LUND UNIVERSITY

The full voic'd quire below

Vertical context systems in Paradise lost

Schaar, Claes

1982

Document Version:
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Link to publication

Citation for published version (APA):
Schaar, C. (1982). *The full voic'd quire below: Vertical context systems in Paradise lost*. (Lund studies in english; Vol. 60). CWK Gleerup.

Total number of authors:
1

General rights
Unless other specific re-use rights are stated the following general rights apply:
Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.
• Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
• You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
• You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Read more about Creative commons licenses: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/

Take down policy
If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

LUND UNIVERSITY

PO Box 117
221 00 Lund
+46 46-222 00 00

Download date: 07. Dec. 2025

LUND STUDIES IN ENGLISH 60
EDITORS CLAES SCHAAR AND JAN SVARTVIK

THE FULL VOIC'D QUIRE BELOW

VERTICAL CONTEXT SYSTEMS IN *Paradise Lost*

CLAES SCHAAR

C. W. K. GLEERUP

LUND STUDIES IN ENGLISH 60

EDITORS CLAES SCHAAR AND JAN SVARTVIK

THE FULL VOIC'D QUIRE BELOW

VERTICAL CONTEXT SYSTEMS IN *Paradise Lost*

CLAES SCHAAR

CWK GLEERUP

CWK Gleerup is the imprint for the scientific
and scholarly publications
of LiberLäromedel Lund

Published with the aid of a grant from
Humanistisk–Samhällsvetenskapliga
Forskningsrådet

© 1982 Claes Schaar
ISBN 91-40-04811-X
Berlings, Arlöv 1982, 9260

Cum ergo de quibusdam signis quaeritur, possunt signis signa monstrari.

Augustine

C'est l'effort conjugué de l'auteur et du lecteur qui fera surgir cet objet concret et imaginaire qu'est l'ouvrage de l'esprit. Il n'y a d'art que pour et par autrui.

Jean-Paul Sartre

In the individual life, as the psychologists have taught us, it is not the remembered but the forgotten past that enslaves us.

C. S. Lewis

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements 9

I. Introduction 11

II. Intensification and Interpretation 34
1. Infernal Punishment 34
2. Autumnal Leaves, Orion, and Infernal Host 52
3. Bee Simile, Midnight Vision, and Infernal Conclave 75
4. Angelic Squadron and Ploughman 83

III. Tensions and Ironies 89
1. Military Demonstration in Hell 89
2. Malcontents in Heaven 102
3. Devils' Transformation 106

IV. The Great Contrasts 113
1. Angelic Stars Round God 113
2. Angelic Choir, God Unclouded, and Mystical Dance 118
3. Angelic Applause 130
4. God on Throne 137

V. Contrasts Continued and Paths of Paradox 149
1. Stairs Mysteriously Meant 149
2. Milky Way 161
3. Infernal Bridge 163
4. Blasted Stars 171
5. Dogs of Hell 177

VI. More Complex Meanings 183
1. Satan's Troubled Thoughts 183
2. Memory of Happiness Lost 191
3. Satan Portrayed 199
4. Teneriff and Atlas 205

5. Comet, Ophiucus, and Morning Star 208
6. Satan on Throne 217
7. Mammon's Speech and Satan's 227
8. The Infernal Argonaut 233
9. Raphael's Flight 251
10. Satan as Cherub 258
11. Satan as Wolf and Cormorant 263
12. Satan as Serpent 271

VII. The Largest Choir 288
1. Pandemonium 288
2. House of God 305
3. Chariot of Paternal Deitie 310

VIII. Concluding Remarks 334

Selected Bibliography 338

Selected Index of Names 348

Selected Index of Topics and Words 350

Abbreviations 353

Acknowledgements

This book is, in a sense, a continuation of my commentary on the *Sospetto d'Herode* (1971), so I owe a debt of gratitude to the same people and the same libraries that are enumerated in the preface to that study. If I should renew my thanks to any one person in particular, they would unhesitatingly go to Mrs. Muriel Spalding-Larsson, whose kind readiness to work through another huge manuscript has been beyond praise, and from whose critical acumen and incessant vigilance I have profited immensely.

Over the years I have incurred other debts which it is a pleasure to record. With admirable tolerance, skill, and patience Mrs. Ann-Mari Gayle performed miracles in deciphering first drafts and transforming them to impeccable typescripts. Professors Gillis Gerleman and Tryggve Mettinger generously put their expert knowledge as Old Testament exegetes at my disposal in the course of discussions about knotty problems connected with Hebrew "infracontexts". I had many fruitful discussions about various semiotic problems with Professors Bertil Malmberg, Louise Vinge, and Nils Erik Enkvist.

I am grateful to the Oxford University Press for permission to quote the Milton texts from Helen Darbishire's *Milton's Poetical Works*, 1962. For permission to reprint my article "The Blasted Starrs Lookd Wan" (1979) I am indebted to the editor of *English Studies*.

To the list of foreign libraries I am pleased to add The University of London Library and that little-known oasis, Dr Williams's Library. I am extremely grateful for all the courtesies freely offered by the staffs of these two London libraries different in size, but equal in generosity.

I owe, finally, a very special debt of gratitude to Lund University Library. My many friends on the staff performed countless services over the years and granted me research privileges of quite decisive impor-

tance: without all these facilities, which made the library a true haven, my studies on Marino, Crashaw, and Milton would never have been possible along the lines I have tried to pursue. The liberal and continuing support of this venerable institution has indeed been invaluable.

The author

CHAPTER I

Introduction

"Years might be spent in the examination of the *Paradise Lost*", wrote Philip Neve in 1789, "without exhausting all its topics of allusion to ancient and modern learning".[1] Few students of Milton's poem are likely to question this statement. Not only are allusions abundantly common, it is also generally recognized that they are of importance to the form and meaning of Milton's epic, though exactly in what way is a question that has not received the attention it deserves. There are two problems here: what are the formal and semantic qualities with which the text is enriched, and how is this enrichment achieved? It is the aim of this study to look into these questions in some detail. Our first step must be to make a brief survey of the definition and use of the term "allusion" in criticism. For natural reasons I have to restrict myself to books and articles relevant to my own discussion. A useful survey of allusion studies is provided by Perri *et al.* in the 1979 issue of *Style*.[2]

That allusions are intentional is, it seems, a generally accepted inference in everyday language, even if this quality is not so often explicitly referred to in definitions. Other properties of allusions tend to engage critics' attention instead. In the encyclopedia by Preminger *et al.*, E. Miner defines allusion as a "tacit reference to another literary work, to another art, to history, to contemporary figures, or the like". The first part of this definition possibly owes something to *OED*'s description of the concept as "a covert, implied, or indirect reference".[3] As to definitions provided in other dictionaries, Littré speaks of a "figure de rhétori-

[1] "Cursory Remarks on Some of the Ancient English Poets, Particularly Milton" (*Milton 1732–1801. The Critical Heritage,* ed. John T. Shawcross, London and Boston, 1972, p. 360).

[2] "Allusion Studies: An International Annotated Bibliography, 1921–1977" (*Style* 13, 1979, pp. 178ff.). See also Louise Vinge, "Om Allusioner" (*Tidskrift för Litteraturvetenskap* 2, 1973, pp. 138ff.).

[3] Preminger-Warnke-Hardison, *Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*. Princeton, 1965, p. 18; *OED allusion* 4.

que consistant à dire une chose qui fait penser à une autre''.[4] Battaglia, like *OED*, stresses the veiled and indirect character of the allusion;[5] Alonso, like Littré, describes allusion as a figure.[6] Critics who study allusions in various literary works or from theoretical points of view make interesting observations on other essential attributes of the device. One of the few definitions which refer expressly to the intentional character of allusion is that provided by Henri Morier: ''Figure consistant à dire une chose avec l'intention d'en faire entendre une autre'',[7] a statement followed by an attempt at a detailed typology of allusions.

The quality referred to by Morier is sometimes evident enough and identification of allusions consequently easy. In modern poetry the obvious instance is naturally those allusions in *The Waste Land* which were helpfully pointed out by the author/annotator. It is more than probable, again, that the well-known echoes of *Samson Agonistes* in movement III of 'East Coker' or of the *Inferno* XV in movement II of 'Little Gidding' were quite deliberately contrived by Eliot and that the same goes for many other literary echoes in *Four Quartets*. They might have been pointed out by the author in the same way as those in *The Waste Land*. To choose another famous example, few people are likely to doubt that the majority of the allusions in *Ulysses* listed in Weldon Thornton's 554-page book[8] were intentional. It is noteworthy that the items that qualify as allusions in this list are not only of the literary kind but also include references to various phenomena, people, and well-known titles such as 698.32 the ''Nova in 1901'', 575.30 ''Katty Lanner'', the choreographer, or 661.27 *Don Giovanni*. Such cases illustrate Ziva Ben-Porat's point that many allusions are far from tacit, and remind us of Carmela Perri's recent criticism of ''the first tenet of the generally accepted definition of allusion, that it is indirect or tacit, in short, that it does not 'proper name' the object to which it alludes''. Louise Vinge observes that an allusion may assume the form of a quotation, and that thus in such a case the difference between an allusion without quotation-marks and a quotation proper is one of form rather than of function.[9]

[4] *Dictionnaire de la langue Française* 1. Paris, 1956, p. 339.
[5] *Grande Dizionario della lingua Italiana* 1. Torino, 1961, p. 341.
[6] *Enciclopedia del Idioma* 1. Madrid, 1958, p. 295.
[7] *Dictionnaire de poétique et de rhétorique*. Paris, 1961, p. 4.
[8] *Allusions in Ulysses. An Annotated List*. Chapel Hill, 1968.
[9] Ziva Ben-Porat, ''The Poetics of Literary Allusion'' (*PTL* 1, 1976, p. 107); Carmela Perri, ''On Alluding'' (*Poetics* 7, 1978, p. 290); Louise Vinge, ''Om Allusioner'', pp. 139f. Referring to a 1964 article by K. Górski, Ziva Ben-Porat stresses the necessity of distinguishing between allusions in general and literary allusions: ''Not every allusion in a literary work is a literary allusion'' (p. 106). This also appears from the definition in Preminger's *Encyclopedia*. – According to Thornton (*Allusions in Ulysses*, p. 3) and A. Kittang and A. Aarseth (*Lyriske Strukturer. Innføring i diktanalyse*, Oslo, 1968, pp. 97ff.), allusion and metaphor are closely related: both have a sense-expanding function.

Going back in time, it is easy to find various kinds of references which in the same way are obviously intentional and may thus be termed allusions proper. It is indeed hard to believe that a consummate artist like Pope was not well aware of what he was doing when, as Brower puts it, he "uses allusion or parody to give us a glimpse of the great Homeric world, thus imitating Homer's technique while reversing the direction of our view".[10] There is surely little meaning in the term "mock-heroic poetry" unless it presupposes an author with very decided intentions and fully conscious of the nature of his work. It is no less obvious, as appears from Anne D. Ferry's careful study, that it was a very conscious author who, in *Absalom and Achitophel*, produced what Ferry calls "extended allusive comparison".[11] Ferry's examples of such comparisons were undoubtedly devised by a poet who deliberately worked with *Paradise Lost* as material.

How can we be sure of the intentional character of these and similar cases? Because the parallels are so close as sometimes to resemble or actually to be translations or quotations, and thus indeed are far from being tacit and indirect; because mention of specific people or things is surely made deliberately; because the literary art of these authors is known to be highly sophisticated in other respects; in short because it stands to reason that such references must be deliberate and thus allusive, and that it would be altogether unnatural if such was not the case.

Yet the matter is not as simple as that. Inevitably borderline cases rear their ugly heads not easily severed. Critics sometimes hesitate over a parallel, being understandably uncertain as to whether the similarity is intended or not. Even if not all allusions are tacit or indirect a great many are, and characterizations vary: such allusions are found to be "veiled", "subtle", "surreptitious", or "covert". We seem to approach a critical point here, a point where it may be doubted whether we have to do with true allusions at all. In an essay on allusions in T. S. Eliot's work S. Bergsten makes a distinction between the "source" and the "function" of a literary allusion. "The source may throw considerable light on the whole context of the borrowed words, in which case the quotation, or reminiscence, is an allusion proper, intended by the author and depending on its source for its full meaning". On the other hand a reminiscence may be "incidental, perhaps unconscious, or allowed to enter into a poem for the sake of its sound or apt wording". In such cases "'allusion' is not the correct word, the source being of no significance to the meaning". It is interesting that this critic finds it necessary to use such

[10] *Alexander Pope, The Poetry of Allusion*. New York-Oxford, 1959, p. 158. Brower's work contains highly illuminating analyses of Pope's technique.

[11] *Milton and the Miltonic Dryden*. Cambridge, Mass., 1968, p. 34. (See the entire chapter on "Poetic Contexts: Parody, Imitation, Allusion", pp. 21ff.).

terms as "source", "quotation, or reminiscence", "allusion proper, intended by the author", or "incidental, perhaps unconscious" reminiscences, "of no significance to the meaning". In the most perceptive study so far of Eliot's allusive technique, M. Thormählen has recently demonstrated how allusive matter not confirmed by Eliot is sometimes just as important as allusions stated in the notes. His poems also, it is pointed out, abound in references to nonliterary matters, at the same time as literary connections can sometimes be established between elements with little or no verbal resemblance at all, on a contextual basis. The conclusion seems justified that "it is extremely difficult to separate derivative elements – subconscious echoes, half-conscious reminiscences, etc. – from allusions proper, where a certain context is deliberately made use of".[12] Obviously the practical problem of defining allusion is far more complicated than it may at first seem to be.

This complex state of affairs is not unexpectedly reflected in the description and discussion of allusions in *Paradise Lost*. These have been pointed out by a succession of editors from Hume onwards; some of the meanings with which they invest the text, by various critics. Among the not very numerous studies entirely concerned with the semantic importance of literary allusions in Milton are Douglas Bush's article on a set of allusions to biblical and classical passages and the resulting ironic effects, and David P. Harding's on the function of Milton's bee-simile at the end of book 1 (compared to the bee-similes in the *Georgics* 4 and the *Aeneid* 3).[13] In a book published the following year,[14] Harding supplemented these remarks with a number of observations on the function of other allusions to classical authors, Virgil and Ovid in particular. A recent study along similar lines by Francis C. Blessington[15] concentrates on the relationship between *Paradise Lost* and the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Aeneid*. This book marks a step forward since attention is paid to the broader contexts evoked by allusions to these epics. It seems natural at this point to refer also to a book admittedly not concerned with Milton but with two other poets, one of whom played an important part in the shaping of Milton's epic: Di Cesare's study of Vida's imitations of the *Aeneid*.[16] One kind of imitation in Vida's *Christiad* is of particular in-

[12] Staffan Bergsten, "Illusive Allusions. Some Reflections on the Critical Approach to the Poetry of T. S. Eliot" (*Orbis Litterarum* 14, 1959, p. 10); Marianne Thormählen, *'The Waste Land'. A Fragmentary Wholeness*. Lund, 1978, beginning of ch. 2, pp. 61ff., 67.

[13] Both articles were published in *JEGP* 60, 1961 (*Milton Studies in Honor of H. F. Fletcher*: Bush, "Ironic and Ambiguous Allusion in *Paradise Lost*", pp. 631ff.; Harding, "Milton's Bee-Simile", pp. 664ff.).

[14] *The Club of Hercules. Studies in the Classical Background of Paradise Lost*. Urbana, 1962.

[15] *'Paradise Lost' and the Classical Epic*. Boston, London, and Henley, 1979.

[16] Mario A. Di Cesare, *Vida's 'Christiad' and Vergilian Epic*. New York and London, 1964.

terest, that called "evocative allusion", defined as a "correspondence in language which, by recalling a passage, draws on the emotions or meanings attached to that passage. It may operate by similarity of context, in which case the evocation adds to the desired effect; it may operate also by mutation, surprise, or contrast".[17] These features of evocative allusion seem to me to be of fundamental importance. Other studies of allusions and the way they work will be discussed in due course in the following chapters.

Discussing allusions in Milton, several critics tend to emphasize the extent of the poet's prodigious, indeed in many people's opinion, immeasurable learning. The reader, says Stanley Fish, is "met at every turn with demands his intellect cannot even consider",[18] and R. M. Adams warns against speculations about not only what Milton demonstrably read but what he might have read – the more guesses, the less probable they appear to be. We would have a "Milton with no sense of discrimination at all, a bibliophilic Grangousier; and then we shall have either five or six separate Miltons, or a physical impossibility".[19] Steadman also stresses the risk of an exaggerated and hypothetical estimate of Milton's reading: although many of the works he knew can be identified, the greater part of his reading remains unknown. Starting out from a general awareness of Milton's colossal erudition, "we are compelled to gloss his text with allusions to a wide scattering of authors, without positive evidence that he knew them".[20]

Since allusions are by definition assumed to be intentional, a dilemma thus arises automatically: the more allusions we posit, the less likely that Milton could have been aware of all of them, and the less meaningful the concept "allusion" becomes. The assumed intention becomes questionable. In the article mentioned previously, Douglas Bush (p. 634) asks himself whether readers of Satan's reference to 'this unhappy Mansion' at 1.268 "are intended to remember" John 14.2 ('In my Father's house are many mansions'). Another doubtful case is 1.221ff. (Satan making his way through the lake of fire), where "we cannot be sure ... if we are intended to see an ironic contrast with the Israelites' miraculous cros-

[17] Di Cesare, pp. 149f.

[18] *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in 'Paradise Lost'*. New York, 1967, p. 37.

[19] *Ikon: John Milton and the Modern Critics*. Ithaca, N.Y., 1955, pp. 129f. – Though expressly discussing 'Allusion' in his *Paradise Lost: Introduction* (Cambridge, 1972, pp. 100ff.), J. Broadbent ignores the problem completely.

[20] "The Epic as Pseudomorph: Methodology in Milton Studies" (*MS* 7, 1975, p. 21). See also W.C. Curry, who stresses Milton's originality as a thinker: the poet fuses widely different systems and philosophies, never subjecting himself completely to any of them, but using them for his specific purposes (*Milton's Ontology, Cosmogony and Physics*, Kentucky, 1957, pp. 10f.). An early commentator on this matter was James Beattie (1776; see *Milton 1732–1801*, pp. 285f.).

sing''. Discussing yet another passage (9.713f. 'So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off / Human, to put on Gods'), Bush observes (p. 639) that ''whether or not Milton intended it, we think of the ironic difference between this argument and St. Paul's pleas for Christian rebirth'' (*Eph.* 4.22ff. 'put off ... the old man' and 'put on the new man'). This remark, made rather in passing, is in fact highly important and touches on what is surely a crucial matter for the critic: even if not intended by the poet, the echo, if recognized, is obviously fundamental to the meaning. There seems to be a stage where the poetry steers its own course, no longer controlled by the poet. What is then semi-intentional, subconscious, or unconscious? As H. R. Swardson remarks in his critical assessment of Milton's poetic achievement in *Paradise Lost*: ''The weight of association may be too much for him, out of his control, stronger than the meanings he would shape in the immediate context of his poem''.[21] We have, in other words, moved out of the poet's province and into the reader's: the latter's associations, not the former's intentions, become the main issue. It seems to be here that we have to look for a starting-point in any meaningful discussion of the matter.[22]

Concentrating on sense and function instead of intention, on actual literary effect instead of possibly premeditated design, we not only dispose of the complex and unfruitful pseudo-problem as to what is a literary allusion proper and what is not. We also move closer to the intellectual habits of Milton's day, to the spiritual milieu in which his poems were composed and studied. The minds of learned poets in the 17th century were saturated with reminiscences of classical, biblical, and patristic literature, and of later works influenced by it. There are accordingly few lines in their poems which are not somehow coloured by such reminiscences, many of which were the result of the methodical study of textbooks forming part of the school curriculum. And learned poets could count on learned readers with a similar frame of reference, capable of recognizing echoes which added to the meaning perceived by them.[23] There is a dividing-line here between Milton's age and our own. In modern culture there is no counterpart to the themes, motifs, images and

[21] *Poetry and the Fountain of Light*. Columbia, Miss., 1962, p. 112. Similar observations on the autonomy of a literary text have been made by many other critics.

[22] It goes without saying that my discussion here is much indebted to the classic first chapter by M. C. Beardsley and W. K. Wimsatt, ''The Intentional Fallacy'', in Wimsatt's *The Verbal Icon. Studies in the Meaning of Poetry*. Lexington, 1954, repr. New York, 1960, pp. 3ff.

[23] A recent study of this very phenomenon in sonneteering is Lars-Håkan Svensson's comprehensive commentary on Daniel's *Delia (Silent Art. Rhetorical and Thematic Patterns in Samuel Daniel's 'Delia'*. Lund, 1980). Svensson is less interested in Daniel's intentions than in ''the meaning his sonnets possess when perused in the light of the long and prodigiously rich tradition of sonneteering'' (pp. 22f.).

formulae which to a great extent made up a common literary property shared by a learned public in the earlier period. The authors of *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land* do not draw on a generally known literary heritage but explore a largely forgotten literary past, creating a frame of reference normally accessible to their readers only after specialists have gone to work.[24] "Allusion", in other words, is perhaps a more meaningful concept in a discussion of modern than of 17th-century poetry. As pointed out by B. A. Wright, "allusion" in Milton's day was a "generic term for metaphors, similes and any kind of analogy", and its use was thus not restricted in the way to which we have become accustomed.[25] Another important concept in this connection was "wit", defined as quickness in recognizing and enjoying similitudes.[26]

Actually, as stressed by Miner and Enkvist, this matter of recognition – whether immediate and spontaneous or based on auxiliary specialist research – is of course of decisive importance.[27] If not recognized, the similitude cannot function and the concealed member of it, the "absent structure", to borrow Umberto Eco's well-known term,[28] remains hidden away, uncommunicative like an inscription in a language not yet deciphered, or rather perhaps inaudible like a voice out of earshot. If recognized, this member of the similar pair acquires meaning, is transformed into a deep context, an infracontext, and automatically enters into a semantic relationship with the surface context.[29] The result is a vertical context system, not of a static but a dynamic type, so that the surface context – whether word, word-group or larger entity – is charged with significance by contact with the infracontext, the hidden word pattern, which bears some kind of similarity to it: stronger or weaker, but

[24] On this difference between past and present see also Douglas Bush's article, p. 632; C. S. Lewis, *De Descriptione Temporum*. Cambridge, 1955, p. 14; and Louise Vinge, "Om Allusioner", p. 152.

[25] B. A. Wright, *Milton's 'Paradise Lost'*, 1962, repr. London, 1968, p. 86.

[26] Wright, *ibid.* See also K.-P. Lange, *Theoretiker des literarischen Manierismus*, München, 1968, pp. 80, 86, 87ff., 101. – Though I do not expressly refer to Rosemond Tuve in this book, I owe much to her *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery. Renaissance Poetic and Twentieth-Century Critics* (Chicago, 1947), and *A Reading of George Herbert* (Chicago, 1952).

[27] Miner, *Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, p. 18; Enkvist, "Die Funktion literarischer Kontexte für die linguistische Stilistik" (*Stilistik* 6, 1976, p. 82).

[28] *La Struttura Assente*. Milano, 1968.

[29] The following description of the "vertical context system" is basically identical with those in the author's articles "Vertical Context Systems" (*Style and Text. Studies Presented to Nils Erik Enkvist*, Stockholm, 1975, pp. 146ff.) and "Linear Sequence, Spatial Structure, Complex Sign, and Vertical Context System" (*Poetics* 7, 1978, pp. 377ff.). A potentially interested reader will easily find out what modifications have been made in my views over the years. I would like to stress the fact that the vertical kind of reading is of course only *one* possible method – an alternative to other kinds of approach, but one which affords certain advantages. The concept "literary context" as used by me is wider than the concept currently used.

at any rate close enough to be recognized by a reader with sufficient knowledge. There are particularly three great poets representing different epochs in European literature whose work depends for its full effect on this kind of recognition: Dante, Milton, and Eliot.

Strictly speaking, two stages are involved in the appreciation of a vertical context system. Recognition means that the surface context, operating as a signal, triggers a memory of the infracontext. Then, as recognition turns to understanding, the signal is transformed into a sign[30] as surface and infracontexts coalesce. This sign may be of two main types, which cannot always be kept strictly apart. Either it consists of the surface context expressly elucidated and explained, in fact annotated, by an infracontext. Or else it is made up of surface- and (often poetic) infracontexts which more indirectly, as they merge in the reader's mind, convey some kind of meaning. An instance of the former type of sign is the passage on the Egyptian army perishing in the Red Sea (*Paradise Lost* 1.305ff.), interpreted with the aid of explanatory patristic comment (pp. 64ff.). An instance of the latter is the simile in 1.781ff. with revelling fairy elves, belated peasant, moon, and jocund music, which signal infracontexts in Virgil, Horace, Apollonius Rhodius, and moon lore. A complex sign emerges indicating evil delusion and distortion of the divine order (pp. 79ff.). The meaning, based on a complex of poetic infracontexts "rubbing off" on the surface context, is rather different from the more harmless fairy scene resulting from a horizontal, surface reading. Sets of these two main types of signs constitute two kinds of code,[31] a simple and a complex one not always, of course, clearly distinguishable. These designations, however, only refer to the nature of the code; among the instances of the simple code there are signs which are intricate enough. Superimposed on these two, again, is the associative and emotive richness with which the surface contexts are simultaneously invested. Conversely, there are certain cases of surface contexts intensified and associatively enriched, though there is little contribution of

[30] For this difference between signal and sign, see M. Bakhtin's ideas as expounded by V. V. Ivanov ("The Significance of M. M. Bakhtin's Ideas of Sign, Utterance, and Dialogue for Modern Semiotics", *Semiotics and Structuralism. Readings from the Soviet Union*, ed. H. Baran. White Plains, N.Y., 1976, pp. 319ff.). It seems that Ziva Ben-Porat has a similar view, tracing the various stages from "recognition of a marker" to "activation of the evoked text": "The more complex process of actualizing a literary allusion can be described as a movement starting with the recognition of the marker and ending with intertextual patterning" ("The Poetics of Literary Allusion", pp. 109ff.). The same process has been described by philosophers dealing with the nature of sign-relations, for example by C. J. Ducasse ("Symbols, Signs, and Signals", *Journal of Symbolic Logic* 4, 1939, pp. 41ff.).

[31] Referring to Eco's terminology and analysis in his chapter on rhetoric and ideology in *La Struttura Assente*, Louise Vinge describes allusion as a kind of coded message which can be decoded by a recipient familiar with the nature of the code ("Om Allusioner", p. 142).

additional meaning. In such cases of predominantly connotative effect the term code is less relevant. An example of this type, in which infracontexts of great power and intensity colour the surface context, is, in part, the passage on Satan compared to Argo passing between the Symplegades and to Odysseus' ship making its way between Scylla and Charybdis. A more extensive case is the account of the infernal punishment, where infracontexts of great authority increase the effect and impact of the surface context (see p. 38ff.).

We would have to agree with E. D. Hirsch, it seems, that there is no "universally applicable distinction" between denotation and connotation, between "primary or manifest, and secondary or nonmanifest meanings".[32] Boundary-lines are fluid and blurred, and it is rather a question of emphasis or degree than of difference in kind. We can imagine the main functions as grades or stages in a progressive series on a scale. It is at one end of the scale that we find the cases of the double code: the surface context is explained by the infracontext, or the two merge into a composite sign indirectly invested with meaning, and connotations further enrich the reader's experience. At the other end of the scale, after a series of intermediate forms, we arrive at the cases in which infracontexts furnish the surface contexts with associative richness and emotive colouring, but afford little explanation or interpretation. These two opposite ends on the scale often occur in the same description or episode. There is also a different category of some importance, in which infracontexts do not afford either additional meaning or associative richness: on the contrary they provide an attenuated or weakened theme in relation to the surface contextual theme, so that the surface context operates by intensification. Such cases might have been regarded as successful instances of *aemulatio*: in accordance with a well-known attitude poets, as Kirkconnell has it, were regarded by Milton "not as patterns to be aped but as rivals to be outsoared".[33] In the Pandemonium section, for instance, we move from witches and sorcerers to devils and from enchanted castles to the infernal hall; thus from manifestations or shapes of evil to evil itself. This type will be treated as a variant of *auxesis*, amplification or enhancement.

A vertical context system, then, may include allusions in the proper sense of the term, overt or covert, and all conceivable borderline cases down to reminiscences and faint echoes of various kinds, quite irrespec-

[32] E. D. Hirsch, Jr., *Validity in Interpretation*. New Haven and London, 1967, p. 61.

[33] *Awake the Courteous Echo. The Themes and Prosody of 'Comus', 'Lycidas', and 'Paradise Regained' in World Literature with Translations of the Major Analogues*. Toronto and Buffalo, 1973, p. xxiv. See also, for examples in the classical field, the article by Gian Biagio Conte, "Memoria dei poeti e arte allusiva" (*Memoria dei poeti e sistema letterario*. Torino, 1974, pp. 5ff.); and Lars-Håkan Svensson, *Silent Art, passim*.

tive of authors' awareness. The only relevant criterion is that associative richness is conveyed infracontextually or else that the surface context provides intensification, and that in the majority of cases meaning of some kind is imparted to surface context by infracontext. From the point of view of method there are thus considerable advantages, when discussing earlier texts, in abandoning the concept "allusion" altogether, a concept often involving complications and confusion. The question, "Is this passage an allusion?" may more usefully be replaced by two questions: "Does this passage suggest some other passage?" and, if so, "How does this other evoked passage affect it?" These questions make possible discussions which are meaningful and based on accessible linguistic material, and psychological speculations may be left out of account. It should be stressed that such discussions do not require a "superreader", an unfortunate character invented by Michael Riffaterre;[34] nor is it particularly apt to speak merely of "the reader", as Fish does in his book on *Paradise Lost*. It is more to the point, in a discussion of Milton's readers, to reckon with a fair-sized group of readers who shared the same cultural background and the same general frame of reference, responding in a similar way to the same infracontextual pattern. Naturally however, *all* members of such a group were not likely to recognize identical details, nor could *one* reader have mastered the most complex patterns, but a signal not received by one reader could be picked up by another and be transformed into a sign, provided the infracontext was fully understood. The more homogeneous the cultural background, the larger the group likely to respond in the same way to the textual stimulus and to feel at home in the vertical context system. Such readers were learned readers,[35] and in their case the channels of communication running from surface context to infracontext must have been short and the impact of the latter on the former strong and immediate. The close familiarity with infracontextual patterns is likely, in ideal cases, to have resulted in instantaneous reactions, in the rapid merging of surface and infracontext, in the quick transformation of signal into sign. The literary situation is analogous to that described by André Grabar in the case of Christian iconography. Image-signs in catacombs, for example, Grabar points out, "fulfill their purpose successfully only in so far as they are clear; but the concept of clarity is a function of the training of the viewer". There is

[34] "Describing Poetic Structures: Two Approaches to Baudelaire's 'Les Chats' " (J. Ehrmann, *Structuralism*. New York, 1966, repr. 1970, pp. 188ff.).

[35] To speak of the "ordinary reader", as Bush does in "Ironic and Ambiguous Allusion in *Paradise Lost*", p. 632, seems also misleading. The learned readers of *Paradise Lost*, incidentally, were quite early to be found not only among the author's countrymen, but also among the literati on the continent (from the beginning of the 18th century onwards). The relevant facts are provided in the introduction to *Milton 1752–1801*, pp. 6ff.

another similarity between religious literature and art in that the part of the message that is properly the author's own is necessarily limited. In iconography, "the rest belongs to the vocabulary of the current language of the visual arts, either the language in general use or, sometimes, a special technical language already established". So it does in literature based on the great sacred texts. "It is on this condition that an image-maker is understood by others, the obvious aim of anyone who expresses himself whether it be in images or in words".[36] A marked departure from tradition endangers understanding. This of course in no way detracts from Milton's achievement as a literary artist: on the contrary, it is precisely thanks to his powers as an outstanding poet that the great traditions acquire fresh life.

A vertical context system is a special type or variant of a phenomenon which has of late been described repeatedly: no literary text can exist without some kind of infrastructure to which it refers and in the absence of which it cannot be understood. Sartre refers to the universe discernible behind all works of art;[37] Foucault, to the resemblance between a book and a point in a network, and to the system in a book of overt or hidden references to other books, to other texts, to other phrases.[38] In a discussion along the same lines, Jurij Lotman comments on the relationship between "Signal" and "Hintergrund".[39] Examining the web of communication woven by a literary text, Barthes distinguishes five codes which include all items encountered in the course of his analysis of a short story by Balzac.[40] Bakhtin studies "the role of someone else's word" in Hellenistic and medieval literature, various forms of quotation, and the fact that certain texts are composed, like mosaics, of other texts.[41] According to Kristeva's theory of phenotext and genotext, the latter provides unstructured semantic possibilities merging with the phenotextual surface and, in so doing, transforming it and investing it with manifest significance.[42] Robert Weimann distinguishes between different levels to which a work of art refers: the reference to its own time, its past significance, and to the time of its effect, its present meaning.[43] The difference between such conceptions and the vertical context systems is

[36] André Grabar, *Christian Iconography: A Study of Its Origins (Bollingen Series* XXXV. 10. Princeton, 1968, pp. 9, 31).
[37] *Qu'est-ce que la littérature*? (ch. 2, "Pourquoi écrire?"). Paris, 1948.
[38] "Réponse au Cercle d'épistémologie" (*Cahiers pour l'Analyse* 9, 1968, p. 14).
[39] *Vorlesungen zu einer strukturalen Poetik*. München, 1972, pp. 178, 180.
[40] *S/Z. Essais*. Paris, 1970.
[41] Ivanov, *Semiotics and Structuralism*, pp. 322f.
[42] Σημειωτική. *Recherches pour une sémanalyse*. Paris, 1969, pp. 278ff.; and *Polylogue*, Paris, 1977, pp. 190ff.
[43] *Structure and Society in Literary History. Studies in the History and Theory of Historical Criticism*. London, 1977, p. 186.

that these latter are of a more limited and specific nature, being entirely based on distinctive, mostly verbal similarities between surface and infracontexts resulting in a closely connected semantic whole, a functional entity. It is this semantic character of the relationship which makes the term "infracontext" a more suitable one than "infrastructure", well-known from the terminology of the social sciences.

I have earlier described the work involved in looking for infracontexts as "text archaeology": "... We work like archaeologists delving far down through the strata of the past, laying bare traces of cultures which throw light on later civilizations, endowing them with a meaning they would not otherwise possess".[44] I later discovered that John Steadman had described the efforts connected with exploring the "buried foundations" upon which *Paradise Lost* is built in similar terms. Milton's epic he compares to Schliemann's Troy, and the task of uncovering the groundwork he associates with that of an archaeologist: the different chapters in his *Milton's Epic Characters* are "'exploratory diggings' into the strata of ideas and motifs beneath Milton's Renaissance architecture, the older foundations that underlie and support his 'vast design'".[45] While there is something to be said for such an analogy in a description of a conventional commentator's work, it seems less fortunate as a characterization of the task involved in constructing vertical context systems. Archaeology suggests the remains of a remote past, ruins which can be interpreted by the historian but which cannot again be put to practical use in the civilization in which he lives. Literary archaeology suggests an annotator of a text listing sources and parallels, activities very different from those of the student of vertical context systems recognizing signals, integrating infracontexts with surface contexts, and appreciating the meaning of the signs which emerge in the process.[46] It is important in this connection to realize that "infracontext" must not be confused with "source", though of course the two concepts may overlap. "Source" is the more limited concept and the source-hunter's business is genetic and concerned with the tracing of origins. The student of infracontexts, on the contrary, deals with the expansion and stratification of meaning. His aim is thus not historical or antiquarian, but practical and pragmatic: to utilize infracontexts in an intensified appreciation of literary texts, not to store away parallel passages in a collection of notes. More than once, in

[44] "Vertical Context Systems", p. 149.

[45] *Milton's Epic Characters, Image and Idol.* Chapel Hill, 1968, p. vii.

[46] I must admit, incidentally, to some doubt as to the advisability of breaking down "allusive" processes into their constituents, as has been done by Ziva Ben-Porat ("The Poetics of Literary Allusion", pp. 112, 113f., 121, and 124f.). It seems to me that graphic representations such as these leave out of account two important features of functioning allusions: their synthetic and kinetic character. Ben-Porat's charts endanger cohesion and petrify dynamics.

the course of my study of *Paradise Lost*, I have been reminded of a notice in one of the great churches of Western Europe: "The Cathedral is not a museum. To enter it is to step into the mysterious world of the faith and the devotion of centuries".

It seems to me important in this connection to refer to Robert Weimann's claim that "past significance" is ultimately indivisible from "present meaning" and from the survival of the work of art into the future. The reader, Weimann stresses, is "a factor in the handing down of the literature of the past": there is a constant interaction between the impress of the past and the impact of the present, and it has become increasingly important to pay attention not only to the theory, but also the practice of tradition.[47] This naturally implies a high degree of activity on the part of the reader, who becomes an instrument of communication. Every student of vertical context systems, for instance, must recreate the textual universe for himself. This universe, coherent and alive in the reader's mind, is the exact opposite of that contained in the monstrous library described by Luis Borges: unlimited, mysterious, full of precious but partly indecipherable texts, esoteric and superfluous.

Some further characteristics and some variants of vertical context systems can be distinguished. There has recently been a discussion as to the relative merits of two kinds of response to literary texts. One of these is the type described by Stanley Fish, "the linear experience of reading", implying a temporal, kinetic "analysis of the developing responses of the reader in relation to the words as they succeed one another in time".[48] The other, espoused by "structuralists" like Roman Jakobson, Barthes, and many others, is the static and spatial conception of the structure of a literary text. The former approach concentrates on concreteness and individual manifestation, which, according to its advocates, are of central importance to stylistics; whereas analysis based on the latter aims at constructing abstract systems beyond the individual level.[49] It is difficult to see why these two approaches should have to be regarded as rivals: the linear as well as the spatial way of dealing with a literary text are equally defensible and justified and, of course, supplement one another. The construction of vertical context systems supports and facilitates both kinds of analysis. The "linear experience of reading" is very intimately connected with a common function of a vertical context system: the intensification and reinforcement, referred to previously, of the surface context by contact with the infracontext. It might be thought that the

[47] *Structure and Society in Literary History*, pp. 62 and 87.
[48] "Literature in the Reader. Affective Stylistics" (*NLH* 2, 1970, pp. 126f.).
[49] See Roger Fowler, *Style and Structure in Literature. Essays in the New Stylistics*. Ithaca, 1975, pp. 11, 87ff.

depth dimension involved in this contact would interfere with linear reading and hamper the progression of developing responses, but the intensification, the associative richness provided by vertical reading, operates differently. As a result of his awareness of vertical contextual cohesion, the reader's appreciation of the surface continuum in its totality is heightened. An instance in Milton is the well-known autumnal-leaves image (*PL* 1.302ff.), in which the dual motif of transitoriness and defeat is intensified by a set of falling-leaves infracontexts ranging from Homer to Tasso and Marlowe. The clarified and enhanced meaning emerging from this composite autumnal-leaves sign colours the subsequent lines on armed Orion vexing the Red Sea coast and on Pharaoh and his army drowning in the waves. At the same time these latter lines as it were double back, affecting and enhancing the meaning of the autumnal-leaves sign just registered by the reader. This mechanism is all the more effective as the Red Sea lines (305-11) are also in their turn part of a vertical context system intensifying and clarifying this significance. The result is a dynamic process, a very rapid to-and-fro movement of words, lines, and meanings (pp. 59ff. below).

The same passage is an instance of a vertical system contributing to the construction of a spatial pattern based on contrasts. On this spatial, non-sequential level the autumnal-leaves simile stands out sharply in opposition to the episodes of angelic choirs praising God and moving round him in perfect, concentric circles (5.160ff. and 618ff.). Like the autumnal-leaves lines these descriptions of celestial hosts form part of vertical context systems: the infracontextual components belong within the esoteric, old topos of divine harmony, the music of the spheres (pp. 118ff. below). Even on the horizontal level, the contrast between the autumnal-leaves simile and the angelic choir is marked enough: opposed to passive fall, decay, and disorder stand perfect motion, eternity, and divine order. But as the infracontexts enter the picture, this opposition becomes much more marked: meanings are strongly intensified, irreconcilable worlds and value systems are pitted against each other. This spatial contrast effect becomes even more powerful when some other lines are included in the system of opposites: those on God during the creation, sowing Heaven with stars 'thick as a field' (7.358ff.). The tension established between this passage and the autumnal-leaves simile is between life and death, fertility and disintegration, and infracontexts enhancing the sowing of stars theme, like those active in the case of celestial choirs, are multiple and range from classical antiquity to Renaissance (pp. 115ff. below). In spatial systems like these the poetic effects are powerful and dynamic, based as they are on much more complex meanings, emerging along vertical axes, than those which operate on a merely horizontal level. This kind of contrast between vertical context

systems tends to intensify the force-counter-force pattern which Murray Roston has recently demonstrated in *PL*, and which he regards as an expression of Baroque sensibility.[50]

Possibly, another aspect of Milton's "Baroque" literary artistry might be mentioned here. According to Roy Daniells, Milton's conscientious descriptions of literal space make it possible to "go a long way toward establishing his relation to Baroque", and Margaret Bottrall earlier on remarked that "Milton's fondness for figures hurtling through space" recalls similar features of Baroque art.[51] If we agree with such statements it could be maintained that these features of Milton's epic poetry have a counterpart, on the abstract level of form, in the vertical context systems of which his text forms the surface stratum: responding to signals, the reader's mind really "hurtles through space" in its passage from surface to infracontexts at different levels. The impression of spatial movement as conveyed by many of Milton's descriptions is thus enhanced and enriched by this experience on the part of a reader perceiving vertical systems. At the same time the poem's ability to make possible such experiences tends to indicate that it has a place among the literary works of art which operate by "marvelous" or extraordinary conceits, as explained by Italian mid-and-late-17th-century literary theorists such as Emanuele Tesauro and Sforza Pallavicino. Using the word 'Allusione', Tesauro defines it in terms which suggest the mental activity involved in the perception of vertical context systems: the device 'fa correr la Mente ingegnosa à cose Passate, ò lontanissime'. According to Sforza Pallavicino, a conceit 'riceue il suo pregio dal ferir l'animo dell' uditore con qualche marauiglia particolare, e maggior di quella che n'è recata da gli altri palesamenti di pellegrino pensiero'.[52] Vertical context systems may similarly be said to work through 'maraviglie' and "to furnish some remarkable new similitude or insight and arouse wonder".[53]

Contrast effects are often ironic, sometimes heavily so. Thus Beelzebub's melancholy reflections in book 1 on God's leaving the fallen angels

[50] *Milton and the Baroque*. London and Basingstoke, 1980 (ch. 2, "The Arch Antagonist", pp. 50ff.).

[51] Roy Daniells, *Milton, Mannerism and Baroque*. Toronto, 1963, p. 98; Margaret Bottrall, "The Baroque Element in Milton" (*English Miscellany: A Symposium of History, Literature, and the Arts*, ed. Mario Praz *et al.*, 1, 1950, p. 40). See also Murray Roston, pp. 87, 106f., and Roland M. Frye, *Milton's Imagery and the Visual Arts. Iconographic Tradition in the Epic Poems*. Princeton, 1978, p. 210.

[52] Emanuele Tesauro, *Il Cannocchiale Aristotelico*. In Torino, 1670 (repr. August Buck, Berlin and Zürich, 1968), p. 618; Sforza Pallavicino, *Trattato dello Stile e del Dialogo*. Roma, 1662, X, 4. See also Joseph A. Mazzeo, "A Seventeenth-Century Theory of Metaphysical Poetry" (*Renaissance and Seventeenth-Century Studies*. New York, 1964, pp. 32ff.).

