it should be noted that Grant McColley, "Milton's Dialogue on Astronomy" The Principal and Immediate Sources", does argue persuasively that Paradise Lost does allude to five separate and distinct cosmological systems, the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems were the two most familiar to the seventeenth-century reader.

11 I am well aware that these two terms, Ptolemaic and Copernican, are not the conceptual monoliths that this thesis presents them to be. However, for the purposes of my argument, this simplistic dichotomy will suffice. For a more detailed examination of these two cosmological systems consider: Alistair Fowler, "Foreword" to Paradise Lost, 28-32; Kester Svendsen, Milton and Science; Alexander Koyre, From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe; Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being; and Marjorie Hope Nicolson, Science and Imagination and The Breaking of the Circle.

12 Specifically, as noted by Alastair Fowler in his "Foreword to Paradise Lost" scholars have tried to determine if Milton's cosmos is Ptolemaic, Copernican, or some other system (Fowler 30). Grant McColley, "Milton's Dialogue on Astronomy: The Principal and Immediate Sources", provides an examination of various contemporary sources - pamphlets and the like - which is exhaustive and convincing. Also, I would call your attention to Hanford's extraordinarily useful and succinct account of how both these systems are presented. (Others who have written on this subject include Clay Daniel, "Astrea, the Golden Scales, and the Scorpion: Milton's Heavenly Reflection of the Scene in Eden"; Malabika Sarker, "'The Visible Diurnal Sphere': Astronomical Images of Time and Space in Paradise Lost"; Kester Svendsen, Milton and Science; and John S. Tanner, "'And Every Star Perhaps a World of Destined Habitation': Milton and Moonmen". The interests of Marjorie Hope Nicolson, The Breaking of the Circle, lie in how astronomy presents a differing cosmological view, a movement that represents a "breaking of a circle" and the acquiring of a cosmic perspective. Alexander Koyre, From a Closed World to an Infinite Universe, in turn, examines how the movement of the relatively comforting closed worlds of the Ptolemaic system were replaced by the anxiety-causing infinity of the Copernican system. A rather neat summation of this debate is "that there were a wide variety of planetary systems available to Milton, and he alludes to many of them in his poem" (Fowler 30). Of particular interest to the subject of this essay is the work done by Mildred Gutkin, "Knowledge Within Bounds: The Spatial Imagery of Paradise Lost", and Jackson I. Cope, "Time and Space as Miltonic Symbol". Both examine the use of space as metaphor, with Cope arguing that the

constraints on space can be seen as order, and order is associated with the will and presence of God. The figure of unbounded chaos, by comparison, is associated with disorder and Satan's evil. Gutkin elaborates this theme: she argues that "the nature of man is limit" (293). Also of note is Jon Whitman's "Losing a Place and Taking One: Theories of Place and Paradise Lost. His ideas of the lack of a consistent perspective due to the "decentralization" of the pre-Renaissance certainty of the geocentric universe, in conjunction with the significance of the cosmological setting of Paradise Lost, neatly communicate the anxiety I believe is at the core of Milton's project. The purpose of this thesis is to refine these theories even further: the metaphor of astronomy is the device which defines and explicates these limits placed on man.

13 It is interesting to consider the source of Adam's intrusive speculation. Does it originate within him, an inherent function of Adam's character, or is it prompted by the nature of Raphael's account? Consider the mesmerizing effect on Adam described in the following passage:

The angel ended, and in Adam's ear
 So charming left his voice, that he awhile
 Thought him still speaking, still stood fixed to hear;
 Then as new waked thus gratefully replied.
 What thanks sufficient, or what recompense
 Equal have I to render thee, divine
 Historian who thus largely hast allayed
 The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsafed
 This friendly condensation to relate
 Things else by me unsearchable, now heard
 With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
 With glory attributed to the high
 Creator; something yet of doubt remains,
 Which only thy solution can resolve.

(VIII.1-14)

Could it be that Adam is being conditioned to desire the continuation of this inappropriate speculation?