[53] Mazzeo, p. 34; Lange, *Theoretiker des literarischen Manierismus*, pp. 87ff., 120, 128f., 130.

with enough strength to do God's 'Errands in the gloomy Deep' read like a sardonic version of the well-known theme of the good angels as the diligent and faithful servants of God (pp. 160ff. below). Irony is very heavy in some passages where it takes on a "black" and almost blasphemous character by being heightened through contact with infracontexts. The "usurper" theme reappears in such passages, for instance in a part of Satan's conversation with Sin and Death at the Gate of Hell in book 2. Satan here makes a remarkable promise, vowing to set free not only his two interlocutors but also all his followers, the fallen angels. The promise is repeated in Satan's boastful speech to his audience of fallen angels in book 10. Both instances of this promise evoke a motif very different from that suggested by them: the Harrowing of Hell, a well-known apocryphal theme in medieval and Renaissance literature, on Christ descending to Hell between crucifixion and resurrection, salvaging the saints imprisoned there. This infracontext as recognized by the reader completely demolishes Satan's proud declarations, and the effect is particularly striking in the second instance: not only is there an irremediable contradiction between surface- and infracontext as such, but this tension is heightened still more by the fact that Satan in his speech in the tenth book has already suffered defeat, something which appears unmistakably after his speech is finished. The tension inherent in the vertical system here is strong enough to disrupt the unity of the sign (pp. 197ff. below).

A set of infracontexts constitutes a matrix, a bed or mould which serves as the base for the surface context and at the same time, up to a point, determines its form. In some cases the matrix is extensive, as in the case of the biblical, apocryphal, and patristic complex of themes and passages which together make up the infracontextual substratum of the account of the fallen angels in Hell and the infernal punishment: burning lake, infernal fire and darkness, fetters and captivity, inability to see God and so on. A matrix of a different and narrower type is made up of the proverbial formula underlying Satan's maxim in his speech to Beelzebub, 'Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven': underneath this statement similar maxims pile up in strata, one upon the other, ranging from Aeschylus and Plutarch to Renaissance poets (p. 228 below).

More interesting perhaps, from the point of view of function, is the synecdochic type where infracontexts do not similarly coincide along a vertical plane, broad or narrow, with the surface contexts, but extend into the periphery, moving outwards, as it were, beyond the vertical boundaries outlined by the surface contexts. They are zero parts of the vertical context systems. The most striking instances are the description of Pandemonium in book 1 and the account of the Chariot of Paternal Deity in action in book 6. The lines on Pandemonium, mainly an instance of the complex code, are invested with complex meaning by a zero-part

system of deep infracontexts simultaneously extending very far laterally and revealing the true nature of the infernal Hall. The synecdochic pattern here is partly of a special kind, some channels of communication running "subterraneously" almost the whole length of the poem, surfacing in the tenth book and then doubling back to enrich the meaning of the episode (pp. 297f. below). The description of the Divine Chariot, mainly a case of the simple code, covers meaning which is conveyed by patristic infracontexts fanning out deep underneath the surface, like the bottom area of a triangle whose sides curve outwards (pp. 316ff. below). All these pars-pro-toto variants of vertical context systems operate on the principle that we can clearly perceive and delimit the nature of an object only by comparing it with other related objects of which we are aware. It is as if a big screen were suspended underneath the surface contexts, filtering out vast quantities of literary material floating upward from the infrastrata. But from the stuff that penetrates the screen it is possible to recover what has stuck on the filter.

As for the double code, some special variants similarly call for specific mention. One is the stratification of meaning, where infracontexts supplement one another. In the simple-code part of the paragraph about the autumnal leaves, Orion vexing the Red Sea coast and Pharaoh's armies perishing in the sea, for example, the meaning may be stratified with the aid of the patristic infracontext into baptism by water, descent into the Underworld and rescue therefrom, and – deeper down, a meaning emerging by further association – baptism by fire. Also, the sense packed into the name Orion connects with different strata in the Old Testament, Bible exegesis, and classical mythology. Christian and classical infracontexts similarly concur, on different levels, in investing the episode of the Israelites on the safe shore with complex significance (pp. 67f. below).

Another variant is the shift of meaning. Complex significance is very clearly to the fore in the special category of denotations in which meaning is movable, shifting radically as different infracontexts are brought into focus. One example is 1.84ff. where Satan, addressing Beelzebub, laments his dire change from splendid angel-hero in the realms of light to disfigured, defeated victim of the wrath of God. The complex-code meaning here depends on our associating Milton's lines with an *Aeneid* passage about Aeneas' melancholy reflections on Hector's mutilated shadow appearing in his dream, or, resulting in an ironic effect, with the diatribe in *Isaiah* on Lucifer the fallen impious tyrant (pp. 193ff. below). The semantic result turns out to be quite different as we "tilt" the text one way or the other.

It follows from what has been said earlier that *Paradise Lost* will be discussed as a literary organism largely independent and autonomous, living its own life determined by its structure and by the literary milieu it

is integrated with. Many of the infracontexts discussed in these chapters, consequently, were probably never contemplated by the poet himself. Since he chose to work in a rich and extremely powerful tradition – to which, however, he more than once took a critical attitude[54] – his poem abounds in meaning and admits of ramified associations within the joint compass of a group of contemporary readers. It is therefore a narrow and unsatisfactory approach if we allow our responses to depend too much on tenets and statements provided by other writings of Milton's. Thus, rejecting the Athanasian Creed, Milton would in consequence discard the doctrine of the Harrowing of Hell, embracing instead that of mortalism according to which man's soul is dead until Christ's second coming.[55] Nevertheless Satan's promises in books 2 and 10, mentioned earlier, immediately suggest the theme of the harrowing, quite irrespective of Milton's attitude to the Athanasian Creed as apparent elsewhere. A better known instance is the poet's views on the relationship between Father and Son: if discussed in the light of *De Doctrina Christiana* (published only in 1825) they may be taken to indicate an anti-Trinitarian position on this question – again, an attitude irreconcilable with the Athanasian Creed. But as Patrides observes in his analysis of this point, theological treatise and poem are two different things, and Milton as a theologian was less fortunate than as a poet: "In the poem he burst his limitations as a theologian and became the great poet he truly was [...] And so the thoughts of *De Doctrina* – thoughts of a dry brain in a dry season – yielded to the throbbing metaphors in book III of *Paradise Lost* ... Milton's *De Doctrina Christiana* is a theological labyrinth. *Paradise Lost* is a window to the sun".[56]

*

In preparing this study I have used Helen Darbishire's Milton text[57] and consulted a number of annotated editions of *Paradise Lost* which seem to me to provide the basic material necessary for a discussion of vertical

[54] For Milton's critical attitude to tradition and his modification of traditional elements see Th. Kranidas, "A View of Milton and the Traditional" (*MS* 1, 1969, pp. 15ff.); Mario A. Di Cesare, "Paradise Lost and Epic Tradition" (*MS* 1, pp. 31ff.); and W. C. Curry, *Milton's Ontology*, p. 11.

[55] See Harry F. Robins, *If This Be Heresy. A Study of Milton and Origen (Ill. Stud. in Lang. and Lit.* 51. Urbana, 1963, p. 56); and Patrides, "Paradise Lost and the Mortalist Heresy" (*NQ* 202, 1957, p. 250f.).

[56] "*Paradise Lost* and the Language of Theology" (*Language and Style in Milton. A Symposium in Honor of the Tercentenary of 'Paradise Lost'*, ed. R. D. Emma and John T. Shawcross. New York, 1967, pp. 105, 106). Patrides sharply rejects M. Kelley's opinion on the relationship between *Paradise Lost* and *De Doctrina Christiana* as apparent from the title of Kelley's book, *This Great Argument. A Study of Milton's 'De Doctrina Christiana' as a Gloss upon 'Paradise Lost'* (Princeton, 1941).

[57] *The Poetical Works of John Milton* 1–2. Oxford, 1955–62.

context systems. These editions are: Hume 1695, Bentley 1732, Newton 1750, Todd 4th ed. 1842, Keightley 1859, Masson 2nd ed. repr. 1903 and 1910, Verity 1910 and the revised ed. of books 1–2 1952, Beeching book 1 (1887) repr. 1938, Chambers book 2 (1893) repr. 1938, Merritt Hughes 1957 (revision of an earlier version 1935), Rajan books 1–2 1964, Bush 1966, and Fowler 1968 (see further the bibliography). I have also, of course, used the Richardsons' commentary of 1734. The works up to and including Todd have been described and evaluated in detail in Ants Oras's well-known study.[58] A few additional remarks may perhaps be called for. The early commentaries are valuable particularly because their authors were more familiar than we are with the ways of thinking and writing prevalent in Milton's day, and it is worth while to pay attention to the associations they had while working through Milton's text. Hume's annotations on the text provided by Tonson, though in Oras's opinion undisciplined and diffuse, show insights into the Semitic material not equalled in later commentaries (see Cohen, pp. 156ff.). Bentley's book, in which the editor fiercely slashes right and left in Milton's text like a woodman crashing through shrubbery, is important by challenging critics and forcing them to answer questions not easily evaded (the most interesting illustration, of course, is Empson's discussion in *Milton's God*). The value of the Richardson commentary has not diminished, and the sensibility displayed in it is still a great stimulus to criticism. The remarks in Newton's Variorum edition, though uneven and not so often concerned with real difficulties as one would have wished, reveal an editor of great learning and a critical talent to the fore particularly in his assessments of the relative merits of Milton and the classical epic poets. Several apt observations are made by his collaborators, particularly by Thyer. Todd's great Variorum edition (1st ed. 1801) is of fundamental importance. His reputation as a critic is not great, but his judgement is often sound, his honesty and industry are remarkable, and he and his contributors – Dunster, Bowle, Stillingfleet, and Lord Monboddo among others – provide comments and supply material basic to an understanding of the literary foundations of Milton's epic. Todd's edition is the first in which real attention is paid to the Romance material. According to Oras, Todd's fourth edition is essentially the same as the earlier ones "except for some very slight additions" (2, p. 322). This is hardly true, for in his endeavours to keep the commentary within reasonable bounds Todd sometimes cancels material included in the third

[58] *Milton's Editors and Commentators from Patrick Hume to Henry John Todd (1695–1801). A Study in Critical Views and Methods* 1–2 (*Acta et Commentationes Universitatis Tartuensis XX–XXI*, Tartu, 1930–31). In an appendix to her *The Throne and the Chariot. Studies in Milton's Hebraism* (The Hague and Paris, 1975, pp. 155ff.), Kitty Cohen evaluates the editors from Hume to Hughes from a Semitist's point of view.

edition. Conversely, among the additions made in the fourth there are interesting quotations from Jewish exegetes (Rabbi Jarchi, Moses Bar-Cepha, Rabbi Eliezer).

As for the post-Todd commentators, Keightley devotes a good deal of welcome attention to construing the text and explaining its difficulties, labours which earlier annotators, quicker to catch Milton's meaning, might have deemed unnecessary. Also, Keightley in his somewhat laconic fashion adduces several new parallels and, as Kitty Cohen observes (p. 169), provides more detailed notes on Scriptural echoes than any previous editor except Hume. Masson's edition, originally published in 1874 (2nd edition 1882), seems to me to be rather overestimated (by Verity and others): his additions to earlier commentaries are not very numerous, nor his discussions very illuminating. Through Verity's well-known work many generations of college and university students all over the world have become acquainted with *Paradise Lost*. Though of course obsolete on many points the edition is still of value, and a recent attempt to supersede it (Broadbent's *Cambridge Milton for Schools and Colleges*) is not successful. The revised 1952 Verity edition of books 1 and 2 combines with Beeching's, Chambers's, and Rajan's works to form a useful composite commentary on the beginning of the poem. Rajan's is particularly remarkable for the just attention paid to earlier editors and critics and for a sound appraisal of their views and interpretations. Hughes' huge volume is noticeable above all for sound discussions of various points connected with Renaissance literature. Bush provides useful information in a succinct form. However, though "designed for readers, not scholars" – a nice distinction – his edition more than once leaves difficulties unexplained or deals with them rather too summarily. Fowler's fully annotated edition is the only one so far in which the results of modern Milton scholarship have been incorporated. Also, large amounts of fresh material relevant to a discussion of the text – Renaissance allegory and Bible exegesis, iconography, symbolic interpretation, numerology – are taken into account. It is consequently Fowler's edition which is most often to the fore in my own discussions, and no student concerned with the interpretation of Milton's text in the light of recent scholarship can afford to ignore his notes.

The material which constitutes the infracontextual strata divides up into ten main groups, which can enter into any number of combinations of any type: classical and early Christian poetry; the Bible with apocrypha in different versions; patristic commentary and exegesis; post-patristic Bible exegesis; *The Divine Comedy* with commentaries; Romance Renaissance poetry; Neo-Latin poetry; English Renaissance poetry; mythography; iconography. These groups form a closed system – true, a very vast one, but closed nevertheless. Encompassed by it,

Paradise Lost is far from being an "open work of art" in the sense which applies to various works of modern art and literature as explained by Umberto Eco.[59] These depend for their effect less on an inherent order than, being "unfinished", on a boundless "field of possibilities", open to spectator, listener, or reader. As said previously, a student of vertical context systems in *Paradise Lost*, left with his own associations rather than with the poet's intentions, constructs the textual universe for himself. But this does not mean that one interpretation is just as good as another: on the contrary, the reader's associations are all the time governed and controlled by the system of surface- and infracontexts, although of course opinions may differ on the validity of interpretations. There is a fundamental difference between a system, no matter how extensive, and no system at all, in short between closed and open.

A few remarks on the infracontextual material. In dealing with readings in the English bibles I have used the Coverdale, Geneva, and Bishops' Bibles, Matthew's Bible, and *The Authorized Version*.[60] Of the collections of Bible exegesis that I have used, one in particular seems to contain a good deal of material relevant to Renaissance thinking: the massive nine-volume Variorum commentary known as the *Critici Sacri*. I have paid much attention to patristic commentary.[61] Its importance can hardly be overestimated, and countless interpretations and explanations made by the Fathers crop up in the works of medieval and Renaissance exegetes. I would particularly stress the significance of Greek patristic literature, which played a prominent part in the spiritual life of the West in the Renaissance – 'iuvat integros accedere fontes'. It appears from the British Library Catalogue how often these patristic authors were printed and reprinted in the West in the 16th and 17th centuries. With certain exceptions they do not seem to have received the attention they deserve in Milton studies, and the dust lies thick on the pages of some of them.

The Divine Comedy in the light of medieval and Renaissance commentary can be profitably studied in Scartazzini's great four-volume edition (Leipzig 1875–1900). All my quotations from *The Divine Comedy*, however, are based on the text in Landino-Vellutello-Sansovino's edition, the most widely studied in the 17th century. Romance Renaissance poetry includes not only Tasso and other representatives of the Italian

[59] *Opera Aperta. Forma e indeterminazione nelle poetiche contemporanee*. Milano, 1962.
[60] The Vulgate is quoted from the Antwerp 1584 edition, the *LXX* from the Amsterdam edition of 1683. For assessments of Milton's familiarity with *Genesis* as rendered in the different bibles see Ernst Häublein, "Milton's Paraphrase of Genesis: A Stylistic Reading of *Paradise Lost*, Book VII" (*MS* 7, 1975, pp. 101ff.). An excellent survey of the various bible versions available in the 17th century is provided by Don Cameron Allen in "Dean Donne Sets His Text" (*ELH* 10, 1943, pp. 208ff.).
[61] A brief survey of the patristic background is provided in Sister M. I. Corcoran's *Milton's Paradise with Reference to the Hexameral Background*, Washington, D.C., 1945, pp. 5ff.

epic but also Camoëns, whose *Lusiads* has recently, and rightly, attracted the attention of Milton scholars. Most relevant Neo-Latin poems are among those listed in Kirkconnell's valuable *The Celestial Cycle*. As for English poetry *The Faerie Queene*, of course, is the most important of all pre-Milton Renaissance texts. In the case of mythography, the early authors edited by Munckerus are of interest along with Boccaccio, Gyraldus, Valerianus, Cartari, Ross, and particularly Comes. Of the many different editions of Comes' *Mythologiae* I have used a late one, of 1641, considerably enlarged as compared with earlier versions. In principle, as in my commentary to the *Sospetto d'Herode*, I have made efforts to rely on texts which Milton and/or his contemporaries could have used or would find it natural to use. The exceptions are the same as those mentioned in that book (pp. 28f.), and so are the motives for departing from my rule.

Iconography constitutes important parts of the infracontextual strata. Some valuable aids to the study of the iconographic tradition are now available. The emblematic material has been abundantly provided in Henkel and Schöne's splendid work[62] and was earlier described and analysed by Mario Praz in a classic study.[63] Recently, the material in other kinds of pictorial art with special reference to Milton's epics has been presented and discussed in an impressive volume with magnificent illustrations by Roland M. Frye (referred to in note 51 above). Frye's work is indispensable to students of *Paradise Lost*, although in his discussion of artistic analogues to details in the poem he pays insufficient attention to the fact that poem and pictorial art are both manifestations of the same literary symbolic tradition, emerging particularly in patristic exegesis.[64] This literary tradition is in some cases more important than the iconographic background, and the relationship poem – literary tradition – iconography is largely disregarded. Nevertheless, many of the analogues he points out are of great interest and often supplement and reinforce the literary infracontexts, contributing as they do to our impression of homogeneousness. They also literally operate as illustrations of the texts.

[62] *Emblemata. Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts,* herausgegeben von Arthur Henkel und Albrecht Schöne. Stuttgart, 1967.

[63] *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery*, 2nd ed. (*Sussidi Eruditi* 16. Roma, 1964.)

[64] Frye, for instance, refers approvingly to Leland Ryken's discussion of "enameled imagery" (*The Apocalyptic Vision in 'Paradise Lost'*) and his view that it depicts "a transcendental realm whose permanence forms a contrast with the transient world of earthly experience". No attention, however, is paid to the important symbolism involved here (p. 200). Again, though Frye's analysis of "vegetable gold" in art is interesting, he does not discuss the significance of gold in the poem, referring instead to various critics' statements, which are all beside the point (pp. 251ff.). See further pp. 308f. below. It is also with some amazement that one reads his explanation of Milton's 'amber stream' (p. 16).

The chapters in this study are not grouped or arranged according to the various types of vertical context systems sketched above; nor are they arranged according to the two main kinds of code. Such a distribution would make havoc of the scenes and events analysed, and any kind of coherence would be impossible. The various sections, which consist of fairly limited passages, admitting of intensive analysis (a mere handful chosen from countless possible cases), have therefore been loosely organized in a series of increasing semantic complexity. The first sections deal with descriptions of the infernal world and are followed by sections on the contrasting celestial realm. The study of contrasts is continued in a chapter on good and evil stairs and passageways. A further step towards semantic intricacy is taken in the main chapter, chiefly concerned with Satan and his activities, and the final chapter deals with the most complex descriptions of all, the cases of extreme synecdoche: Pandemonium with its opposite counterpart, the House of God, and the Chariot of Paternal Deity. It is in these descriptions that the number of voices is greatest; it is as if a door were opened, and a hum as from a great crowd filled a quiet room – with this difference that we can make out what everyone is saying, or rather, I hope we can. In a concluding chapter strands are drawn together, and a survey of the decoding is attempted.

CHAPTER II

Intensification and Interpretation

1. Infernal Punishment

The theme of the rebel angels' sin, fall and eternal punishment is reinforced by a very extensive infracontextual matrix containing the same theme – biblical, apocryphal and exegetic, and belonging within a double code. In addition, certain word-groups separate out as coming very close to the actual wording used by Milton, operating as powerful intensifiers. In the horizontal surface context, the first mention of this theme is arranged much as it is in Marino–Crashaw's *Strage degli Innocenti*, following as it does on an invocation of the Heavenly Muse who is asked to inspire and help the poet in his great endeavour. One difference is that in *PL* the account of the infernal punishment is separated from the invocation by an indictment in which Satan is branded as the external cause[1] of Man's transgression, while the account of the punishment in the *Strage* comes immediately after the invocation. With several other representatives of the Renaissance religious epic,[2] Milton invests his invocation with a complex syntactic form, an elaborate structure in which various kinds of clauses are tacked on to each other in an intricate pattern (ll. 1–26). The subsequent branding of Satan as the external cause is simpler in syntactic form (27–33) and winds up with the direct question, 'Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?', possibly modelled on the τίς- question in the *Iliad* 1.8 (Hume): Homer asks who among the gods was responsible for the strife between Agamemnon and Achilles. The question comprises one line and the same number of words in both poems, but in the *Iliad* the theme is heroic, in *PL* super-heroic. This enhancing effect is followed up on a formal level, by the subsequent description of Satan's sin and punishment. After a kind of syntactic

[1] As shown by Steadman the view of Satan as the external, or procatarctic, cause of the fall of Eve was traditional in Renaissance exegetic thought (" 'Man's first Disobedience'. The Causal Structure of the Fall", in *Milton's Epic Characters*, pp. 139ff.).

[2] See *Marino and Crashaw: 'Sospetto d'Herode'. A Commentary*. Lund, 1971, pp. 85ff. Poets conspicuous for such formal arrangements are Mantuan, Fracastoro, Vida, Sannazaro, and Tasso.

intermediate paragraph, in which the degree of complexity is fairly high without matching that of the invocation (34–44, 44–49), a succession of concatenated clauses runs from 1. 50 down to 1. 74 with very slight pauses – a counterpart on the syntactic level to the invocation, similarly underscoring contrast, a lofty effect being achieved in both paragraphs (see also p. 58).

The lines on Satan's aspirations,

> [with all his Host]
> Of Rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring
> To set himself in Glory above his Peers,
> He trusted to have equald the most High,
> If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim
> Against the Throne and Monarchy of God
> Rais'd impious Warr in Heav'n and Battel proud
> With vain attempt (37–44),

are ultimately based on *Is.* 14.13–14, but represent, as Steadman demonstrates, a minority among the versions of the text. Most translations of the Hebrew provide 'similis ero Altissimo / excelso'; only the Zurich Latin Bible and the Tremellius-Junius version say that Lucifer wants to be equal to the most High, and of these only the latter gives unequivocally, 'me aequabo excelso'.[3] The theme as represented by Tremellius-Junius is further developed in religious poetry taking its starting-point in *Is.* 14.13. In Marino's *Gerusalemme Distrutta* 17, God describes the fruitless rebellion of the dissident angel who tried to wrench his sceptre from him and rise above him. Earlier, Sannazaro's *De Partu Virginis* (3.40ff) had included some lines to the same effect: the good angels remained faithful when 'Arctoum ... furor pertenderet impius axem / Scandere, et in gelidos regnum transferre Triones'. Such lines, suggesting the *Gigantomachia*,[4] hint not only at an endeavour on the part of Lucifer to become a Jove-like God, but indeed at an attempt to defeat him. They make up a background concealing a threat and suggesting more advanced satanic plans.

The 'impious Warr in Heav'n and Battel proud' raised with vain

[3] See Steadman, "Satan and the Argument from Equality" (*Milton's Epic Characters*, pp. 160ff.).

[4] For the traditional association of the *Gigantomachia* myth with the rebellion of the apostate angels see D. P. Harding, *Milton and the Renaissance Ovid*, Urbana, Ill., 1946, pp. 85ff., and *The Club of Hercules*, pp. 57ff. On the part played by the myth of the titans and the giants "across the panorama of *Paradise Lost*" see also A. C. Labriola, "The Titans and the Giants: *Paradise Lost* and the Tradition of the Renaissance Ovid" (*MQ* 12, 1978, pp. 9ff.).

attempt against God's throne and monarchy in Heaven echo two *Aeneid* word-groups (Todd), one of which, 6.612f., is semantically relevant. This is where among the sinners in Hades Aenas is shown those who did not fear to take up impious arms against their lords, a group guilty of the same crime as Satan. Imprisoned, they await punishment: 'Inclusi poenam expectant' – words which according to Norden must have been absorbed in an early apocalypse, *The Acts of the Apostel Thomas*, ch. 54,[5] in a section describing the punishment of sinners in the Underworld: "He showed me a very dark cavern, and many souls were looking out wishing to have a share of the air, but their guards would not let them". On an infracontextual level a theme is thus introduced which surfaces a few lines further down in *PL*, where the fallen angels are said to dwell in a dark but glowing prison and in chains and fire.

In the well-known lines depicting the War in Heaven and the Fall, infracontexts are highly functional. Lucifer, 'with ambitious aim', began an impious war against God's throne and monarchy, but in vain:

> Him the Almighty Power
> Hurld headlong flaming from th'Etherial Skie
> With hideous ruin and combustion down
> To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
> In Adamantin Chains and penal Fire,
> Who durst defie th'Omnipotent to Arms.
> Nine times the space that measures Day and Night
> To mortal men, hee with his horrid crew
> Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe
> Confounded though immortal. (44ff.)

'Hurld headlong flaming from th'Ethereal Skie / With hideous ruin and combustion' is ultimately derived from *Luke* 10.18 'Videbat satanam sicut fulgur de caelo cadentem', paraphrased in *Purg.* 12.26f. 'Dal cielo/ Folgoreggiando scender da un lato'. The rhythmical pattern of Milton's line may well have been inspired by Dante's, which as Gmelin observes "rhythmisch die Bewegung des Blitzes nachahmt".[6] A contrast *polyptoton* is supplied by the *Sospetto* 30, where Lucifer in his prime is referred to as 'Principe già de' fulguranti Amori' (the angel guarding the tomb in *Matt.* 28.3 'erat aspectus ... sicut fulgur'.) While the *Sospetto* context suggests the magnificence and the ancient glory of the fallen angel, a Homeric analogue points in the opposite direction, linking up with Milton's 'hideous', 'combustion', 'perdition'. Hephaestus (*Il.* 1.592f., New-

[5] Norden, *P. Vergilius Maro, Aeneis Buch VI*, 4th ed., Stuttgart 1957, p. 290.
[6] Gmelin, *Die Göttliche Komödie, Kommentar*, 2, Stuttgart, 1955, p. 208.

ton) describes how he was hurled from the divine threshold and finally fell down on Lemnos, and 'there was little life in me'. This proleptically suggests the Mulciber theme in 1.740ff., where Hephaestus reappears as the demonic architect responsible for the building of Pandemonium and where the motif of his fall recurs in much greater detail. He fell from morn to noon, 'from Noon to dewy Eve, / A Summers day; and with the setting Sun / Dropd from the Zenith like a falling Starr, / On *Lemnos* th' *Aegaean* Ile'. The rightly admired beauty of this description is in part a function of the inherent logic of the lines, explaining the immensity of the fall: the protracting effect of the repeated 'noon', the heightening transition from the scene as part of human experience ('dewy Eve / A Summers day') to the cosmic picture of the star falling from the zenith, and the second repetitive scheme 'setting – Dropd – falling'. The "deflating"[7] next words 'Thus they relate, / Erring; for hee with this rebellious rout / Fell long before' does not invalidate the essential truth of the description. From the Middle Ages onwards, one of Vulcan's many identities was diabolic.

The motif of perdition is further heightened by the link between the 'Adamantin Chains' fettering Satan in Hell and the shackles of the same material binding the rebellious hero in *Prometheus Bound* 6; a further association is provided by ἀδάμας, also used metaphorically about Hades. At the same time 'Adamantin Chains', though forming part of a very different context, suggests the identical expression as used by Spenser in *An Hymne in Honour of Loue* 89. Love puts an end to the war of the elements by placing them in order and keeping them within their bounds, 'Together linkt with Adamantine chaines'. This is the well-known golden chain keeping the universe and all that it contains together, and is understood in this sense from Homer via Plato to the Renaissance – the 'gold'n Chain' by which 'this pendant World' is hanging in *PL* 2.1051f.[8] The adamantine chains fettering Lucifer in Milton are thus associable with those linking together the elements in Spenser, preventing the universe from falling apart by containing the forces of chaos, disorder and destruction.

Word-groups indicating the infernal punishment are distributed over the first few books and occasionally over the later ones, too. In addition to the 'Adamantin Chains' in 1.48, there are Satan 'Chaind on the burning Lake' in 1.210 and 2.169, 'wrapt in Chains' 183, 'Chains and these Torments' 196, 'the chains / Heapt on him there' 3.82f., 'Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chaind' 4.965, the devils' 'prison strong' 2.434,

[7] This effect was pointed out by T. J. B. Spencer, "John Milton: the Great Rival" (*The Listener* 70, 1963, pp. 123f.). See Fowler's note.
[8] See the note in Greenlaw-Osgood-Padelford's Variorum Spenser, *The Minor Poems* 1, 1953, pp. 513f.

and the 'Dungeon' 1.61 and 10.466. 'Penal fire' is part of another repetitive system running through the first two books like strong stresses: 1.52 'fiery Gulfe', 1.68 'fiery Deluge', 1.69 'ever-burning Sulfur', 1.184 'fiery waves', 1.210, 2.169 and 576 'burning Lake', 1.296 'burning Marle', 6.55 'fiery Chaos'. Points corresponding to the chains-prison group in the infracontextual matrix are embedded in *Jude* 6 and particularly in *Rev.* 20.1ff. (Verity, Bush, Fowler): 'Angelos vero qui non seruauerunt suum principatum, sed dereliquerunt suum domicilium, in iudicium magni diei, vinculis aeternis sub caligine reseruauit' (*Jude* 6); 'Et vidi angelum descendentem de caelo, habentem clauem abyssi, et catenam magnam in manu sua. Et apprehendit draconem serpentem antiquum ... et ligauit eum per annos mille, et misit eum in abyssum, et clausit; ... 7 Et cum consummati fuerint mille anni, soluetur Satanas de carcere suo, et exibit', etc. (*Rev.* 20.1ff.). In the Greek version of the *Book of Enoch* 10.4, 'chained' corresponds to συμπόδισον, "bind hand and foot", a command addressed by the Lord to Raphael, instructed to deal with one of the leaders of the evil angels, Azazel. The formula recurs with few variations in Renaissance religious epics, as in the *De Partu Virginis* 1.398f., where David predicts, 'Ipse catenato fessus per tartara collo, / Ducetur Pluton'. The motif in the Renaissance is thus powerfully reinforced by a matrix of homogeneous word-groups in biblical and apocryphal texts. Scriptural authority is also bestowed on the penal-fire group, whose basis is some *Revelation* passages with great impact, 20.10 'Diabolus ... missus est in stagnum ignis et sulphuris, vbi et bestia et pseudopropheta cruciabuntur die ac nocte in secula seculorum', and the 'stagnum ignis' in 20.14 and 15, into which Death and Hell are cast. The motif recurs in various New Testament Apocrypha, e.g. *The Apocalypse of Peter* and *The Sibylline Oracles*, bk.2.[9] All these graphic accounts of the fall, again, are further reinforced by the iconographic tradition which has recently been analysed in great detail by Roland Frye:[10] the utter defeat and 'hideous ruin' of the rebellious angels captivated the imagination of a large number of medieval and Renaissance artists.

Commentators understand the 'burning Marle' in 1.296 as some kind of special soil ("burning Ground", "singed Soil" Hume; "rich earth" Beeching; "rich, moist earth" Verity; "soil or earth in general" Tillyard; "soil" Bush; "'rich clay soil', but probably used here as a sensuously rich synonym for 'ground'" Fowler, etc.). However, I suspect that the reason for Milton's use of 'Marle' (the only instance in his poems) is stylistic rather than semantic. The word may be used in imitation of

[9] On the fall-and-penal-fire motifs see further James H. Sims, *The Bible in Milton's Epics*, Gainesville, 1962, pp. 107ff.
[10] *Milton's Imagery and the Visual Arts*, pp. 56ff.

Spenser's 'marle' at *FQ* 2.11.33, 'To seize vpon his foe flat lying on the marle', a detail in the account of the fight between Prince Arthur and Maleger. In Spenser, too, the word (a synonym for 'earth') occurs only once, and may have been used as an uncommon term which satisfies decorum, possibly suggesting defilement,[11] and fitting the description in *PL* of Satan making his way back to the beach of the burning lake. The symbolic significance of the burning lake in *Revelation* is explained at some length by Haymo in a passage which serves as an effective background for Milton's lines: 'Per stagnum vero ignis in quo missus est diabolus, profunditas intelligitur inferni, in quo impii cum capite suo damnati in perpetuis tenebris obvolventur. Quoniam licet sit ibi ignis, non erit ad lucendum, sed ad miserorum corpora concremandum. Corpora enim reproborum erunt fomentum ignis. Ideoque et ipse ignis erit indeficiens, quia erunt et corpora immortalia quibus semper accendetur'.[12] These words on the nature of the infernal fire also link up with *PL* 1.181 'The seat of desolation, void of light' (see further p. 43).

The infracontext for 1. 50 'Nine times the Space' etc. in the *Titanomachia* passage in the *Theogony* (722ff.) has often been commented on: the distance is the same between heaven and earth, and earth and Tartarus; it would take nine days for a thunderbolt to fall through either space. Apart from indicating the enormity of the distance, suggesting the horror of the apostate angels' fall, the lines in the *Theogony* introduce a brief but eloquent account of the Underworld, and so, synecdochically, prepare the reader for the subsequent description in *PL* (see pp. 240ff.).

The 'hideous ruin' is generally explained as "rushing down", "downfall", not, incidentally, a latinism, as Fowler reminds us. Richardson aptly defines the semantic area of 'ruin' by his rendering "Rushing with Violence, Noise, Tumult, and Velocity" (p. 11). 'Hideous' is a favourite word with Spenser, who uses it mainly in descriptions of evil powers in *FQ*.[13] Similarly in *PL* it is almost exclusively reserved for things variously associated with the Underworld, Chaos, or the War in Heaven: the devils' 'hideous change' 1.313, their 'hideous fall' 2.177, the 'hideous Peal' emitted by the hell hounds 'about the middle round' of Sin 2.656; the 'hideous outcry' of the 'Snakie Sorceress' 2.726, the 'hideous Name' of Death 2.788, the 'hideous length' of the battle-array in 6.107 and the 'hideous' way in which God's adversaries join 'the horrid shock' in

[11] See A. C. Hamilton's note on the passage in his *Faerie Queene* edition (London, 1977), p. 278.

[12] *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 117.1188).

[13] Hilda M. Hulme ("On the Language of *Paradise Lost*: Its Elizabethan and Early Seventeenth-Century Background", *Language and Style in Milton*, pp. 74ff., "Milton's Use of Spenserian Diction") calls attention to various other traces of Spenserian diction in Milton's poems.

6.206. The ordnance pieces used by the devils in the War in 6.577 have 'hideous orifice'. The only passage where the word is used in a different context – though associable with Satan – is 12.56, where the confused builders of the tower of Babel utter a 'hideous gabble'. The 'hideous ruin' thus covers an area packed with converging horizontal associations, further reinforced by the meaning of 'combustion'. In Raphael's War-in-Heaven description, 'combustion' (6.225) probably means "commotion", "tumult"; but there is more to it than that in 1.46. According to Fowler "M. may intend an ambiguity; in astronomical contexts the word meant 'obscuration of a planet due to near conjunction with the sun'". But in the context and coordinate with 'hideous ruin' it is more probable that 'combustion' means "the fire of eternal punishment", a meaning of 'combustio' common in patristic texts, e.g. Gregory *In Evang.* 11.4 'cruciatur aeterna combustione', possibly based on Itala *Matt.* 25.46 'ibunt illi in combustionem aeternam' (Vulg. 'supplicium').[14] This meaning is further reinforced by 'perdition' – only used in this passage in *PL* – meaning both "utter destruction" and "the place of destruction or damnation", ultimately rendering Hebrew *'abaddôn*, "the place of perishing, Hades".[15] As Todd pointed out, Heywood in the *Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels* makes Lucifer select legions of proud and rebellious angels, but God 'with expedition / Hurl'd them with himselfe headlong to perdition'. The last word is used in the same way as it is by Milton, and the verbal similarities together with the additions in *PL* transform Milton's lines into an intensified version of the theme, as if he had tried to surpass the description of his predecessor. The same function recurs in Milton's location of Hell 'As farr remov'd from God and light of Heav'n / As from the Center thrice to th' utmost Pole' (1.73f.): in Homer (*Il.* 8.16) Zeus threatens to hurl disobedient gods as far beneath Hades as heaven is above earth; in the *Aeneid*, Tartarus extends below the Underworld twice the distance between earth and heaven (6.578). Todd's comment is surely relevant: "As if these three great poets had stretched their utmost genius, and vied with each other, who should extend his idea of the depth of Hell farthest". According to Wright[16] Milton's 'thrice' is "indefinitely extensive, not a computative expression; nine or any other larger mystic number would be no more adequate if taken literally, would still not give room and verge enough". Milton seems to use the word in conformity with rhetorical rules; as Norden says (commenting on Virgil's passage),

[14] *ThLL combustio* 1762. Wright (*Milton's Paradise Lost*, p. 73), rendering the word by "utter confusion, destruction", as in *Macb.* 2.3.64, seems to me to miss the essential meaning. It is possible, as Keightley thinks, that 'ruin' and 'combustion' were frequently combined.

[15] *OED perdition* 2 fc.

[16] "Masson's Diagram of Milton's Spaces" (*RES* 21, 1945, p. 43).

"Übertreibungen durch blosse Steigerung des Zahlworts" were characteristic of the pathos of Roman rhetoric.[17]

Yet other lines on the infernal punishment motif partly derive their effect from words charged with meaning by infracontextual details. Beelzebub in his defeatist reply (1.128ff.) thinks it is possible that God has allowed the devils to keep their spirit and strength in order as his thralls 'in the heart of Hell to work in Fire, / Or do his Errands in the gloomy Deep' (151f.). The line on the devils working in infernal fire is aptly compared by Beeching to Virgil's description (*Aen.* 8.418ff.) of the cave where the Cyclops are really working 'in Fire', in their giant smithy resonant with the groan of anvils, the hiss of steel and the panting of the fire in the furnace: ... 'striduntque cauernis / Stricturae chalybum et fornacibus ignis anhelat'. On a submerged level there is a link with the earlier lines on Vulcan, since Virgil's paragraph on the Cyclops' cave is concluded by the line 'Hoc tunc ignipotens caelo descendit ab alto' (423) – synecdochically reminding us once more of the fall of the rebel angel. There are isolated pronouncements in the Fathers on Satan and the evil angels as ministers of God,[18] – a doctrine mentioned in *De Doctrina Christiana* (Hughes) – but to a contemporary reader of *PL* the line 'Or do his Errands in the gloomy Deep' is likely to have taken on a different significance. In *Hebr.* 1.14 angels are described as ministering spirits: 'Nonne omnes sunt administratorij spiritus, in ministerium missi propter eos qui haereditatem capient salutis?' (*AV* 'Are they not all ministring spirits, sent foorth to minister for them, who shall be heires of saluation?') In patristic commentary and literature based on it, it is one of the prime functions of the good angels to work as the adroit and willing servants of God: 'Deo semper assistunt' is an almost formulaic expression of the doctrine.[19] It is formulated in particularly great detail and with great eloquence by Anselm in *Meditatio* 13 (*De Christo*), a passage which has probably coloured Dante's account of the activity of the angels at the beginning of *Par.* 31.[20] 'Per te', says Anselm, 'millia millium, ad complenda Patris mysteria, alacri discursu jugiter meant inter caelum et terram, quasi apes negotiosae inter alvearia et flores disponentes omnia suaviter; populus accinctus, nesciens labem vel inobedientiae moram.

[17] Norden, *Aeneis Buch VI*, p. 281. See also Isabel MacCaffrey, *'Paradise Lost' as "Myth"*, Cambridge, Mass., 1959, pp. 77f., and Fowler referring to the distance as an instance of the proportion between reason and concupiscence according to Neoplatonic thought.

[18] As in Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.* 77.28 (*PL* 36.1001) and Gregory, *Mor.* 2.38 (*PL* 75.586). See also *RAC* 5.194.

[19] Found for instance in Lactantius *Div. Inst.* 7, Augustine, *Civ. D.* 7.30, 9.23, 10.26; Gregory, *Mor.* 2.3; Clemens Alex. *Stromata* 7.3.4; Dionysius Areop., *Cel. Hier.* 4.4, and many other passages.

[20] Scartazzini's *Divina Commedia* 3, p. 822.

Per te centena decies millies millena assistunt in sanctuario uranici templi, intendentes in vultum majestatis claro et inflexibili visu, ac personantes harmoniam incessabilis hymni, in gloriam trinae et simplae divinitatis. Per te seraphim ardet, per te cherubium lucet, per te throni judicant' (see further p. 160).[21] Against the background of this paragraph Milton's lines stand out in sharp ironical contrast: the rebellious breed have fallen from a state where the delay of inobedience was unknown; those do errands in the gloomy deep who used to assist in the shrine of the celestial temple; the fallen angels work in infernal fire while in Paradise Seraphim and Cherubim have their fire and light from God; the devils are left with sufficient strength and vitality to undergo more effectively eternal punishment, while the good angels will spend eternity blissfully watching the face of the Lord and producing harmonious hymns to his glory. This systematic, though submerged, point-by-point contrast is further accentuated by the echoes from the Virgilian lines on the Cyclops and the fallen Vulcan and, proleptically, by the later descriptions in *PL* of the good angels in their state of bliss (3.60ff., 345ff., 5.161ff., see pp. 118ff.). There is also an ironic contrast with Satan's speech in 5.772ff. where, gathering his followers in preparation for the revolt, he scornfully rages against the idea that they should serve Christ and submit to him in worship: 'Will ye submit your necks, and chuse to bend / The supple knee?' (787f.) – thereby, as stressed by Steadman, contradicting the biblical doctrine of the nature and office of the angels.[22]

Beeching rightly establishes a connection between the livid flames in 1.182, whose 'glimmering' is the only light illuminating the seat of desolation towards which the two fallen angels make their way, and the 'darkness visible' of 1.63, which

> Serv'd onely to discover sights of woe,
> Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
> And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
> That comes to all.

Keightley compares Milton's description with Heywood's picture of Hell in the *Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels*: the Underworld has no visible light. To this could be added Crashaw's 'darke flames' in the *Sospetto*

[21] *PL* 158.774.

[22] Steadman, "'Magnific Titles'. Satan and the Argument of Nobility" (*Milton's Epic Characters*, p. 264). As pointed out by E. F. Daniels ("Milton's Fallen Angels – Self-Corrupted or Seduced?", *NQ* 205, 1960, pp. 447ff.), the idea that the rebel angels were seduced by Satan – a doctrine based on Eusebius, Cyrillus, Aquinas, and others – is not the only version provided in *PL*: God declares that they were "selfcorrupted". The two versions are not reconciled by Milton.

d'Herode 6 and 'swarthy flames' in Beaumont's *Psyche* 7. Richardson, Todd, and Keightley quote the *Book of Wisdom* 12.5 describing the plight of the impious Egyptians, 'No force of fire was strong enough to light them'. While such isolated passages add to the connotations evoked by Milton's lines, the most important infracontextual basis providing denotative meaning and forming part of the simple code consists of a massive patristic 'dark flame' tradition represented by a great many Greek and Latin Fathers:[23] Hell-fire burns but does not illuminate. In part (Gregory, Strabo), the tradition emerges in glosses or commentaries on *Job* 10.22. This passage deals with the land from which no one returns and reads, in the *AV* translation, 'the land of darkness ... where the light is as darkness', fairly closely rendering Hebrew *wăttopă' kᵉmô 'opæl* ("and it shines like darkness"). The dark flame is a kind of punishment, 'Horrendo igitur modo erit tunc reprobis dolor cum formidine, flamma cum obscuritate', as stressed by Gregory in his "Poenarum inferni descriptio" interpreting 'Et sempiternus horror inhabitat' in the *Job* passage (*Mor.* 9.65f.).[24] Explaining how light and darkness can exist simultaneously, he uses, like Basil before him, the miracle of the Three Youths in the fiery furnace to point out that flames may solace the elect and punish the damned.[25] At the same time the punishment consists in the fallen angels being able to see the torments to which they are exposed; the livid flames and the darkness visible[26] serve to reveal sights of woe and hopelessness. The point is explained by Aquinas in the *Summa, Suppl.* 97.4: The infernal light is only just sufficient to allow the damned to see and realize the extent of the misery of their damnation, thereby increasing their punishment.[27] The dark flame recurs in medieval vision literature, for instance in Hildegard of Bingen's *Scivias* 1, *visio* 3.[28] Interestingly, Roland Frye (pp. 131f.) demonstrates how the visual arts make the infernal *chiaroscuro* concrete and palpable and thus really show what the darkness visible was like: Bosch, Civetta, Guido Reni, Raphael, and others succeed in producing an infernal landscape as seen "through a cloud of darkness, but the forms retain a linearity which is distinct and unmistakable" (p. 132).

In view of the meanings suggested by the infracontexts, the darkness visible and the livid flames seem to have multiple meanings in the

[23] As demonstrated by Steadman in "Milton and Patristic Tradition: the Quality of Hell-Fire" (*Anglia* 76, 1958, pp. 116ff.)
[24] *PL* 75.914f.
[25] Steadman, p. 120.
[26] 'Visible', as Bush notes, means "that can be seen through".
[27] Steadman refers to Aquinas on p. 121 of his article.
[28] *PL* 197.406. See M.-M. Davy, *Initiation à la Symbolique Romane (XII^e siècle)*, Paris, 1977, pp. 160f.

immediate surface context and in relation to the later description of the good angels. The words emphasize the twofold character of the infernal punishment, what Hume, aware of exegetic tradition, calls the 'poena sensus' and the 'poena damni': physical pain and loss of the beatific vision. At the same time they paradoxically suggest a very different form of blindness, that described in 3.377ff., where not even the highest ranks of the angels, dazzled by the intensity of the divine light, are able to approach God unless they veil their eyes with their wings.[29] Nor is this all, for, defining by difference, the words on the darkness visible also intensify and throw into relief the account, based on a different tradition, of the blessed angels' existence in pure divine light and their ability to see God: 5.160ff. 'Speak yee who best can tell, ye Sons of light, / Angels, for yee behold him, and [...] Circle his throne rejoycing, yee in Heav'n.'[30]

The words 'livid flames' also suggest a classical infracontext on the infernal-blindness theme: *Theb.* 1.57 (Todd). This is where Oedipus in his blindness adjures 'Styx livida'[31] and the infernal powers. Oedipus is blind, yet says expressly that he can see the black river – 'tuque umbrifero Styx liuida fundo / Quam video' – and his incantations lead up to the cry for revenge on his cruel sons. In *PL* emphasis, *auxesis*-wise, is similarly on the infernal scenery as seen by the fallen angel and the paragraph also leads up to the theme of revenge, Satan suggesting that he and the others consult on how to harm their enemy and make good their own loss. It is only by superficial contrast that Statius speaks of Oedipus' 'vacuos orbes' and Milton about 'Eyes / That sparkling blaz'd' (193f.): like Oedipus, Satan can only see the infernal landscape; as suggested by the darkness visible formula he is sightless in his incapacity to see God, being irrevocably 'remov'd from God and light of Heav'n'. For similar reasons the Underworld is called 'cieco mondo' by Dante in *Inf.* 4.13 and 27.25, or 'carcere ceco' in *Inf.* 10.58 and *Purg.* 22.103; and the existence of its inhabitants 'la lor cieca vita' (*Inf.* 3.47). As a kind of infrastress on the eye motif, Virgil and Dante describe Charon's eyes, which can also

[29] These two irreconcilable forms of blindness are commented on by Phyllis MacKenzie ("Milton's Visual Imagination: An Answer to T. S. Eliot", *UTQ* 16, 1947, p. 22), and subsequently by Merrit Y. Hughes, *Ten Perspectives on Milton,* New Haven and London, 1965, pp. 25f. and 66f., referring to MacKenzie. See also Jackson I. Cope, *The Metaphoric Structure of 'Paradise Lost'*, Baltimore, 1962, p. 94, n. 22.

[30] Attempts to relate the 'darkness visible' to optical phenomena as described by classical authors (early *PL* editors on Sophocles, Euripides, Seneca; among later critics Ann Gossman, "Two Milton Notes. 1. Milton, Plutarch, and 'Darkness Visible'", *NQ* 206, 1961, pp. 182f. on Plutarch's *Concerning Nature*) shed no light on the deeper meaning of the theme and do not relate it to the total pattern of the epic. – For the traditions of dazzled and seeing angels, respectively, see below pp. 121ff.

[31] Probably 'livido' merely means "black" in the *Inferno*, as in 'livida palude' in 3.98, corresponding to 'l'onda bruna' in 3.118. 'Livid' only occurs in this passage in Milton's poetry.

only see the Underworld, in much the same way as Milton does Satan's: 'Stant lumina flamma' (*Aen.* 6.300); 'Che'ntorn'a gli occhi haue di fiamme rote' (3.99); in 109 Dante speaks of 'Charon dimonio con occhi di bragia'. Todd, who points out these similarities, also calls attention to the Dragon's blazing eyes in *FQ* 1.11.14. Satan's eyes are not so much instruments of orientation and perception as magic tools expressing hatred and striking terror in the beholder. They are of the same kind as the glowing eyes of monsters in the old epics, and are traditionally compared to comets boding disaster and death to princes (see further pp. 208ff.). The meaning of the "eyes" theme is indicated by association with infracontextual lines describing the flaming, 'malignant' and 'glowing' eyes of Lucifer imprisoned in Hell in the *Sospetto d'Herode* (8.1, 11.3, 19.3f.) There is little difference between these descriptions and Tasso's lines on dehumanized Pluto presiding over his followers in *GL* 4.7: 'Rosseggian gli occhi, e di veneno infetto ... il guardo splende'. So, by an intermediate infracontextual chain, Milton's lines evoke portraits of a monstrous rather than a human or superhuman Satan, and the same process takes place here as in the case of Satan 'dilated', and standing 'like *Teneriff* or *Atlas* unremov'd' in 4.986f. (see below, p. 206).

An interesting feature of the account of Satan rising from the pool and making his way to the 'dreary Plain' is the four-element pattern which links up with the space motif later in the poem.[32] The theme of water predominates in the often discussed description of Satan – Leviathan in 192ff.: his head is raised above the wave, he lies prone on the flood, 'floating many a rood'. After briefly listing some of the evil and rebellious Titans for comparison Milton decides on Leviathan, a type of Satan,[33] by way of more detailed *amplificatio*. With the aid of Homeric-simile technique he paints a miniature tableau transforming the traditionally bare *exemplum* anecdote of the deceptive floating island into a seascape enlivened by vivid little touches: the monster is hugest of all creatures 'that swim th' Ocean stream'; the pilot of some night-foundered skiff, thinking he is an island, with 'fixed Anchor in his skaly rinde' moors by his side 'while Night / Invests the Sea, and wished Morn delayes'. Milton breaks off the simile without telling us what happens to the unsuspecting sailors; by this fairly unusual but effective use of the figure *aposiopesis*, however, he not only illustrates "the delusiveness of Satan and the

[32] Karen Levenback's article, "The Elements in *Paradise Lost*" (*MQ* 10, 1976, pp. 11ff.) deals with the theme of the four elements as an Empedoclean feature of *PL*. See also Fowler's note on 2.275. In the passages discussed here, earth and fire tend to merge.

[33] See Harold Fisch, "Hebraic Style and Motifs in *Paradise Lost*" (*Language and Style in Milton*. pp. 40f. and 47), on the connection between Leviathan and the fallen angels, Lucifer, and the tempting serpent. Roland Frye suggests that the description of Satan 'prone on the flood' may have been influenced by Beccafumi's view of Hell at Siena (pp. 82f.).

danger of trusting his false appearance of greatness in the early books of the poem'' (Fowler). The legend paradoxically also suggests the opposite of man carried off to Hell: synecdochically, connecting with the legend of Jonah, it promises not only death but resurrection and the Harrowing of Hell.[34] So the zero part left out by Milton, packed with content, holds out the promise of the ultimate defeat of Satan and the victory of Christ on the other side of suffering and tribulation.

If the section on water – concluding with pool and rolling billows in 221ff. – and its inhabitants is detailed, that on air is briefer though heavy with infracontextual meaning:

> Then with expanded wings he stears his flight
> Aloft, incumbent on the dusky Air
> That felt unusual weight, etc.

It is in laborious and sluggish flight that Satan steers his course towards the shore, the heaviness being emphasized by various means. ''Pressing with his weight'', according to Fowler, was ''then a common use of the word'' ('incumbent'.) But in actual fact the word in this sense seems rare in poetry of the age – this is the only instance in Milton – and there is every reason to believe that it was used because of its rarity and as highly illustrative of heavy weight. Among the numerous places where 'incumbere' is used in the classical epics, one is of special interest from an infracontextual point of view: the paragraph on Sleep (*Theb.* 10.137ff.) in which the Thebans are plunged into a deep slumber, making them an easy prey to their Argive enemies. Statius' account of Somnus' flight to the earth, and its effects, is a concentrated description of downward movements: the god descending through the cold air, animals lying down on the ground, waves slipping from rocks, clouds moving sluggishly, tree-tops bowing down, even stars coming loose and falling from the skies. The description leads up to the picture of Somnus himself arriving at the Theban camp: ... 'Humentibus alis / Incubuit, piceaque haud vmquam densior umbra / Castra subit'. Somnus in this episode, and Satan, are both destructive forces; 'alis ... Incubuit piceaque ... umbra' corresponds fairly closely to 'wings ... incumbent on the dusky Air', stressing the sluggish heaviness, and also evokes the entire paragraph on Somnus. At the same time, the words 'haud vmquam densior umbra' remind us of the specious and unsubstantial nature of the rejected Satan, and the opposite theme of weight and heaviness foreshadows Satan's dizzying dive into Chaos at the end of bk 2. 'Unusual weight' is weight to which the air is not accustomed, and commentators quote Spenser's lines

[34] See also Rowland, *Animals with Human Faces*, Knoxville, 1973, pp. 17ff.

on the Dragon's sluggish and laborious flight in *FQ* 1.11.18: the air feels 'too feeble ... and element vnsound / To beare so great a weight'. To the impression of heaviness contributes, on a different semantic level, the 'dusky Air', recalling as it does not only Statius' 'piceaque ... umbra' but also the 'aer bruno' in *Inf.* 2.1, when night draws near and Dante, in a mood of deep dejection, is about to begin his journey through the Underworld.

The space devoted to the element of earth is as short as that given to air, but the fourth element is also present:

> ... till on dry Land
> He lights, if it were Land that ever burnd
> With solid, as the Lake with liquid fire. (227ff.)

The phraseology again suggests the *Inferno* (14.37ff.), where burning sand punishes the violent against God, Nature, and Art – blaspheming Capaneus among others – :

> Tale scendeua l'eternale ardore:
> Onde la rena s'accendea, com'esca
> Sotto focile, a doppiar lo dolore.

The last few words in Dante's lines are also evoked by the fallen angels' painful steps over the burnt soil in 1.562. However, the 'Land that ever burnd' at the same time links up with an infracontext which invests Milton's lines with further meaning by evoking a much wider background, several times removed. In *Phars.* 9.692ff. Lucan describes the Libyan desert with its unbearable heat: 'Premit orbita solis, / Exuritque solum'. Above this burning ground flew Perseus holding Medusa's head dripping with blood which, falling onto the glowing sand, bred deadly serpents. This scene surfaces in *Inf.* 24.82ff., where snakes punishing the Thieves surpass in hideousness those in the Libyan desert (85ff.). So the 'Land that ever burnd' evokes two infracontexts in Dante: one direct and symmetrical, the other indirect, more deeply submerged and more complex, calling up a highly differentiated pattern of associations, enriching the infernal theme.

The burning land prepares us for the more detailed lines on the fourth element, earth and fire merging again in the concluding section on the volcano:

> And such appeard in hue; as when the force
> Of subterranean wind transports a Hill
> Torn from *Pelorus,* or the shatterd side

Of thundring *AEtna*, whose combustible
And feweld entrals thence conceiving Fire,
Sublim'd with Mineral fury, aid the Winds,
And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
With stench and smoak: Such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. (230ff.)

Commentaries on the Pelorus passage have been numerous and detailed from the early editors onwards – on the sources in Virgil and Ovid (possibly via Sandys)[35] and the seismological theories in the *Metamorphoses* on the origin of volcanoes, on the connection with the Titan (Typhon) motif in 1.199 (rebellion against God), and on the patristic identification of volcano with devil. It remains perhaps to point out that in emblematics the volcano typifies envy: a Spanish emblematist, Covarrubias in *Emblemas Morales*,[36] sees Etna, consumed by its own fire, as a symbol of envious man eaten up by the glow of his vice. It is more important from the point of view of literary effect that the passage in Virgil (*Aen.* 3.571ff.) – part of Aeneas' description of events during the landing in Sicily – reinforces both the theme of violent subterranean upheaval and of divine punishment: an eddying black cloud with sheets of flame and glowing ashes ascends from the volcano even to the stars, red-hot rocks are hurled towards the sky amidst terrific roaring and deafening crashes. Under the burning mass the giant Enceladus, struck by Jove's thunderbolt, lies buried, and the whole of Sicily, blanketed by smoke, thunders and shudders. This description supplements with sensory impressions the more factual and scientific account of the eruption in Milton's poem, at the same time establishing links with the previous descriptions of the infernal fire and with the rebellious-Titan motif.

The sections on the four elements work on different levels in the poem. First – chiefly by being invested with overtones and additional meanings by infracontexts – they remind us again of Satan's nature, his sin and his punishment. Second, they stress the fact that the fallen angels' surroundings and essence are no longer homogeneous ether, celestial fire, but that the rebels are henceforth relegated to a heterogeneous world subject to change and transitoriness, no matter how unchanging their own nature may be, and it is unchanging only up to a point. After the fall, as pointed out by patristic commentators, the angelic essence changes from celestial fire to air:[37] 'Caelestia corpora gerebant, neque hoc mirum est, si conver-

[35] As suggested by Labriola, "The Titans and the Giants: *Paradise Lost* and the Tradition of the Renaissance Ovid", p. 13.
[36] See Henkel and Schöne, *Emblemata*, col. 65.
[37] See E. Kirschbaum, "L'Angelo rosso e l'angelo turchino" (*Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana* 17, 1940, pp. 215ff.). In *Eph.* 2.2 the devil is referred to as 'princeps potestatis aëris'.

sa sunt ex poena in aeriam qualitatem, ut iam possint ab igne idest ab elemento naturae superioris aliquid pati' (Augustine); 'Corpus ergo aethereum idest igneum eos (the good angels) dicunt habere, angelos vero malos, idest daemones, corpus aereum' (Fulgentius).[38] Darkness and air are inseparable,[39] as are air and the other three elements. Third, the laborious and painful movement in the spatial world of the elements foreshadows the desolate and frightening infernal scenery through which the fallen angels make their way in 2.521ff. and 614ff., with 'shuddring horror pale, and eyes agast'.[40] And fourth, evil spirits are traditionally associated with the four elements, which they control and through which they operate: in *PR* 2.124 Satan addresses his spirits as 'Powers of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth Beneath'; in *Il Penseroso* 94 demons are found 'In fire, air, flood, or under ground'.[41] The deities ruling over air, fire, water, and earth – Jupiter, Vulcan, Neptune, and Pluto – were of course frequently demons in Christian cosmology. The details in the infernal world are in systematic contrast to those in Paradise with its Empyreal and marble ether, its golden floor, its river of amber. A more important contrast is bound up with the antithesis between the four infernal elements and the holy number four associated with the divine Chariot in the sixth book (see pp. 318ff.).

At the beginning of the second book the four elements recur – or most of them – in another account of the infernal punishment, provided on a kind of fictional level. Belial, the 'sober lawyer', dissuading the fallen angels from war, warns his comrades of the danger that God, not satisfied with the defeat administered to the devils, may renew his attacks. His suggestion that war 'op'n or conceald' should be avoided is buttressed by a detailed list of punishments (ll. 170–186) which might befall the apostate angels unless they are prudent enough to take his advice:

> What if the breath that kindl'd those grim fires
> Awak't should blow them into sev'nfold rage
> And plunge us in the Flames? or from above
> Should intermitted vengeance Arme again
> His red right hand to plague us? what if all
> Her stores were op'nd, and this Firmament
> Of Hell should spout her Cataracts of Fire,
> Impendent horrors, threatning hideous fall
> One day upon our heads; while wee perhaps

[38] Quotations in Kirschbaum, p. 217.
[39] Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.* 148.9 (*PL* 37. 1943), *Sermo* 222 (*PL* 38.1091), Peter of Poitiers, *Sent.* 2.4 (*PL* 211.950), John of Damascus, *De Fide Orthod.* 2.7 (*PG* 94.887).
[40] See Cope, *The Metaphoric Structure of 'Paradise Lost'*, pp. 56ff.
[41] See Svendsen, *Milton and Science*, Cambridge, Mass., 1956, pp. 51f.

Designing or exhorting glorious Warr,
Caught in a fierie Tempest shall be hurld
Each on his rock transfixt, the sport and prey
Of racking whirlwinds, or for ever sunk
Under yon boiling Ocean, wrapt in Chains;
There to converse with everlasting groans,
Unrespited, unpitied, unrepreevd,
Ages of hopeless end; this would be worse.

The 'red right hand' of God envisaged by Belial as an instrument of vengeance reflects part of the Horatian description of omens and frightening visitations by which Jove shows his anger at the criminal acts of bloodstained Rome (*Carm.* 1.2.1, Bentley): ... 'Rubente / Dextera sacras iaculatus arces / Terruit urbem'. The intensifying 'rubente dextera', which as commentators point out revives the old cliché of Jove the hurler of lightning, is perhaps even more effective in Milton's *auxesis*-like imitation. The word 'red' is sparsely used in *PL*[42] and never about Hell (on this point the poem agrees with the Bible, and, it seems, with the Church Fathers). Apart from the 'Red Sea' – an instrument of vengeance – the 'red right hand' is related only to the 'red Lightning and impetuous rage' at 1.175 and the angelic squadron which turns fiery red during the encounter with Satan in book 4 (l. 978). At 8.619 the angel's smile glowed 'Celestial rosie red, Loves proper hue'. Red is thus exclusively reserved for descriptions of divine wrath (or love) in the poem. The 'red right hand' prepares us for the firmament of Hell spouting 'Cataracts of Fire, / Impendent horrors, threatning hideous fall', and the victims caught in a fiery tempest. Fowler feels that perhaps 'cataracts' means "floodgates", as indeed the word is translated in the Tremellius version of *Gen.* 7.11 in the description of the Flood. He also suggests a connection with the 'spouting cataracts and hurricanoes' in *King Lear* 3.2.2. But surely 'cataract' here is used in the original sense of καταράκτης – "waterfall". Fire will literally pour down on Satan and his followers; '*impendent* horrors, threatning hideous fall'.

The elements of fire, air and water taking part in the punishment, commentators feel, derive from the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, but it must be added that a special contrast effect is achieved by contact with this infracontext. In *Aen.* 6.740ff. the various punishments meted out to the souls are instruments of purification. After mentioning the chastisement each spirit will have to undergo in atonement for sins committed in his

[42] On the subject of the low frequency of 'red' and other colour words in Milton see G. S. Koehler, "Milton's Use of Color and Light" (*MS* 3, 1971, pp. 55ff.), and Camé, *Les Structures fondamentales de l'univers imaginaire Miltonien* 1, Lille, 1975, p. 23.

lifetime – some being outstretched to empty winds, while others are purified by floods or fire – Virgil goes on to say that after the term of castigation the souls are sent on to Elysium where some in a state of regained purity remain for ever, while most others drink oblivion from Lethe and are then allowed to return to fresh bodies. The contrast between the temporary process of purification in the Latin poet and the condition of eternal chastisement in Milton is emphasized not only by 'for ever' but by intensification of the various points enumerated by Virgil. Besides the dramatic expansion of the neutral 'exuritur igni' there is the 'sport and prey / Of racking[43] whirlwinds' for 'panduntur inanes / Suspensae ad ventos', and 'sunk / Under yon boiling Ocean, wrapt in Chains' for the quite different and in part antithetic 'sub gurgite vasto / Infectum eluitur scelus'. The impression of a sharp contrast between the eternally damned in Milton's Hell and the temporarily chastised in Virgil's Hades is strengthened for those readers who also catch an echo of the Platonic description in the *Phaedo* 113 D of the purification of souls in the Underworld ("[the lake, where] they dwell and are purified of their evil deeds").

The contrast is also heightened by the different provenance of the kind of punishment which involves the elements of fire and earth: 'Wee perhaps ... Caught in a fierie Tempest shall be hurld / Each on his rock transfixt'. These words link up with those scornfully uttered by Satan in 1.315ff. where – much like Belial – he warns his followers that God may follow up his advantage by finishing off his enemies if he discovers their wretched plight, and descending 'tread us down / Thus drooping, or with linked Thunderbolts / Transfix us to the bottom of this Gulfe' (327ff.) Both warnings, commentators agree, derive from the account in *Aen.* 1.44f. where Juno relates the fate of Ajax: on his way back from Troy his ship was destroyed and he himself struck by Jove's thunderbolt wielded by Pallas, who then impaled him on a pointed rock:

> Ipsa Iouis rapidum iaculata e nubibus ignem,
> Disiecitque rates, euertitque aequora ventis.
> Illum expirantem transfixo pectore flammas
> Turbine corripuit, scopuloque infixit acuto.

'Rapidum ignem' and ' euertitque aequora ventis' have thus merged in a 'fierie Tempest', and Pallas' fury had been caused by the hero's sacrilegious act of assaulting Cassandra in her temple. Commenting on the

[43] Substituting 'racking' for 'inanis' ("empty"), Milton comes close to Dante's 'La bufera infernal, che mai non resta, / Mena gli spirti con la sua rapina, / Voltando e percotendo li molesta' (*Inf.* 5.31ff.; Chambers).

passage, Donatus, full of horror, rails at 'illum temerarium, illum inconsideratum, illum sacrilegum, illum prophanum, illum qui in templo dee, in templo Virginis, ante ipsas aras, in conspectu numinis, regiam sacerdotem intactum stupro violauit'.[44] Unlike the lines inspired by the passage on the purification of souls Milton thus comes close to the infracontext in 180f., both verbally and thematically, the motif being godless arrogance. The surface context of 180–184 looks homogeneous enough, but as soon as the infracontexts come into play a tension develops between the non-ironical lines on the fallen angels struck down by fire and transfixed on rocks, a description reinforced by the Virgilian background, and the ironical lines on winds and ocean, which derive their particular character from other Virgilian and Platonic echoes. The asyndetic series with identical prefix, 'Unrespited', 'unpitied', 'unrepreevd' – a well-known device in Greek tragedy (Todd, Chambers, Fowler)[45] – lends a sublime character to the passage and at the same time, combined with 'Ages of hopeless end', strikes the final note of this paragraph on infernal punishments. – The infracontextual enrichment in all these sections on the Underworld works with equal efficiency on different levels of interpretation: the naïve and simplistic one where Hell, its topography, and its inhabitants and their activities are regarded as reality; and the sophisticated level at which the infernal world is symbolical and/or mirrors a stratum of the human soul.

2. Autumnal Leaves, Orion, and Infernal Host

In the vertical system which constitutes the description of infernal punishment, infracontexts have initially an intensifying function, increasing as they do the impact of surface contexts whose meaning is already fairly obvious. As the story gets under way, infracontexts also convey additional meaning (darkness visible, four elements) aiding the interpretation. In the account depicting the rebel angels' defeat and subsequently their threat to the world, infracontexts play an even more important part in stressing the significance of the surface contexts. As submerged members of the well-known autumnal leaves image they increase its force, clarify its logic, and simultaneously, forming part of the simple code on certain points, add to its meaning. The preceding scene shows

[44] Quoted in Virgil's *Opera*, 1544.

[45] Dennis H. Sigmon ("The Negatives of *Paradise Lost*: An Introduction", *SP* 73, 1976, p. 333) feels that "the common prefix negates not only the individual words but also the overall movement by fixing the three together in one situation that is 'everlasting'".

Satan making his way over the burning soil back to the shore of the burning lake. He stops and addresses

> His legions, Angel Forms, who lay intranst
> Thick as Autumnal Leaves that strow the Brooks
> In *Vallombrosa*, where th'*Etrurian* shades
> High overarcht inbowr; or scattered sedge
> Afloat, when with fierce Winds *Orion* armd
> Hath vext the Red-Sea Coast, whose waves orethrew
> *Busiris* and his *Memphian* Chivalrie,
> While with perfidious hatred they persu'd
> The Sojourners of *Goshen*, who beheld
> From the safe shore thir floating Carcasses
> And brok'n Chariot Wheels. So thick bestrown
> Abject and lost lay these, covering the Flood,
> Under amazement of thir hideous change. (301ff.)

The passage has often been commented on and most infracontexts have been known for varying lengths of time.[1] The train of associations on the horizontal level, leading from withered leaves strewing the brooks via scattered sedge afloat and the Red Sea Coast to the defeat of the Egyptian army pursuing the Israelites, is psychologically and logically coherent[2] and immediately, on the surface level, suggests an endless number, transitoriness, and defeat. It is bracketed by lines the second set of which amplifies and reinforces the first: 301 'His legions, Angel Forms, who lay intranst'; 311f. 'So thick bestrown / Abject and lost lay these, covering the Flood, / Under amazement of thir hideous change'.

[1] The fullest notes are those provided by Todd and his contributors. Earlier, Newton made some important observations.

[2] Some modern critics who have commented interestingly on various aspects of the image are Isabel MacCaffrey (*'Paradise Lost' as "Myth"*, pp. 125f.); J. B. Broadbent (*Some Graver Subject. An Essay on 'Paradise Lost'*, London, 1960, pp. 85f.); Irene Samuel (*Dante and Milton: The 'Commedia' and 'Paradise Lost'*, Ithaca, 1966, pp. 76f.); C. Grose (*Milton's Epic Process. 'Paradise Lost' and Its Miltonic Background*, New Haven and London, 1973, pp. 163f.); Kitty Cohen (*The Throne and the Chariot. Studies in Milton's Hebraism*, pp. 53ff.); J. P. Holoka (''Thick As Autumnal Leaves' – the Structure and Generic Potentials of an Epic Simile", *MQ* 10, 1976, pp. 78ff.); and F. C. Blessington (*'Paradise Lost' and the Classical Epic*, p. 5). On the horizontal level, attention has been paid to the chain of associations, the complexity of the image, and its curious temporal aspects by G. Hartman ("Milton's Counterplot", *ELH* 25, 1958, p. 6); Stanley Fish (*Surprised by Sin*, p. 36); L. Brisman (*Milton's Poetry of Choice and Its Romantic Heirs*, Ithaca and London, 1973, pp. 185f.); and H. R. MacCallum ("Milton and Sacred History: Books XI and XII of *Paradise Lost*", in *Essays in English Literature from the Renaissance to the Victorian Age, Presented to A.S.P. Woodhouse*, Toronto, 1964, p. 167). MacCallum refers to Milton's narrative device as a "loop in time": "The ends to be brought about by Providence exist from the beginning".

'Abject' is "cast off", "rejected", but also suggests the shedding of leaves in autumn.

The infracontexts reinforcing more or less strongly the sense of the autumnal leaves, in the manner of the complex code, range from the *Iliad* to the second part of *Tamburlaine* (as pointed out by various commentators) and achieve a strong effect and heavy impact, being literally superimposed on one another in a deep and narrow matrix: *2 Tamburlaine* 3.5.5f. on *GL* 9.66, *GL* on *OF* 16.75, *OF* on the *Inferno* 3.112f., the *Inferno* on the *Aeneid* 6.309f., the *Aeneid* on the *Argonautica* 4.216ff., and the *Argonautica* on the *Iliad* 6.147ff. There may be other intermediate links.[3] The different instances of the simile provide slight variations within a homogeneous framework. They are concerned with quality, the transitoriness of life, and/or quantity, colossal numbers. In the *Iliad* Glaucus in his between-the-armies dialogue with Diomedes makes reflections on the flux of generations, and the leaves are "the perfect image of the rhythm of life and death constituting the human condition" (Holoka, p. 79): generations come and go much as the scattered leaves of autumn are replaced by fresh ones when spring comes. While making this point with great clarity, the simile has the additional effect of contrasting youth and heroic strength with transitoriness. It also of course operates as a *sententia*, stating a universally valid law. In the *Argonautica* 4.216ff. the Colchians pursuing the Argonauts are as numberless as the waves on a stormy sea or as leaves falling in an autumnal forest; in the *Aeneid* 6.309f., the best known of the classical instances, the scene is set in Hades, and the leaves illustrate the innumerable souls flocking on the banks of Acheron to be ferried across the river; by coordination with a bird-flock simile, the emphasis tends to be on the great number:

> Quam multa in syluis Autumni frigore primo
> Lapsa cadunt folia, aut ad terram gurgite ab alto
> Quam multae glomerantur aues, vbi frigidus annus
> Trans pontum fugat, et terris immittit apricis.

The only indication of the ebbing of life in the simile itself would seem to be 'Autumni frigore' and 'frigidus annus'. In the three classical texts the similes comprise no more than four lines – in the *Argonautica* not even that, and syntactic complexity is not great.

In Dante's poem the infernal setting of course remains, though the leaves do not illustrate large numbers but the movement of the souls of the damned, as they move one by one from the bank of the river into Charon's boat:

[3] Todd and Beeching provide surveys and references.

Come d'autumno si leuan le foglie
L'un' appresso del'altra, infin che'l ramo
Vede ala terra tutte le sue spoglie;
Similmente il mal seme d'Adamo
Gettasi di quel lito ad una ad una
Per cenni, com'augel per su'richiamo.

The word 'autumno' and the idea of the denuded branch play the same part as the words on the autumnal chill in Virgil's passage, but the difference in function is obvious; also, as Scartazzini points out, Virgil's bird simile recurs in a fundamentally different shape in Dante's poem. As in the classical lines, the syntactic structure is fairly simple. Ariosto in *OF* 16.75, a stanza which is part of the description of the battle between Christians and heathens, is similarly concerned with colossal numbers in his lines on Agramante's army. The leaves simile is preceded by an impressive image which reinforces the idea of quantity and in addition foreshadows the defeat of the African king's host:

Poi son le genti senza nome, e tante,
Che del lor sangue hoggi faranno un lago,
Che meglio conterei ciascuna foglia
Quando l'Autunno gli arbori ne spoglia.

The combined ideas of defeat and numberlessness are similarly present in Tasso's account in *GL* 9.66 of the devils being chased back to Hell by the Archangel Michael; by this divine intervention the demons' aid to the heathen army is temporarily checked. Tasso imitates Virgil and deviates from Dante in illustrating large numbers both by the image of falling leaves and of migrating birds, though in inverse order:

Non passa il mar d'augei sì grande stuolo,
Quando a i soli più tepidi s'accoglie;
Nè tante vede mai l'autunno al suolo
Cader co' primi freddi aride foglie.

Ariosto's and Tasso's images keep strictly to the number of lines and the simple structure found in Homer and Virgil. The simile in Tasso naturally reinforces directly the surface context in Milton, being immediately concerned with the defeat of the devils. The result of Michael's intervention is depicted in the beautiful two lines which end st. 65 and read like a description of the fall of the angels, thus affording a kind of flashback which gives the background for the angels' siding with the heathen army:

Essi gemendo abbandonar le belle
Region de la luce, e l'auree stelle.

These lines also recur as an infracontext for the end of *PL* 4 (see p. 208).

As compared with *GL*, the leaves simile in *2 Tamburlaine* is a less relevant infracontext. A messenger informs Callapine that Tamburlaine is threatening his realm with an army, 'Its number more than are the quivering leaves / Of Ida's forest'; an image which closely resembles Bacchylides' description, in one of his victory-songs, of the countless spirits seen by Hercules on the banks of Cocytus during his visit to the Underworld; they resemble leaves quivering in the wind on the gleaming slopes of sheep-grazed Ida (5.64ff.).[4] This description occupies three brief lines. There is no evidence of Bacchylides' poem being known in post-classical times (it is preserved in a papyrus discovered in the 1890s), but there are references to the poet and quotations of his works in scholia on various classical authors (Kenyon, p. xv). The point, however, is immaterial: this is a typical case of a passage which operates as an infracontext though it cannot have served as a source.

As compared with Virgil's use of the autumnal-leaves image, Newton felt, "Milton's comparison is by far the exactest, for it not only expresses a multitude, but also the posture and situation of the Angels". Another apt and early comment by C. Falconer was rightly praised by Ricks:[5] ... "The falling of a Shower of Leaves from the Trees, in a Storm of Wind, very well represents the Dejection of the Angels from their former Celestial Mansions; and their *faded splendor wan* (4.870) is finely expressed by the paleness and witheredness of the Leaves". Establishing a relationship between the *PL* simile and the different infracontexts, however, we find that they separate out in groups which affect the meaning of Milton's lines in different ways regardless of the superiority of any one simile in particular. The essential infracontext is naturally *GL* 9.66, which is directly concerned with the fallen angels, makes them as it were re-enact the fall and the defeat, and subsumes the idea of transitoriness and large numbers under these conceptions. The impression induced by the infracontext in Tasso is strengthened by those in Virgil and Bacchylides which similarly deal with the realm of the dead and with great numbers, but where the idea of the adversaries of God is of course absent. The other infracontexts are not equally relevant, but rather form

[4] The resemblance between Bacchylides' simile and Milton's was observed by the Greek poet's editor, F. G. Kenyon (ed. London, 1897, p. 46) ... "The parallel is the more striking because it is, of course, unconscious". Bowra (*From Virgil to Milton*, London, 1945, pp. 240f.) also comments on the simile in Bacchylides, as does Hughes (ed.) referring to Bowra.
[5] *Milton's Grand Style*, Oxford, 1963, p. 123. The quotation is from Falconer's *Essay on Milton's Imitations of the Ancients* (1741).

a kind of supplementary group. Thus the lines in Dante, which are usually adduced as a close parallel to those in Virgil, are of less importance since the idea of one-by-one movement is too marked. The lines in *OF* are more relevant, suggesting both crushing defeat and colossal numbers, whereas Apollonius Rhodius and Marlowe are merely concerned with the latter conception, and Homer with the short-lived generations succeeding one another, thus adding a *sententia* to the semantic strata. Yet they all somehow support one another, reinforce Milton's words, invest them with overtones, and combine to form a large sounding-board for the passage in *PL*. The idea of countless numbers conveyed by most of them suggests the extent of God's victory and, simultaneously, the magnitude of the menace to his realm. At the same time the number of leaves, already enormous in *PL*, is as it were multiplied into the colossal and infinite by contact with the infracontexts, each one adding to the multitude. This theme of large numbers is heightened by the iconographic treatment of the *Exodus* episode: as Roland Frye has demonstrated (pp. 95f.), the enormous size of Pharaoh's host is a feature frequently emphasized in art.

Another sense of the leaves simile, pointed out by Beeching – the loss of original brightness –, is similarly heightened by the infracontexts. 'Strow' not only suggests movement and thus serves as one of the links with the infracontexts, which describe falling leaves, it also, *eo ipso,* calls up the image of a carpet of dead leaves and thus simultaneously evokes the idea of the "sodden devitalized rotting of Satan's clustered legions", which Irene Samuel feels is conveyed by the image.[6] As a kind of faint accompaniment to these infracontexts we can discern the meanings attached to the leaves symbol by the early exegetes: 'homines mali' (Rupert), 'instabilitas' (Rabanus Maurus), 'mentis levitas' (Garner of St. Victor); 'Sicut a quercu ariditate concussa defluunt folia, ita cum defuerit vobis aqua, id est, scientia divinarum Scripturarum / ... / ariditate siccabimini' (Haymo).[7] To these effects could be added another one, on a level of pure form, which emerges when Milton's paragraph is brought into contact with the infracontexts. Holoka (p. 81) calls attention to the syntactic complexity and "acceleration" of Milton's lines, a pattern whose effect is enhanced by subtle metrical devices. Though the syntactical pattern is not of the same kind as the symmetrical periods frequently found in the Italian poets, it is possible that the elaborate, though less

[6] *Dante and Milton: The 'Commedia' and 'Paradise Lost'*, p. 76. See also the remarks of G. Hartman ("Milton's Counterplot", p. 6); of Hilda M. Hulme, whose view that Milton's image "does not speak of the leaves as fallen" seems doubtful ("On the Language of *Paradise Lost*", p. 79); of Sims (*The Bible in Milton's Epic*, pp. 223f.); and of Camé (*Les structures fondamentales* 1, p. 58).

[7] *PL* 168.145, 112.939, 193.347, 116.728.

highly organized syntactical structure in *PL* 1.299ff. should be regarded as a counterpart to the magnificent style as characterized by Tasso in the *Discorsi del Poema Eroico* (book five).[8] This is where Tasso discusses eloquence, defining very clearly its structural features: 'Seguendo adunque il trattar del elocuzione, io dico che la lunghezza de' membri e de' periodi, o de le clausule che vogliam dirle, fanno il parlar grande e magnifico non solo ne la prosa, ma nel verso ancora, come in quelli' – and then adducing as instances the quatrains of two sonnets in Petrarch's *Rime* (nos. 337 and 298).[9] Adherence to the Italian Renaissance ideal of the magnificent style – if this is what Milton's lines indicate – may be an expression of the poet's aim to surpass the achievements of his predecessors: the lines of great complexity in *PL* contrast with the much simpler structures in the infracontexts. The lofty character of Milton's autumnal leaves passage thus becomes even more marked, as if the poet were celebrating God's victory by outdoing his predecessors in weaving this particularly intricate structural web.

But it is not only, of course, with the aid of greater syntactic complexity that Milton surpasses his predecessors. The "successful rivalry" also, and mainly, depends on the classically based leaves simile linking up, within the same structural framework, with scriptural elements. Again, the scriptural infracontexts enrich and elucidate the meaning in a simple code. Vallombrosa does not primarily mean a geographically definable spot at such and such a distance from Florence and possibly visited by Milton in 1638,[10] but "the valley of the shadow of death"[11] in *Ps.* 23.4, Hebrew *gê' ṣălmawæt*, differently rendered in the Septuagint and the Vulgate (ἐν μέσῳ σκιᾶς θανάτου; 'in medio umbrae mortis'). The psalmist expresses his confidence in the grace of God, and in view of the wording of the verse, 'though I walke through the valley of the shadowe of death, I will feare no euill: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staffe, they comfort me', the infracontext lends a heavily ironical colouring to the account of the defeated celestial host strewing, like autumnal leaves,

[8] F. T. Prince discusses Milton's dependence on the ideas in Tasso's *Discorsi* in "The Influence of Tasso and Della Casa on Milton's Diction" (*RES* 25, 1949, pp. 222ff.). See also Mario Praz, "Tasso in England" (*The Flaming Heart*, Gloucester, Mass, 1966, pp. 320f.). Remarks on Milton's sentence structure are also made in R. D. Emma's *Milton's Grammar*, The Hague, 1964, pp. 137ff., in the same author's "Grammar and Milton's English Style" (*Language and Style in Milton*, pp. 246ff.), and in Partridge's *The Language of Renaissance Poetry*, Tonbridge, 1971, p. 264.

[9] *Discorsi del Poema Eroico* (Torquato Tasso, *Prose*, ed. E. Mazzali, *La Letteratura Italiana, Storia e Testi* 22, Napoli, 1959, p. 661).

[10] See the remarks by Frye, p. 94.

[11] The literal meaning of Vallombrosa, "the valley of the shadow" is commented on by Rajan, Broadbent (*Some Graver Subject*, p. 86), and Steadman, "The Devil and Pharaoh's Chivalry" (*MLN* 75, 1960, p. 201).

the brooks in Vallombrosa, where 'th'Etrurian shades / High overarcht imbowr'. The valley of the shadow of death is transformed into a locality on a par with other landscapes mentioned in the chain of similes, but Vallombrosa and 'th'Etrurian shades' also connect with the 'regno di pene, e di perpetua morte' and 'gli abissi' (*GL* 9.64 and 66) to which Michael in Tasso's poem chases back the devils. The infracontext in Tasso also reinforces the meaning of 'scatterd'. As Steadman says,[12] biblical diction frequently expresses the defeat of God's enemies by the word 'scatter'; the *LXX* word, διασπάω, can be a military term for "scattering and breaking up an army".

It seems likely that Old Testament passages can also aid us in the interpretation of the lines on armed Orion vexing the Red-Sea Coast and on the defeat of Pharaoh's army pursuing the Israelites. There is no doubt something to be said for Quintilian's view that a knowledge of astronomy is necessary for an understanding of poets, but it seems equally important to observe the allegorical meanings attached to the constellations. The generally recognized fact that the rising and setting of Orion were attended with storms – *Aen.* 1.535 'nimbosus Orion', 4.52 'aquosus Orion' etc. – is regarded by Fowler as secondary to the significance of Orion as a biblical symbol. It would perhaps be safer to say that 'aquosus Orion' operates quite well at one level, but that on another level the meaning is made much richer and more complex by different infracontexts. Orion occurs in the Old Testament at *Job* 9.9, 38.31, and *Amos* 5.8, and according to Fowler commentators on these passages "interpreted the creation of Orion as a symbol of God's power to raise tempests and floods to execute his judgments". But in support of this the only authority adduced is Riccioli's *Almagest*; the Old Testament text and patristic and later exegesis are not taken into account.

The basic question, of course, is why Orion should be mentioned at all. It does not occur in the *Exodus* text, nor is the use of this constellation necessitated by the context. In *Job* 9.9 the sufferer describes the power of God 'Which maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South'; in 38.31 God, convincing Job of foolishness, asks him, 'Canst thou bind the sweete influences of Pleiades? or loose the bands of Orion?' In *Amos* 5.8 the prophet is reproving Israel: 'Seeke him that maketh the seuen starres and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day darke with night; that calleth for the waters of the Sea, and powreth them out vpon the face of the earth: the Lord is his Name'. The Greek Fathers, as far as I know, do not comment explicitly on *Job* 38.31, and in Latin patristic and later commentary by far the commonest allegorical interpretation of *Job* 9.9 and *Amos* 5.8 is

[12] "The Devil and Pharaoh's Chivalry", p. 200.