14 A notable example is the multitude of "translations" of the Psalms by Sir Edmund Spenser, Mary and Sir Philip Sidney and others. Traditional criticism has dismissed this form of literature as being relatively unimportant. However, paraphrasing of the Psalms was more than mere literary exercise. Along with giving the translator an intimate, personal relationship with the Word of God, the specifics of the translation or paraphrase could act as an indication of the theological position a poet/author held. It is certainly reasonable to assume Paradise Lost grew out of this tradition, with Milton's epic being an elaborate response to a literary form that

possessed both history and authority. For an illuminating study of the importance of this form of literature I would call attention to James Peter Doelman, Biblical Verse Paraphrase of the English Renaissance: A Study in Literary and Social Contexts.

15 See James Holly Hanford and James G. Taaffe, A Milton Handbook, 185, for a more comprehensive discussion of these scientific discoveries.

Chapter 3: "Time" and Mortality

1 The depiction of "time" in Paradise Lost has been a frequent subject of academic study. See, among others, Edward W. Taylor, Milton's Poetry, 60-104; Rosalie L. Colie, Paradoxica Epidemica, 169-189; Laurence Stapleton, "Perspectives of Time in Paradise Lost"; Ricardo J. Quinones, The Renaissance Discovery of Time, 444-493; Joseph H. Summers, The Muse's Method, 71-86; Jackson I. Cope, "Time and Space as Miltonic Symbol", Stanley Fish, Surprised by Sin, 30-37; Isabel Gamble MacCaffrey, Paradise Lost as 'Myth', 50-54, 73-81; Helen Gardner, A Reading of Paradise Lost, 37-51; Robert Kellogg, "The Harmony of Time in Paradise Lost"; and Albert R. Cirillo, "Noon-Midnight and the Temporal Structure of Paradise Lost and "'Hail Holy Light' and Divine Time in Paradise Lost".

2 This is a purely hypothetical example; I'm sure.

3 See the definitions of myth offered in Note 6, Introduction, particularly those of Isabel Gamble MacCaffrey, Paradise Lost as 'Myth'; and Mircea Eliade, Myth and Reality.

4 See Chris Baldick, The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms, 143.

5 The "formulation" referred to by MacCaffrey - as she points out (25) - is contained in the first sentence of Augustine's City of God, where he speaks of:

"...that most glorious society and celestial city of God's faithful, which is partly seated in these declining times, wherein "he that liveth by faith" is a pilgrim amongst the wicked; and partly in that solid state of eternity, which as yet the other part doth patiently expect, until "righteousness be turned into judgement," being then by the proper excellence to obtain the last victory, and be crowned in perfection of peace" (Book I, ch 1; I, 1).

6 See Isabel Gamble MacCaffrey, Paradise Lost as 'Myth':

"Our interest in a myth depends largely on foreknowledge; its familiar story is something we have always with us, to which our attention returns periodically for

recognition and affirmation.

The poet whose subject is myth strives to promote, therefore, not learning but knowledge; to evoke not surprise but acknowledgment; to produce not development but revelation, not an introduction to something new, but a deepened understanding of something old. Consequently, the "normal" straightforward narrative patterns traditional to storytellers will be inappropriate; suspense will be replaced by the tacit comment of interconnecting temporal threads. The mythical narrative slights chronology in favour of a folded structure which continually returns upon itself, or a spiral that encircles about a single centre; in this, it reproduces the very shape of the myth itself, which is circularly designed for resonance and cross reference. The poem will be built from a blueprint rather than a map; because suspense is neglected and expanding implications are stressed, it will have the third dimension of depth, whereas the ordinary story is built in the two surface dimensions and the fourth, time. Telling of the story qua story is minimized by the mythologist..." (45).

7 Considerable academic debate has arisen around this passage. Isabel MacCaffrey, Paradise Lost as 'Myth', 76, believes that the word "even" (IV.555) is a reference to a specific time of day, thus rendering the reading of Uriel passing through a time of day, as one would a location, credible. However, others, among them Alastair Fowler in his annotations to Paradise Lost, read this word as a description of the sun beam on which Uriel travels. I believe there is sufficient ambiguity to allow for both readings.