Orion = "martyrs": just as the rising of Orion is connected with storms, so do the martyrs of the Church enter the world in the midst of the turmoil of persecution and oppression.[13] Hugh of St. Cher sides with this majority. Haymo reads Orion as the Church or as Saints,[14] and Francisco Ribera[15] has a similar idea, while Bruno on *Job* 9.9 says Orion signifies tyrants since he is armed with a sword. (Similarly Euripides in *Ion* 1153 mentions ξιφήρης Ὠρίων; in *Aen.* 3.517 Palinurus is watching 'armatum ... auro Oriona'; and Pontanus in *Vrania, sive de stellis* 3, equips Orion with an 'ensem auratum.') None of these interpretations fits the literary situation in *PL* very well. It is more rewarding to study the implications of the name for Orion in the Hebrew text, *kᵉsîl*, "fool", but not fool in the sense "stupid fellow": "*kᵉsîl* als Appellativum ist nach hebräischem Sprachgebrauch nicht der Tor im intellektuellen Sinne, etwa = stumpf, blödsinnig, sondern verbindet in sich die Vorstellungen 'übermütig, frech, trotzig, mutwillig' und 'gewalttätig, riesenhaft' in sensu malo".[16] According to one modern commentator on *Amos* the word "may point to some mythological notion that the star was once a foolhardy giant, chained for his impiety in the heavens which he strove to capture (cf. *Job* XXXVIII 31)".[17] Another commentator, on *Job*, observes, "... C. 38.31 speaks of the 'bands' of Orion: as Orion was supposed by the ancient Greeks to be a giant bound in the heavens by chains, it is difficult not to think that some similar idea underlay the Heb. name, and that there was some legend of a giant who, confiding foolishly in his strength, and defying the Almighty, was, as a punishment for his arrogance, bound for ever in the sky".[18] Milton and his age were unfamiliar with the conclusions of modern Old Testament exegetes, but there is good reason to believe that they were familiar with the tradition traced by these scholars. In the *Targūm*, the Aramaic paraphrase of the Old Testament texts, *kᵉsîl* in *Job* 9.9 is rendered by *nᵉpîla'*, the giant; a similar rendering is provided by the Syriac version. Identification of Orion with Nimrod, the giant hunter of *Gen.* 10.9, occurs in the Byzantine chronicles: the *Chronicon Paschale*, the chronicle by Georgius Cedrenus, and the *Anonymi Chronologica* handed down as part of the *Chronographia* by Johannes

[13] Eucherius, *Liber Form. Spir. Intell.* 3 (*PL* 50.742), Gregory, *Moralia* 9 (*PL* 75.866 and 868), Rabanus Maurus, *De Universo* 14 (*PL* 111.273), and *Alleg. in Sanct. Script.* (*PL* 112.1013), Odo Clun., *Epit. Moralium* 9 (*PL* 133.194), Rupert, *Comm. XII Proph. Min.* (*PL* 168.318) and *Comm. in Job* (*PL* 168.1006).

[14] *Enarr. in Amos* (*PL* 117.115).

[15] *In Lib. XII Proph. Comm.*, Cologne, 1610, p. 268.

[16] S. Mowinckel, *Die Sternnamen im Alten Testament*, Oslo, 1928, p. 37.

[17] *The Book of Amos* with notes by E. A. Edghill, ed. with an introduction by G. A. Cooke, London, 1926, p. 51. See also *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, edd. R. S. Cripps and R. H. Kennett, Guildford and London, 1955, p. 185.

[18] *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job*, edited by S. R. Driver and G. B. Gray, Edinburgh, 1921, p. 86.

Malalas.[19] Most of these texts were available to Milton and/or his readers; there is a spate of *Targūm* editions from the editio princeps, Bologna 1482, onwards; the *Chronicon Paschale* was first published at Munich in 1615; Cedrenus' chronicle at Basel in 1566; the *Chronographia* at Oxford in 1691. Latin versions ran parallel to all three Greek texts. Nimrod was traditionally regarded as a tyrant and a scorner of God: 'Nemrod gigas diaboli typum expressit, qui superbo appetitu culmen divinae celsitudinis appetivit, dicens: "Ascendam super altitudinem nubium, et ero similis Altissimo"' (Isidore).[20] Broadbent remarks that in 12.65f. Milton refers to Nimrod, the tyrant, 'to himself assuming / Authoritie usurpt, from God not giv'n'.[21]

This tradition concerning the nature of Orion is reinforced by Greek myth. The giant hunter pursued not only the animals of field and forest but also Artemis, for which offence he was temporarily punished with blindness. According to one version of the story Artemis caused his death, after which he was transferred to the heavens and shackled with chains. He is thus guilty of a crime similar to those committed by Tityos and Ixion. The tradition is attested by Callimachus and Horace,[22] among others, and recurs in the mythographers. Hyginus in *Fabula* 195 and in the *Poeticon Astronomicon* 2.34 tells the story of the constellated giant; Seneca in *Hercules Furens* 12 provides a concentrated description of the armed rebel: 'Ferro minax hinc terret Orion deos'. Comes in addition refers to the opinion of those who provide a moral interpretation of the myth: arrogance is hateful and repulsive to the immortal gods; hence the punishment (*Mythologiae*, p. 256 v.).

Another interpretation of the figure takes as its starting-point the mention of Nimrod in *Gen.* 10.8ff. as the founder of Babel. Annotating the passage, Augustine associates Nimrod with the building of the tower of Babel, a tradition recurring in Brunetto Latini, who adds that Nimrod was responsible for the resulting confusion of tongues. There is then a connection between Nimrod's activities and Satan's deceitful use of language when corrupting man.[23] Nor is this all, for yet another infracontext establishes a connection between Orion and Satan as he is described making his way towards the shore of the lake of fire, supported by his

[19] Available in *PG* 92.145, 121.53, and 97.81, respectively.

[20] Isidore, *Alleg. quaedam Script. Sacr.* (*PL* 83.103); similarly Ambrose, *De Noe et Arca* (*PL* 14.416), Rabanus Maurus, *Comm. in Genesim* (*PL* 107.528: 'Nemrod ... non incongrue diabolo comparatur'), and Philo Judaeus, stressing the rebellious and treasonable character of Nimrod (*De Gigantibus* 15). See also Labriola, "The Titans and the Giants", pp. 11f., on similarities between Nimrod and Satan.

[21] *Some Graver Subject*, p. 112.

[22] *Hymn to Artemis* 265; *Carm.* 3.4.70ff.

[23] Augustine, *Civ. Dei* 16.4; Brunetto Latini, *Trésor*, 1.24 (references in Gmelin 1, p. 451). Labriola, p. 12, comments on the parallel between the tower of Babel and Pandemonium.

giant spear (1.283ff.). When in *Aen.* 10.763ff. Mezentius, scorner of the gods, enters the field of battle he is compared to gigantic Orion striding through the ocean with his shoulders above the waves or walking on the ground with his head hidden in clouds, supported by an ash-tree torn from the mountain-tops; in the ensuing fight he is eventually killed by Aeneas. A point where surface and infracontexts interlock fairly closely here is the connection between 'the tallest Pine / Hewn on *Norwegian* hills' (291f.), a mere wand as compared with Satan's spear, and the 'annosam ... ornum' torn from the mountain-height by Orion. This connection with Orion is reinforced by the association between Satan with his spear and the giant Polypheme as established by Stillingfleet and discussed by Rajan.[24] There is, in addition, an infracontextual level which invests the lines on Satan's spear with further connotations. As Warton pointed out annotating *SA* 1122 (Todd), Bojardo, Tasso, and Du Bartas equip their giants and/or heroes with ships' masts for lances, while Spenser compares Satyrane's spear in *FQ* 3.7.40 to a mast. So Milton's image, in which the mast is a wand in relation to Satan's spear, operates as a powerful *auxesis* beyond the effect it has on a purely horizontal level. The horrifying size of Satan himself is thus brought home with special emphasis within the framework of a vertical context system. Giant size, pride, and subsequent defeat thus again come to the fore, this time by contact 'surface context A > infracontext > surface context B > surface context A'.

According to traditions more or less esoteric, but undoubtedly by and large available to Milton and his contemporaries, in short, Orion is a figure who has many features in common with Lucifer, the godless rebel.

From this infracontextual background for Orion there is a link with the surface context where the fallen angels are associated with giants, the 'Giant Angels' in 7.605. Most commentators connect this with the giants in classical mythology, though Pearce and Todd called attention to giant as a Biblical rendering of a Hebrew word meaning "violent", "proud", "fierce", and Todd specifically referred to *Gen.* 6.4 'There were Giants in the earth in those daies: and also after that, when the sonnes of God came in vnto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them; the same became mightie men, which were of old, men of renowne'. Commenting on the words 'the proud attempt / Of Spirits apostat' in 7.609f. Todd remarked, ... "apostate being the marginal reading in the Latin version of the Bible, for the term giants, Gen. vi. 4". Steadman provides a detailed discussion of the background for the Giant Angels,[25] showing

[24] *'Paradise Lost' and the Seventeenth-Century Reader*, London, 1947, pp. 123f. See also Stanley Fish's discussion of Milton's image (*Surprised by Sin*, pp. 23ff.).

[25] "'Men of Renown'. Heroic Virtue and the Biblical Giants" (*Milton's Epic Characters*, pp. 177ff., particularly 179–185). Additional comments are provided by Labriola, pp. 11f.

that Hebrew *n'pîlîm* in *Gen.* 6.4, translated as 'giants', was also rendered by words meaning "assailants" and "the violent": giants were fierce robbers and tyrants. According to Jerome, *n'pîlîm* also derives from a root with the sense "fall", and patristic commentators associated the word with the fallen angels (Steadman p. 184). So 'Giant Angels' in book 7 links up with Orion in book 1, the words mutually reinforcing one another's meanings, and the Old Testament connotations add to the semantic depth and richness of the words.

But must not Orion be a good power, an agent of God, since he brings about the downfall of evil? Agent of God he undoubtedly is, without being a good power: within the framework of the image and the story Orion prefigures as well as re-enacts Satan's achieving his own downfall, the ruin of Busiris-Pharaoh and his entire crew, and the salvation of the just – all his malice

> serv'd but to bring forth
> Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn
> On Man by him seduc't, but on himself
> Treble confusion, wrauth and vengeance pourd. (217ff.)[26]

Like the theme of Orion, that of the drowning of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, another stratum of the image, is charged with meaning by the infracontextual matrix. One cluster of meanings is based on the identification of Pharaoh with Busiris, which was shown by Don Cameron Allen to have been made in pre-Milton times by Melanchthon. In classical myth, of course, Busiris was slain by Hercules, a well-known type of Christ from the Middle Ages onwards. Again, Steadman has demonstrated how the mention of Busiris connects with the theme of the rise and fall of the tyrant in *PL*, and has also pointed out the presence of the motif of false heroism as indicated by the word 'Chivalrie'. Also, Harold Fisch has discussed the association of Egypt with Hell and of Pharaoh with the great *tanin,* the reptile in *Ezek.* 29.3, and thus with Leviathan, a type of the devil.[27] Other meanings on which I shall concen-

[26] Evil forces temporarily used for good purposes, as servants of God, is a theme discussed, among others, by Patrides (*Milton and the Christian Tradition*, Oxford, 1966, pp. 222f.) and Hughes (*Ten Perspectives*, pp. 171ff.). Satan raising destructive forces against himself is a motif in *PL* dealt with by Fish (*Surprised by Sin*, p. 79) and W. G. Riggs (*The Christian Poet in 'Paradise Lost'*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 1972, p. 32).

[27] Don Cameron Allen, "Milton's Busiris" (*MLN* 65, 1950, pp. 115f.); Steadman, "Busiris, the Exodus, and Renaissance Chronography" (RBPH 39, 1961, pp. 794ff.) and "'Memphian Chivalry': Milton's Busiris, Etymology and Chronography" (*UR* 1971, pp. 215ff.); and Fisch, "Hebraic Style and Motifs in *Paradise Lost*" (*Language and Style in Milton*, p. 63). Steadman's articles provide a detailed analysis of the identification Pharaoh-Busiris. Bush in his edition supplies a brief summary note. See also Fowler's comment on 306–311.

trate here are bound up with patristic comments on *Exodus*, which are connected by important channels of communication with comments on some Pauline passages (*Rom.* 6.4 and *Col.* 2.12) and on *Matt.* 3.11. Directly or by synecdoche, all these different passages invest Milton's lines on the Egyptians swallowed up by the Red Sea with significance powerful enough to radiate far into the poem.

The point of departure is the meaning embedded in a simple code and assigned by patristic tradition to the Pharaoh – Red Sea theme: the washing away of sin through baptism.[28] The Israelites are the Christian soul, unharmed by the water; Pharaoh and his "angels" are Satan and the vices. Zeno provides a succinct account of the roles played by the protagonists of the drama: 'Aegyptus mundus est iste. Pharaoh cum populo suo diabolus et spiritus omnis iniquitatis. Israel populus Christianus, qui proficisci jubetur, ut ad futura contendat'.[29] Other patristic comments ring various changes on the theme of baptism. According to Augustine there is no doubt that the march of the Israelites through the Red Sea means baptism, by which, guided by Jesus Christ prefigured by Moses, we are delivered from the devil, his angels, and the defilement of sinful life. Isidore asks what the Red Sea signifies if not baptism – the enemies of the Israelites are sins and the devil, and drown in spiritual baptism.[30] This significance of the episode underscores the defeat of Satan and his followers and the evil they stand for: the floating carcasses and the broken chariot wheels are the scattered remains of sinful life due to hatred of good; according to Basil, the baptismal water destroys our hatred (ἔχθρα) of God (*De Spiritu Sancto* 14). The destruction of the evil forces involves spiritual welfare and salvation. This leads over to another level of meaning, the escape from death, which becomes relevant through contact with the infracontextual Pauline passages interpreting

[28] This is attested by an overwhelming majority of patristic authors, and Steadman seems to be in error when he says the immersion of Pharaoh's army was "sometimes" regarded as a symbol of baptism, but "frequently" as an allusion to the Day of Judgement ("The Devil and Pharaoh's Chivalry", p. 199). See further below.

[29] *Tractatus LIV* (*PL* 11.510).

[30] Augustine, *Sermo* 363 (*PL* 39.1635), also *Sermo* 352 (1551) and 24 (appendix 1791–93); Isidore, *Quaest. in Vet. Test., in Exodum* (*PL* 83.296). Identical interpretations are provided by Tertullian, *De Baptismo 9* (*PL* 1.1209), Hilarius, *Tractatus in CXXXIV Psalmum* (*PL* 9.762), Bede, *In Pentat. Comm.* (*PL* 91.310–11), Rabanus Maurus, *Comm. in Exod.* (*PL* 108.65–6), Bruno Carth., *Expos. in Psalmos* (*PL* 152.1348), Bruno Ast., *Expos. in Exod.* (*PL* 164.265), Rupert, *De Trinit.* (*PL* 167.645ff.), Hugh of St. Victor, *Alleg. in Vet. Test.* (*PL* 175.655). Cyprian, Ambrose, and Prosper also refer to this interpretation. In the Greek patrology it is represented by Basil, *Hom. in Sanct. Bapt.* 2 (*PG* 31.428) and *De Spirit. Sanct.* 14 (*PG* 32.124), Didymus Alex., *De Trinit. II* (*PG* 39.696–7), Gregory of Nyssa, *In Bapt. Christi* (*PG* 46.589), Chrysostom, *In Dict. Pauli* (*PG* 51.248), and Procopius, *Comm. in Exod.* (*PG* 87.583); possibly also by others. Some of these passages are discussed by Jean Daniélou, *Bible et liturgie*, Paris, 1958, pp. 119ff., and *Sacramentum futuri, Études sur les origines de la typologie biblique*, Paris, 1950, pp. 83, 154ff.

baptism as the burial and Resurrection of Christ: *AV Rom* 6.4 'Therefore wee are buryed with him by baptisme into death, that like as Christ was raised vp from the dead by the glorie of the Father: euen so wee also should walke in newnesse of life'; and *Col.* 2.12 'Buried with him in Baptisme, wherein also you are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead'. As pointed out by Dublin and Daniélou,[31] commenting on the passages in St. Paul, several Greek Fathers remind their readers that the death of Christ means a descent into the Underworld, and that by baptism the Christian makes the same journey and back again: "To be baptized and submerged", says Chrysostom, "and then emerge and turn back, is a symbol or a sign of the descent to Hades and the ascent therefrom"; and Basil asks, "How then do we accomplish the descent into Hades? By imitating the Burial of Christ through our Baptism, for the bodies of the baptized are as it were buried in water". Gregory of Nazianzus calls baptism a "peregrination with Christ", and in *Pastor Hermas* the power of baptism over the pre-Christian virtuous dead is explained briefly and to the point: "They went down into the water dead but came up alive".[32]

This infracontextual significance is relevant to the Red Sea as a baptism symbol in *PL*: Milton's lines prefigure Satan's second defeat, whether involving Judgement Day or the Harrowing of Hell and the devil's inability to keep man in infernal servitude: 3.250f. 'But I shall rise Victorious, and subdue / My Vanquisher, spoild of his vanted spoile'; ... 294 'So Man, as is most just, / Shall satisfie for Man, be judg'd and die, / And dying rise, and rising with him raise / His Brethren, ransomd with his own dear life'. By the combination of burning lake and baptism, as suggested by *PL* 1.300ff. and 306ff., contact is however also established with yet another infracontextual level investing Milton's lines with significance. That level is basically represented by *Matt.* 3.11, where John the Baptist prophesies that Christ, mightier than he, shall baptize us with the Holy Ghost and with fire. In patristic and later commentary, opinions are divided as to the exact meaning of the baptism of fire, though most commentators are agreed on the general sense. An austere attitude is represented by Hilarius, who thinks that after baptism in the Holy Ghost it remains for us to be consumed by the fire of Judgement. According to

[31] John Dublin, "The Descent in Hades and Christian Baptism" (*The Expositor* 11, 1916, pp. 241ff.); Daniélou, *Bible et liturgie*, pp. 106, 109.

[32] Chrysostom, *In Epist. 1 ad Cor. Hom.* 40 (*PG* 61.348), Basil, *De Spir. Sanct.* 15 (*PG* 32.129), Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio XL in Sanct. Bapt.* (*PG* 36.361), *Pastor Hermas, Simil.* 9.16.6. Similarly Origen, *Comm. in Matt.* 15.23 (*PG* 13.1321), and Cyrillus, *Procatech.* 16 (*PG* 33.360–61), who calls baptism a "chariot bound for Heaven" (ὄχημα πρὸς οὐρανόν). Chrysostom provides the same interpretation of baptism in *In Epist. ad Col. II, Hom. VI* (*PG* 62.340). It should be remembered that the child is submerged in the holy water according to the Greek Orthodox baptismal rite.

Bede, however, the fire signifies the tribulations of the flesh, while Anselm Laudensis says it may be penitence or persecution, or else, with Rabanus Maurus, believes it refers to the purgation of lesser sins that may remain after baptism. Alternatively, Rabanus Maurus says the fire is another form of the Holy Ghost, an interpretation provided before him by Augustine and after him by Bruno Astensis, and which would seem to be similar to the view of two Greek Fathers, Chrysostom and Gregory of Nazianzus: the fire is a sterner, more violent and more effective form of baptism through grace.[33] (In *Acts* 2.3, of course, the Holy Ghost appears as γλῶσσαι ὡσεὶ πυρός, 'tongues like as of fire'). This view is not far from that provided by a marginal comment on *Matt.* 3.11 in the Geneva Bible: 'When God baptizeth inwardely with the vertue of his Spirit, he burneth, and consumeth the vices and inflameth the heartes with loue towards him'. So while the fire in the Underworld is a form of punishment chastising the evil spirits and their leader, it suggests at the same time, by way of sharp contrast, what to some Fathers is a particularly powerful form of baptism, an act of grace supplementing baptism by water or purifying man of whatever sins may adhere to him in the course of his life.

In short, from the infracontextual level radiate meanings which stratify the basic significance of the Red Sea theme: baptism. While the devils undergo severe punishment – equivalent to spiritual death –, man is purified by holy water, his sins washed away. While the devils are imprisoned in the Underworld, Christian man, like Christ, descends there but ascends again. While the devils are tortured in the burning lake, man's purification by fire is a second baptism, sterner, harsher, and more lasting than the first. We are reminded of the double function of the Logos, which will be discussed in the last main chapter (pp. 325f.).

While these and other particulars are connected with biblical commentary, another detail, part of a mixed code, seems to derive its meaning from a group of quite different infracontexts. Discussing the words 'who beheld /From the safe shore thir floating Carcasses' (309f.) Steadman observes that the *AV* text in *Exodus* reads, 'Israel sawe the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore' (14.30), a reading corresponding to those in *LXX*, the Vulgate, and the Geneva Bible; and Calvin paraphrases, 'dixit Israelitas vidisse strata in littore cadavera'. Steadman[34] quotes and discusses the ambiguous Tremellius version, 'videruntque Jisraelitas /

[33] Hilarius, *Comm. in Matt.* (*PL* 9.926), Bede, *In Matt. Evang. Expos.* 1 (*PL* 92.17), Anselm Laud., *Enarr. in Matt.* (*PL* 162. 1266), Rabanus Maurus, *Comm. in Matt.* (*PL* 107.773), Augustine, *Sermo* 71.12 (*PL* 38.455), Bruno Ast., *Comm. in Matt.* (*PL* 165.88), Chrysostom, *In Matt. Hom. XI* (*PG* 58.192), Gregory of Nazianzus, *In Sanct. Lum.* (*PG* 36.357). See also Daniélou, *Bible et liturgie*, p. 109.

[34] "'From the Safe Shore': Milton and Tremellius" (*Neophilologus* 44, 1960, pp. 218f.).

Aegyptios morientes, in litore maris' with its marginal note calling attention to the ambiguity: Israelites on sea coast, or Egyptians dead on shore. According to the annotator the second alternative is preferable, and Steadman suggests that Milton's version was probably due to his concern for "greater consistency in his simile", or alternatively that the poet may have remembered Rabbi Eliezer's words about the Egyptians floating like skin-bottles on the surface of the water. But the simile would have been consistent either way, and Rabbi Eliezer ends his comment by quoting the *Exodus* text according to the majority of the versions. There may be a totally different background for the reading in Milton, one which is semantically interesting.

It seems to me that Milton's line suggests a classical apophthegm, probably best known in the form given by Lucretius in the very first lines of book 2 of the *De Natura Rerum*:

> Suave mari magno turbantibus aequora ventis
> E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem
> Non quia uexari quemquamst iucunda voluptas,
> Sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suaue est.

"How sweet it is from the safe shore to watch another's severe struggle on the open sea, when the winds lash the waters; not because it is a pleasure to watch someone else's sufferings, but because it is a good thing to see the troubles you have escaped". The lines illustrate the philosopher's envious plight, looking down on the vain and meaningless strife of the ambitious. Significantly, Lucretius a few lines further down expressly refers to those who strive night and day to achieve the greatest power and influence. The same sentiment, expressed in the same way as in Lucretius' first two lines, recurs in Horace's *Epistle* 1.11.10 ('Neptunum procul a terra spectare furentem'), and Cicero dwells on his present situation in life when he regards the shipwreck of the state: 'Cupio istorum naufragia ex terra intueri' (*Ad Att.* 2.7); a statement backed by a Sophocles quotation to a similar effect. The first part of a fragment from Archippus literally suggests the words used by Lucretius: "How sweet it is to watch the sea from the land, oh mother, provided one never sails on it!"[35] The point of all these maxims is thus precisely to "behold from the safe shore" – 'e terra', ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς – the precarious plight of those who try their luck or strive to achieve power. Contact with these *sententiae* provides a further interpretation of the Red Sea situation which states a generally valid truth: the Israelites represent a rational and divine world

[35] References to Horace, Cicero, and Archippus occur in all major editions of Lucretius (Munro, Leonard and Smith, Bailey).

order and watch, from their safe vantage-point, those who want to disrupt that very order and destroy them, putting crude power above moral truth.

This significance is particularly apparent if contact is established – as is easily done – between the classical apophthegms and a group of patristic and later passages which deal with the righteous who, themselves safe and sound, watch the perdition of the unjust. These texts have nothing to do with the *Exodus* episode, but are made up of comments on a passage in the *Psalms*, 57.11: 'Laetabitur justus, cum viderit vindictam; manus suas lauabit in sanguine peccatoris.' The commentators agree on the meaning of this joy on the part of the virtuous: they do not rejoice because others suffer, but because justice is administered and above all because they themselves are spared punishment.[36] These comments thus coincide with the sense of Lucretius' lines 2 and 4. Augustine, for example, instructs the readers of the psalm: 'Agnoscite ergo istam poenam, et gaudete vos non esse in hac poena omnes qui proficitis, omnes qui intellegitis et amatis veritatem [...] Ergo istam poenam quando videtis gaudete, quia in illa non estis'. The last part of the verse in the psalm has a special sense expounded by Bede: 'Et merito laetabitur, quia *lavabit manus suas*, id est, mundabit opera sua; *in sanguine peccatoris*, id est, in consideratione damnationis peccatoris'. Aquinas also comments on the matter in the Supplement to the *Summa*. Joy can be twofold; it may concern something in itself, or it may concern something connected with it. In the first sense the just cannot rejoice, for they do not experience hatred. But in the second sense they can: 'Et sic divina justitia et sua liberatio erunt per se causa gaudii beatorum, sed poenae damnatorum per accidens'.[37]

The safe shore in *PL* 1.310, in short, is the centre of infracontextually conveyed meanings powerfully reinforcing one another. It is fitting that the simile should end on a note stressing the universal, the generally valid, and that this universal element should be concerned with survival

[36] Hilarius, *Tract. in LVII Psalm.* (*PL* 9.372), Rufinus, *In Psalm. LXXV Comm.* (*PL* 21.876), Augustine, *Enarr. in Psalm. LVII* (*PL* 36.690–1), Cassiodorus, *Expos. in Psalt.* (*PL* 70.408), Paterius, *Expos. super Psalm.* (*PL* 79.855), Bede, *In Psalm. Libr. Exeg.* (*PL* 93.786), Haymo, *Explan. in Psalm.* (*PL* 116.389), Bruno Herb., *Expos. Psalm.* (*PL* 142.225), Bruno Carth., *Expos. in Psalm.* (*PL* 152.905), Petrus Lomb., *Comm. in Psalm.* (*PL* 191.539). As compared with this homogeneous group of interpretations, Tertullian's malicious joy in the well-known final chapter of the *De Spectaculis* stands out as exceptional: 'Quae tunc spectaculi latitudo! Quid admirer? Quid rideam? Ubi gaudeam, ubi exultem, spectans tot ac tantos reges, qui in caelum recepti nuntiabantur, cum ipso Jove et ipsis suis testibus in imis tenebris congemescentes? [...] Ut talia spectes, ut talibus exultes, quis tibi praetor, aut consul, aut quaestor, aut sacerdos de sua liberalitate praestabit?', etc. This was written in another age and another context than were the comments on psalm 57.

[37] *Suppl. q.* 94, *a.* 3 (*Summa Theologiae* 3, Taurini et Romae, 1948, pp. 1052f.). The same idea recurs in *Quodlib. q.* 7, *a.* 16 (*Opera Omnia* 9, p. 583).

and salvation. The entire autumnal leaves – Red Sea image has thus a marked vertical dimension. From its infracontextual levels emerge interrelated meanings which foreshadow two great motifs running in contrast patterns through the poem: the motif of the pride and downfall of the tyrant and his followers, and that of victory and immortality.

Sin is aridity and sterility, and an apt symbol dominates the account of the fallen angels getting up and gathering in response to their leader's summons at 338ff.:

> As when the potent Rod
> Of *Amrams* Son in *Egypts* evil day
> Wav'd round the Coast, up calld a pitchy cloud
> Of *Locusts*, warping on the Eastern Wind,
> That ore the Realm of impious *Pharaoh* hung
> Like Night, and dark'nd all the Land of *Nile:*
> So numberless were those bad Angels seen
> Hovering on wing under the Cope of Hell
> 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding Fires.

According to Fowler, "M's comparison of devils to locusts is based on allegorisations of this passage [*Exod.* 10.12–15] and of *Rev.* IX 3 (e.g. Raban Maur's, Migne CXI 257), which had become so familiar that Phineas Fletcher could allude to them in the title of his poem *Locustae.* Callot used the locust schema – on which see E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion* (1962) 68f. – for some of the devils in his engraving 'The Temptation of St. Anthony' (1817)". Locusts = devils had earlier been called a "familiar metaphor" by Hughes. The relevant biblical passages are *Exod.* 10.13ff. 'And Moses stretched forth his rod ouer the land of Egypt ... and when it was morning, the East wind brought the locusts [...] they couered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkned', etc; and *Rev.* 9.2f. (after the sounding of the fifth angel) 'Hee opened the bottomelesse pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great fornace, and the sunne and the ayre were darkened ... And there came out of the smoke locusts vpon the earth, and vnto them was giuen power, as the Scorpions of the earth haue power'. However, there is no locust schema in Callot's engraving: Gombrich's illustration shows a sideface "Heupferd"; Callot's engraving, a cross between bird and bat en face. As to the allegorisations, we do not easily find them simply equating devils with locusts. Rabanus Maurus provides this interpretation (of *Rev.* 9) only as one of many;[38] his other alternatives are, 'populos significat instabiles et vagos'; 'dissidentis a se et discordantis humani

[38] In *De Universo Libri XXII* (*PL* 111.257).

generis inconstantia'; 'superbia vel vagatio mentis'; 'mobilitas levitatis', and 'linguae adulantium'. Nowhere else in the patrology, to my knowledge, do locusts unequivocally signify devils – in spite of their mission in *Rev.* 9 to torment man, in spite of their terrible appearance, and in spite of their being commanded by the angel of the bottomless pit, Abaddon-Apollyon (*Rev.* 9.5ff., 11). Commentators on *Exod.* 10.12ff. feel they stand for some of the other alternatives in Rabanus Maurus' list above,[39] or for vices or evil spirits,[40] or for false witnesses,[41] or for flatterers,[42] the last item on his list. In Alciati's emblems locusts are instruments of divine visitation. The vast majority of commentators on *Rev.* 9.3[43] agree that the locusts signify heretics, a significance to which J. Gorecki calls attention;[44] stray interpretations are "the universe of evils", "the terrible existence of sinners", and "false preachers".[45] In pictorial art as a whole there is no preference at all for locusts in scenes representing demons or their surroundings; what we find are other insects, lizards, fish, birds, or grotesque combinations of all four, sometimes with human limbs added.[46] In Brueghel's *Fall of the Angels* I can only find one indisputable locust among all the falling monsters: the insect at top centre. It is therefore probable that Fletcher used the locusts as a title for his poem less because locusts = devils was a common collocation than because he imitated the locust passage in *Revelation*: in the key stanza of his English poem *The Locusts, or Apollyonists* the devil 'cluck's his Locusts from their smoky hives: / See how they rise, and with their numerous swarmes / Filling the world with fogges, and fierce alarmes, / Bury the earth with bloodles corps, and bloody armes' (5.31). I do not think too much should be made of Broadbent's and others' idea that "real locusts were an object of peculiar 17th-century horror", described with disgust by travellers to the east.[47] The traditional allegorical interpretation is of basic importance. However, if there is no common immediate identification between locusts and devils there may be an indirect and oblique one. The opinion of most commentators on *Rev.* 9.3,

[39] Isidore, *Quest. in Vet. Test.* (*PL* 83.294), Bede, *In Pentat. Comm.* (*PL* 91.303), also Rabanus Maurus himself in *Comm. in Exod.* (*PL* 108.42).
[40] Bruno Ast., *Expos. in Exod.* (*PL* 164.251).
[41] Rupert, *De Trinitate* (*PL* 167.606).
[42] Hugh of St. Cher on *Exod.* (*Crit. Sacr.* 1).
[43] Ambrose, Bede, Alcuin, Strabo, Haymo, Anselm Laud., Bruno, Rupert, Zegerus, and Grotius (the last two quoted in *Critici Sacri* on *Rev.*).
[44] "Milton's Similitudes for Satan and the Traditional Implications of Their Imagery" (*MQ* 10, 1976, pp. 101ff.).
[45] In, respectively, Richard of St. Victor, *Exegetica in Apocal.* (*PL* 196.783), Arethas Caesareae, *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PG* 106.622), and Hugh of St. Cher (*Crit. Sacr.*).
[46] See e.g. the iconographic material provided by E. Castelli, *Il Demoniaco nell' arte*, Milano-Firenze, 1952, particularly plates 36, 60, 61, 76, and 77; also Roland Frye, p. 97.
[47] Broadbent, *Some Graver Subject*, p. 87.

that locusts signify heretics, indirectly suggests *Inf.* 8.82ff., where the City of Dis is manned by a thousand spirits 'da Ciel piouuti', i.e. the fallen angels. These are called 'gli heresiarche, / Co'lor seguaci d'ogni setta', the Archheretics with their followers of every sect (9.127f.). The rebel angels were the first to be seized with the pride of unbelief.[48] It is thus possible that to readers with a knowledge of the exegetical background and of *The Divine Comedy* the locusts in *PL* functioned only to some extent as directly symbolic of devils – numberless, destructive, associated with oriental and Roman Catholic tyranny (Broadbent, p. 87), and possibly, if with MacCaffrey (pp. 128f.) we connect the passage with Adam's vision of the future in bk. 11, as chastisers of evil; – but mainly, on a different simple-code level, that they suggested the sin of the fallen angels: the arch-heresy of pride. It is interesting, as Fowler observes, commenting on the barbarian hords image a few lines further on, that Milton in *Prolusio* 5 uses that symbol for the large number of errors threatening truth. As Rajan points out, annotating ll. 338–44, Milton returned to this theme in *Of Reformation*. It could be added that in the patristic commentators the darkness and smoke described in *Exodus* and *Revelation* signify heretic pollution and distortion of the dogma and teaching of Christ and the Holy Church. At the same time the biblical description on this point coincides with a traditional feature in accounts of portents, omens and diabolic activities: the darkening of the sky, the "face of heaven". Dunster refers to the devils in *GL* 4.18 "flying abroad over the world to injure the Christian cause" and compared by Tasso to wild storms obscuring the face of the day; he also calls attention to the stanza in 9.66 – already discussed in the analysis of the leaves image – where the world, after Michael has driven the demons back to Hell, 'quella sì negra / Faccia depone'. The bad-omen character of the darkened sky is of course highly intensified by the classical and Renaissance infracontexts centring around the 'facies caeli' nucleus. We shall return to the same topos later (pp. 100f.).

While the biblical background of Milton's lines is thus reinforced by other infracontexts of a different character, there is a contrast effect at work on the horizontal level since the infernal locusts warping on the eastern wind and hovering on wing under the cope of Hell are in the sharpest possible contrast to the celestial spirit who in 1. 20ff. 'with mighty wings outspred / Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss'; while the locusts are instruments of destruction.

[48] See John S. Carroll, *Exiles of Eternity. An Exposition of Dante's Inferno,* London and New York, 1903, pp. 158f., and Gorecki, p. 103. The latter observes that locusts are identified with heretics, false teachers and evil prelates in a marginal gloss on the *Revelation* passage in the Geneva Bible, and that Thomas Wilson's *Christian Dictionary* provides the same symbolic meanings (pp. 102f.).

The triple motif of numberlessness, sterility, and destruction is continued in 351ff. After their 'great Sultans's' signal has been given the demons alight on the brimstone, filling the plain:

> A multitude, like which the populous North
> Pourd never from her frozen loins, to pass
> *Rhene* or the *Danaw*, when her barbarous Sons
> Came like a Deluge on the South, and spred
> Beneath *Gibraltar* to the *Lybian* sands.

McCaffrey remarks that there is a "dim reminiscence of the rebel angels congregating in the North", and feels that the frozen loins is a "kind of horrible parody on one of [M.'s] favorite ideas, the fertility that comes from God and from God's symbol, the sun". The same critic further points out that the metaphor anticipates the 'perverse' breeding in Chaos at 2.625, and that the barrenness of the picture is reinforced by the reference to the Lybian sands (p. 129). In fact the contrast is considerably heightened by the tradition underlying 'frozen loins', for besides the obvious reference to the "coldness of the climate" (Newton) the phrase suggests the female counterpart to the *semen frigidum* doctrine in witchcraft, the common idea that Satan's semen was icy cold and of course quite sterile; also, his embrace afforded the opposite of pleasure (fatentur ... nullam afferre voluptatem sed horrorem potius).[49] So the common designation of the North as the haunt and home of the devils leads over to the idea of frosty sterility, intensified by the curiously double effect achieved by contrast (cold – heat), and concord (barrenness). Annotating *Jeremiah* 1.14 'Et dixit Deus ad me, Ab Aquilone pandetur malum super omnes habitatores terrae', Hugh of St. Cher associates the north wind with the sterility of sin: ... 'Aquilo est frigidus ventus, quia a frigore materiali, scilicet a suggestione diaboli, per quam refrigescit charitas multorum, veniunt omnia peccata' (vol. 4, p. 4v.). The idea of profusion and overflowing abundance agrees paradoxically with that of sterility since what overflows is devastation wrought by barbarian hordes overrunning Europe and spreading error and heresy – the 'colluvies errorum' invading truth in the fifth *Prolusio*. As mentioned before, the locust image is thus continued on several levels, and the negative comparison – 'like which' ... 'never' intensifies the idea. Just as there is a contrast between the locusts warping on the eastern wind under the cope of Hell and the holy Spirit brooding on the vast Abyss, so there is a correspond-

[49] See Fran. Maria Guaccio, *Compendium Maleficarum* (1626), quoted in H. Ch. Lea, *Materials toward a History of Witchcraft* 2 (Philadelphia, 1932, p. 918); also J. Hansen, *Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Hexenwahns* (Bonn, 1901, p. 162), and H. Biedermann, *Handlexikon der magischen Künste* (Graz, 1968, p. 163).

ing contrast between the frozen loins and the vital virtue and vital warmth infused by the Spirit of God on his brooding wings during the act of creation in 7.235ff.

There is however a further dimension to the barbarous tribes image, projected on to the passage by another group of infracontexts. Whaler's observation[50] that before Milton Du Bartas had compared northern barbarians to locusts is in itself of limited critical interest, and Hughes' suggestion that the mention of the northern tribes crossing the Rhine or the Danube may be due to the opening part of Macchiavelli's *Florentine History* merely introduces another possible source. Similarly 'pourd', 'Deluge', and 'spred' may echo Spenser's words on the fierce nation which 'ouerflow'd all countries farre away, / Like Noyes great flood, with their importune sway' (2.10.15; Newton) – lines compared to Petrarch's account of useless barbarian mercenaries invading Italy: 'Oh diluvio raccolto / Di che diserti strani / Per inondar i nostri campi' (*Canz.* 128.28ff.; Todd). But underlying such descriptions, as Todd remarks, is probably the biblical account in *Is.* 59.19 of God's name feared in the entire world: *AV* 'When the enemie shall come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift vp a standard against him'; and the Geneva Bible: 'For the enemie shal come like a flood: but the Spirit of the Lord shal chase him away'. This translation is however only one alternative; the other is provided by the Coverdale and Bishops' Bibles, 'For he shal come as a violent water streame, which the winde of the Lorde hath moued' (a similar interpretation is furnished by the *LXX*). Either alternative thus invests Milton's lines with additional meaning: the first hints that another defeat is in store for the devils, the second that the infernal deluge flooding the earth is a visitation sent by God.

At the end of the subsequent passage, ll. 356ff.,

> Forthwith from every Squadron and each Band
> The Heads and Leaders thither hast where stood
> Thir great Commander; Godlike shapes and forms
> Excelling human, Princely Dignities,
> And Powers that earst in Heaven sat on Thrones;
> Though of thir Names in heav'nly Records now
> Be no memorial, blotted out and ras'd
> By thir Rebellion, from the Books of Life,

there is an element of irony and a reversal of the biblical context, as Sims has pointed out: "The Biblical statement [chiefly *Rev.* 3.5] ... concerns those who overcome temptation or defilement and thus will *not* have

[50] "Animal Simile in *Paradise Lost*" (*PMLA* 47, 1932, p. 543, n. 26).

their names blotted out; Milton simply reverses the situation to make it appropriate to the fallen angels ... the Biblical overcomers of evil are given new names in Heaven (*Rev.* 3:12b), while these fallen angels 'Got them new Names' upon earth through the evil of pagan idolatry''.[51] Also the beginning of the passage, however, derives special overtones, though from an infracontext of an entirely different character: the end of the first book of the *Strage degli Innocenti* and the beginning of the second. 'Forthwith from every Squadron and each Band / The Heads and Leaders thither hast where stood / Thir great Commander' suggests st. 64 in Crashaw's rendering of Marino's epic, where Herod's chiefs and commanders are summoned to his court by heralds and messengers who 'poasting every way / To th'heads and Officers of every band / Declare who sends, and what is his command'. (The last word may have elicited 'Commander' in *PL* 1.358, a word otherwise used only once in the poem). At the beginning of the second book in Marino, Herod's lieutenants are described as hurrying to their leader just as the fallen angels do – 'Al Re s'en giro: thither hast where stood / Thir great Commander' – and taking their places in the senate according to rank. What they are summoned to hear proves eventually to be the tyrant's decision to massacre the Infants in order to remove Christ, the alleged threat to his power, much as Satan in *PL* is ultimately to reveal a scheme similarly intended to break the power of God. The theme of destruction is thus emphasized by the submerged similarity between on the one hand Herod's henchmen, massacring the Infants and bent on killing Christ, Life itself, and on the other the locusts-devils-heretics invading the earth and spreading destruction, barrenness and heresy. Milton's lines operate as powerful intensifiers against the background of Crashaw's: from Herod and his lieutenants, merely types of Satan and the devils, we come to Satan and the devils themselves.

The simile in 612ff. describing the apostate angels 'from eternal Splendors flung', yet standing faithful, 'Thir Glory witherd' harks back to the lines on the autumnal leaves in 301ff.: both images concern trees in a state suggesting transitoriness and sterility, in one case shedding leaves in autumn, in the other struck and singed by lightning. As James F. Hoy points out[52] there are numerous suggestions of distress and disaster in the entire paragraph from 590–620, of which the second simile forms part; at the same time it forms one of many variations on the theme of eternal punishment:

[51] *The Bible in Milton's Epics*, p. 13.
[52] "A Meteorological Image in *Paradise Lost*" (*MQ* 9, 1975, pp. 17f.).

As when Heavens Fire
Hath scath'd the Forrest Oaks, or Mountain Pines,
With singed top thir stately growth though bare
Stands on the blasted Heath.

Relevant infracontexts are *Phars.* 1.139ff. (Todd) and *Macbeth* 1.3.77 (Dunster). In the *Pharsalia* Lucan compares Pompey, marked for defeat, with an oak-tree bearing a nation's spoils and chieftain's gifts, but supported by weak roots, stretching naked boughs and providing a shade not with its leaves but with its trunk; destined to fall at the first storm, yet alone worshipped while younger and stronger trees grow up all around. The contrast between the outward trappings of Pompey's leadership and his real weakness, and that between the victor's spoils hanging on the tree and the frailty of its trunk and branches, has a parallel in the loss of hoped-for victory and the withered glory of the infernal host. Imminent ruin and disaster are also suggested by the connection between the 'blasted Heath', on which the oak-trees and mountain pines stand, and the blasted heath on which Macbeth meets the witches who address him with prophetic greetings. 'Blasted' recurs in 6.372 describing the defeat of some of the rebel angels, and in 10.412, on the effect of the demon messengers on the pallid stars. Echoes from the infracontexts at 612ff. thus throw into relief the motifs of Satan's and his followers' weakness, specious power, past and future defeat.

3. Bee Simile, Midnight Vision, and Infernal Conclave

Just as the locust-and-barbarous-sons imagery hints at the threat posed by the devils to the world, so the end of book 1 seems liable to a similar interpretation. The building of Pandemonium is a line of demarcation in the story of the fallen angels in Hell. Pandemonium symbolizes a certain amount of security, the infernal host has literally dug in, erected a base for further operations, and prepares to take some kind of organized action. The account of Satan's crew gathering for 'the great consult' begins in 1.755ff., where the phraseology connects with 356f. and at the same time with the Slaughter-of-Innocents associations elicited by it: the summons calls 'From every Band and squared Regiment / By place or choice the worthiest', who arrive in large masses. 'The spacious Hall ... Thick swarmd, both on the ground and in the air, / Brusht with the hiss of russling wings', and the poet goes on to describe the gathering devils in the passage containing the famous and elaborate bee simile:

As Bees

In spring time, when the Sun with *Taurus* rides,
Poure forth thir populous youth about the Hive
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Flie to and fro, or on the smoothed Plank,
The suburb of thir Straw-built Cittadel,
New rubd with Baume, expatiate and conferr
Thir State affairs.

The simile has been commented on at some length by editors and critics. Hume and Newton pointed out the most important classical infracontexts involving bee similes: *Il.* 2.87ff. the Greeks making their way to an assembly, *Aen.* 1.430ff. the milling crowd of the builders of Carthage, and 6.707ff. the hovering ghosts in the Underworld. Hume also called attention to *Georg.* 4, where Virgil discourses on the life of bees and their commonwealth. Demonstrating the "noble pedigree" of the bee simile, Whaler[1] lists a great many examples of different kinds, concluding that Milton's simile most resembles Virgil's in the *Aeneid* (nature of the thing described), but that it is original in that the spirits in *PL* are reduced to the size of bees. Objecting that Whaler neglects the similarity between situations, Steadman[2] stresses the importance of Homer's simile: like Milton's, it is used about an assembly discussing war; in both poems the assemblies are summoned by heralds and the leaders are kept apart from the rank and file; unlike the simile in Virgil, that in Homer and in Milton is simple. By imitating Homer, Milton "invested the warrior-devils with at least the shadow of the dignity of classical heroes" (p. 102). In Harding's opinion[3] the most significant influence on Milton is *Georg.* 4, which he calls "a hitherto unacknowledged source" (p. 666): besides various verbal parallels, there is Virgil's comparison of bees to Cyclops, and in *PL*, of course, the fallen angels are repeatedly connected with impious giants. Harding feels that a deflating, anti-heroic effect is achieved by the angels exhibiting the same virtues as the bees (valour, resolution, loyalty to leader). Also, they are helpless before God, just as the bees are before the bee-keeper. Grose[4] demonstrates the intricacies of Milton's technique: the bee simile illustrates the thickness of the devils' swarm; the description is then broken off, the reader is asked to behold a miracle, the recently gigantic devils are reduced to pygmy size, and in the subsequent lines the quasicomic status of the devils is equated

[1] "Animal Simile in *Paradise Lost*", pp. 545ff.
[2] "The Bee-Simile in Homer and Milton" (*NQ* 201, 1956, pp. 101f.).
[3] "Milton's Bee-Simile", pp. 665ff.
[4] *Milton's Epic Process*, pp. 224ff.

with the realm of deceptive poetic appearance. The peasant would be mistaken in dismissing his vision as mere figments of imagination, and "Milton can express the full terror of the devils only by declaring the ultimate failure of figurative or descriptive language" (p. 228). Roland Frye calls attention to the iconographic tradition associating devils with stinging insects (p. 97). In Tillyard & Tillyard's edition of books 1 and 2 (London, 1956), it is pointed out that the bee-hive image as a "social or political allegory was a Renaissance commonplace"; an example is *Hen. V* 1.2. 187ff.

Grose's criticism has the advantage of considering the bee simile in the context of the entire concluding paragraph of the first book, but the problem of the relationship between surface- and infracontexts remains. Although – as Steadman admits – impressions of the *Aeneid* may have coloured the image, and although there is much to be said for Harding's opinion, the bee simile in the *Iliad* seems to be of basic significance for the reasons adduced by Steadman. Commenting on Milton's use of Homer's simile, Falconer points out the addition of the "smoothed plank" and the rustling wings, giving the image a "Propriety which Homer wants".[5] But on the simile in 2.87ff., where the Greeks gathering together are compared to swarms of bees sallying forth from a hollow rock, are superimposed similes in Vida, de Scudéry (Whaler, p. 551) and Ramsay's *Poemata*, all three dealing with councils of devils. In the *Christiad* Vida uses a dismissive comparison to demonstrate the multitude of devils hastening to carry out Satan's commands (p. 11):

> Non tam olim densa sublimes nube per auras
> Florilegae glomerantur apes aestate serena
> Nubifugo Borea, et madidis cessantibus Austris,
> Siquando exorta est inter discordia reges,
> Saeuaque collatis inuadunt proelia signis.

Similarly Andrew Ramsay in *Poemata Sacra* 3, dealing with the Fall of Man, has recourse to the bee simile in his account of the devils' reaction after Lucifer's promise to take vengeance for the defeat:

> Assensere umbrae stygiae, auxiliaria spondent
> Arma, irāque fremunt rabidae, et fera murmura miscent
> Agmen apum ut, quando populantur cerea tecta.

Again in de Scudéry's *Alaric*, after Lucifer has announced his intention to interfere in the war between the Gothic chieftain and Rome,

[5] Quotation and discussion in Ricks, *Milton's Grand Style*, p. 125.

Comme un nombreux Essein, qui la Ruche abandonne,
Murmure sourdement, fait du bruit et bourdonne;
Ainsi tous les Demons qui parlent bas entr'eux,
Forment le mesme bruit dans un Antre si creux.

Ramsay and de Scudéry are likely to have imitated Vida and probably Virgil, and Milton, as Steadman thinks, is likely to have imitated Homer. Anyhow the three middle poets insert the simile into the same context, while Milton, probably under the influence of Homer, moves it to a different place in the poem. Yet as a result of these interrelationships, reinforced by the Virgilian "labouring Cyclops" theme emphasized by Harding, the simile seems to have formed a fixed and coherent pattern in Renaissance versions of the Infernal Council motif, possibly reinforced by the iconographic convention. The infracontexts in other words anchor the bee simile squarely within the framework of the IC theme and, forming a matrix, lend a kind of solidity and stability to the image. Incidentally, besides typifying virtues such as diligence and civic concord and being associated with love, bees also stand for less commendable qualities such as blind vindictiveness and falseness.[6] 'Thick swarmd' harks back to the 'pitchy cloud / Of *Locusts'* in 340f., just as 'Poure forth thir populous youth about the Hive / In clusters' – besides connecting with the infracontext in *Georg.* 4.21f., 'Cum prima novi ducent examina reges / Vere suo, ludetque favis emissa juventus' – links up horizontally with 'A multitude, like which the populous North / Pourd never from her frozen loins' in 351f. The connection reminds us of the destructiveness of the devils, at the same time as the extension of the simile, where "our poet carries the similitude farther" than his masters (Newton), suggests a degree of dangerousness greater than the large-scale but unplanned and haphazard destructivity of the locusts: the plotting devils expatiating and conferring their state affairs on the smoothed plank, 'The suburb of thir Straw-built Cittadel', suggests a dangerous, scheming enemy, all the more efficient owing to his talent for organization and social order. Yet another effect is achieved here, a definiton by difference, due to the contrast with an infracontext in *Par.* 31.4ff., where the crowd of good angels, singing the praise of the Maker, are like bees now plunging into flowers, now winging their way to where their labour is turned to sweet honey, bent on a kind of work as different as it possibly can be from the occupation of their fallen counterparts in *PL.*

It is against the background of these meanings, overt or implied, that the remaining part of the final paragraph takes on its basic meaning:

[6] As appears from various emblems (see Henkel & Schöne's *Emblemata*, cols. 918ff.).

So thick the aerie crowd
Swarmd and were strait'nd; till the Signal giv'n,
Behold a wonder! They but now who seemd
In bigness to surpass Earths Giant-Sons
Now less then smallest Dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that Pigmean Race
Beyond the *Indian* Mount.

The swarm of devils, who now seem enormous, now diminutive, thronging numberless in a narrow room, are obviously doing something that demons are supposed to do in accordance with their nature: creating delusions and turning the world of sense and proportion upside down. Also, giants of course are traditionally the enemies of gods; to regard, with Rajan, the fallen angels as giants "in their potentiality for destruction" and as pygmies "in the presence of righteousness" is an interpretation hardly warranted by the context in Milton. 'Earths Giant-Sons' harks back to Orion in 305 and to the giant angels in 7.605 with their classical and Old Testament backgrounds.[7] Devils' capacity for taking on all sorts of different shapes was described in the same works as provided information about their habit of assuming "either sex, or both", and which were adduced and quoted by Newton and Todd: Michael Psellus' 1615 dialogue on the "operations of Demons", quoted and discussed in the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and Wierus' *De Praestigis Daemonum* (1582), 1:14: 'Daemones ... pro arbitrio velut nubes, vento flante, in varias formas mutant, contrahuntque, atque extendunt ... neque solum magnitudine diversitas in eis accidit, verum etiam figuras coloresque variant multiformes' (Todd on 1.423f.). This had been long asserted by the Church Fathers, and the delusions created by the devils are a way of deceiving the soul and consequently of seducing it into sin: if human beings can perform all sorts of tricks before their astounded audience in the theatre, 'Quid magnum ("difficult") est diabolo et angelis eius, de corporeis elementis per aerea corpora facere quae caro miretur; aut etiam occultis inspirationibus ad illudendos humanos sensus phantasmata imaginum machinari, quibus vigilantes dormientesve decipiat, vel furentes exagitet?'[8] Although possibly elicited by Virgil's 'mirabile dictu' in the description of Aeneas' entering Carthage veiled in a cloud,[9] Milton's 'Behold a wonder!' sounds like a magician's exclamation as he distorts the vision of the audience. The wonder belongs to the miracles which Augustine, explaining the nature of false miracles unconnected

[7] See Steadman, "Men of Renown. Heroic Virtue and the Biblical Giants" (*Milton's Epic Characters*, pp. 197ff.), and Labriola, pp. 13ff.
[8] Augustine, *De Trinitate* 4.11 (*PL* 42.897).
[9] Hartman, "Milton's Counterplot", p. 9.

with the worship of God, calls 'malignorum daemonum ludibria et seductoria impedimenta, quae vera pietate cavenda sunt'.[10] The impression of magic and unreality is heightened by the reference to the legendary 'Pigmean Race / Beyond the *Indian* Mount' derived from the text of a scholiast on *Il.* 3.6 and from Pliny's *Hist. Nat.* 50.7.2 (Todd), and to the fairy elves engaged in midnight revels and traditionally regarded as dangerous and demonic beings by the Puritans.[11] The theme of delusion and magic is as it were compressed and reinforced by the account of the vision in ll. 781ff.:

> ... or Faerie Elves,
> Whose midnight Revels, by a Forrest side
> Or Fountain, some belated Peasant sees,
> Or dreams he sees, while over head the Moon
> Sits Arbitress, and neerer to the Earth
> Wheels her pale course: they on thir mirth and dance
> Intent, with jocond Music charm his ear;
> At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.

The belated Peasant who "sees, or dreams he sees" the midnight revels – anchored not only in time by the moon overhead but also in space by the 'Forrest side / Or Fountain' – has antecedents in Apollonius Rhodius (Todd) and Virgil (Newton). In some mysterious lines in the *Argonautica* 4.1477ff. Lynceus thinks he sees Heracles, who had been left behind, alone, far off, on a boundless plain, as "on the day of the new moon a man sees, or imagines he sees, the moon obscured by clouds" (ὥς τίς τε νέῳ ἐνὶ ἤματι μήνην / ἢ ἴδεν, ἢ ἐδόκησεν ἐπαχλύουσαν ἰδέσθαι). In *Aen.* 6.452ff. Aeneas in the underworld catches sight of the shade of Dido,

> per umbras
> Obscuram, qualem primo qui surgere mense
> Aut videt aut vidisse putat per nubila lunam;

trying in vain to reason with her. The curious suggestiveness of these classical passages, one of which concerns the infernal world, heightens the impression of mystery and the supernatural mood in Milton's; the submerged μήνη and 'luna' in the infracontexts, half hidden by clouds, represent as it were a stage preliminary to the moon in the surface context in *PL*, where it appears detached from the shadows in the classical poems and emerges quite close to us and to the observer.

[10] *De Civ. Dei* 10.12 (*PL* 41.291).
[11] See K. M. Briggs, *The Anatomy of Puck*, London, 1959, pp. 27, 99.

Conversely, 'dreams' suggests unreality more than ἐδόκησεν and 'putat' do, and there is a submerged connection with the 'Horizontal misty Air' obscuring the sun in the simile on Satan in 594ff. and with the locusts darkening the air in 343. 'Arbitress', commentators observe, means "witness", but there is more than that to the word since the entire description in 784ff. was shown by Heylin – before Bentley and Newton – to be an imitation of another classical passage, Horace's *Epode* 5.49ff., on the sorceress Canidia speaking her incantation: 'Non infideles arbitrae, / Nox, et Diana quae silentium regis / Arcana cum fiunt sacra', with the addition, 'Nunc nunc adeste, nunc in hostileis domos /Iram, atque numen vertite'. So the Horatian lines play a part in investing Milton's description with a "diabolic" significance emerging from a complex code, all the more so since the moon in 784 continues the moon theme associated with Satan and/or the devils in 1.287, 440, and 596, and involving a contrast with the sun as associated with God and Christ (see also p. 188 below). The pale course in 786 elicits a comment from Verity, "pale, with alarm"; made more explicit by Rajan: "She wheels nearer to the earth because she is influenced by the fairies and can be imagined as *pale* with alarm". But the goddess of sorcerers can hardly be frightened by sorcerers, not even if we accept with Newton and other commentators that there is here a reference to the traditional belief that witches and faeries had "great power over the moon".[12] The moon wheeling nearer the earth seems rather to be another point linking up Milton's lines with Horace's fifth *Epode* on Canidia, who is said to draw the moon from the sky, 'lunamque caelo deripit'. In *Ep.* 17.77f., speaking herself, she boasts of the same magic achievement: 'Polo / Deripere Lunam vocibus possim meis'. The theme is reinforced by other similar references to the moon drawn down by magic in classical authors: Aristophanes, *Clouds* 749f., Virgil *Ecl.* 8.69, Propertius 1.1.19, Tibullus 1.2.43. 'Pale moon' is simply a commonplace like 'candida luna' and similar collocations in other languages. The simile does not suggest harmlessness, as Rajan feels – the infracontexts which colour it make it anything but harmless. The 'jocond Music' which charms the spectator's ear, as the mirth and dance his eye, is part of the delusion motif which colours the entire final paragraph of the book, and 'charm' has to a great extent its original significance. The combined joy and fear suggest the emotional imbalance which is characteristic of a life without God, the exact opposite of the *gaudium spirituale*, just as 'sees, / Or dreams he sees' suggests inadequacy on the part of the senses, which again is the result of the demons' power over human beings[13] and which is the direct opposite of firm and exact knowledge,

[12] Svendsen (pp. 74f.) provides a summary of contemporary moon lore in demonology.
[13] See E. v. Petersdorff, *Daemonologie* 1, München, 1956, p. 181.

which derives from God. Broadbent's statement that the "devils belong finally to the feigned world of romance and fairytale" and Hartman's reference to the fairy elves theme as a "pastoral"[14] tell us little about the central significance of the episode: what is described here is really the devils' destructive power, their evil way of sapping human spiritual resistance and taking possession of the soul.

Lines 789–792 summarize the preceding account, the words still emphasizing at the same time the fact that, as Beeching reminds us, "only their size, not their number was diminished". The concluding six and a half lines,

> But farr within
> And in thir own dimensions like themselves
> The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
> In close recess and secret conclave sat
> A thousand Demi-Gods on gold'n seats,
> Frequent and full. After short silence then
> And summons red, the great consult began,

have since Newton and Todd been regarded as a sarcastic allusion to the assembly of Catholic Church dignitaries entrusted with the duty of electing a Pope, the word 'conclave' being the key word of this interpretation. Perhaps this idea has loomed somewhat too large in criticism of the lines, and as Frye observes, Milton's "days of sectarian controversy and bickering were over, and it is incumbent upon us not to read into *Paradise Lost* sectarian biases not demonstrably present" (p. 135). Also, it seems to me that if too much attention is paid to the conventional interpretation the final paragraph tapers off, as it were, and becomes limited in scope instead of providing an effective end of book 1 and a functional prelude to book 2: as C. S. Lewis[15] has pointed out, the intensity of the last lines makes us well prepared for the opening of the second book – an effect that should be heightened rather than played down. Anyway, some infracontexts of importance to the significance have been overlooked. Todd observed that a stanza in Fletcher's *Apollyonists* (1. 17), on the devils' gathering preparatory to Satan's speech, provides resemblances to Milton's lines, though Fletcher's devils have bat shapes and the assembly is called a 'full foule Senate' – a reminder by way of association that the 'great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim' and the

[14] Broadbent, p. 106, Hartman, p. 9. F. T. Prince's comment is more to the point: "Milton's faeries have a sinister quality" (*Paradise Lost, books I and II*, Oxford, 1962, p. 138).

[15] *A Preface to 'Paradise Lost'*, Oxford, 1942, repr. 1960, p. 43.

thousand demi-gods on golden seats are after all devils bent on evil and preparing with their leader to avenge themselves on God and man. But there is another infracontext which as far as I know has gone unnoticed and which adds yet another sense to those already provided. It does not detract from the associations of pomp and grandeur but helps us as it were to put a certain construction on them. It is found at the beginning of the second book of the *Strage degli Innocenti* (st. 3) and deals with Herod's satraps settling down in their leader's magnificent hall and waiting for him to speak:

> Al Rè sen giro, ed incombrar costoro
> Del senato real gli aurati scanni.
> Di mano in man, secondo i gradi loro
> E del sangue, e de'titoli, e de gli anni,
> Quai più lontani à lui, quai più vicini;
> Satrapi, Farisei, Scribi, e Rabini.

The members of the senate in Marino's poem will shortly listen to Herod's proposal for a mass murder designed to do away with the devil's chief enemy, and that proposal will be made from a throne as gorgeous as Satan's royal seat, described at the beginning of book 2. The 'Satrapi, Farisei, Scribi, e Rabini' on their golden seats, 'aurati scanni', will be as responsible as the great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim by taking part in the sinister conclave, Herod being a figure for the devil; the two assembly episodes are connected by being both ultimately concerned with revenge on God, and the barbaric splendour of both senates is in submerged contrast to the exposed defencelessness of man in Eden and subsequently, in the *Strage*, to the Infant hunted and pursued by Satan's instruments. Against the background of Marino's stanza on the type of the devil and his crew, Milton's lines on the devil himself and his retinue stand out with an intensifying function. This is thus an effect of the same type as that resulting from the contact between *PL* 1.350ff. and some earlier stanzas of the *Strage* (see p. 74 above).

4. Angelic Squadron and Ploughman

One episode, in which the infernal and the celestial worlds meet, is particularly interesting from the point of view of infracontextually conveyed meaning. In 4.977ff. the good angels appear as an aggressive army, threatening Satan after his arrogant speech during the interrogation by Gabriel:

While thus he spake, th' Angelic squadron bright
Turnd fierie red, sharpning in mooned hornes
Thir Phalanx, and began to hemm him round
With ported Spears, as thick as when a field
Of *Ceres* ripe for harvest waving bends
Her bearded Grove of ears, which way the wind
Swayes them; the careful Plowman doubting stands
Least on the threshing floore his hopeful sheaves
Prove chaff.

The passage resembles the paragraph in the first book (616ff.) where, when Satan prepares to speak, his followers

thir doubl'd Ranks they bend
From Wing to Wing, and half enclose him round
With all his Peers: attention held them mute.

In these lines in the first book Satan, about to speak, is the centre of the demonic assembly, which he sways and manipulates. In the passage on the angelic squadron in the fourth book he has just finished speaking; the lines are full of "aggressive" words: 'fierie red', 'sharpning', 'mooned hornes', 'Phalanx', 'ported Spears' (spears "borne pointed towards him", Hume), etc. Again, while the crescent and its centre in 615ff. prepare to turn outwards against a common enemy, the mooned horns in 4.977 close in on the adversary. The military aspect of the 'mooned hornes' is of course of fundamental significance. Verity indicates what seems to be the most important infracontext here, Tasso's stanza in *GL* 20.22 on the Egyptian army assembling to meet the Christians in the decisive battle: 'E fece anco ei l'essercito cornuto, / Co' fanti in mezo, e i Caualieri al fianco', translated by Fairfax, 'Like the new moone his host two hornes did spread / In midst the foote, the horse were on each side'. The army of the good angels thus assumes the same formation as the Christians' adversaries in the infracontext, just as they range themselves as their enemies do in the first book, and are compared to the moon which in earlier contexts appears as a sign indicating satanic powers. The good angels as it were meet their adversary on his own terms.

There is of course a contrast with the descriptions in *PL* of the angels ecstatically praising God, the luminous centre (see pp. 130ff.): the angels who surround Satan do so in a very different mood and for different purposes. The contrast is also obvious between the scene in 4.979f. and the express mention of Satan as the centre of the 'doubl'd Ranks' in book 1, where the fallen archangel, though darkened, eclipsed, and showing signs of care, 'yet shon / Above them all'. In addition to these meanings

the moon in 4.979 seems to be on the increase ('began to hemm him round') and thus links up with an emblem which illustrates the situation, 'Zunehmender Mond', with the motto 'Redibo plenior' and the distich 'Luna redit semper, sed lumine Plenior aucto / Praeda rex, victo, plenior, hoste, redit'.[1] The fiery red of the angelic squadron is explained by Fowler as the colour of the Cherubim, though indicating angry ardour in this passage. But red is traditionally the colour of Seraphim, not Cherubim,[2] and the angelic squadron *turned* fiery red. 'Fire' in the sense "ardour" is obviously right: to some exegetes, fire signifies 'severitas terroris'.[3] This meaning is supported by contact with an infracontext in Aratus' *Phaenomena* 796ff. on the significance of the waxing moon's appearance: "When on the third day a complete halo surrounds her, blushing red, on all sides, she foretells a hard wind – the more intense her blush, the more violent the storm". More important than this infracontext, however, is a group of apocalyptic accounts, biblical and apocryphal, of the last day. Among the terrifying celestial phenomena the moon red as blood appears several times: *Joel* 2.31 'The Sunne shall be turned into darknesse, and the Moone into Blood' (quoted in *Acts* 2.20); *Rev.* 6.12 (after the opening of the sixth seal) 'The Sunne became blacke as sackecloth of haire, and the Moone became as blood'; and *The Assumption of Moses* 10.5 'The whole of the moon shall be turned into blood'. These infracontexts, forming part of a simple code, thus invest 'Turnd fierie red, sharpning in mooned hornes / Thir Phalanx' with a very menacing note, boding ill for Satan and enhancing the general sense of danger to the evil powers already suggested by the lines. The 'angelic squadron' is a frequent expression in Italian poetry (Todd); the usual neutral sense in the Italian texts is "multitude", as in *L'Adamo* 103 'l'angeliche squadre'. The military sense of the word in 977 is suggested already in 862f., where the 'half-rounding guards / Just met, and closing stood in squadron joind / Awaiting next command'.

This theme of belligerence and danger to Satan, however, seems to some extent to clash with a theme of the opposite character. The 'ported Spears' compared in density to a ripe cornfield stirred by the wind are traditional, as Todd, Keightley and others have indicated. Two infracontexts, however, seem to be of particular interest: Homer's account in *Il.* 2.147ff. (Newton) of the Argives' reaction after listening to Agamemnon's proposal that the siege be suspended and the warriors

[1] Rollenhagen (Henkel & Schöne, *Emblemata*, col. 38). See also Praz, *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery*, p. 177.

[2] See Kirschbaum, "L'Angelo rosso e l'angelo turchino", pp. 234ff., and *RAC* 5.176. The name 'Seraphim' is interpreted as "flaming" or "glowing": 'incandentes sive comburentes' (Jerome); θερμαίνοντες (Pseudo-Dionysius).

[3] See for instance Adamus Scotus, *De Tripartito Tabernaculo* 18 (*PL* 198.788), and Koehler, "Milton's Use of Color and Light", p. 57 and n. 6, p. 77.

return home (the crowd, beginning to surge towards the ships, is stirred as a vast cornfield bends with the wind); and Virgil's concentrated line (*Georg.* 2.142, 'Nec galeis densisque virum seges horruit hastis'; Todd) forming part of a section on Italy as a land of peace, harmony, civic duty and fruitful soil. Both infracontexts are in contrast to the surface context in Milton: the infracontexts suggest hesitation, defeatism, or the opposite of militancy; the surface context warlike determination. However, the infracontexts tend to put a certain construction on Milton's lines and to hint that the angels' determination, though apparently impressive enough, perhaps is literally on the surface. On the submerged level they foreshadow the meaning which seems to me to surface in the lines on the 'careful Plowman', on whose identity and motives opinions differ; as R. D. Bedford remarks, the simile has "repeatedly given readers a difficult time".[4] Bentley thinks the ploughman's fears are due to a storm; Empson says the ploughman may be God, and if so anxious and thus not omnipotent; or he may be Satan, "the natural ruler or owner of the good angels"; and if so only temporarily anxious.[5] According to Ricks we have to do with an epic simile, "beautiful but digressive".[6] Summarizing these views and – I think rightly – rejecting Bentley's and Empson's, Fowler says the ploughman "has to be in some sense 'like' God", though this does not mean that "he 'is' God in all respects, or that M's God is anxious and less than omnipotent". 'Threshing', Fowler feels, being "a very familiar metaphor for divine judgment", may indicate that "God is *careful* that the final judgment, and the final reckoning with Satan, should not be premature. It might even be maintained that the simile, by opening the theme of divine judgment followed up in the Scales image of ll. 997ff., actually contributes to an impression of God's secret transcendence". But apart from one point – about which more in a moment – this involves notions which do not seem relevant in the context. Nor does the text really tell us, as Fowler maintains, about the ploughman's "doubt whether it is time to reap". Fish suggests that the ploughman may be Satan or Gabriel, and that the point about the ploughman simile is its "indeterminateness",[7] while Bedford thinks the ploughman at the centre of the simile is "Adam, Abel, the Peasant, the reader", "both doubtful and hopeful" (p. 194). God prevents the fight, Fish says, so that Heaven should not "go to rack" the way it did during the celestial war; and Hartman feels Milton creates an impression of a "balance of power between heaven and hell".[8]

[4] "Similes of Unlikeness in Paradise Lost" (*EIC* 25, 1975, p. 194).
[5] *Some Versions of Pastoral*, London, 1935, p. 172.
[6] *Milton's Grand Style*, pp. 129f.
[7] *Surprised by Sin*, p. 174.
[8] "Milton's Counterplot", p. 11.

As to the identity of the ploughman, it seems to me there can be little doubt that he is not only "like" God, but that he *is* God in all respects. God = ploughman is a traditional identification based on Irenaeus' *Adversus Haereses* 4.34.4.[9] In this chapter Irenaeus explains that God himself made the plough and began to use the pruning-hook, activities which signify the first sowing of man in the shape of Adam and the gathering of the harvest by the Word at the last day. The plough according to Irenaeus is thus a symbol of the creation, and the pruning-hook of the Last Judgement.[10] The ploughman-threshing symbol in Milton seems to be evoked by natural association after the cornfield simile in 980ff., and there is probably a parallel here between human and angelic existence; just as God prepares for harvesting the righteous in his celestial garners at the Day of Doom, so he is ready to call the good angels back to him after they have stood the test. But the divine farmer is said to fear lest his crop, which looks promising, may fail; 'careful', then, seems to mean "anxious" (Bush), "worried", "uneasy"; and 'doubt' to mean "fear".[11] The sense appears to be that God is worried that his angels, though apparently determined, threatening and angry, may waver face to face with their formidable enemy. After all, Satan in 985ff. stands 'dilated', collecting all his might, unshaken like Teneriff or Atlas, reaching the sky, horror plumed on his crest – a description made even more sinister and menacing by powerful infracontexts in Virgil and Tasso (see below pp. 206ff.). The risk of the angels faltering in a critical situation, unable to stand the test, and the possibility of a cosmic upheaval as the result of a battle (991ff.) are probably God's reason for calling off the fray. Unless God fears that the angels may actually change sides – as, after all, an appreciable number did before the War in Heaven – the lines on the ploughman and his sheaves seem to be a variation on the "neutral angels" motif: according to one tradition, some angels remained neutral pending the outcome of the battle between God and Satan. This is reflected in *Inf.* 3.37ff., dealing with those who never embraced a cause nor stood up either for good or for evil:

> Mischiate sono a quel cattiuo choro
> DeglAngeli, che non furon ribelli,
> Ne fur fedeli a Dio, ma per se foro.

[9] *PG* 7.1086 B.
[10] See Daniélou's analysis of the symbolism in Irenaeus ("La Charrue symbole de la croix", *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 42, 1954, pp. 193ff.).
[11] OED *doubt* II 5.

The tradition is also found in Clement of Alexandria and in several medieval legends,[12] and is to the fore in 2.420ff. (neutral devils) and 3.217ff. (neutral angels). Only after God has interfered in 4.994ff., showing the devil the sign of defeat in the heavens, does Satan flee 'murmuring'.

I do not think we need worry overmuch because this interpretation implies that God is described as anxious. After all, Milton's God does not lack human features, and I refer again to Patrides' point that *PL* is an epic poem, not a theological treatise.

[12] See Gmelin 1, pp. 67f.

CHAPTER III

Tensions and Ironies

1. Military Demonstration in Hell

A contrast to the infernal-punishment and defeat themes is made up of the passages where the devils pluck up their courage when addressed by Satan. From passive sufferers they are transformed into warriors eager to fight. These episodes in the first book link up with paragraphs in the fifth and sixth, describing the rebel malcontents preparing for their revolt. They also interlock, by contrast, with the 'triumph-to-shame' episode in book 10. Infracontexts here provide meanings of a somewhat different kind from those suggested by the autumnal leaves, bee, and mooned horn – cornfield images. They chiefly charge the surface contexts with tensions, now making the devils more, now less dangerous and menacing than they appear to be on a merely horizontal level. It is mainly a question of the complex code.

The theme of the devils' acclaiming their leader with loud applause is a traditional feature of the IC texts, and the invariant is both thematic and verbal. The thematic pattern is simple enough: after the leader's speech the assembly demonstrates agreement, and subsequently events develop in accordance with the plan outlined in the speech. Relevant surface contexts are *PL* 1.540ff. and 663ff., describing the applause following Satan's threatening speeches (540ff. sound of martial trumpets, shout reverberating in Hell, banners and spears raised, helmets and shields, march to the sound of Dorian music; 633ff. drawing of millions of flaming swords illuminating Hell and clashing against shields). There are also the passages in 2.284ff. (applause described in an after-the-storm simile following Mammon's speech advising peace and 'the settl'd State / Of order'), and 2.477ff. (bowing in reverence before Satan after his decisive suggestion that he tempt and corrupt man).

The applause following Satan's speeches in 1.540ff., 663ff. and 2.477ff. turns into fierce demonstrations against God the victor and tyrant. Psychologically, the process is convincing enough – anybody who has attended a political mass meeting knows that the cheers supporting the speakers are simultaneously threats hurled at their adversaries. In the

infracontexts, the connection is unmistakable: in Mantuan's *Georgius*, at a council of the fallen heathen gods, Minerva declares war on the Christians, and 'Sic affata truces vmbras truculenta Minerua / Laudauere deam Lemures et ad omnia promptos / Se fore promittunt pro maiestate deorum' (570ff.). In *L'Angeleida* the demons bow to Satan after his speech, promising to tempt and corrupt man and thus to thwart God (3.17ff.); in the *Daemonomachiae* the fallen angels applaud and rage against the Creator; in Ramsay's *Poemata Sacra*, bk. 3, as mentioned before, the combination of applause and vengeful ire is described in two eloquent lines: 'Assensere umbrae stygiae, auxiliaria spondent / Arma, irāque fremunt rabidae, et fera murmura miscent', a scene made admirably concrete by the bee simile: 'Agmen apum ut, quando populantur cerea tecta'. Again in Mellius de Sousa's *De Lapsu Adae* (3rd book of the *De Miseria hominis deque Reparatione humana*) Satan's speech is interrupted by the frightening din of agitated devils, raging and blaspheming like the giants defeated on the fields of Phlegra. In the *Sospetto d'Herode* 33ff. the theme recurs: the Furies after Lucifer's speech 'clapt their hands', and all the 'Powers of Hell in full applause / Flourisht their Snakes, and tost their flaming brands', after which the horrid sisters promise revenge and aid by guile or force of arms till the whole universe is uprooted, Heaven's fires quenched by the seas, and the world crushed 'till his wide corners meet'. Milton in 1. 535ff. enriches the tradition by providing a magnificent description of a military demonstration following the lengthy enumeration of devils obeying their 'Generals Voice'. Azazel, a 'Cherub tall', unfurled

> Th' Imperial Ensign, which full high advanc't
> Shon like a Meteor streaming to the Wind
> With Gemms and Gold'n lustre rich imblaz'd,
> Seraphic Arms and Trophies: all the while
> Sonorous mettal blowing Martial sounds:
> At which the universal Host upsent
> A shout that tore Hells Concave, and beyond
> Frighted the Reign of *Chaos* and old Night.
> All in a moment through the gloom were seen
> Ten thousand Banners rise into the Air
> With Orient Colours waving: with them rose
> A Forrest huge of Spears: and thronging Helms
> Appeard, and serried Shields in thick array
> Of depth immeasurable: Anon they move
> In perfet *Phalanx* to the *Dorian* mood
> Of Flutes and soft Recorders; such as rais'd
> To highth of noblest temper Hero's old

Arming to Battel, and in stead of rage
Deliberat valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat.

Their music at the same time had the power to 'mitigate and swage / With solemn touches, troubl'd thoughts' and to chase away unwarlike emotions. Determined and unruffled they move on 'in silence to soft Pipes that charmd / Thir painful steps ore the burnt soile', and now

Advanc't in view they stand, a horrid Front
Of dreadful length and dazling Arms, in guise
Of Warriers old with orderd Spear and Shield,
Awaiting what command thir mighty Chief
Had to impose.

The manoeuvre is repeated, and at the same time "neatly differentiated", as Rajan says, in the second book 510ff. where Satan appears, the council over, 'Hells dread Emperour with pomp Supream, / And God-like imitated state' –

him round
A globe of fierie Seraphim inclos'd
With bright imblazonrie, and horrent Arms.

The details of the account are reminiscent of the great Italian epics: the ten thousand banners rising in the air 'With Orient Colours waving' (546) sounds like an abbreviation of Tasso's lines on the Christian and pagan armies preparing for the final and decisive battle in the last canto of *GL* (20.28; Thyer):

Sparse al vento ondeggiando ir le bandiere,
E ventolar sù i gran cimier le penne:
Habiti, fregi, imprese, arme, e colori,
D'oro, e di ferro al Sol, lampi, e fulgori;

a description which in its turn, as Morpurgo remarks, annotating the lines, suggests the murals by Vasari or Giulio Romano in the great Renaissance palaces, depicting gigantic battles. Similarly the 'Forrest huge of Spears' evokes the continuation in *GL*, 'Sembra d'alberi densi alta foresta / L'un Campo, e l'altro, di tant' haste abonda' (29), or a similar detail in the description of the battle in 8.17, 'un bosco ... d'haste, e di spade'. Some other details are strongly reminiscent of Renaissance pictorial art: the 'thronging Helms' and 'serried Shields in

thick array / Of depth immeasurable' reads like an apt description of the motif for many a colourful battle scene in a painting or an arras.

Other iconographic infracontexts establish a link with the account of Pharaoh's 'chivalry' in 1.306ff.: the illustrations of the *Exodus* episode to which Roland Frye refers similarly depict endless successions of thronging helmets and serried shields (see above p. 57). So a hint of the devils' defeat is subtly introduced into the picture of the fallen angels' proud demonstration of power.

As for specific literary infracontexts, Keightley and Verity point out the similarity of the description in Thucydides of the Spartans' advance at Mantineia (5.70), which may well have suggested the phalanx in Milton's paragraph. Douglas Bush,[1] with E. M. Gardner and several others, seems convinced that Milton is "adapting a passage in Plutarch's *Lycurgus*" on warriors marching in calm and order to the music of flutes. Either or both of these passages may well have served as source material and, whether they do or not, heighten the impression of determination, pride, and military efficiency left with us by the surface context. Their function is thus non-ironic. The matrix, however, is still not complete. The most important infracontext affecting the meaning of ll. 546ff. with the spears, helmets, and shields, seems to me to be the *Iliad* 13.130ff., describing the Achaeans bracing themselves for the Trojan attack on their ships. Homer's Φράξαντες δόρυ δουρί, σάκος σάκεϊ προθελύμνῳ/ Ἀσπὶς ἄρ' ἀσπίδ' ἔρειδε, κόρυς κόρυν, ἀνέρα δ' ἀνήρ ("joining spear close to spear, shield to serried shield, buckler pressed on buckler, helm on helm, and man on man") is close to 'A Forrest huge of Spears: and thronging Helms / ... and serried Shields in thick array / Of depth immeasurable'. Also, the word πυκνοὶ in the next line covers 'in thick array', and Homer's οἱ δ' ἰθὺς φρόνεον, μέμασαν δὲ μάχεσθαι (135) ("they were determined to go straight on, and were eager to fight") is as it were freely rendered by Milton's 'Deliberat valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd /With dread of death to flight or foul retreat' (554f.) and 'Breathing united force with fixed thought' (560). These Homeric infracontexts are particularly important because, as commentators on the *Iliad* point out, they were imitated by various classical poets including Virgil (*Aen.* 10.361). Moreover, attention was drawn to them by their being incorporated in a text well known to the Renaissance: the *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi,* probably of the second century A.D.[2] In this work, each poet is asked to recite what he thinks is the best passage in his own poems.

[1] "Ironic and Ambiguous Allusion in *Paradise Lost*", p. 635. Rajan also agrees with this view.

[2] The standard text in the Renaissance and much later, in fact right up to the early 19th century, was that of Henricus Stephanus (1573). The passages discussed here are to be found on pp. 321f., ed. Goettling, 1831.

Hesiod quotes one from *Works and Days*, Homer some lines from the *Iliad* which include the description quoted above. The audience demand that Homer be given the prize, but the king decides otherwise: Hesiod, commending peace and agriculture, deserves the prize rather than the poet who sings of war and bloodshed. So the lines on the warriors in *PL* derive prominence as well as additional, sophisticated meaning by association with an infracontext which was admired and imitated, which, it was believed, was recommended by the poet himself, and which at the same time, dealing as it did with violence, was pronounced inferior to Hesiod's praise of peace. Significant meaning is thus packed into Milton's lines by an infracontext operating on different levels.

The general surface impression of a grand and lofty version of the applause theme is naturally due, not only to the account of the devils' march to the '*Dorian* mood / Of Flutes and soft Recorders' inducing a temper of calm and endurance in the warriors,[3] but also to the word 'Orient' in 1. 546. As Beeching points out, Milton uses the word "as an epithet of the sun or sunbeams, of gems (3.507), of pearl (4.238, 5.2), of wine ('orient liquor', *Comus* 65) and of 'colours' in the present passage".[4] It seems that 'Orient' is invested with complex and highly significant connotations in 1.546: in addition to "choice", "precious", "brilliant", "lustrous", "resplendent" etc., the word recalls by contrast the theme of "Christ the light of morning"; in *Zach.* 2.16 Christ is 'the Orient': 'Ecce vir, Oriens nomen eius'. The contrast is condensed into one word: Christ is the east, Satan the north; but Satan and his crew usurp an epithet of Christ's just as Satan does when appearing as the morning star (5.708ff.), in so doing leading his followers astray.

There is a different system intersecting the lines which introduce the paragraph on the fallen angels' military demonstration: Satan

> strait commands that at the warlike sound
> Of Trumpets loud and Clarions be upreard
> His mighty Standard;

a proud honour claimed by Azazel (531ff.). These lines, as well as the 'Trumpets regal' sounding 'the great result' when the council is over (2.515), derive much of their force from infracontexts in a narrow matrix traditionally dealing with Lucifer summoning the council of devils. The motif seems to stem ultimately from Vida, in whose *Christiad* the devils

[3] A point made by several commentators. However, as observed by Patrides (*Milton and the Christian Tradition*, p. 45), the devils' music is anything but perfect: detached from its true origin it becomes a 'discordia discors' adding to the jarring noises in Hell.

[4] See also Anne D. Ferry on Milton's use of 'Orient' (*Milton's Epic Voice. The Narrator in 'Paradise Lost'*, Cambridge, Mass., 1963, p. 99).

are summoned by an 'ingens buccina' echoing through Hell and shaking the earth (p. 8):

> Quo subito intonuit caecis domus alta cavernis
> Vndique, opaca, ingens antra intonuere profunda,
> Atque procul grauido tremefacta est corpore tellus.

Tasso imitates and heightens the description (*GL* 4.3): 'Il rauco suon de la tartarea tromba' summons the fallen angels; 'Treman le spaciose atre cauerne, / Et l'aer cieco a quel rumor rimbomba;' the impact is louder than a thunderclap, more frightening than a volcanic eruption. Superimposed on these descriptions is the account in the *Sospetto d'Herode* 38 of Lucifer's summons of Crudeltà echoing through the caves of the Underworld:

> Vlularo trè volte i caui spechi,
> Trè volte rimbombar l'ombre profonde,
> E fin ne' gorghi piu riposti, e ciechi
> Tonar del gran Cocito i sassi, e l'onde –

a description which comes close to Milton's words on the angels' shout that 'tore Hells Concave, and beyond / Frighted the Reign of *Chaos* and old Night'. In Crashaw's rendering the caves of night howled thrice 'and thrice the sound, / Thundring upon the bankes of those black lakes / Rung through the hollow vaults of Hell profound'. The impact of Milton's descriptions is thus made heavier by the homogeneous infracontextual formulae literally echoing one another. The reinforcement also operates phonetically: behind Milton's words we hear the dull and heavy sound of infracontextual words, in their turn amplifying one another: 'intonuit intonuere profunda rauco suon tromba rumor rimbomba rimbombar l'ombre profonde thundring hollow vaults profound'. At the same time the two concepts "summons-to-speech" and "applause-following-speech" evoked by merging surface and infracontexts coalesce, between them suggesting the determination, vigour, and menace embodied by the infernal assembly. The grand and lofty character of the entire prelude to Satan's speech in 622ff. (331–621: similes describing flying and landing demons, invocation of Muse, list of pagan gods modelled on list of chieftains in *Aen.* 7.641ff., rank and file of devils, Satan's summons, march of devils 'breathing united force', description of enormous army, description of Satan) is intensified by the decorum in the account of the devils' frames of mind and the different sound effects, a feature aptly analysed by Greenwood quoted by Newton: "Hence is to be observed the exactness of Milton's judgment in appropriating the several instru-

ments to the several purposes which they were to serve, and the different effects they produced. Thus, when *a doubtful hue* was cast upon the countenance of Satan and his associates, and they were but little above despair; in order to *raise their fainting courage and dispel their fears* he commanded his standard to be *uprear'd at the warlike sound of trumpets and clarions*; which immediately inspired them with such a flow of spirits, that they are represented as sending up *a shout that tore Hell's concave*. But when this ardor was once blown up, and they were to move in perfect phalanx, then the instruments are changed for *flutes and recorders to the Dorian mood*, which composed them into a more cool and deliberate valor, so that they marched on with silence and resolution".

The military acclamations recur after Satan's threatening speech in ll. 663ff.:

> He spake: and to confirm his words, out-flew
> Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
> Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
> Farr round illumind Hell: highly they rag'd
> Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped Arms
> Clashd on thir sounding shields the din of warr,
> Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heav'n.