8 Considerable academic scrutiny has been accorded the concept of time as agent of constraint or limit. See, among others, Joseph Summers, The Muse's Method, 71-86; Jackson I. Cope, "Time and Space as Miltonic Symbol"; Ricardo J. Quinones, The Renaissance Discovery of Time, 459-476; Robert Kellogg, "The Harmony of Time in Paradise Lost"; Edward Taylor, Milton's Poetry, 60-104; and Rosalie L. Colie, Paradoxica Epidemica, 169-189.

9 For a delineation of the concept of Great Chain of Being within the text of Paradise Lost see V.469ff. The seminal study of this concept, so important to Renaissance thought, still remains Arthur O. Lovejoy's The Great Chain of Being.

10 See John Donne, "The First Anniversarie: An Anatomie of the World", line 213.

11 For a discussion of this postlapsarian temporal effect, see, among others, Robert Kellogg, "The Harmony of Time in Paradise Lost"; and Robert J. Quinones, The Renaissance Discovery of Time.

12 The uncertainty of the antecedent to the word "change" (X.213) can lead to two possible readings. The first, as I suggest in my thesis, is that "change" refers back to "they" (X.211), Adam and Eve; the second possible reference could be to

"air" (X.212), indicating the effect that the Fall had on the weather (X.651ff) and, consequently, air temperature. I think the former reading more reasonable, given the chronology of events. Of course, my understanding of the sequence of events, or fallen chronology, could be at odds with God's "Word/Result" immediacy, rendering this point debatable.

13 For an elaboration of this idea, as well as a discussion on Milton's participation in the epic oral storytelling tradition, see Robert Kellogg, "Harmony of Time in Paradise Lost".

14 See Edward W. Taylor, Milton's Poetry, 83-84

15 For a fascinating study of the text of Paradise Lost as heuristic tool for the reader, see Stanley Fish, Surprised by Sin. For his specific discussion of "time", see 30-37. Notably, Fish mentions the influence of Helen Gardner, A Reading of Paradise Lost and Isabel Gamble MacCaffrey, Paradise Lost as 'Myth', as sources for his own researches into the text's depiction of time.

16 For a more comprehensive discussion of the significance of this metaphor (X.175-181), see Robert Kellogg, "The Harmony of Time in Paradise Lost"; and Edward W. Taylor, Milton's Poetry, 60-104. I am deeply indebted to both these sources for my discussion of this literary figure.

17 At this point, the perspicacious reader might wonder if this passage can be read on yet another level: perhaps the "seer blest" is none other than Milton; and this blind genius is the one who has accomplished the following: "Measured this transient world, the race of time,/ Till time stand fixed..." (XII.554-555).

18 The debate concerning the fact that "all poets are liars" can be traced back to Plato. Consider the following contribution to this discussion, offered by Robert Kellogg, "Harmony of Time in Paradise Lost":

"All fiction attempts to protect itself to some extent from the charge that it tells lies. To do so it advances, or so its defenders claim, either some higher truth that through the veil of its apparent lies can be discovered by the learned adept (generally the way of allegory), or it attempts to represent universal truths, not through particular instances but through typical ones (generally the way of realism). Aristotle is the greatest theoretician in ancient times of this second line of defense. Classical allegories, on the other hand, had no single advocate so distinguished. Theogenes of Rhegium (c. 525 B.C.) is at best only the first of a long, long line.

Aristotle had another tactic for defending fiction against its detractors, an extremely important one: When the poet cannot say something he knows to be true, he should say things men have always thought to be true. When he gives preference to universal truths derived from the representation of typical and plausible

characters and events, he does allow for the perpetuation of tradition, even in a literary culture. This Aristotelean licence permits traditional stories a place in literary epic, no matter how implausible they may be" (Kellogg 265).

19 An exchange that exemplifies this particular definition of time might be:

Q: "So, how did you spend your summer vacation?"

A: "Writing my thesis, you nitwit!"

20 Ricardo J. Quinones, The Renaissance Discovery of Time, describes this situation in a similar fashion:

"... at the end of Book IX we are told that the fallen pair of lovers, Adam and Eve, spent the "fruitless hours" in mutual recrimination (neither of them "self-condemning") we are brought up short with this new temporal attitude. In the Garden before the Fall, hours could not be "fruitless" since there was no real conception of time as a commodity that could be profitably or unprofitably spent. Adam and Eve tilled the soil, but since their labour was not forced, it was delectable..." (464).

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