Ironic effects are achieved by contact with the infracontexts. The simultaneity of movement in 'out-flew / Millions of flaming swords' recalls Tasso's words about the excited Christian army's reaction to the quarrel between Gernando and Rinaldo resulting in the former's death (*GL* 5.28), an episode describing dissension and envy, the opposite of unanimity: 'Quasi in quel punto mille spade ardenti / Furon uedute fiameggiar insieme'. Two similar lines are found in Silius Italicus (Bowle). Again, as Thyer observes, Milton in 'Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs / Of mighty Cherubim' may be intent on disrupting the old cliché 'drawn from the sides' in order "to keep up the dignity of language", in so doing adopting the Greek phrase παρὰ μηροῦ, ("from the thigh"). It occurs in *Il.* 1.190, where Achilles in his quarrel with Agamemnon hesitates whether he should draw his sharp sword from beside his thigh and kill his adversary, or control his wrath. The tension between the tenor of surface context and infracontext reappears on a different level in the next two lines on the sudden blaze illuminating Hell. The lines make Todd think of a passage in the Prologue to *Fuimus Troes* (1633) about 'bold souldiers in hell, / Whose glittering armies brighten those gloomy shades, / In lieu of starry lights'.[5] But apart from the cressets in Pande-

[5] See also Roy Daniells' remarks in *Milton, Mannerism and Baroque*, pp. 83f.

monium there seems to be no reflected light in hell 'Save what the glimmering of these livid flames / Casts pale and dreadful'. Traditionally, the sudden blaze which 'Farr round illumind Hell' suggests the light which shatters the darkness of the Underworld during the Harrowing of Hell when Christ takes Satan prisoner and delivers the fettered souls: 'Ad inferum supervenit in forma hominis dominus maiestatis, et aeternas tenebras illustravit et indissolubilia vincula disrupit' (*Gospel of Nicodemus* A5). Association with this theme thus links up with Satan's promising speeches in 2.823ff. and 10.460ff. ironically suggesting the Harrowing of Hell motif (pp. 197ff.). – The concluding lines recall in a general way, according to Bentley, the "known custom of the Roman soldiers, when they applauded a speech of their general".[6] This echo intensifies the threat and dangerousness suggested by Milton's lines by emphasizing the devils' military efficiency.

The dying-wind simile describing the applause after Mammon's speech (2.284ff.) is another consistently lofty and exalted paragraph on the fallen angels' reaction, thus resembling the passage in 1.541ff. The same feature, as we shall see, is typical of the applause paragraph in 2.477ff. The simile in 284ff. is another of those audio-visually sharp miniature tableaus seemingly directing the reader's attention somewhat away from the main narrative, but in reality stating and defining the main point with great precision:

> He scarce had finisht, when such murmur filld
> Th'Assembly, as when hollow Rocks retain
> The sound of blustring winds, which all night long
> Had rous'd the Sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
> Sea-faring men orewatcht, whose Bark by chance
> Or Pinnace anchors in a craggy Bay
> After the Tempest: Such applause was heard
> As *Mammon* ended, and his Sentence pleas'd,
> Advising Peace: for such another Field
> They dreaded worse than Hell, etc.

Ever since Hume, commentators have compared these lines with the rising-wind simile in *Aen.* 10.96ff. describing the gods' response to Juno's speech, in which she ardently refutes Venus' accusation that she

[6] James A. Freeman ("Satan, Bentley, and 'The Din of War'", *MQ* 7, 1973, pp. 1ff.) tries to fault Bentley here, suggesting that the fallen angels' reaction alludes to barbarian tribes rather than Roman soldiers. But in the field of classical scholarship Bentley knew what he was talking about: in Livy 28.29.10 soldiers clash their swords against their shields after a speech by Scipio, and see *Hist. Alex.* 10.7.14 (ed. Curtius): 'Phalanx hastis clipeos quatiunt'.

persecutes the Trojans. As pointed out by Newton, a critic with a keen eye for decorum, "The conduct of both poets is equally just and proper. The intent of Juno's speech was to rouse and inflame the assembly of the Gods, and the effect of it is therefore properly compared by Virgil to the *rising* wind: but the design of Mammon's speech is to quiet and compose the infernal assembly, and the effect of this therefore is as properly compared by Milton to the wind *falling* after a tempest". The effect is heightened by the complex syntax, the exquisite cadences of the lines carrying the simile, by sound effects such as 'hollow Rocks', 'blustring winds', and 'hoarse cadence lull', and also by the *hapax* use of the word 'cadence' in the sense both of the rhythmical movement of wind and sea and of the sound quality itself (later imitated by other poets, as appears from the *OED*). Another relevant infracontext indicated by Newton is Claudian's simile on the infernal applause after Allecto's speech in the *In Rufinum* 1.70ff. After summoning the infernal sisters the Fury recommends war on the entire universe, a proposal causing dissension and uproar among the listeners,

> ceu murmurat alti
> Impacata quies pelagi, cum flamine fracto
> Durat adhuc saeuitque tumor, dubiumque per aestum
> Lassa recedentis fluitant vestigia venti.

In this simile the wind is falling, but the main point of the comparison is the murmur of the sea and the swell of the still agitated waves. Still, there is a certain discrepancy between agitated feelings and the effects of a falling wind, and decorum seems better preserved in *PL*, subdued passions agreeing with the abating wind. Milton's after-the-storm simile is thus one of the points on which he successfully emulates a predecessor. Again, in Milton's version the simile accords with the message of Mammon's speech: the tossing waves are gone – we only learn that the wind had roused the sea during the night – emphasis is on the dying wind, and the ship is added, investing the simile with a significance absent in Claudian's text. In emblematics, a ship seeking shelter from a storm is a symbol of wisdom and foresight. In Juan de Boria's emblem book a ship in a storm approaches a harbour; the motto reads 'Fortiter occupa portum', words derived from Horace's *Carm.* 1.14.2.[7] This is where the poet warns the ship of state against being carried back by the waves into a storm after having just escaped another; an allegory aimed at the Roman people who have just seen the death of Pompey and are in danger

[7] Henkel & Schöne, *Emblemata*, cols. 1468/69; also Praz, *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery*, p. 114.

of falling victim to the growing dissension between Caesar and Antony. Infracontexts thus provide a pertinent and significant gloss on Milton's simile, and the deeper meaning comes to the fore in the last two and a half lines, 'for such another Field / They dreaded worse than Hell'.

The sublime and elevated manner reinforced by infracontexts is naturally most pronounced in the last applause paragraph, following Satan's final and decisive speech in the second book. When Satan has revealed his intentions and 'prevented all reply' the assembly rises, and 'Thir rising all at once was as the sound / Of Thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend', etc. (476f.). This resembles an echo of the sound retained by the hollow rocks, the hoarse cadence of 285ff. Lord Monboddo makes an apt remark on the difference between a "less correct and judicious author", who would have compared the sound to loud thunder, and Milton whose distant thunder "is a sound not loud or strong, but awful, and very like that produced by the movement of a great multitude" (quot. Todd). The effect is heightened by the caesura after 'remote', lending emphasis to the word. As in the case of 'cadence', Milton's quasi-adverbial use of 'remote' in the sense "at a distance", "far off" is a neologism (see *OED remote* 3c). Together with the next words, 'With awful reverence prone', the lines on the distant thunder conjure up an idea of something venerable and majestic, which colours the subsequent description and is reinforced by the infracontexts. Two paragraphs on the applause proper (475–482, 486–495) alternate with passages on the devils' virtues (482-485 appreciation of self-sacrifice, 496–505 concord; both cases being contrasted with human habits).

The description of the devils' worship, 'Towards him they bend / With awful reverence prone; and as a God / Extoll him equal to the highest in Heav'n' (477–79) recalls two entirely different infracontexts, investing the lines with a tension they do not possess detached from the double background. In Beaumont's *Psyche* (1.45), after Satan's speech declaring war on man and God, the infernal audience applaud their leader, and their 'Snaky-heads thrice bowing to the floor / Take their damn'd leave' in order to implement Satan's revenge scheme. In no other IC text except Milton's and Beaumont's is the act of reverence described in this particular way. A different kind of connection is afforded by the similarity between 478f. 'and as a God / Extoll him equal to the highest in Heav'n' and the *Theogony* 91ff. (Stillingfleet) on the attitude of the people to a wise and venerable monarch: When he makes his way through the assembly he is acclaimed like a god with gentle reverence, and shines forth in the crowd that has gathered. Hesiod's account forms part of a long paragraph on the virtues of the king-judge: his persuasive power, endowed by Calliope, his integrity, wisdom, and honesty, the fact that he is a gift from Zeus, just as poets are gifts from Apollo. This characteriza-

tion, expressed in elevated language, colours the lines on the people's worship and thus, at the same time, twice removed, the corresponding lines on the devils' worship in Milton's surface context. Lines 477–79, densely packed with words within the same semantic sphere – 'bend, awful, reverence, prone, God, extoll' – heighten the sense of 480ff., describing the fallen angels' appreciation of the fact 'That for the general safety he despis'd / His own', and of 482ff. assuring the reader that not even damned spirits lose all their virtue, so bad men should not boast of what ostensibly good deeds they have done, magnified by vain glory and ambition. Against the background of these infracontexts the lines are curiously ambiguous. On the one hand the solidarity and unity of spirit within the infernal host are emphasized; on the other, the speciousness of these virtues comes to the fore since, as particularly Steadman has pointed out, they throw into relief the viciousness and dangerousness of the enemies of God.[8]

This entire section in *PL* in its turn reinforces the subsequent paragraph briefly summing up the worship theme and leading up to the elaborate cloud-and-sun simile (486ff.):

> Thus they thir doubtful consultations dark
> Ended, rejoycing in thir matchless Chief:
> As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds
> Ascending, while the North wind sleeps, orespread
> Heav'ns chearful face, the lowring Element
> Scowls ore the dark'nd lantskip Snow, or showre;
> If chance the radiant Sun with farewell sweet
> Extend his ev'ning beam, the fields revive,
> The birds thir notes renew, and bleating herds
> Attest thir joy, that hill and valley rings.

'Rejoycing in thir matchless Chief' is reminiscent of Homer's description of the Argives' joy as they watch the powerful Ajax emerging from their ranks for single combat with Hector (*Il.* 7.214; Stillingfleet); but the similarity at the same time involves a synecdochic effect, for Homer adds that every Trojan began to tremble with fear and even Hector's heart beat faster. So the infracontext as it were provides the motif of the threat which is present in earlier applause sections but absent in the surface contextual level here.

The cloud-and-sun simile recalls two Homeric infracontexts: *Il.* 5.522ff. and 16.297ff. (Newton). These two are however rather different. In the account of the fighting in the fifth book the Argives' firmness and

[8] *Milton and the Renaissance Hero*, Oxford, 1967, pp. 23ff., 43ff., 78ff.

constancy under the Trojans' attack are visualized as the picture of mist that settles motionless on the tops of mountains when the North wind sleeps and the other winds are still and do not chase the clouds. The relationship between Homer's and Milton's similes and Homer's and Milton's contexts is fairly complex if we regard the simile as an interpretation of the entire situation, not merely of the immediately surrounding lines. The simile in the *Iliad* seems less apt than that in *PL* since the Trojans attack but the winds of the image do not; in *PL*, on the contrary, the apostate angels are no longer pursued and assailed by their withdrawing adversaries. The effect of the sun which shows itself falls somewhat outside the main image, indicating as it does the spirit of hope and confidence among those pursued shortly before. The connection between surface and infracontext is closely linked by the verbal correspondence between 'while the North wind sleeps' and ὄφρ' εὕδῃσι μένος βορέαο, though the simile in Homer serves as an infracontext for only half of that in Milton, the cloud part. It is the simile in 16.297ff. that covers the main part of the comparison, adding another sense to the sun part in *PL*, which it scarcely possesses as it stands in the surface context. This image forms part of the episode in which the Achaeans succeed in chasing away the Trojans who have set fire to their ships: they put out the fire and enjoy a short breathing-space though the fighting does not end, just as Zeus removes a thick cloud from a great mountain-top so that all the summits, peaks, and valleys become visible, and the sky suddenly becomes clear. Here of course Homer's simile is appropriate: the dense cloud is driven away just as the fire and the enemy are, and clear weather is the result. In *PL* this simile, if consciously used by Milton, has been altered so as to suit the context. But the two Homeric similes, though in part delimiting the sense in *PL* and in part reinforcing it, are still not the most important background for Milton's image. More interesting is that supplied by emblematics, i.e. the large group of "sun breaking through clouds" emblems. This is for instance represented by an emblem plate in Boria, accompanied by the motto 'Nitor in Adversum';[9] other examples are the numerous emblems with dwindling clouds and shining suns and the mottoes 'post nubila clarior' or 'post nubila Phoebus'.[10] These maxims serve as reminders that resistance can be overcome and happiness succeed unhappiness, and as it were emphasize the mood prevalent among the fallen angels. The effect is also intensified by the universal character of the emblematic truths.

Thyer compares the phrase 'Heav'ns chearful face' with *FQ* 2.12.34 where Guyon and Palmer on their way to the Bower of Bliss suddenly see

[9] Henkel & Schöne, *Emblemata*, col. 24.
[10] In *Emblemata*, examples are provided from emblem-books by Covarrubias and Rollenhagen.

a dense fog blotting out 'heavens chearfull face'. But this expression in its turn is modelled on a formula in classical poetry, 'facies caeli', which is frequently used in descriptions of omens and portents meaning disaster or attending the death of heroes:[11] the sun pales or else is hidden by clouds or darkness. The formula is suggested, if not actually used, in the description of the swarm of locusts in book 1 (see p. 71). *Georg.* 1.467ff. describes the omens attending the assassination of Caesar: 'sol [...] caput obscura nitidum ferrugine texit'. According to Tibullus (2.5.75) and Plutarch (*Life of Caesar* 69), the sun turned pale on the same occasion. In Sannazaro's *De Partu Virginis* (1.372f.) David prophesies that the sun shall darken his golden locks on the occasion of the death of Christ. In Dolce's *Marianna* 1.1 Herod's queen, full of forebodings of coming disaster, complains, 'tinto è di pallor la bella faccia': the sun hides its rays. So it does to demonstrate its sorrow at the death of Adonis in Marino's *L'Adone* 19.13: instead of illuminating the world with its rays, the sun is 'prigionier fra le nubi, anzi sepolto'. In the *Sospetto d'Herode* 47 the clear face of the sky is covered by a deathly pallor as Crudeltà begins her fatal flight to Herod; in Crashaw's rendering 'th' aire too well / With a chang'd countenance witnest the sight'. In bk. 3 of the *Strage degli Innocenti*, st. 3, 'Paravea il Sol, con volto afflitto e smorto' during the slaughter, a line anticipated in Aretino's *Humanità di Christo*: 'Intanto il sol si fugge: egli si nasconde tra i nuvoli'. Again in *GL* 16.68 Armida, abandoned by Rinaldo, swears revenge, calls up a host of infernal spirits, and 's'empie il Ciel d'atre nubi, e in un momento / Impallidisce il gran pianeta eterno'. The use of the infracontextual darkened-sun formula lends another and curious significance to the sun-cloud imagery in *PL*, emphasizing, as it were, the gravity of the infernal threat and its different degrees. The cloud image evoking the formula illustrates the 'doubtful consultations dark' – a gloomy (and secret) council whose result is uncertain. Even such a council, the underlying formula tends to suggest, is portentous and menacing. But the unobscured-sun image illustrates the fallen angels' joy and relief at their leader's decision, which of course spells the real and fatal danger to the world. In additon, the unobscured-sun image involves a "black" and blasphemous contrast, the sun standing traditionally for God, Christ, and the power of good.

Several linguistic details in the sun-and-cloud simile emphasize the highflown and sublime character of the paragraph. Besides affording a contrast to 'doubtful' and 'dark', 'rejoycing' and 'chearful face' are set off against 'lowring', 'scowls', 'dark'nd', 'Snow', and 'showre', which

[11] Discussed by Patrides in *Milton and the Christian Tradition*, pp. 75f. As Patrides remarks, the events during the Passion are in part examples of this motif, as are the "Nature's lamentation" passages in classical pastoral elegy.

form a fairly homogeneous sound-pattern. Ricks[12]calls attention to the expressive use of 'scowl' with 'snow' as its object. Another contrast is afforded by the proximity of these words to 'the radiant Sun with farewell sweet' and the picture of exulting nature with reviving fields, birds which renew their singing, joyful herds, and responding hill and valley. And this miniature scene, finally, contrasts with the gloomy description of mankind divided against itself in hatred, enmity, and strife, instead of fighting the common enemy. The syntax adds to the impression of loftiness and magnificence, being another instance of the difficulty, *asprezza*, praised by leading Italian rhetoricians and theorists as a characteristic of the "great style" (see p. 57ff. above). One of the devices used for this purpose is the figure *hirmus* – the 'long loose' as Puttenham called it – used in order to expand the sentence, suspend the sense, and make the whole pattern involved and complex. Milton begins the simile with the clauses introduced by 'As when ...', which, surrounding the 'while'-clause, link up loosely with the 'if chance'-clause with the main point: 'The fields revive, / The birds thir notes renew', etc. Nothing is made easy by the poet; on the level of syntax, as of meaning, the reader has to cooperate in order to recognize the signal and receive the message.

2. Malcontents in Heaven

The episode of the angelic malcontents preparing for their revolt in Heaven foreshadows the fallen angels rallying their forces in the Underworld. In 5.744ff. the apostate angels are described in their supralunar magnificence. After the Son's speech

> *Satan* with his Powers
> Farr was advanc't on winged speed, an Host
> Innumerable as the Starrs of Night,
> Or Starrs of Morning, Dew-drops, which the Sun
> Impearls on every leaf and every flouer.

Though an old simile, as Newton says, and a commonplace one, 'Innumerable as the Starrs' has an important function in the context, stressing as it does the connection of the still unfallen angels with the blessed ones who will for ever continue in their solidarity with God: the blessed angels are repeatedly compared to stars and their movements to the dance of stars (see pp. 113ff.). At the same time 'an Host / Innumerable as

[12] *Milton's Grand Style*, p. 81.

the Starrs of Night' links up vertically with a passage in Callimachus and in so doing horizontally with another one in *PL* bk. 1. In his *Hymn to Delos* (IV) the Hellenistic poet prophesies evil days when late-born Titans will wage barbaric war on the Hellenes, rushing on like snowflakes, as numerous as the constellations studding the sky in clusters. The mention of the barbarians, associated with the Titans, links up with *PL* 1.354ff. discussed previously, where the numberless devils are compared to 'barbarous Sons' coming like a 'Deluge on the South'; the 'Innumerable ... Starrs of Night' via Callimachus' snowflake-constellation image thus connects with the locust image illustrating the enormous numbers, destructiveness and heresy of Satan's followers in bk. 1. These connections make the star image in 5.745 more complex in adding an element which dissociates the future apostate followers of Satan from the eternally blessed angels.

From 'Starrs of Night' we pass to 'Starrs of Morning' with a reminiscence of 708f. where Satan, mendaciously, 'allur'd them ... as the Morning Starr that guides / The starrie flock': the stars of the morning which Crashaw calls 'the droves / Of stars that guild the Morne' (*Sosp.* 30). The stars that follow the mendacious rebel participate in his sin, the sin of pride stressed in the *Isaiah* passage (14.12) which is a diatribe against Lucifer, 'sonne of the morning', who has fallen from heaven; the opposite of 'the offspring of Dauid, and the bright and morning starre' of *Rev* 22.16. The cesura after 'Morning' at 746 is a fairly heavy one, establishing a pause which prevents too smooth and easy a transition to 'Dew-drops', with its special meanings. Dew-drops, says Newton, is a new and beautiful simile, which he links up with orient pearl in the description of morning in 5.2. To Todd it suggests such lines as *FQ* 4.5.45 'with pearly dew sprinkling the morning grasse' and Sylvester's Du Bartas 'To walk the mountains, or the flowery meads / Impearl'd with tears, which sweet Aurora sheds' (1621, p. 70). But in this context, describing the rebel angels on their way to Satan's royal seat in the North, the dew-drops, members of the simple code, invite a different interpretation. Fowler points out that dew was a common emblem of evanescence from its use in Henry King's *Sic vita*; in King's poem the transitoriness of man is compared to the fall of a star, the flight of eagles, the spring's hue, the drops of morning dew, wind, and bubbles. However, the list in King's poem in its turn is ultimately inspired, like other similar lists, by biblical infracontexts in *Hosea* 6.4 and above all 13.3, and thus has a much greater impact and authority than if King's poem alone had provided the basis. In *Hos.* 6.4 the Lord blames Judah for untowardness: ... 'your goodnesse is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away'. In 13.3, reproaching Israel with idolatry, he uses the same similes, adding two more with a similar meaning: 'There-

fore they shalbe as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it passeth away, as the chaffe that is driuen with a whirlewinde out of the floore, and as the smoke out of the chimney'. To a reader familiar with the infracontext in *Hosea* 13, the effect of the dewdrop simile in *PL* 5.746 is heightened by the submerged tenor in the biblical text – idolatry – and by the submerged vehicles with which the dew is coordinate there: morning cloud, chaff, smoke. Significance is also added by a commentary in Rupert dealing with *Hosea* 13.3 on evil men and oblivion:[1] Cloud, dew, dust, and smoke mean that the memory of those who have fallen down into sin will evaporate and come to nought. This interlocks with a surface context in bk. 6.379 dealing with the difference between good and bad angels: the rebels are 'by doome / Canceld from Heav'n and sacred memorie', which in its turn, commentators observe, suggests *Rev.* 3.5 'Hee that ouercommeth ... I will not blot out his name out of the booke of life'. So what in Rupert's interpretation and in *Rev.* 3.5, by implication, applies to impious humans is extended in Milton's text to evil angels. In a vertical context system Milton's lines thus work *auxesis*-wise, as intensifiers.

Nor is this all, since the dew image, defining by difference, also induces a "black" effect connected with the *in bono* meaning of dew in other biblical and patristic contexts. In the vast majority of Old Testament instances of 'dew' (which does not occur in NT), the sense is directly opposite to that in the two passages in *Hosea*, and the Church Fathers' notes differ accordingly. Commenting on such passages as 'Rorate, caeli, desuper, et nuber pluant iustum' (*Is.* 45.8), 'Sicut ros Hermon, qui descendit in montem Sion' (*Ps.* 132.3), or 'Et erunt reliquiae Iacob in medio populorum multorum quasi ros a Domino, et quasi stillae super herbam' (*Mica* 5.7),[2] exegetes provide such interpretations as 'ros' = 'verbum Domini' (Eucherius, Rabanus Maurus), 'gratia Spiritus Sancti, doctrina apostolorum' (Rupert, Rabanus Maurus), 'superna contemplatio, Dei gratia, plenitudo sanctitatis' (Rabanus Maurus). A particularly curious effect is provided by contact with one patristic instance of 'ros' = 'gratia Dei', in Cyprian's *De Unitate Ecclesiae* 12, where it is described how God refreshes and invigorates the Three Youths in the fiery furnace with spiritual dew: 'Quia in Deum simplices atque inter se unanimes permanebant, flammis ambientibus medios spiritu roris animavit'.[3] There is thus a deeply submerged and strong contrast between the holy men and the angels after the fall, burning in unquench-

[1] *Comment. in XII Proph. Min.* (*PL* 168.190).
[2] 'Ros' in similar contexts occurs in *Gen.* 27.28 and *Job* 29.
[3] *PL* 4.509.

able fire with no divine dew to preserve them. Conflicting associations, in a word, are evoked, iceberg-wise, by the same simple simile, the "black" effect supplying the impression of the complex, involved nature of the future rebels' predicament: that of angels not yet apostate, but no longer blessed since their evil plans are maturing. They will be struck from the celestial records, and the divine grace and bliss suggested by the dew symbol in some infracontexts throw their imminent and irreparable fall from the grace of God into bold relief.

The account of the military applause in 1.540ff. – the ten thousand banners, the huge forest of spears, the thronging helms and serried shields in thick array – links up with the description of Satan's army in the north (6.79ff.): the details stand out more and more clearly as the angelic host approaches:

> Farr in th' Horizon to the North appeerd
> From skirt to skirt a fierie Region, stretcht
> In battailous aspect, and neerer view
> Bristl'd with upright beams innumerable
> Of rigid Spears, and Helmets throngd, and Shields
> Various, with boastful Argument portraid,
> The banded Powers of *Satan* hasting on
> With furious expediton.

Correlating points are well known and obvious at first sight: the bristling upright shafts of rigid spears corresponding to the universal host lifting ten thousand banners into the air, with 'A Forrest huge of Spears' (545ff.); 'Helmets throngd' answers to the 'thronging Helms' in 1.547, and the 'Shields / Various, with boastful Argument portraid' reappear as 'serried Shields in thick array' in the scene in the Underworld. The parallels suggest the reappearance, with unbroken energy and unchanged evil intentions, of the diabolical army, rallied after its defeat. As in the case of 1.540ff. there is a link, forged by iconographic infracontexts, to the description of Pharaoh's defeat in 1.306ff. (see p. 57). There is one interesting change when the host appears again in Hell: the 'boastful Argument portraid' on their shields, the sculptures and the paintings are gone when the defeated angels gather again in the Underworld, as if a sign of assurance and arrogance had disappeared – there is no longer anything to boast about – but the banners, colours, spears, helmets and shields remain in token of the prevailing rebellious mood among Satan and his followers; so does the outward magnificence of other kinds of equipment not immediately useful in battle: trumpets, clarions, imperial ensign, trophies. With the 'boastful Argument' the relevant infracontext

is gone too: that in Euripides' *Phoenissae* 1111f. (Todd)[4] where the heroes laying siege to Thebes are described equipped with shields with highly 'boastful arguments' – the expression is directly taken from the lines on Amphiaraus, the only one without a showy device on his shield (οὐ σημεῖ' ἔχων/ὑβρισμένν'). The devices on the heroes' shields, tokens of their arrogance, serve them no better in the end than the devils' do in Heaven: the war in Euripides' play takes an unexpected turn and Thebes is saved. The infracontext thus gives a particular impact to 6.84, and the absence in 1.545ff. of the theme of that line entails a corresponding gap on the vertical level. The realistic touch of visual perspective in 79ff. – "It appear'd a fiery region indistinctly at first, but upon nearer view it proved to be Satan's rebel army" (Newton) – is in sharp contrast to a similar description in the *Sospetto d'Herode* 15 of the morning of the Nativity: in Crashaw's rendering Satan in his impotent rage watches 'How bright a Dawne of Angels with new Light / Amaz'd the midnight world', making a day 'Of which the Morning knew not'. The luminous good angels are the dawn in the East, God's region, just as in *PL* the rebel angels are the fiery glow in the North, the devils' region, where evil originates and spreads over the world: *Jer.* 1.14 'Ab Aquilone pandetur omne malum super omnes habitatores terrae' (see p. 72). The passages throw one another into relief, and that in the *Sospetto* describes a repetition of the defeat which is the subject of the main part of book 6 in *PL*: on the occasion of the Nativity, the 'Heav'n-rebuked shades made hast away', rendering Marino's 'Vede ... Le tacit' ombre, e i tenebrosi horrori / Da le voci del Ciel percosse, e rotte'.

3. Devils' Transformation

The paragraph from 10.504 down 10.547 is in all essentials a counterpart to the various applause passages in books 1 and 2 and, in a sense, to Satan's voluntary transformation into a serpent in 9.497ff. The introductory lines on Satan who, returned from his mission and expecting

> Thir universal shout and high applause
> To fill his eare,

links up particularly with 1.542ff., where after Satan's proud speech, firing his followers' enthusiasm,

[4] For Milton's familiarity with Euripides' texts see M. Kelley and S. D. Atkins, "Milton's Annotations of Euripides" (*JEGP* 60, 1961, pp. 680ff.).

the universal Host upsent
A shout that tore Hells Concave, and beyond
Frighted the Reign of *Chaos* and old Night.

The details in the first book are real, but those in the tenth imaginary, things that Satan expects to happen, and his expectations are naturally aroused after his experiences in bk. 1. The subsequent lines in the first book, describing how

Ten thousand Banners rise into the Air
With Orient Colours waving: with them rose
A Forrest huge of Spears: and thronging Helms
Appeard, and serried Shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable (545ff.),

with their repeated insistence on vertical movements and thrusts upwards, with a general emphasis on power, vitality, and warlike enthusiasm, are in sharp contrast to the paralysing downward motion reflected in the account of the devils' transformation into serpents in the tenth book. First Satan

His Visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
His Armes clung to his Ribs, his Leggs entwining
Each other, till supplanted down he fell
A monstrous Serpent on his Belly prone,
Reluctant, but in vaine.

where 'supplanted', ("tripped up"), and 'reluctant'[1] support each other in emphasis on the powerlessness of Satan, resumed and clearly brought to the fore in the words of 515ff., 'a greater power / Now rul'd him, punisht in the shape he sinnd, / According to his doom'. Still more pronounced is of course the contrast in the account of the fallen angels, horrified, watching their own transformation (539ff.):

horror on them fell,
And horrid sympathie; for what they saw,
They felt themselves now changing; down thir arms,
Down fell both Spear and Shield, down they as fast,
And the dire hiss renewd, and the dire form
Catchd by Contagion, like in punishment,
As in thir crime. Thus was th' applause they meant,
Turnd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame
Cast on themselves from thir own mouths.

[1] The collocation of the words was observed by Dunster (Todd).

Parallelism and correlation with the account in the first book have been pushed a step further as compared with 511ff.: 'down', three times repeated, is a kind of scornful reply to 'upsent', 'rise', and 'rose' in 1.541, 545, 546; and the falling spear and shield, disabled and impotent, are in contrast to the proud and erect 'Forrest huge of Spears' and the 'serried Shields in thick array / Of depth immeasurable' (1.547ff.). The transformation, spreading like an epidemic, and the hiss repeated everywhere – the only sound emitted by the devils – similarly stand out in opposition to the proud rebels' march in 1.549f., where they move 'In perfet *Phalanx* to the *Dorian* mood / Of Flutes and soft Recorders'. As Hume pointed out, 'exploding hiss' suggests the sense of 'explodere', to "hiss off the stage": their triumph turned to shame, the fallen angels reject and hiss themselves off the stage – the supreme and utter shame, and an episode which intensifies the usual motif of devils scorned by gods (see p. 180). Also, as Steadman shows,[2] the emphasis on ignominy is in accordance with Christian exegetical tradition (Chrysostom, Mercerus, Rivetus). Powerless fury and shame are the only emotions left with the demon-serpents in the tenth book, while in the first the fallen angels 'in stead of rage / Deliberat valour breath'd'. There is also, within the framework of the contrasts, another instance of the figure *asteismus*, this time on the syntagmatic level. A word recurs with an unexpected twist and a change of meaning, so that a sardonic pun is produced: 'A horrid Front / Of dreadful length and dazling Arms' such as is formed by the army of devils prepared for battle in 1.563f. corresponds to the words preceding the account of the dire change in bk. 10, 'horror on them fell, / And horrid sympathie'. In 1.563 the 'horrid Front' is bristling with spears and terrible; in 10.540 the 'horrid sympathie' is a likeness causing horror but also of course the state of being affected by a similar feeling of horror.[3] In 539, 'horror on them fell', the main word stresses two emotions which are both covered by the word: loathing and fear.[4] The spectrum of meanings brought into focus by the *asteismus* collocation of the 'horror – horrid' passages adds to the contrast effect resulting from the correspondence between the entire paragraphs in the first and tenth books. The feeling which the devils want to evoke in their enemies in book 1 they themselves have fallen victim to in book 10. This feeling is caused not by their enemies but by themselves.

The list of names in 521ff. briefly specify the monsters into which the devils have been changed:

[2] "'Triumph to Shame': Satan's Humiliation and the Serpent's Doom" (*Milton's Epic Characters*, pp. 298ff.).
[3] *OED sympathy* 3 b.
[4] *OED horror* 3.

Dreadful was the din
Of hissing through the Hall, thick swarming now
With complicated monsters, head and taile,
Scorpion and Asp, and *Amphisbaena* dire,
Cerastes hornd, *Hydrus,* and *Ellops* drear,
And *Dipsas* (Not so thick swarmd once the Soil
Bedropt with blood of *Gorgon,* or the Ile
Ophiusa) but still greatest hee the midst,
Now Dragon grown, larger then whom the Sun
Ingenderd in the *Pythian* Vale on slime,
Huge *Python*, and his Power no less he seemd
Above the rest still to retain.

The subsequent lines describe the serpents following their leader to an open field where the other devils are waiting to witness his triumph; instead they see a crowd of serpents, themselves soon changing too – and 'horror on them fell'. Fowler rightly, I think, refutes the idea that the seven serpents which are given names might be correlated with the deadly sins: there is too little descriptive differentiation, and the enumeration is no more than a bare list of names with brief adjectival qualifications ('dire', 'hornd', 'drear', 'Huge'). The only descriptive part of the passage deals with Python, whose shape Satan has been compelled to assume. At the same time, various meanings attach to the 'complicated'[5] serpents' names, and commentators have pointed out the allegorical significance of some of them: 'amphisbaena', inconstancy and adultery; 'cerastes', lust for power; 'dipsa' provoking thirst by its bite, Tantalus in Hell, etc.[6] But I am not sure Svendsen is right in saying that in Milton's lines there "are compressed pages of learning treasured by the encyclopedists" (p. 35); nor, I think, is Fowler's comparison of the list with the enumeration of serpents created by God in Sylvester's Du Bartas (1.6.198ff.) very relevant. The true function of the list seems to be complex. First, it agrees with and is heightened by the name-list in 1.392ff., where the devils are enumerated at some length in the shape of heathen gods and enemies of Judah. An infracontext of importance to the meaning of 10.521ff. is the list of demons in monstrous shapes surrounding Satan and enumerated by Vida in the *Christiad* as they hurry to the Infernal Council: gorgons, centaurs, sphinxes, hydras, chimaeras, scyl-

[5] 'Complicated' probably means not only "compound", "complex", the opposite of simple (*OED*), but also "tangled"; and perhaps there is a meaning corresponding to our "sophisticated", "rare".

[6] Hughes refers to Aldrovandus' *Serpentum et draconum Historiae* (1640); Svendsen to various other authorities (pp. 35f.); and see Fowler's note.

las, harpies (p. 8), and Tasso provides a similar crowd in the corresponding episode in *GL* 4.5. According to David's prophecy in the *De Partu Virginis* 1.393ff. 'trepident Briareia turba, Cerastae / Semiferumque genus Centauri, et Gorgones atrae / Scyllaeque Sphingesque' when the divine conqueror breaks open the gates of Tartarus. The basis for these and other similar lists in IC poems by Valvasone, Rolim de Moura, and Mellius de Sousa is the enumeration in *Aen.* 6.273ff. of the figures who crowd the entrance to the realm of Pluto. Grief, Care, diseases, Age, Fear, Famine, Want, Death and other enemies of mankind dwell there, and also monstrous shapes like scyllas, centaurs, the hundredfold Briareus, the hissing hydra of Lerna, the horrid chimaera armed with flames, and so on.[7] All the infernal creatures enumerated by Virgil and later authors dealing with the Underworld can appear as serpents, which incarnate evil in its manifold forms and are all instruments of divine vengeance, a point made by *Ecclesiasticus* (39.33ff.): 'Sunt spiritus qui ad vindictam creati sunt [...] Bestiarum dentes, et scorpij, et serpentes, et romphea vindicans in exterminium impios'. The serpents in bk. 10 also stand for the many shapes of Death enumerated at some length by Michael in 11.466ff.

Secondly, another infracontext adding to the significance of the list of serpents is *Inf.* 24.85ff. (Todd), which in its turn leads on to yet another infracontext almost as important as the descriptions of the members of Pluto's court. In Dante's stanzas in canto 24, the wanderer on his way through the eighth circle sees a chasm full of snakes described with a rhetorical device similar to that used in 25.97ff. in the account of the transformation of man into serpent and vice versa:

> Più non si vanti Libia con sua rena;
> Che se chelidri, iaculi, e pharee
> Produce, e cencri con Amphesibena;
> Nè tante pestilentie, nè sì ree
> Mostrò giamai con tutta l'Ethiopia,
> Nè con ciò, che di sopra al mar rosso ee.

And in the midst of this horrid tangled mass run those to be punished there, the Thieves, 'nude, e spauentate'. The same device, dismissive comparison, is used by Milton in his attempt to give some idea of the serpentine horrors: 'Not so thick swarmd once the Soil / Bedropt with blood of *Gorgon*, or the Ile / *Ophiusa*'. Libya unable to vie with Dante's eighth circle and the infernal horrible swarm recur in the *Pharsalia*

[7] See also the discussion of Pandemonium, pp. 294ff. below.

9.699ff. (Newton). Lucan tells the story of Perseus on his flight above the Libyan desert, carrying the head of Medusa, whose dripping blood makes even the barren sand teem with a strange brood – a variety of deadly snakes with exotic and odd-sounding names: 'aspida', 'haemorrhois', 'chersydros', 'chelydrus', 'cenchris', 'hammodytes', 'cerastes', 'scythale', 'dipsas', 'amphisbaena', 'natrix', 'iaculus', 'pareas', 'prester', 'seps', 'basiliscus'; one more grotesque and nightmarish than the other. The list ends with the 'draco', of giant size like Python at the end of Milton's paragraph. The 'draco' pursues entire herds, kills bulls and elephants without difficulty and destroys everything. Milton's description, 'still greatest hee ... larger then whom the Sun / Ingenderd in the *Pythian* Vale on slime, / Huge *Python*', also links up with Ovid's lines on the giant serpent Python in *Met.* 1.434ff. (Newton). Born out of the mud of the earth heated by the sun, 'maximus Python' became a terror to mankind just created, and was killed by Apollo. Also, of course, Milton's lines connect with the 'draco ille magnus' in *Rev.* 12.9 (Newton): 'Serpens antiquus, qui vocatur diabolus et satanas, qui seducit vniuersum orbem, et proiectus est in terram, et angeli eius cum illo missi sunt'.

Numerous links thus connect the serpent list in Milton with a great many infracontexts, forming a predominantly complex code. It interlocks with the traditional enumerations of demon members of Satanic courts, summarizing their evil and deadly properties in serpent shapes. It suggests, by the direct reference to Lucan's story, the theme of the Gorgon threatening the whole universe with instantaneous death. It recalls the account of infernal punishment in *Inf.* 24 and, like Dante's list, is said to surpass the horrors of Lucan's description of the serpents in the Libyan desert, thereby intensifying the description in a way which certainly matches the subject. Finally , by introducing the Python at the end, it suggests terrifying size and destruction (Lucan and Ovid), and punishment by divine intervention (Ovid and *Revelation*). Beams of meaning, in a word, radiate upwards from these different zero-part infracontexts, converging in the *PL* passage and charging it with significance beyond that contained on the horizontal plane. An ironic effect, incidentally, is achieved by the submerged connection between Lucan 9.728, 'aurato nitidi fulgore Dracones', and the 'burnisht Neck of verdant Gold' of the Satanic serpent in 9.501, described just before the moment of his short-lived triumph (see p. 275 below), and by the contrast between these details and the Python as he appears in 10.529ff., a repulsive snake that rules over the other snakes. Another contrast effect centres on the fundamental difference between 'the Hall, thick swarming ... With complicated monsters' in 10.522f., and the universe full of ordered and symmetrical movement, described as an illustration of the happy angels' song and dance about the sacred Hill in 5.619ff. The heavenly bodies

describe 'mazes intricate, / Eccentric, intervolv'd, yet regular / Then most, when most irregular they seem' (622ff.). This contrast interlocks with other similar effects on different levels in the poem. More of this anon.

CHAPTER IV

The Great Contrasts

1. Angelic Stars Round God

In the various episodes describing the blessed angels and their empyreal milieu – an exultant choir contemplating God and surrounding the divine centre in gyratory motion – there are sets of point-by-point antitheses to the descriptions of their former comrades fallen from Heaven. On the surface level these antitheses of course throw into relief the contrasts between the world of damnation and the world of bliss. When infracontexts enter the picture, these contrasts not only become more conspicuous, but the actual significance of the episodes is enriched, amplified, and stratified.

The fallen angels are compared to autumnal leaves and locusts, meaning transitoriness and spiritual darkness; the blessed angels are closely associated with stars, symbols of luminous eternity. The passage in 3.60ff. on the blessed angels gathered round God may be regarded as a kind of basis for the angels-stars passages in the poem. The key concepts are stars-holiness-luminosity. Stars = angels is traditional, though the tradition does not perhaps seem quite so massive as it is sometimes supposed to be. Augustine (*Enchir.* 58) considers it an open question whether sun, moon, and stars belong to the angelic host ('Sed ne illud quidem certo habeo, utrum ad eamdem societatem [beatissima et superna societas] pertineant sol et luna et cuncta sidera').[1] In several Old Testament and apocryphal passages, however, the connection between stars and angels is so strong as practically to amount to identification; as T. Mettinger says, angels and stars constitute a semantic continuum.[2] The identification is particularly close in *Job* 38.7, 'Cum me laudarent simul astra matutina, et jubilarent omnes filij Dei', a passage annotated by Gregory: 'Quia enim prima in tempore condita natura rationabilium

[1] *PL* 40.260. On this opinion (similar views are expressed by Clement of Alexandria and Gregory of Nazianzus) see *RAC* 5.136.

[2] "Härskarornas Gud" (*Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok* 44, 1979, pp. 19f. and n. 28). Apart from *Job* 38.7, Mettinger points out, angels and stars are closely connected in *Ps.* 148.2–3, *Is.* 24.21–23, *Dan.* 8.10–12, and *Deut.* 4.19–20.

spirituum creditur, non immerito matutina astra angeli vocantur',[3] an opinion adopted by two such different commentators as Olympiodorus Alexandrinus and Munsterus.[4] In Philo Judaeus (*De Gigant.* 2) the stars are divine souls (ψυχαὶ... θεῖαι), faultless and perfect and moving in circles, the perfect form. In the *Apocalypse of Baruch* 51.10 the righteous shall be 'made like unto the angels, / And be made equal to the stars'; in *Ezra* 1.3.7 they are similarly 'destined to be made like the light of the stars, henceforth incorruptible'. In *Enoch* 86.3 the visionary 'saw many stars descend and cast themselves down from Heaven'; the stars are falling angels. The 'third part of the stars of Heaven' drawn down to the earth by the dragon's tail in *Rev.* 12.4 are the rebel angels. When Dante in *Par.* 23.110 mentions 'lumi' which "made resound" ('facean sonar') the name of Mary, he is apparently referring to angels, in the same way as are the author of the Apocryphal *Apocalypse of John* and Irenaeus in his book against heretics when they call angels φῶτα, "lights".[5] Anyway the theme was sufficiently well known for Milton to use it in 3.60ff.: God views his works from the 'pure Empyrean', and

> About him all the Sanctities of Heaven
> Stood thick as Starrs, and from his sight receiv'd
> Beatitude past utterance.

Superficially, 'Starrs' is used for the sake of comparison, but on a deeper level there is a fusion of "angels" and "stars". 'Sanctities' is taken by Fowler to mean gods and to be metonymic: "They are represented by one of their qualities, holiness". Todd, however, pointed out what several Shakespeare commentators have observed: "The phrase *Sanctities of Heaven* might be suggested by Shakespeare", to be exact *2 Hen. IV* 4.2.20, Lancaster to the Archbishop:

> ... the very Opener, and Intelligencer
> Betweene the Grace, the Sanctities of Heauen,
> And our dull workings.

Probably, as Thaler thinks (Shaaber Variorum ed.), Shakespeare used the word in a concrete sense, as Milton did. If so, the metonymic colour is likely to have disappeared by the time Shakespeare used the word, for he was probably utilizing 'sanctity' in the same way as 'sanctitas' had been used for more than a thousand years, to denote the rank of high

[3] *Moralia* 7 (*PL* 76.467).
[4] *In Beatum Job* (*PG* 93.400), *Critici Sacri* 2, col. 922.
[5] *RAC* 5.100.

ecclesiastical dignitaries. What bishops and archbishops are on earth, the angels are in Heaven: dignitaries of a certain rank. As to the first half of the next line, 'Stood thick as Starrs', there are numerous horizontal and vertical connections. There are links with the creation episode in 7.356ff. where God made the moon and 'everie magnitude of Starrs', 'And sowd with Starrs the Heav'n thick as a field', which connects up vertically, as pointed out by Todd, with two English texts, Spenser's *Hymne of Heavenly Beautie* and Crashaw's *The Weeper;* in addition with one Italian work, Andreini's *L'Adamo,* and one classical, the *Astronomicon* by Manilius. The horizontal connection with the line on the sowing of stars in the seventh book stresses the theme of life and fertility; the forces of good as opposed to those of death and evil. There is thus at the same time a link with the theme of the spirit of God infusing vital virtue and vital warmth into the amorphous 'fluid Mass' in 7.235f. in the course of the act of creation. These lines, again, are in sharp contrast to the sterility-destruction theme associated with the devils and their activity and developed at some length in the North-and-locust section in the first book. Another contrast which easily imposes itself involves 2.510ff. on 'Hells dread Emperour', whom round

> A Globe of fierie Seraphim inclos'd
> With bright imblazonrie, and horrent Arms.

Besides indicating the traditional colour of Seraphim,[6] the word 'fierie' denotes anger here but, unlike 'fierie red' at 4.978, anger of the unrighteous kind indicating hatred of God. The lines in 3.60ff. mention no colours at all; they seem to be absorbed in the dazzling light of Paradise. In the second book the Seraphim surrounding Satan appear to function as a kind of bodyguard anticipating the coming conflict; the words 'round', 'Globe', 'inclos'd' denote a protective movement inwards, but 'horrent' is an "aggressive" word as in *Aen.* 10.178 on warriors rushing to battle 'horrentibus hastis' (Keightley); and 'Globe' has a military sense, "body of soldiers".[7] 'Bright imblazonrie' evokes feudal and military pomp and splendour, the impression of magnificence being heightened by the substantive's character of neologism. By contrast, the simple lines in 3.60ff. evoke no conception of aggressive movement but of fixed order; what movement there is does not proceed outwards or inwards from surrounding angels but outwards from the godhead as indirectly suggested by 'receiv'd' – the angels are rapt in the vision beatific of God.

[6] See p. 85 above, n. 2.
[7] As in, for instance, *Aen.* 10.373 ('globus ... virum densissimus') (Newton), and in Fletcher's *Christ's Triumph after Death* 13 (Hughes).

The theme of life and fruitfulness associated with angelic stars is powerfully reinforced by the three infracontexts in Spenser, Crashaw, and Andreini previously mentioned and by their probable basis in Manilius' *Astronomicon* (Richardson). In *An Hymne of Heavenly Beautie* 50ff. the poet asks his reader to lift his eye to the firmament, 'The house of blessed Gods, which men call *Skye,* / All sowd with glistring stars more thicke than grasse', all surpassing each other in beauty. The firmament is more beautiful, with its sun and moon, than anything in the visible universe. If abundance of celestial beauty is the basic theme in Spenser, abundance of spiritual love is the corresponding theme in the second stanza of Crashaw's *The Weeper,* on Magdalene's eyes:

> Heauens thy fair eyes be;
> Heauens of euer-falling starres.
> 'Tis seed-time still with thee
> And starres thou sow'st, whose haruest dares
> Promise the earth to counter shine
> Whateuer makes heaun's forhead fine.

Again in *L'Adamo* 1798ff., in the speech in which Adam explains to Eve that God put the forbidden apple among other fruits in the garden to test man's will, God is ''l celeste Cultore, / Che i bei campi del Cielo / Seminati ha di stelle'. The themes of Spenser's *Hymne* and Crashaw's *Weeper* would seem to merge here, at the same time opening out towards the ''heaven's field'' motif, a group represented e.g. by *Aen.* 6.887, where souls are said to dwell 'aeris in campis latis', and subsequently in Ovid, Manilius, Martianus Capella, Tasso, Marino and Crashaw.[8] All instances suggest the heavens as an enormous expanse where souls and spirits range unhampered and unrestrained by fetters of time or space.

These Renaissance infracontexts thus reinforce and amplify the surface context in Milton, but this process is concluded and climaxed by the deepest infracontext, that in the *Astronomicon,* end of book 5 (ll. 723ff.). This is where the poet depicts the enormous host of stars in the highest part of heaven, visible when the sun has travelled through all the signs, closing one year and beginning a new one. The observer can then see the entire firmament densely sown with celestial seeds, countless as flowers or grains of sand on the beach:

> Tunc conferta licet Caeli fulgentia templa
> Cernere seminibus densis, totisque micare
> Floribus, vt siccae currunt per littus arenae.

[8] See *Sospetto d'Herode. A Commentary,* p. 176.

"Milton", thought Richardson, "seems to have read *Conserta,* much more Beautiful, and his Reading to be Prov'd by the Word *Densis,* which would be Unnecessary, and even Bad with the Word *conferta*" (p. 326). However, 'conferta', "teeming with", will do quite well and easily corresponds, strengthened by 'densis', to 'thick' in the two *PL* passages and that in Spenser's *Hymne.*[9] The overtones provided by the Renaissance infracontexts on the sowing of stars are strongly amplified by the Silver Latin poet's work. The colossal number of stars, the profusion of the celestial seeds, is illustrated still further in the next few lines (726ff.). The celestial fires are more numerous even than endless waves and falling leaves in the forests:

> Nec spatium stellis, Mundo nec cedere summam:
> Sed quot eant semper nascentes aequore fluctus,
> Quot delapsa cadant foliorum millia siluis,
> Amplius hoc ignes numero volitare per orbem,

which by contrast association suggests the falling-leaves passages in Homer, Apollonius Rhodius, Virgil, Dante, Tasso, and others: infracontexts heightening the theme of transitoriness in the passage on the defeated and fallen angels in 1.302ff. This contrast association leads over to the idea of dissimilarity on a more vital point: the intense luminosity of the angels-stars is set off sharply against the dim obscurity of Hades and the 'darkness visible' of the dwelling-places of the dead and the damned. Contact between infracontexts on a submerged level thus again heightens the contrast between the brief description of the blessed angels in the presence of God in the third book of *PL,* and the elaborate description of the fallen angels with their defeated leader in the first book. In between these levels lies the stratum of Spenser's, Crashaw's, and Andreini's passages reinforcing the Life-abundance-grace theme in book 3 and thus as it were underscoring that passage in its contact with the infernal passage in book 1. To all this must be added a final effect conveyed by Manilius' poem: the very end of the fifth book, a superb finale to the entire poem, consists of a comparison between the stellar world and a well-ordered and stable society, where every class and rank occupies its proper place. In this civic organisation the people, the lesser stars, are described as the very foundation of the state in their countless number and their latent power: if these stars had power in proportion to their number, the universe would be unable to support the blaze and fire:

[9] One MS of the *Astronomicon* actually provides 'conserta', which is not adopted in any post-Scaliger edition known to me.

Maximus est populus, summo qui culmine fertur,
Cui si pro numero vires Natura dedisset,
Ipse suas aether flammas sufferre nequiret,
Totus et accenso Mundus flagraret Olympo.

The idea of the order and harmony of the angelic world is heightened by these lines, all the more conspicuous by their position in the poem, and another double contrast is brought to the fore: that between this well-organized universe and the disordered rout of the fallen rebels, and that between the apathy and impotence of the devils and the tremendous hidden force of the angels, servants of God. The various levels of this entire structure, horizontal and vertical, from the surface context in *PL* down to the deepest infracontext in the *Astronomicon,* are interwoven and cannot all be perceived at the same time. But even when grasped only fragmentarily and successively instead of wholly and simultaneously, they do something important to the meaning of Milton's text.

2. Angelic Choir, God Unclouded, and Mystical Dance

There might have been a certain amount of monotony in the other scenes with the good angels if it had not been for the contrasts with the infernal scenes and the additions made by the infracontexts to the significance. The motif of the dance-and/or-choir of the angels in 3.579f., 5.160ff., and 5.618ff. is closely connected with the identification angels-stars referred to previously. It was a commonplace from classical antiquity to the Renaissance that the entire cosmos moves in harmony and unison, that as Tillyard says "the created universe was itself in a state of music, that it was one perpetual dance".[1] The music was the "music of the spheres", allegedly of Pythagorean origin and described by countless authorities on cosmology.[2] The movements of the stars inspire the idea of a dancing universe; the stars mark time and pace as seasons and generations revolve in cyclic motions: the constellations move 'Thir starry dance in numbers that compute/ Days, months, and years' (*PL* 3.579f.). In the *Timaeus* 40 C Plato describes the whole cosmic machinery in motion; the never-changing stars take part in a dance and always, divine

[1] *The Elizabethan World Picture,* London, 1960, p. 94. In his last chapter, "The Cosmic Dance", Tillyard provides a brief but informative account of the motif in the English Renaissance.
[2] See for example Svendsen, pp. 60f.

and eternal living beings as they are, revolve in the same way. From this account it is not a far cry to some biblical passages and some commentaries by Church Fathers and early Christian poets. Annotating *PL* 5.618ff.,

> That day ... they spent
> In song and dance about the sacred Hill,
> Mystical dance,

Hume pointed out the similarity between Pythagorean ideas and *Job* 38.37 'concentum caeli quis dormire faciet'. Clemens Romanus (*Ep. ad Cor.* 20.3),[3] like the author of the *Timaeus,* describes sun, moon, and stars moving in harmony according to God's command without any irregularity in their established orbits. The reason for the choir and/or concentric movement is the yearning on the part of the angelic host to praise and worship the Lord. Dracontius in the *De Laudibus Dei* 2.208ff. represents angels of different orders and stars praising God side by side:

> Te seraphim cherubimque deum dominumque precantur,
> te chorus angelicus, laudans exercitus, orat,
> thronus et incessans humili te uoce precatur;
> agmina te astrorum, te signa et sidera laudant
> auctorem confessa suum, te fulmen adorat;

and the host of worshippers is joined in the subsequent lines by various manifestations of the elements. Annotating *Rev.* 5.11–12 'Et vidi, et audiui vocem angelorum multorum in circuitu throni, et animalium et seniorum; et erat numerus eorum millia millium, 12 dicentium voce magna, Dignus est Agnus qui occisus est, accipere virtutem, et diuinitatem, et sapientiam, et fortitudinem, et honorem, et gloriam, et benedictionem', some Church Fathers stress various reasons for the jubilation: God is the source and root of all good (Cassianus, Rupert);[4] the angels bear testimony to Incarnation, Nativity, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension (Anselm Laud.).[5] To others the angelic choir symbolizes the Church or the guardians of the Church (Ambrose, Alcuin, Strabo, Arethas Caesareae).[6] The numerous accounts of angelic stellar dances in the *Paradiso*[7] indicate that the dances are set in motion by Love, that the dancers are contemplating Truth, and that the dances move round a

[3] *PG* 1.249.
[4] *Compl. in Apocal.* (*PL* 70.1409); *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 169.931).
[5] *Enarr. in Apocal.* (*PL* 162.1521).
[6] *In Apocal. Expos.* (*PL* 17.811), *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 100.1124), *Glossa Ord. Apocal. Ioh.* (*PL* 114.721), *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PG* 106.609).
[7] *Par.* 13.16ff., 14.19ff., 24.10ff., 27.106ff., 28.28ff., 98ff., and particularly 27.106ff.

Divine Centre. The iconographic celestial-dance tradition is strong: artists like Raphael, Zuccari, Tintoretto and Guido Reni reinforce the infracontextual pattern by magnificent representations of orbs and globes of angels surrounding the Godhead (Frye pp. 184f.).

The basis for the "angels' choir" thus falls, roughly and thematically, into two parts or groups: descriptions of stars and/or divinities producing a wonderful musical harmony and describing intricate though regular movements in space; and descriptions of worshipping divinities-angels moving round a centre variously defined as a prime mover, Creator, or "The One". *PL* 5.160ff. is based on the latter group. The Lord is 'To us invisible or dimly seen / In these thy lowest works', but his creation reveals his goodness and divine power; beyond that,

> Speak yee who best can tell, ye Sons of Light,
> Angels, for yee behold him, and with songs
> And choral symphonies, Day without Night,
> Circle his Throne rejoycing, yee in Heav'n;
> On Earth join all ye Creatures to extoll
> Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.

The angels' witness based on their ability to see the Lord is contrasted with his invisibility. Infracontexts here are complex, since there are degrees of invisibility which are in varying contrasts to the visibility theme. These contrasts, again, are overt or submerged. The overt and horizontal contrasts are naturally sharp and have to do with the inability of the punished apostate angels to see God – a condition that results from these angels' obeying Satan's rebellious speech in 5.772ff. Ll. 160ff. thus by contrast evoke 1.72ff., where the fallen angels' 'portion' is set 'As farr remov'd from God and light of Heav'n / As from the Center thrice to th' utmost Pole' – the much-disputed geometrical measures stressing the irreparably broken contact between God and the rebels; and 5.613f., where God describes the punishment in store for any angel who disobeys his orders as regards worship of the Son: 'Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls / Into utter darkness, deep ingulft, his place / Ordaind without redemption, without end'. For the beatific vision and the divine light in Paradise the fallen angels have substituted the impenetrable gloom of Hell. The contrast recurs in many IC texts and may have become a fixed macroformula. In *PL* 1.244f. Satan complains that he and his followers have exchanged 'this mournful gloom / For that celestial light'; Tasso in *Gl* 4.10 makes Pluto accuse the celestial victor:

> Et in vece del dì sereno, e puro,
> De l'aureo sol, de gli stellati giri,
> N'hà quì rinchiusi in questo abisso oscuro.

The lines on the 'darkness visible' in the first book with its infracontextual basis – blindness as punishment – make the good angels' perspicacity in God's presence stand out all the more clearly. The good angels' ability to see God is affirmed by several Fathers. Annotating *Rev.* 22.4 'Serui eius seruient illi. Et videbunt faciem eius; et nomen eius in frontibus eorum', Ambrose dwells on the bliss of the celestial beholders: 'Sed omnem dulcedinem atque suavitatem illud transcendet, quod videbunt Deum facie ad faciem'.[8] Similarly, according to Gregory the supreme bliss of the angels consists in beholding God: 'In hac aeternitate angeli sancti vino sapientiae inebriantur, dum ipsum Deum facie ad faciem videntes, omni voluptate spiritali satiantur'.[9] In *Par.* 29.76ff. Beatrice says the angelic substances, once they have enjoyed the sight of God, never turn their glance away from him. Basil and Augustine, like Milton, distinguish between man and angel when expounding *Matt.* 18.10 on the little ones who as angels will behold the face of the Lord: unlike them, no man will see God's face and live. Aquinas similarly observes that no man beholds the essence of God unless he is separated from this mortal existence.[10]

God unveiled and unobscured to the view of the Son is the subject of 10.63ff., after God's speech to the angels confirming his prediction of the Fall and promising redemption through the Son:

> So spake the Father, and unfoulding bright
> Toward the right hand his Glorie, on the Son
> Blaz'd forth unclouded Deitie; hee full
> Resplendent all his Father manifest
> Expressd, and thus divinely answerd milde.

Hume and later editors refer to *Hebr.* 1.3 on the Son through whom God has spoken "in these last days": 'Who being the brightnesse of his glory, and the expresse image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when hee had by himselfe purged our sinnes, sate down on the right hand of the Maiestie on high'. Fowler also refers to other passages in *PL* said to be based on *Hebr.* 1.3:3.138ff. 'The Son of God was seen / Most glorious, in him all his Father shon / Substantially exprest'; 3.384ff. 'Begott'n Son, Divine Similitude, / In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud / Made visible, th' Almighty Father shines'; 6.680ff. 'Effulgence of my Glorie, Son belov'd, / Son in whose face invisible is beheld / Visibly, what by Deitie I am'; and 6.719ff. '... on

[8] *In Apocal. Expos.* 22.4 (*PL* 17.963).
[9] *Super Cant. Cant. Expos.* 2.5 (*PL* 79.495).
[10] Basil, *Homilia in Ps.* 33.11 (*PG* 29.377); Augustine, *Civ. Dei* 22.29.1 (*PL* 41.797); Aquinas, *Summa* Ia, *qu.* 12, *art.* 11.

his Son with Rayes direct / Shon full: hee all his Father full exprest / Ineffably into his face receiv'd'. All these surface contexts are variations on the same theme: God expressed and made visible by the image of the Son (see p. 141 below). The lines in 6.719ff. are of course a close parallel to 10.65f. 'Hee full / Resplendent all his Father manifest / Expressd', while 3.385 on the 'count'nance, without cloud, / Made visible' suggests the 'unclouded Deitie' in 10.65. In addition to *Hebr.* 1.3 a relevant biblical infracontext, as pointed out by Upton annotating 6.681f. (Todd), is *Col.* 1.15 ['his deare Sonne] ... Who is the image of the inuisible God, the first borne of euery creature'. In *Col.* 1.15 'image' is εἰκὼν, in *Hebr.* 1.3 χαρακτὴρ: literally "likeness" and "impression of a graven seal", respectively. The full meaning of the cloud metaphors in 3.385 and 10.65, however, is not apparent except in relation to other surface contexts and to other infracontexts beyond the basic biblical verses. 'Unclouded Deitie' and 'without cloud / Made visible, th' Almighty Father shines' suggest St. Bernard's way of explaining the Incarnation as a cloud tempering and absorbing the divine light which is unbearable to human eyes: 'Merito quidem solemnitatis et laetitiae dies agitur, quando sol ille supercaelestis, sol iustitiae, nostris se praesentavit obtutibus, nube carnis et mortalitatis sacco fulgorem suum et lucem temperans inaccessibilem'.[11] God is fully visible to Christ without any intermediate form, but not to humans. By extracontextual association, the cloud in 'unclouded', 'without cloud' moves the subject of our attention a step ahead, up to the fulfilment of God's promise, Salvation through Christ.

God's invisibility and incomprehensibility to man is thus a common motif, but the idea of the divinity's invisibility even to the angels, though rarer, is clearly expressed in *PL* 3.375ff., from which in their turn other links extend to different infracontexts. Not even the highest rank of angels can look directly on God:

> Fountain of Light, thy self invisible
> Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit'st
> Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
> The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
> Drawn round about thee like a radiant Shrine,
> Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appeer,
> Yet dazle Heav'n, that brightest Seraphim
> Approach not, but with both wings veil thir eyes.

The same effect on the celestial nobility is described in *GL* 9.57 (see p. 44 above), where Tasso says about God and the angels, 'Quiui (in

[11] *In Ascensione Domini, Sermo* 4 (*PL* 183.309).

Heaven) ei così nel suo splendor s'inuolue / Che v'abbaglian la vista anco i più degni', lines that suggest Crashaw's on the Nativity in the *Sospetto d'Herode* 22, 'That the Great Angell-blinding light should shrinke / His blaze, to shine in a poore Shepheards eye'. Some Greek patristic commentators support the tradition, most emphatically perhaps Chrysostom speaking of God,[12] invisible to Seraphim, incomprehensible to Cherubim, and "unseen by Principalities, Powers, Virtues and all creatures without exception; only the Son and the Holy Ghost know him". Commentators on 3.375ff. refer to various biblical passages on the invisibility of God; the most important from an infracontextual point of view being *Is.* 6.2 '[I saw also the Lord sitting vpon a throne] ... Aboue it stood the Seraphims: each one had sixe wings, with twaine he couered his face, and with twaine hee couered his feete, and with twaine he did flie', the first part of which may have directly coloured *PL* 3.382 (the same phrase in *Exod.* 3.6: 'And Moses hid his face: for he was afraid to looke vpon God'). To these verses on God's invisibility to the angels may be added Enoch's vision in *1 Enoch* 14.21: "None of the angels could enter and could behold the face of the Honoured and Glorious One and no flesh could behold him". The cloud which God "draws round about him" in *PL* 3.378f. also recalls the cloud out of which God speaks on Mount Sinai (*Exod.* 24.16f., Hughes). The theme of intense light traditionally merges with the theme of darkness, which in celestial contexts means excess of light as explained in Greek patristic commentary (Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa). When for instance Moses in *Exod.* 20.21, after God has announced the Ten Commandments, 'drew neere vnto the thicke darkenes, where God was', he is facing God wrapped in supraluminous light.[13] All these infracontexts and others of a similar content which suggest them – for instance Spenser's *Hymne of Heavenly Beautie* 178 (Thyer) and Marino's *Gerusalemme Distrutta* 7.4 and 9 (Walker) – operate as an effective foil which makes the lines in 10.63ff. as it were stand out, dazzling with intense light. Unbearable to man and to angels of even the highest rank, it blazes forth for a moment in a tremendous spark between Father and Son. Without the infracontextual background, the voltage of Milton's lines would be lower and the deeper meaning of 'Blaz'd forth unclouded Deitie' would hardly come to the fore. The total pattern of the words 'bright' – 'Glorie' – 'Blaz'd forth unclouded' – 'Resplendent' adds to the impact of the lines, as does a non-Christian

[12] *De Incomprehensibili Dei Natura* 3 (*PG* 48.720). Also Origen, on whose views of the matter see H. F. Robins, *If This Be Heresy, A Study of Milton and Origen*, p. 68. See also L. A. Jacobus on God as perceptible even to the angels through Christ only (*Sudden Apprehension, Aspects of Knowledge in 'Paradise Lost'*, The Hague-Paris, 1976, pp. 186f.).

[13] See M. M. Davy, *Initiation à la Symbolique romane*, p. 53 and notes.

infracontext connecting with 'unclouded': the *Odyssey* 6.41ff. This is where Homer in a few compressed lines describes Olympus, whither Athene is winging her way: unmoved by changing weather, dazzlingly white, the abode of the blissful gods, its air clear and cloudless, αἴθρη ἀνέφελος.

As in the case of so many other accounts of the ordered world of Heaven or Paradise, overt or submerged links with other contexts, both surface and infra, bring out contrasts with the chaotic world of evil. Lines 10.63ff., 3.375f. 'Fountain of Light, thy self invisible / Amidst the glorious brightness' and 6.681f., on the invisible Deity beheld visibly, are in the sharpest possible horizontal contrast to the account of the hell-fire in 1.62f.: invisible light as against darkness visible.[14] Again, the blindness of man and/or the angels is in absolute contrast to the blindness of the damned. Blindness as part of damnation is due to the damned being irrevocably shut off from God. Blindness as part of the beatific state is due to the blessed being overpowered and dazzled by the insupportable light of the divine, and the motif is perhaps to be regarded as a figure of thought: if not even the angels can behold God, how great his majesty, how intense the divine effulgence. In the one case, the blind are too far from God; in the other, blindness is due to an excess of divine light.

In 5.160ff, on the motif of "dance-worshipping choir", two groups of infracontextual formulae stand out as homogeneous, in varying degrees suggested by the phrases 'Day without Night' in 162 and 'Him first, him last, him midst, and without end' in 165. The first of these is looser and more variable than the second. The first group is biblical and made up of a matrix of phrases like *Is.* 60.20, on the coming splendour of Sion, 'Non occidet ultra sol tuus, et luna tua non minuetur'; *Zach.* 14.7 on Christ's kingdom prophesied, 'Et erit dies vna quae nota est Domino, non dies neque nox; et in tempore vesperi erit lux'; *Rev.* 21.25 on Christ's coming and eternity, the new Jerusalem, 'Et portae eius non claudentur per diem, nox enim non erit illic'; and *Rev.* 22.5, same theme, 'Et nox ultra non erit, et non egebunt lumine lucernae, neque lumine solis, quoniam Dominus Deus illuminat illos'. These infracontexts, forming part of a simple code, thus confer scriptural authority on Milton's words in 1.162 and endow them, incorporated into a description of angels praising God, with additional significance by suggesting the promise of Salvation and the splendour of Redemption.

The other, longer, adverbial phrase qualifying the angels' praise, 'Him first, him last, him midst, and without end', on the other hand, is almost entirely of classical origin. Infracontexts contain a set of formulae which recur in almost identical form in a number of authors and correspond

[14] See Hughes, *Ten Perspectives on Milton,* pp. 66f., and p. 44 above.

directly to the trimembered phrase in Milton, forming a narrow matrix. Newton refers to Theocritus 17.3, Todd to Theognis 1.3 and an Orphic Gnomic poem, περὶ θεοῦ. Annotators of these poems in their turn refer to similar formulae in other Greek authors. These infracontexts all centre on the supreme power of gods and kings. Theocritus says Zeus is praised first and last when man turns to the King of Heaven; Ptolemy, first, last, and midmost, when an earthly being is extolled. Newton points out that Milton has improved the theme "by adding *and without end!,* as he is celebrating a God, and Theocritus only a man". Theognis promises to celebrate Apollo in song "first, last, and midmost" (... πρῶτόν τε, καὶ ὕστατον, ἔντε μέσοισι / ἀείσω). Yet another poet, Aratus, after pointing out at the beginning of his *Phaenomena* that Zeus is the creator of everything and the organizer of the stellar orbits, adds (1.14) that men therefore praise him first and last (πρῶτόν τε καὶ ὕστατον). The Orphic poem[15] mentioned by Todd describes God's omnipotence in all its aspects: without descending from the celestial sphere God moves the entire world ordering its beginning, middle, and end. Another instance of the formula, and one of great authority, occurs in Plato's *Laws* (4.715 E), where in the Athenian's fictitious speech to the immigrants Justice is described as the constant companion of a divinity who according to ancient tradition is the great orderer of the universe, upholding the beginning, the end, and the middle of all that exists. The great homogeneity of the Greek formula[16] – further supported by *Rev.* 1.8 Ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ, λέγει κύριος ὁ θεός – and the invariable reference in the infracontexts to God as the great upholder of an ordered universe, lay heavy stress on Milton's tripartite phrase and its suggestion of universal law and divine power. At the same time, a connection is established between the wider significance of the infracontexts and the theme of harmonious music and concentric movement around God as stressed in *PL* 161ff. – a celestial and wholly perfect universe. The vertically established meaning thus moves on two intersecting planes. Against the symmetry and harmony evoked by the system made up of these themes and formulae, the infernal asymmetry and disorder as depicted in books 1 and 2 with their infracontexts stand out in sharp relief.

The themes of angelic praise of the Lord and of concentric movement and harmony are further stressed by the continuation in 166ff., where in succession morning-evening star, sun, moon, the other planets, elements, mists and exhalations, winds, trees, plants, fountains, birds and

[15] Available in *Orphica,* ed. Hermann, Lipsiae, 1805, p. 451; also in Eusebius, *Praepar. Evang.* 13.12 (*PG* 21.1097ff.).

[16] The instance in Ben Jonson's *Masque of Augures* 444 quoted by Fowler is an apt imitation of the formula.

other creatures, manifestations of sublunar existence (166–204), are asked to extol the Godhead. Infracontexts lend various additional meanings particularly to the lines on Venus, the sun, the planets, and the trees. Besides this explicit worship theme there is an indirect suggestion, established merely with the aid of formal arrangement, of an enormous 'chorus' organized in circles from the stellar centre outwards all the way to the periphery with its transitory manifestations of sublunar existence, 'Yee that in Waters glide, and yee that walk / The Earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep'. Thus explicit and implicit meanings again coalesce, literally enclosing the same powerful centre.

While the main part of the explicit semantic content of 5.160ff. is bound up with the worship theme and a minor part with the dance theme, the opposite is true of 5.618ff. After God's speech announcing the begetting of the Son and directing that he be worshipped by all the angels,

> All seemd well pleas'd, all seemd, but were not all.
> That day, as other solem dayes, they spent
> In song and dance about the sacred Hill,
> Mystical dance, which yonder starrie Spheare
> Of Planets and of fixt in all her Wheeles
> Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
> Eccentric, intervolv'd, yet regular
> Then most, when most irregular they seem:
> And in thir motions harmonie Divine
> So smooths her charming tones, that Gods own ear
> List'ns delighted.

Fowler feels that Milton's intention in this paragraph "seems to be a positive presentation of obedience, to offset the negative presentation in Satan's speech, ll. 787–99". But this function seems to be relevant rather in the case of 5.160ff., which is coloured mainly by the worship theme. If 5.160ff. contrasts with Satan's speech inciting his followers to disobedience and with the passages in 1.72ff. and 5.612ff. on punishment (the horror of eternal darkness and the inability to see God), the dance-and-choir description in 5.618ff. rather operates by contrast to, 1) the account of the scattered barren leaves strowing the brooks in Vallombrosa and the scattered sedge afloat on the storm-wrecked Red Sea (1.301ff.), dead debris no longer part of organized organic life; 2) the "pitchy cloud of locusts", larger than the deluge of disordered barbarian hordes from the north (1.340ff.); 3) the crowd of devils compared to bees flying 'to and fro' (1.768ff.); 4) the apostate angels' listlessness, depression and divided intentions in 2.521ff. and the laborious and disorganized exploration of the forbidding and desolate infernal landscape 571ff. ('Thus roving on / In confus'd march forlorn, th'adventrous Bands / With shuddring horror

pale, and eyes agast ... found / No rest', 614ff.); 5) the routed rebels in disorder at the end of the battle in Heaven (6.838ff.); and 6) the account of Satan's infernal audience turned to serpents with limited power of movement (10.538ff.). All these accounts and episodes provide the very opposite of the order and harmony suggested in 5.618ff.

At the same time various details in ll. 618ff. link up horizontally and vertically with other particulars. A set of words like 'fixt', 'mystical dance', 'starrie Spheare', 'Wheeles', 'harmonie Divine' make up pronounced contrasts to 'scatterd', 'fierce Winds', 'brok'n Chariot Wheels', 'Deluge' in the account of the defeated angels in the first book; while words which might seem to indicate dissonance – 'mazes intricate', 'Eccentric', 'intervolv'd' – have the opposite function. The emphatic 'seem' in 624 links up with the double 'seemd' in 617, but the resemblance indicates contrast – 'seemd' implies discord and disunion, while 'seem' lays stress on the essential harmony, intact beneath a surface disordered only in the minds of the uninitiated. Again, the fundamental order behind seeming disorder is suggested by the tautly symmetrical chiasmus 'regular most – most irregular'. Also 'eccentric', as suggested by Hughes and Fowler, has the same astronomical application as in 3.575 and 8.83 (without the same centre of revolution but from a higher standpoint the mazes are the very opposite of 'eccentric'). Simultaneously the word has the meaning suggested by its being coordinate with 'intricate' and 'intervolv'd': "odd", "whimsical" (first instance in *OED* 1685) – but only to the human eye. 'Maze' would seem to have the same meaning as it has in Ben Jonson's *Histriomastix* 3.232: "a winding movement, esp. in a dance" (*OED* 4C).

As to vertical connections, one is suggested by contact with an infracontext in the *Purgatorio*. The words 'dance about the sacred Hill' in 619 obliquely recall the sequence 'i giron del sacro monte' in an entirely different episode in *Purg.* 19.38: morning has come on the third day in Purgatory, and the two travellers continue their journey into the fifth circle with the new sun behind them:

> Su mi leuai; e tutti eran già pieni
> Del'alto dì, i giron del sacro monte;
> Et andauam col Sol nuouo ale reni.

This infracontext in contact with the surface context operates *auxesis*-wise, as a step towards greater intensification in two respects: Dante and Virgil are still in Purgatory, the dance in Heaven takes place in Paradise; Dante and Virgil are on the move towards a goal still far ahead, while the angels are involved in a concentric movement, a perfect motion utterly and fundamentally different from any laborious striving towards a destination.

Commentators on the lines dealing with the seemingly irregular regularity of the celestial dance refer to various infracontexts, the most important being Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* 5.24.69 (first pointed out by Hume). This is where the wise man enjoys contemplating the firmament and the movements of innumerable stars, the five planets and the sun and moon, all moving orbits assigned to them, 'quorum vagi motus rata tamen et certa sui cursus spatia definiant', "whose movements, though irregular, set fixed and well-defined limits to their courses". Cicero goes on to explain that such observations as these led the ancients to extend the bounds of their knowledge, to enquire into the riddles of the universe, and to ponder the questions of life, death, and the cycle of nature. While the first half of this infracontext thus deals with the wise man's intellectual pleasures, the second half is expanded into the wider motif of the highest levels of knowledge, which of course goes well with the theme of the celestial dance and the immanent laws which govern it. Another, later infracontext in *GL* 9.61 (Hume) is close at hand thematically: God orders the Archangel Michael to descend to the earth, forbid the devils to interfere with the battle between Christians and heathens, and send them back to the Underworld. During his descent from the supralunar to the sublunar world he sees Saturn and Jupiter revolving to the left, 'e gli altri (five planets), i quali esser non ponno erranti, / S'angelica uirtù gl'informa, e moue'. The next stanza depicts Michael dispersing darkness and horrors with his luminous wings and countenance. 'Non ponno erranti' operates much as 'vagi' does in Cicero's lines: superficially they may seem irregular, but are really governed by divine powers. To Cicero's and Tasso's accounts Th. Greene adds the lines in Marino's *Strage degli Innocenti* 2.94, which describe the angel descending to warn the Holy Family of the impending danger. He leaves the immobile eternal sphere and passes 'de corpi lubrici, e correnti / Gli obliqui balli, e lieui giri, e i lenti' – words adumbrating "the spiralling Baroque cosmos" to which Milton compares the angels' dance.[17] These infracontexts thus invest Milton's lines on the higher kind of astronomical regularity with overtones stratifying the meaning of the surface context and intensifying its lofty character: the lines suggest the summit of knowledge, capable of discerning regularity behind apparent deviation, and at the same time the divine harmony preserving the order of the universe and defending it against evil disorder. And these infracontexts, emphasizing the themes of order and perfection, are again in sharp contrast to those which unfold underneath the autumnal leaves section in book 1, suggesting disorder and transitoriness. The polarity, as it were,

[17] Thomas Greene, *The Descent from Heaven. A Study in Epic Continuity*, New Haven and London, 1963, p. 248.

reaches its climax at the infracontextual level.

It is a fitting end to the paragraph on the celestial dance that the motif of the Pythagorean Music of the Spheres – analysed in all its details and implications by S.K. Heninger[18] – should come quite clearly to the fore in this part of the surface context. The apparent irregularity is so irrelevant and the consonant regularity so perfect that a harmony is produced, enchanting even to God. The last lines, to use an analogy from music, wind up the account of the dance like a kind of effective coda. The function of the infracontexts depends on this very feature. Todd refers to a passage in Philo Judaeus (*De Somniis* 1.625) on the celestial harmony: "And heaven always sings melodies, in accordance with the movements of the bodies contained in it, producing an all-musical harmony". The passage forms part of a paragraph in which Philo explains why the heaven and the mind are capable of praising the perfection of the Father who created them. Still, Philo has nothing to say about God's rapt delight in the music of the spheres. According to Hume, the harmonious perfection of the Heaven "so tunes her charming notes, that God himself, pleased and delighted, pronounced them good, *Gen.* 1.18", perhaps a somewhat fanciful paraphrase of the Bible's words on God's placing the two great lights and the stars in the firmament to regulate day and night, 'Et vidit Deus quod esset bonum'. The real force of the surface context seems to emerge through contact with a passage somewhat similar to the lines in *Genesis* (a similarity observed by various commentators on Plato) – the *Timaeus* 37 C, on the Creator watching the result of the act of creation: "When the Father who created this world saw it in motion and alive, an image of the eternal gods, he was delighted and pleased, and began to make plans for making it still more like its model".[19] This infracontext on God's joy at the creation indicates the very summit of perfection. In Plato's text the double expression for enjoyment ("delighted" – "pleased"), ἠγάσθη and εὐφρανθείς, puts strong stress on 'delighted' in the surface context and intensifies its meaning. As Fowler says, 'charming' has the sense "magical" rather than "pleasant" – a meaning which fits in well with 'delighted' as intensified by the Platonic infracontext. 'Magical', however, needs some modification, since 'charming' qualifying 'tones' is exactly synonymous with κηλέω, "charm or bewitch by music". There is thus a very marked antithesis between 'charm' in 5.626 and in 1.787 – the contrast between divine enchantment and infernal witchcraft.[20]

[18] *Touches of Sweet Harmony. Pythagorean Cosmology and Renaissance Poetics*, San Marino, 1974.

[19] See Heninger, p. 215.

[20] On "good" miracles performed by God against nature see Patrides, *Milton and the Christian Tradition*, pp. 89f.

3. Angelic Applause

The angels'-applause sections in 3.344ff. and 5.583ff. must be seen against the background of the elaborate instances of the "high style" in the devils'-applause sections in the first two books. In a general way the contrast has been commented on by many critics. There are numerous points which link up with corresponding details in the infernal applause paragraphs in 1.535ff. and 2.477ff., and the connections are affected in various ways by infracontexts. After the speech in which God announces the Son's exaltation and orders the angels to worship him, his audience exults and pays enthusiastic homage. Lines 344ff.,

> No sooner had th' Almighty ceas't, but all
> The multitude of Angels with a shout
> Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
> As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heav'n rung
> With Jubilee, and loud Hosanna's filld
> Th' eternal Regions,

obviously recall 1.541ff. on the effect of the raising of the imperial ensign and the blowing of the trumpet in the first book,

> At which the universal Host upsent
> A shout that tore Hells Concave, and beyond
> Frighted the Reign of *Chaos* and old Night.

Various details magnify the angel-devil differences, while matching at the same time the elevated level of style: 'Sweet / As from blest voices' distinguishing the angelic shout from the infernal; the rare and high-style word 'Jubilee', "exultation" with its additional suggestion of the meaning of the word in *Leviticus* 25, on the solemn feast celebrating the great jubilee year in Israel, with releasing of slaves and reverting of property (Fowler). Also, Dunster points out the similarity between God's words on Creation in *Job* 38.7 'When the morning starres sang together, and all the sonnes of God shouted for ioy' and 'with a shout ... As from blest voices, uttering joy'. It could also be argued that the phrase 'numbers without number' adds to the loftiness of style, being an unusual and probably *genus grande* variation on the common phrase "numbers numberless" found in *PR* 3.310 and frequently elsewhere, in classical and Renaissance poetry. There is yet another infracontext to be considered, that in *Par.* 28.94ff., describing the angels' singing after Dante has been enlightened by Beatrice on the nature of the congruence of the celestial hierarchies and spheres, and has seen how the circles emit countless blazing sparks:

Io sentiua osannar di choro in choro
Al punto fisso, che li tiene al'vbi,
E terrà sempre, nel qual sempre foro.

The entire context of harmony and dazzling celestial light in Dante, as well as the singing of Hosanna by concentric rings of angels, are suggested by Milton's 'and loud Hosanna's filld / Th' eternal Regions'. God, the fixed point in this celestial universe, keeps every singing hierarchy in its place (its *ubi*) – a relationship of harmony and symmetry radically different from the connection between the infernal host and their leader urging them to acclaim his plan to thwart God's designs.

From a syntactical point of view, there is the same similarity as on other points to 2.285ff., and simultaneously various differences. There has been a good deal of discussion about the way to construe lines 345ff. Bentley added some verbs to save the grammar; Pearce took the 'multitude of Angels ... uttering joy' as an "ablative case absolutely"; Lord Monboddo, reluctant to accept this because it would make "the connection too remote", supplied 'shouted' or 'received', "so that the full construction will be, 'The Angels shouted with a shout', or 'received', viz. what God had said, 'with a shout loud as from numbers without number'". Empson referred without enthusiasm to Pearce's proposal,[1] so did Adams, who suggested another alternative, taking 'The multitude of angels' as the subject, and 'Heav'n' as the object, of the verb 'rung'.[2] Fowler, apparently accepting Pearce's suggestion, comments on the "unusually sustained syntactic breath of the word group in absolute construction", making the following main verb "resoundingly emphatic". Now all these different explanations from Pearce onwards, each one of which is syntactically possible, indirectly stress the main point here: that a discussion about how to construe the lines ever arose at all. The point is not whether this or that construction is the correct one, but that the syntactical pattern is complex enough to make the reader puzzle over it. This is another instance of the "difficulty" or *asprezza* characteristic of the great style, and represents a further degree of difficulty as compared with the anacoluthic *hirmus* construction in 2.285ff. The syntactic pattern in 3.344ff. is thus at the same time an instance of *auxesis*, intensification, as befits a paragraph of even greater solemnity and sublimity. The destructive note of 1.541f. 'At which the universal Host upsent / A shout that tore Hells Concave' corresponds to the peaceful one of the 'multitude of Angels with a shout' and 'Heav'n rung / With Jubilee'; just as 'Frighted the Reign of *Chaos* and old Night' is antithetic

[1] *Some Versions of Pastoral*, p. 160.
[2] *Ikon: John Milton and the Modern Critics*, p. 106.

to 'loud Hosanna's fill'd / Th' eternal Regions'. There is thus the same difference on points of detail here as there is between 2.510ff., bad angels surrounding leader, and 3.60ff., good angels surrounding God.

There is a close verbal correspondence between the continuation in 3.349f. 'lowly reverent / Towards either Throne they bow' and 2.477f. 'Towards him they bend / With awful reverence prone', but infracontexts, though high style in both cases, channel the associations evoked by the lines in different directions. As regards 2.477ff. the seemingly irreconcilable infracontext in *Psyche* 1.45 on the devils who 'Their Snaky-heads thrice bowing to the floor / Take their damn'd leave' and in the *Theogony* 91f., on the reverence shown to a monarch superior in wisdom, have in common the fact that both emphasize submission to the leader and obedience to his demands. Infracontexts suggested by 3.349f. of course reinforce a similar meaning, but beyond this open up wider semantic areas. Newton adduced *Rev.* 4.10f. as a parallel to Milton's lines, and this is naturally the nearest infracontext: 10 'The foure and twentie Elders fall downe before him that sate on the Throne, and worship him that liueth for euer and euer, and cast their crownes before the Throne, saying, 11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receiue glorie, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created'. This idea of worship of God as the creator and upholder of life, in fact as the principle of Life itself, is vertically supplemented by patristic and later infracontexts expounding the meaning of the biblical crowns cast before the throne (... βαλοῦσιν τοὺς στεφάνους αὐτῶν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου 'mittebant coronas suas ante thronum'). Alcuin[3] sees the act as symbolic of the shedding of pride and arrogance; Richard of St. Victor,[4] as the offering to God of all victories, rendering all glory and honour to him alone; Augustine, Primasius, Bede, and Haymo[5] regard it as a sign of offering up all virtue, dignity and fortitude.

This emphasis on humility and sacrifice as provided by the infracontexts is reinforced on the horizontal level by the continuation in Milton:

> ... to the ground
> With solemn adoration down they cast
> Thir Crowns inwove with Amarant and Gold,
> Immortal Amarant, a Flour which once
> In Paradise, fast by the Tree of Life
> Began to bloom, but soon for Mans offence

[3] *Comm. in Apocal.* 3 (*PL* 100.1119).
[4] *In Apocal.* (*PL* 196.754).
[5] In, respectively, *In Apocal. Expos.* (*PL* 35.2423), *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 68.819), *Explan. Apocal.* (*PL* 93.144f.), *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 117.1012f.).

To Heav'n remov'd where first it grew, there grows,
And flours aloft shading the Fount of Life,
And where the river of Bliss through midst of Heavn
Rowls ore *Elisian* Flours her Amber stream;
With these that never fade the Spirits Elect
Bind thir resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams,
Now in loose Garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement that like a Sea of Jasper shon
Impurpl'd with Celestial Roses smil'd.

In the commentaries the significance of 'Amarant', "unwithering", is bound up with Clement of Alexandria's definition of the flower as a "symbol of immortality" (first pointed out by Hume), and Milton's making it bloom 'fast by the Tree of Life' is also said to be due to Clement's account.[6] Like Clement, Fowler feels, Milton "is deliberately comparing a pagan religious symbol with a Christian one very like it", because, as the poet knew, "floral crowns were distinctively pagan, and the amarantine crown an ancient symbol of untroubled tranquility and health". Editors also refer to a similar interpretation in Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica*. But this seems to me to be a false scent. Any interpretation of the symbol must use as its starting-point the passage in *1 Pet.* 1.3f. and 5.4 on the manifold spiritual graces (Hume): *1 Pet.* 1.3f. 'God ... hath begotten vs againe vnto a liuely hope, by the resurrection of Iesus Christ from the dead, (4) To an inheritance incorruptible, and vndefiled, and that fadeth not away (ἀμάραντον), reserued in heauen for you'; 5.4 'And when the chiefe shepheard shall appeare, ye shall receiue a crowne of glory that fadeth not away' (ἀμαράντινον). Underneath the Greek words important meanings can be discerned, as indicated in a simple code by patristic commentators and other emblematists than Valeriano. Among the Latin and Greek Fathers, Bede[7] and Didymus Alexandrinus[8] on *1 Pet.* 1.4 lay emphasis on the eternal unwithering inheritance as distinct from the mundane good which fades and wears with use; to Theophylactus, one of the later Greek Fathers, the unfading crown of glory in 5.4 is the grace of God given to the humble.[9] The concept of holiness and immortality is still further explored in emblematics. In Nicholas Reusner's *Emblemata* (1580) 33, the Amarant signifies 'Martyrium', and with the motto 'Semen Ecclesiae, Sanguis Piorum' goes a distich which ends, 'Qui moritur Christo, viuit, et haud moritur'.[10] The

[6] See Hughes' note on the passage.
[7] *In Prim. Epist. Petri* (*PL* 93.43).
[8] *In Epist. St. Petri Prim. Enarr.* (*PG* 39.1756).
[9] *Expos. in Epist. I St. Petri* (*PG* 125.1248).
[10] Henkel and Schöne, *Emblemata*, col. 347.

soul's strength and invincibility is the theme of Joachim Camerarius' *Symbolorum et Emblematum ... Centuria Collecta* (1598) 61: The motto 'Nunquam languescimus' is accompanied by the distich 'Impavidum invictumque animum signas amarante: / Et vegetis senibus grata corona tua est'.[11] No wonder the flower, according to the myth alluded to by Milton and often illustrated in pictorial art, was removed to Heaven where it shades the Fount of Life.[12]

The entire sphere of meaning suggested by these vertical contexts extends into the subsequent description of the amber stream and the pavement shining like a sea of jasper with the purple of the crowns discarded by the angels, amber standing for purity[13] and Christ's double nature (see p. 322 below), jasper for a variety of holy concepts subsumable under eternal life.[14] The antithesis could hardly have been more pronounced between the angels' throwing their amarant crowns before God's throne, with all its implications, and the structurally corresponding infernal applause with the devils' waving banners and 'Forrest huge of Spears' and 'serried Shields in thick array / Of depth immeasurable' (1.545ff.). And no contrast can be greater than the sea of jasper in the third book and the lake of fire in the first.

There is a similar detailed antithesis on surface and infracontextual levels between the last part of the good angels' applause, their playing on harps and singing, and the music performed by the fallen angels in 1.554ff. After crowning themselves again (3.365ff.),

> thir gold'n Harps they took,
> Harps ever tun'd, that glittering by thir side
> Like Quivers hung, and with Præamble sweet
> Of charming symphonie they introduce
> Thir sacred Song, and wak'n raptures high;
> No voice exempt, no voice but well could joine
> Melodious part, such concord is in Heav'n;

a passage naturally suggesting univocal verses in the *Psalms* on praising the Lord with harp, psaltery, and singing: 33.2 'Praise the Lord with harp: sing vnto him with the Psalterie, and an instrument of ten strings;'

[11] Col. 348.

[12] Don Cameron Allen ("Milton's Amarant", *MLN* 72, 1957, pp. 256ff.) feels that Milton's use of the amarant may have been inspired by Claudian's lines in the *Laus Serenae* on the eternal flowers nourished by the waters of Helicon. But as the author himself admits Helicon is not Heaven, the flower is not the amarant, and in the infracontextual pattern Claudian's lines are not very important.

[13] Commentators from Newton onwards refer to Callimachus and Virgil in antiquity.

[14] See *Marino and Crashaw: 'Sospetto d'Herode'. A Commentary*, pp. 213f. See also p. 308 below.

71.22 'I will also praise thee with the psalterie, euen thy trueth, O my God: vnto thee will I sing with the harpe, O thou Holy one of Israel'; 98.5 'Sing vnto the Lord with the harpe: with the harpe, and the voice of a Psalme'; and 150.3 'Praise him with the sound of the Trumpet: Prayse him with the Psalterie and Harpe'. The heavy impact of the scriptural infracontexts, further reinforced by music-making angels in the visual arts,[15] heightens the antithesis between the harp passage in Milton and the fallen angels' march to the '*Dorian* mood / Of Flutes and soft Recorders', which inspire them with 'Deliberat valour' instead of rage, and with a firm resolution not to retreat; a kind of music also capable of calming troubled thoughts and to chase away 'Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain' – all these good things in themselves, but used for evil purposes. Above all, as Patrides observes,[16] it is a kind of music "divorced from its true source" and therefore, in a larger context, fundamentally discordant.

Various stylistic devices are used for thematic reinforcement in the amarant-crown-and-harp passages. There are the long, undulating periods taking over after the *asprezza* lines 344–49 and linking together the two parts of the applause section (344–353 and 365–371): a concatenation of chiefly coordinate clauses developing almost in one breath the themes of amarant crowns, Fount of Life, river of bliss, and celestial playing and singing, and broken – by a light full stop – only at l.364. There are the 'gold'n Harps', the adjective symbolizing perfect virtue and splendour of holiness in patristic literature. The harps hang 'glittering by thir side / Like Quivers', as a kind of peaceful counterpart to the infernal flaming swords 'drawn from the thighs / Of mighty Cherubim'. 'Præamble' is a rare word, being only used, as Fowler points out, in this one place as a musical term; 'charming' and 'raptures' combine to indicate the music's power of inducing blissful ecstasy as distinct from the relentlessly warlike mood called forth by the devils' Dorian music; 'symphonie' (harmony of sound), at the same time suggests the meaning "concord", taken up in the last line's 'such concord is in Heav'n'. On a deeper level the meaning of συμφωνία in Pythagorean doctrine is evoked: the harmony of the spheres. "Concord" and "union" among the faithful is also a common meaning of the word in Greek patristic literature. The general atmosphere of harmony, unity and celestial joy centres around God and grows out of the blissful, "concentric" contemplation of him and his works. In 1.551ff. the grim determination and the 'united force with fixed thought' are actuated by the infernal host's desire for revenge, the striving for a goal which lies ahead and demands strenuous effort

[15] See Frye, pp. 187f.
[16] *Milton and the Christian Tradition*, p. 45; and see p. 95 above.

from the infernal warriors. If the angels move in circles, concentrically and effortlessly, the devils move onwards, linearly and vigorously. Holiness and infinite goodness are suggested by one surface context, perversion and infinite evil by the other, and the contrasts are brought into full relief by the infracontexts.

There is another interesting contrast effect on the horizontal, syntagmatic level. The sections in the first book also interlock, antithetically, with Raphael's description of the jubilant angels summoned by God to hear his announcement of the creation of the Son and his command that the Son be adored (5.583ff.), a counterpart to the paragraph on the exulting angels in 3.344ff. On the day "brought forth" by Heaven's Great Year,

> th' Empyreal Host
> Of Angels by Imperial summons calld,
> Innumerable before th' Almighties Throne
> Forthwith from all the ends of Heav'n appeerd
> Under thir Hierarchs in orders bright:
> Ten thousand thousand Ensignes high advanc't,
> Standards, and Gonfalons twixt Van and Reare
> Streame in the Aire, and for distinction serve
> Of Hierarchies, of Orders, and Degrees;
> Or in thir glittering Tissues bear imblaz'd
> Holy Memorials, acts of Zeale and Love
> Recorded eminent. Thus when in Orbes
> Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
> Orb within Orb, the Father infinite,
> By whom in bliss imbosomd sat the Son,
> Amidst as from a flaming Mount, whose top
> Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.

The *antanaclasis* 'Empyreal-Imperial' stresses the celestial sovereignty as compared with the simple 'Imperial Ensign' in 1.536. 'Innumerable before th' Almighties Throne / Forthwith from all the ends of Heav'n appeerd / Under thir Hierarchs in orders bright' recalls 'The Heads and Leaders thither hast where stood / Thir great Commander' in 1.357f. The same infracontexts in the *Sospetto d'Herode* that are called up by resemblance in 1.356ff. are here called up by contrast. A curious detail links the lines more closely with Marino's version than with Crashaw's: 'From all the ends of Heav'n appeer'd / Under thir Hierarchs in orders bright' resembles *Sosp.* 64 'De' Consiglieri Principi la schiera' (Herod's satraps) and 'capi, e ministri in ogni banda' (= from all parts of the realm) more than 'all his Counsellours' and 'th' heads and Officers of every band', mistranslating the original.

The 'ten thousand thousand Ensignes high advanc't', again, links up with 'Th' Imperial Ensign' in 1.536, the infracontext in *Dan.* 7.10 'thousand thousand ministred vnto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him' (Todd) making the contrast between the two surface contexts sharper. The phrase recurs in the description of the Chariot of Paternal Deity in bk. 6, where it takes on further meaning (see p. 327). Again, while 'Standards, and Gonfalons twixt Van and Reare / Streame in the Aire', indicating distinction of hierarchies, orders, and degrees, the ensign in 1.537 'Shon like a Meteor streaming to the Wind / With Gemms and Gold'n lustre rich imblaz'd, / Seraphic arms and Trophies', 'Meteor' being of course an omen of disaster. The final picture of the angels 'Orb within Orb' connects with the solemn and lofty descriptions of the angelic choirs adoring the Maker. By these various means, the double account of exulting angels is made sharply antithetic to the picture of the fallen angels proclaiming their loyalty to Satan.

4. God on Throne

Mammon's speech in the second book includes some lines on what the situation would be like if the apostate angels were pardoned and restored to favour:

> ... With what eyes could we
> Stand in his presence humble, and receive
> Strict Laws impos'd, to celebrate his Throne
> With warbl'd Hymns, and to his Godhead sing
> Forc't Halleluiah's; while he Lordly sits
> Our envied Sovran, and his Altar breathes
> Ambrosial Odours and Ambrosial Flowers,
> Our servil offerings. (239ff.)

This is a kind of caricature or travesty of the theme of angels' applause in the third book (344ff.). Mammon's advice is for the fallen angels to make the best of the situation and explore the possibilities provided by the nether world (see p. 231).

Surely an existence in comfort would be possible in an area where the soil hides gems and gold (271). In describing the corresponding amenities of Heaven, Mammon unwittingly, in a piece of Sophoclean irony, emphasizes the contrast between life and death, eternity and transitoriness. Commentators on 1.245 refer to passages in Spenser on the ambrosial odour of the roses and lilies to which Belphoebe's cheeks are com-

pared (*FQ* 2.3.22), and on the bride's locks in the description of the nuptials of the Thames and the Medway (4.11.46). The first passage, Todd remarks in his Spenser edition, "strongly resembles a passage in Camoëns, where the breath of Jove is described as shedding such exquisite fragrance as might inspire the dead with life". The lines in question form part of a stanza describing Jove gathering the gods around him – or beneath him, according to their ranks – on Olympus. He is sitting on his throne dazzling with stars, a wielder of bolts, grave and dignified, and

> Do rosto respirava hum ar divino,
> Que divino tornara hum corpo humano (22),

"An Oderiferous Ayre blew from his face, / Able to breathe new life in a pale Ghost" in Fanshaw's somewhat fanciful rendering. 'Ar' is "air", "effluence", "breath", or more abstractly "appearance". The meaning in Camoëns and Milton is clarified by contact with classical infracontexts in Virgil and Homer. In *Georg.* 4.415ff. Cyrene 'liquidum ambrosiae diffundit odorem' with which she anoints her son Aristaeus, in so doing fortifying him in his coming struggle with Proteus, and a 'dulcis aura' breathed from his locks. In a famous passage in *Aen.* 1.403f., after addressing Aeneas and delivering the divine message, Venus' 'ambrosiae ... comae diuinum vertice odorem / Spirauere', and the hero recognizing the goddess, his mother, prepares for fulfilling his mission. The Virgilian lines in their turn signal Homer, *Il.* 1.529ff., where Zeus grants Thetis' request that he redress Achilles' wrongs, thereby proving his divine power; his undulating ambrosial locks flow from his head, and he makes the great Olympus shake. Again, underneath these passages on ambrosial locks, there loom the basic meanings of ἀμβροσία, ἀμβρόσιος, ἀμβροσιώδης, "immortality", "food for the gods"; "immortal", "divine"; "divinely excellent", "fragrant". In the *Acts of Thomas* (A 7), ἀμβρόσιος qualifies the Eucharist. Francelia Butler[1] suggests that in his use of 'odour' in *PL* Milton resembles Jacob Boehme in investing odour with a religious-philosophical meaning: the various identities of the Holy Spirit, as in Boehme's philosophy, are unified by fragrance – a "tincture of the divine efflux", as Boehme calls it. So God's altar "breathing" 'Ambrosial Odours and Ambrosial Flowers' suggests infracontexts where stress is laid on invigorating and rejuvenating powers, on divine might and immortality. There is also, as Butler points out, an implied contrast with the sulphurous stench and smoke of Hell (p. 66). Mammon's scornful definition of 1.245, 'our servil offerings', cannot invalidate

[1] "The Holy Spirit and Odors in *Paradise Lost*" (*MQ* 3, 1969, pp. 65ff.).

the semantic intensification of that line, all the more powerful owing to the repeated 'Ambrosial'. The meaning shows through in spite of Mammon's sneer. On the whole, though spoken in hatred and scorn, Mammon's words and the associations they evoke convey a sense of the glory of God quite irrespective of the speaker's attitude: the divine, as it were, is powerful enough to penetrate into the infernal gloom. The effect is similar to that of sts. 20–24 in the *Sospetto d'Herode* on the Holy Mystery as pondered by Lucifer.

While multiple infracontexts invest line 245 in *PL* with homogeneous meanings, there is at the same time a contrast with the lines on what in Mammon's opinion constitutes the attraction for the fallen angels: gems and gold hidden in the infernal soil. These words suggest the passage in Valvasone's *Angeleida* where the devils try as best they can to console Satan, pointing out to him all the riches furnished by the Underworld of which he is now master, not a vassal as he was in Heaven (see p. 231). This additional theme in the surface context and in the infracontexts provides a synecdochic effect added to the effects produced by l.271 in Mammon's speech. Behind his words we hear the sophistry of the widespread consolation cliché, which in effect merely goes to prove to Satan that he is incapable of regaining his previous position, being a prisoner of the nether world. The contrast to the "ambrosial" passage with its infracontextually supplied associations could hardly be stronger.

From 2.245f. and 3.61ff. extend links with other surface contexts, above all with 3.135ff., where God has just foretold the Fall and explained that he has no responsibility in the matter, but has also made it clear that grace can be extended to man who fell, tempted by Satan, but not to the tempter.

> Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance filld
> All Heav'n, and in the blessed Spirits elect
> Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd:
> Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
> Most glorious, in him all his Father shon
> Substantially exprest, and in his face
> Divine compassion visibly appeerd,
> Love without end, and without measure Grace,
> Which uttering thus hee to his Father spake.

'Ambrosial fragrance' is invested with the same associations as l.245 in the second book, though various additional Renaissance infracontexts merge with the contexts relevant in bk. 2 so as to give the significance of 135ff. a particular slant. As Thyer observes, Milton deviates from classical models in representing the deity not as "awful" and terrifying but as

mild and merciful. This means that he moves away from Homer, whose Zeus makes Olympus tremble, and approaches Virgil and his goddesses using ambrosia to rejuvenate and fortify their children. Another Virgilian passage suggested here is *Aen.* 1.255ff., which stands out in obvious contrast to *Il.* 1.529ff. though resembling that passage on some points. In *Aen.* 1.255 Jove is addressed by Venus as Zeus is by Thetis in *Il.* 1.529ff., but in Virgil's text he is no heavy father but a smiling benefactor, clearing the sky and calming storms with his appearance, softly kissing his daughter's lips and soothing her fears:

> Olli subridens hominum sator, atque deorum
> Vultu, quo caelum, tempestatesque serenat,
> Oscula libauit natae, dehinc talia fatur:
> 'Parce metu, Cytherea', etc.

This mild and loving father-god then foretells the destinies of Aeneas, the hero's apotheosis, the foundation of the glorious Roman empire, and the coming age of peace and justice. He then sends Mercury on his important mission, thereby initiating the accomplishment of the prophecy: 'Volat ille per aera magnum / Remigio alarum, ac Libyae citus astitit oris' (300f.). The diction in the lines on the benevolent deity has a lofty character: the archaic 'olli', the solemn 'subridens' – both words used by Virgil in the *Aeneid* only, and three times out of four together –; the formulaic, elevated 'caelum, tempestatesque serenat'.[2] The lines colour or foreshadow Jove's prophetic reply much as the lines on God and Christ colour the Son's answer; and Mercury's mission has a counterpart in Christ's self-assumed duty as God Incarnate: this last-mentioned connection thus has an *auxesis* effect, Milton's lines "emulating" and surpassing Virgil's. In Ross' *Mystagogus Poeticus* (p. 266), 'Our blessed Saviour is the true Mercury ... who by his Cross, as the true *Caduceus,* hath reconciled all things in heaven and earth'.

The Renaissance infracontexts reinforcing the passage in 3.135ff. are made up of the lines from Camoëns which are also relevant as a background for 2.245ff., and also of some stanzas in *GD* (see below). The immortality theme which is to the fore directly in *Lus.* 1.22 and indirectly in derivatives of ἀμβροσία of course recurs here since the joy and fragrance of this celestial scene anticipate the immortality eventually to result from God's decision and the Son's mission. The 'new joy ineffable

[2] K.W. Gransden remarks ("*Paradise Lost* and the *Aeneid*", *EIC* 17, 1967, p. 284) that Virgil's phrase as repeated in *Aen.* 12.829 affords another point of contact with *PL*, i.e. with 5.718: in that line God smiles with a "show of concern" as he answers the Son, just as in the *Aeneid* line Jupiter smiles pretending to be overruled by Juno demanding the deletion of the name of Troy in favour of Rome.

diffus'd' among the spirits elect is also as it were an effect of this meaning. The lines on the Son, again, are intensified by contact with two infracontexts of different authority, one New Testament, the other Renaissance. 'In him all his Father shon / Substantially exprest' suggests *Heb.* 1.3 '[his Sonne] ... Who being the brightnesse of his glory, and the expresse image of his person', rendering ὃς ὢν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ (Vulg. ... 'Qui cum sit splendor gloriae, et figura substantiae eius'). As is well known, there has been a lively discussion of the complex problem of whether Milton's words are reconcilable with the view as expressed in *De Doctrina Christiana* that there is a difference in essence between Father and Son, or else whether they are to be taken in the sense that the Son is coeternal with the Father, or whether the Three Persons share in different ways in *substantia* and *essentia* (see Introduction, p. 28). Suffice it to say here that 'shon' in l.139 corresponds semantically, if not grammatically, to ἀπαύγασμα, 'splendor'; 'substantially' to ὑποστάσεως 'substantiae'; 'exprest' to χαρακτὴρ, 'figura'. As for the construction, the punctuation indicates that 'exprest' qualifies 'shon'. As to 'appeerd', again, 'compassion' is the natural subject, as will also appear from the passage's contact with the other infracontext, *GD* 7.62f.[3] In this poem by Marino, God has just revealed his desire utterly to destroy the Jewish race which has broken his holy laws. The Virgin intervenes, however, and the Son silently demonstrates the scars of his five wounds, the 'Cicatrici d'amor sante, e beate':

> Pace, pace, e pietà scritto à vermiglio
> In quei viui caratteri gli lesse,
> E ne gli occhi non men libri del Core
> Lesse à lettre di foco, Amore Amore.

And God relents:

> Sorrise il Sommo Padre, e'l suo sorriso
> Rasserenò di nuoua luce il Polo:
> Sorrise à quel sorriso il Paradiso,
> E rise seco il suo felice stuolo;

admitting that the might of Love has conquered his wrath. Though God decides not to annihilate the world, however, he will send his avenging Angel to visit limited punishment on his people – a decision reminiscent of God's plan to regard man as responsible for his actions, yet allow the

[3] Pointed out by J. C. Walker (Todd's note on ll. 140ff.).

Son to carry out his work of Salvation. Not only does 'in his face / Divine compassion visibly appeerd, / Love without end' evoke 'E ne gli occhi non men libri del Core / Lesse à lettre di foco Amore, Amore'; the previous description of the Son's five scars, in which 'pace, pace, e pietà' are written in scarlet, prefigures on a submerged level the work of Salvation to follow as a result of Christ's offer to sacrifice himself as a ransom for man according to the Argument. Again 'in the blessed Spirits elect / Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd' is enriched by the smile of the entire Paradise, 'il suo felice stuolo' in Marino's stanza, not least because this in its turn suggests several passages in the *Paradiso* where Dante describes the smile or laughter of the blessed as a sign of the highest beatitude and beauty. In 27.4 for example it seems to Dante, hearing the choir of Paradise praising God, that he sees 'un riso / Del'universo', joy and ineffable happiness, and in *Par.* 30.40ff. the pure light of Heaven is

> Luce intellettual, piena d'amore;
> Amor di vero ben, pien di letitia,
> Letitia, che trascende ogni dolciore.

Such lines shed their light also on Milton's description of the scene in Paradise, increasing its luminosity, intensifying its power.[4]

The Father in 3.56ff. regards the universe and the ordered creation:

> Now had th' Almighty Father from above,
> From the pure Empyrean where he sits
> High Thron'd above all highth, bent down his eye,
> His own works and their works at once to view;

about him all the different angelic orders stand thick as stars receiving 'Beatitude past utterance';

> on his right
> The radiant image of his Glory sat,
> His onely Son;

and he looks out over the couple 'in blissful solitude' in Eden, over Hell and Chaos, and Satan 'Coasting the wall of Heav'n on this side Night / In the dun Air sublime'.

The picture of God on his throne equally suggests Homeric and Christian descriptions of the powerful celestial monarch. This is thus a case of

[4] God's smile here is in the sharpest possible contrast to that in a very different context, to which Patrides calls attention in *Milton and the Christian Tradition*, pp. 155f. (see p. 180).

Milton, as Steadman says, suggesting "a parallel between Heaven and Olympus", consciously juxtaposing truth and fable, pagan myth and biblical fact, and utilizing classical epic in order to portray the divine efficiency.[5] Other critics, however, have regarded the inevitable tension as a blemish (see Steadman, pp. 283f.). There is, however, another tension which emerges from the contact between the main infragroups and the surface context in Milton. In the *Iliad,* Zeus sits literally in splendid isolation, a fact stressed by formulaic means. When in 1.496f. Thetis seeks out the son of Cronos, he is "sitting apart from the other gods on the highest top of Olympus with many ridges". In 5.753ff. Zeus is sought out by Hera on a different errand and the same description of the god and his situation recurs word for word. In both cases Zeus is νεφεληγερέτα, "cloud-gatherer". So he is in 8.38, and in the following lines goes to Ida where he sits among mountain tops κύδεϊ γαίων, "exulting in glory". In passages such as these Zeus is in isolated majesty, threatening and awe-inspiring, in spite of his benevolent attitude to the other gods and of his wise decisions. Another epithet of his is τερπικέραυνος, "he who delights in thunder," as in 8.2, where he is described before addressing a gathering of gods, again on the highest peak of "many-ridged Olympus," forbidding them, on penalty of being hurled down into Tartarus, to interfere on either side in the Trojan war.

The corresponding Christian texts divide up into Old Testament descriptions of Jehovah and Renaissance pictures of God. The Lord, like Jove, is a thunderer, a terrifying flinger of thunderbolts: *Ps.* 77.18 'The voice of thy thunder was in the heauen: the lightnings lightned the world, the earth trembled and shooke'; *Is.* 29.6 'Thou shalt bee visited of the Lord of hostes with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storme and tempest, and the flame of deuouring fire'.[6] Yet this awe-inspiring Lord of hosts with his thunder is of course no remote, withdrawn figure contemplating the world in solitude like a tyrant shut up in his palace or brooding on an inaccessible peak of a mountain; surrounded by angels, he is very much present also in relation to his people – threatening, punishing, promising, rewarding. The difference between the classical descriptions of the supreme god and the Christian pictures becomes quite obvious when we move on from the Old Testament passages – which make up a kind of intermediary form – to the Renaissance poetic accounts of the Lord watching the sublunary world. In these accounts, though naturally strongly coloured by scriptural descriptions, the frightening feature of the figure is gone, and God appears as a

[5] "The God of *Paradise Lost* and the *Divina Commedia*" (*ASNS* 195, 1959, p. 284). See also Blessington's analysis of Zeus-Jove in relation to Milton's God (*'Paradise Lost' and the Classical Epic,* pp. 41ff.).

[6] Similar passages for instance in *Job* 26.14, 37.4–5, *Ps.* 18.13, 104.7.

thoughtful, all-seeing divinity attentively watching the goings-on on earth and in Hell. These Renaissance descriptions make up a progressive series with increasingly detailed pictures of celestial magnificence. At one end of the scale is the account in the first book of the *De Partu Virginis* (33ff.), where God 'aetherea ... ab arce' watches the devils hoarding their spoils of souls in Hell, while Tisiphone incites the Furies to dire deeds and considers the helplessness of the human race, of divine origin though it be. In an ensuing monologue he decides to aid man against evil. A similar episode is the subject of some stanzas in *GL,* possibly imitated from Sannazaro, but the vantage-point from which God views the world is no longer a mere 'arx aetherea'. The Father's throne is erected in the clearest part of the sky (1.7), and the distance from the stars to the throne equals that from the stars to Hell, a point which affects the subsequent description of the Archangel Gabriel on his mission to the Christian armies, adding to its lofty and magnificent character (1.13ff.). The stanza on the Lord in the first book is, as it were, continued and expanded in sts. 56–58 in the ninth, where the context is similar. In these stanzas Tasso describes God just before he sends the Archangel Michael to chase away the demons who interfere in the battle for Jerusalem. In these expanded passages it is less the outward magnificence that interests the poet than God the lawgiver, the triune ruler of Fate, Nature, Time, Space, Movement, and Fortune who can annihilate glory, wealth, and power, reducing them to smoke and ruins. God is surrounded by light strong enough to dazzle even the highest in Heaven, and among the innumerable angels of different ranks joyful hymns are being sung: 'Al gran concento de' beati carmi / Lieta risuona la celeste Reggia'. As in the case of 1.7, this account of God's power and omnipotence colours his subsequent speech and the description of Michael's mission, increasing the magnificence of the picture of the archangel illuminating the darkness with his 'divin lume'.

From these stanzas by Tasso it is but a short step to Camoëns' lines on the supreme god surrounded by light, presiding over a gathering of lesser gods about to decide the destinies of the Lusitanians (*Lus.* 1.22f.). This is Zeus, but the description resembles that of the Christian Lord as provided by Tasso, and the 'os menores' mentioned in a later stanza correspond to the angels in epics on the Christian Olympus: 'Os outros deoses todos affentados / Como a razaõ e a ordem concertauam' (Fanshaw: 'The other *Deities* were placed low'r, / As *reason* and the Herald *order* would'). He is sitting on a dazzling throne of stars and his sceptre sparkles with jewels more brilliant than diamonds. Like God in the other Renaissance accounts of a similar kind, the Father and the lesser gods decide to send a messenger to carry out their decision.

The other end of the thematic scale, the last step in this progressive

series from the forbidding thunderer to the god of light in his omnipotence and supreme wisdom, is represented by Marino's stanzas on the Almighty in *GD* 7.9–10. The Italian poet's lines seem flooded by light – 'una luce densa' –; infinite goodness and divine glory flow like an ocean from a fountain of light ('Da la fontana di thesori immensa, / E da l'immenso incomprehensibil seno, / Oceano di gloria egli dispensa'), mirroring itself and mirrored by blessed souls; and also –

> Vn altro sè produce, e questo espresso
> E di sè questo in vn parto, e concetto.
> Vnico, eterno, in tutto equale ad esso
> Diuina imago, anzi diuin subietto;
> Originata, e non creata prole,
> Dio di Dio vero, unico Sol di Sole.

In the subsequent stanzas, Marino elaborates the motif of the Son reflecting the love of the Father: 'L'alma, e l'amor, ch'ogn' altro amor auanza / L'amato Figlio in lui reflette, e gira'. Again the unity between Father and Son is the subject of the next few lines:

> De la gemina fiamma egual sostanza,
> Ineffabilemente allhor si spira,
> Spirto Dio, diuin nodo, eterno amore,
> Santo don, Santo messo, e Santo ardore;

while the same idea of the unity is represented in three successive images in the next stanza: as the soul consists of memory, will, and mind; as water may take the form of well, stream, and river; and as the sun has great power, heat, and light, in the same way the three divine virtues form one single godhead: 'Di tre Persone vn Gerion verace, /Vnica fiamma in triplicata face'. Marino's lines on the Son as an image of the Father, on the unity of both and on the Trinity, in their turn expand the verse in *Hebr.* 1.3, '[Filius] ... qui cum sit splendor gloriae, et figura substantiae eius, portansque omnia verbo virtutis suae, purgationem peccatorum faciens, sedet ad dexteram maiestatis in excelsis'.

In his commentary, Hume asks the "discerning linguist" to compare the description of God in *PL* 3.56ff. with that in sts. 55–57 of the ninth book of *GL*. What the linguist *should* do, however, is to extend his comparison so as to include all the relevant infracontexts. How do they affect the meaning of the lines on the Father in the Empyrean and the Son? It would seem, if we sort them out, that the infracontexts work in a kind of cumulative series beginning with the contrast based on contact with the Homeric descriptions of the isolated tyrant, which on certain

points differ from those in Virgil. The Old Testament passages on the thunderer lead on to the third step, Sannazaro's account of God watching what goes on in Hell, narrowing down the description of the deity to a minimum, while the theme of Tisiphone's doings in Hell and the helplessness of the race of man interlocks with the meaning of '*Satan* ... /Coasting the wall of Heav'n on this side Night'. The other infracontexts in Tasso, Camoëns, and Marino pack more and more meaning into the words on God, on his looking down at the universe, and partly on Satan's activities. The pure Empyrean where he sits is, as it were, glossed and concretized in a complex code by Tasso's lines on the throne in the ether and by Marino's on the fountain of light and the ocean of glory, and 'High Thron'd' is glossed in Camoëns' throne of stars. Similarly, a kind of comment on 'Almighty' is provided by Tasso's lines on the Father as the lord of Fate, Nature, Time, Space, and the divinity who can reduce glory, wealth and power to smoke and ruins, ignoring the feelings of mankind. Again the Father bending 'down his eye, / His own works and their works at once to view' is invested with a sort of proleptic meaning foreshadowed in Tasso's account of the fighting Christians who are the prime object of God's attention in the first and ninth books. While '*Satan* there / Coasting the wall of Heav'n on this side Night / In the dun Air sublime' suggests Sannazaro's account, Milton's words at the same time link up with the result of God's sending Michael down to chase away the devils interfering with the holy war for Jerusalem in *GL*, bk. 9: 'Essi gemendo abbandonar le belle / Region de la luce, e l'auree stelle ... E dispiegar uerso gli abissi il uolo / Ad inasprir ne' rei l'usate doglie' (65–66) (see further p. 208). Satan's schemes, we know, will end in the same ignominious way.

Some of the points involved in the descriptions of God in this vertical context system are illustrated in iconography. The mood of the Old Testament heavy father is reflected, for instance, in the grim and austere features of Christus Pantokrator in the mosaics of the Daphni monastery near Athens. In the famous Sicilian mosaics, the figure of Christ in the Cathedral of Monreale shows the same stern features,while that in the Cathedral of Cefalù has a majestic and at the same time sad and thoughtful, less austere expression. The same is true of Christ in the splendid mosaics of the Cappella Palatina at Palermo, though Christ in this version can also show a more or less gracious countenance depending on the spectator's vantage-point. This anticipates, as it were, the attitude of God as represented in the Renaissance religious epics: more complex, more "modern", and severe or mild as regarded from different points of view – another instance of movable meaning as found in several places in Milton's epic. The different aspects of God as suggested infracontextually in the second and third books thus have a visual counterpart reaching

down into deep strata of European iconography as preserved in ancient centres of culture, stamped by Byzantine tradition.

As we move on to the few words on the Son, the inverse proportion between "lemma" and "gloss" becomes even more marked. The brief 'The radiant image of his Glory sat, / His onely son' is enriched by the infracontext in Marino's lines: 'Questo espresso / E di sè questo in vn parto, e concetto. / Vnico, eterno, in tutto eguale ad esso / Diuina imago, anzi diuin subietto' followed by the lines on the Son mirroring the Father and his love. Also, the triple similes knitting firmly together the previous lines on the Son's relationship to the Father operate like a kind of finale, uniting the previous thematic strands into one indivisible motif. And the stanzas in Marino in their turn, as said before, derive their force and impact from St. Paul's 'splendor gloriae, et figura substantiae ejus' (*Hebr.* 1.3) and its basis in the Greek text.

The descriptions of divine light in the 'radiant image of his Glory' and in the various infracontexts are thus intensified by being telescoped into one another and are in the sharpest possible contrast to the atmosphere surrounding Satan as he coasts 'the wall of Heav'n on this side Night / In the dun Air sublime'. The 'dun Air', as pointed out by commentators, suggests 'aer bruno' in Italian poetry; as Thyer remarks, Italian poets "almost constantly express a gloomy, dusky air, in these terms" (Todd). 'Sublime', as in 2.528 where the lesser devils imitate the heroes in the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid* by taking part in contests 'Part on the Plain, or in the Air sublime', means "aloft", "on high", the formulaic character of these two lines linking them together as taking place in infernal or inferno-like surroundings. By contrast, in the non-formulaic line 6.771 Christ 'on the wings of Cherube rode sublime'; a line which provides an antithesis also by being part of the description of the Son scoring his victory in the War in Heaven.

To the accompaniment of music from harp, solemn pipe, dulcimer, and string instruments – the celestial counterpart to the music which excites or tempers the mood of the fallen angels in book 1 – the Son arrives (7.584ff.)

> at the holy mount
> Of Heav'ns high-seated top, th' Imperial Throne
> Of Godhead, fixt for ever firm and sure,

and sits down with the Father. The throne 'fixt for ever firm and sure' evokes, as pointed out by Todd, *Is.* 6.1 *AV* 'I saw also the Lord sitting vpon a throne, high and lifted vp, and his traine filled the Temple' (the Bishops' Bible and Coverdale's and Matthew's Bibles provide '... vpon an hygh and glorious seate', Geneva 'vpon a high throne, and lifted vp').

The *AV* reading is reinforced by the Vulgate 'Vidi Deum sedentem super solium excelsum et eleuatum' and *LXX* Εἶδον τὸν κύριον καθήμενον ἐπὶ θρόνου ὑψηλοῦ καὶ ἐπηρμένου. By switching the epithets that go naturally with the respective head-words – moving 'fixt ... firm and sure' from 'Heav'ns ... top', and 'high-seated' from 'th' Imperial Throne' – Milton creates the impression that the mount is the throne and that the throne is rock-firm, immovable, eternal like a mountain. Underneath 'high-seated' we sense the *LXX* words ἐπηρμένως "exalted" and ὑψηλός "lofty"; in *Ezek.* 17.22 the latter word qualifies ὄρος "mountain". The merging of throne and celestial mount continues the cosmological description of the Lord's return to Heaven (574–584), forming at the same time a heavily ironic, antithetic counterpart to the lines on Satan on his throne. To that point we shall return on pp. 218ff. below.

CHAPTER V

Contrasts Continued and Paths of Paradox

1. Stairs Mysteriously Meant

Just as the angelic choirs and their worship can be systematically contrasted with the infernal hosts and their activities, so the theme of celestial stairs and paths is diametrically opposed to the theme of the infernal bridge and its constructors in book 10. These we shall discuss later on. The stairs and the 'ample rode' lead up to God, the bridge connects the world with Hell. Not only, as in the case of the Heaven-Hell contrasts, do the opposites bring out more clearly in relief the meaning of either opposed component; within the infernal part of the theme there are infracontextually induced effects which tend to undermine the grim surface description. They lend a paradoxical character to the account of the hellish bridge and the mission of Sin and Death, and merge with the celestial part of the theme in providing a kind of hopeful comment on a sinister motif.

From the portal of Heaven the mystic stairs descend, described in a way which suggests various important infracontexts:

> The Stairs were such as whereon *Jacob* saw
> Angels ascending and descending, bands
> Of Guardians bright, when he from *Esau* fled
> To *Padan-Aram* in the field of *Luz,*
> Dreaming by night under the opn Skie,
> And waking cri'd, This is the Gate of Heav'n.
> Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
> There alwaies, but drawn up to Heav'n somtimes
> Viewless, and underneath a bright Sea flowd
> Of Jasper, or of liquid Pearle, whereon
> Who after came from Earth, sailing arriv'd,
> Wafted by Angels, or flew ore the Lake
> Rapt in a Chariot drawn by fiery Steeds. (3.510ff.)

From Newton onwards commentators have noted the origin of Jacob's ladder in *Gen.* 28.12f., 'And he dreamed, and beholde, a ladder set vp on the earth, and the top of it reached to heauen; and beholde the Angels of God ascending and descending on it'. The complex significance of the symbol is well known: the ladder is a symbol foreshadowing the unbroken communication between Heaven and Earth, between God and man through Christ and the angels; a communication that Satan will try in vain to provide against (on Satan's attitude to the ladder and the part he plays in this scene see below p. 153). Jacob's ladder has also been thought[1] to link up with Homer's golden chain which is suggested by the end of book 2 and which in its turn contrasts with the account of Satan's world in that section of *PL*. Another meaning reinforcing the contrast is that of man trusting in God and braving the dangers of the world. An emblem by Georgette de Montenay shows a man ascending a ladder reaching into Heaven; underneath is a stormy sea, and the motto reads, A QUO TREPIDABO.[2] There has been a good deal of discussion about the meaning of the ladder as it emerges from a wider infracontextual background. The most informative comments seem to me to be those provided by Whiting, Patrides, and Røstvig.[3]. Though there is a considerable variety of meanings according to exegetes – the Two Testaments (Zeno), man's contemplation of God and man's compassion toward man (Gregory), humility (Bernard), love (Honorius), the angelic orders (Aquinas), the chain of good works (Bruno) – the predominant significance of the ladder is Christ as a mediator between man and God.[4] This significance is found from Ambrose onwards, and, during the late Renaissance, in the writings of Catholics and Protestants alike. In art, Frye points out (p. 191), the Heavenly Ladder shows a number of "more or less standard features"; for example, God, Christ, or the Virgin often appear at the head of the stairway. Fowler feels that the meaning of the ladder in *PL* is the entrance to Heaven achieved "by repentance and devotion and meditation on created nature ..., not by Peter's keys," and says that Jacob's ladder was often interpreted as a symbol of "ascesis through contemplation – the sense in which the image is used in *Par.* 21". This parallel was first noted, it seems, by Todd. In the 21st canto Dante, who has ascended with Beatrice to Saturn, sees a golden ladder stretching upwards from the planet, crowded with descending luminous angels:

[1] By Don Cameron Allen in "Two Notes on *Paradise Lost*" (*MLN* 68, 1953, p. 360), referring to a passage in Bodin's *Heptaplomeres*.
[2] Henkel and Schöne, *Emblemata*, col. 1416.
[3] G. W. Whiting, *Milton and This Pendant World*, Austin, 1958, pp. 59ff; Patrides, "Renaissance Interpretations of Jacob's Ladder" (*Theologische Zeitschrift* 18, 1962, pp. 411ff.); Røstvig, "Images of Perfection" (*Seventeenth-Century Imagery*, edited by E. Miner, Los Angeles, 1971, pp. 6ff.).
[4] Whiting, pp. 63ff, Patrides, pp. 412ff.

Di color d'oro, in che raggio traluce,
Vid'io uno scaleo eretto in suso
Tanti, che ne seguiua la mia luce.
Vidi ancho per li gradi scender giuso
Tanti splendor, ch'io pensai, ch'ogni lume,
Che par nel ciel, quindi fosse diffuso. (28ff.)

The old commentators on these lines (Jacopo della Lana, Anonimo Fiorentino, Allessandro Torre, Postillatore Cassinese, Benvenuto di Imola, Francesco da Buti) strongly stress the holy and secluded life, precious virtues, martyrdom, etc. which are the prerequisites for the contemplation of God, the rising by degrees to the perception of the divine on the basis of holiness – hence the gold as material for the ladder. While Dante only mentions angels descending the ladder, Milton follows *Genesis* in making them ascend and descend it – the ascent traditionally referring to contemplation, the descent to action.[5] Also the names of Padam-Aram and Luz, referring to Jacob's wanderings, provide contrasts to the barbaric names used in the account of Pandemonium. The contrast between these various meanings of the ladder and Satan's evil plans and actions – contemplating destruction and striving to achieve it – is highly relevant in the context. However, just as the context in *Genesis* powerfully intensifies the *PL* passage, so the context in the *Paradiso* 21, on a more limited scale, enhances the effect of Milton's lines. Beatrice's increasing divine beauty almost consumes Dante, just as Jove's fire reduced Semele to ashes; the cool atmosphere of contemplation and perfection forms the setting of the scene, and the luminous spirits descending the ladder resemble all the light in Heaven poured down the steps. All in all, contact with the various infracontexts invests Milton's lines with meaning beyond that suggested by the situation in hand: the promise of ultimate Salvation, of the Kingdom of Heaven opened to man despite Satan's subversive activities.

In view of the meaning of the ladder supplied by the infracontexts, a clue to the significance of 'mysteriously' may be provided by μυστήριον as used in the Greek patrology. Two common meanings are "secret revealed" and "that by which a secret is conveyed", "symbol", "type";[6] and the sense of 'mysteriously' seems to waver, ambiguously, between these two: each rung is part of a revealed secret, the union with God. The ascent, as Røstvig remarks, proceeds from the particular, the body, via various stages to the One (p. 6). As has been demonstrated by

[5] See J. Carroll, *In Patria. An Exposition of Dante's Paradiso,* London, 1911, p. 322.
[6] *PGL* p. 892, D 2d and E 3.

Carroll commenting on the *Paradiso* passage,[7] an important infracontext here is Richard of St. Victor's description of the different stages of contemplation in the *Benjamin Major* (1.6). The passage was well known and was quoted and discussed at some length by Aquinas (*Summa* II–II 180 *a.*4). According to Richard, 'Sex autem sunt contemplationum genera a se et inter se omnino divisa. Primum itaque est in imaginatione et secundum solam imaginationem. Secundum est in imaginatione secundum rationem. Tertium est in ratione secundum imaginationem. Quartum est in ratione et secundum rationem. Quintum est supra, sed non praeter rationem. Sextum supra rationem, et videtur esse praeter rationem. Duo itaque sunt in imaginatione, duo in ratione, duo in intelligentia'.[8] On the lowest step only corporeal and terrestrial things can be apprehended, while the sixth and final stage refers to the vision of God, the truth invisible, transcending imagination and reason (Aquinas: 'solum ultimum videtur ad divinam veritatem pertinere') – an implied meaning which further increases the contrast referred to previously. The words in 516ff. coordinate with 'Each Stair mysteriously was meant' – 'nor stood / There alwaies, but drawn up to Heav'n somtimes / Viewless' – further confirm the interpretation of the ladder in *PL* as contemplation, for the gradual ascent according to Richard of St. Victor can only take place on the basis of the necessary virtues. This suggests the commonest infracontextual meaning, Christ, the embodiment of all virtues. The mystical ladder is only lowered when the truly virtuous approach.

In the continued narrative in Milton,

> *Satan* from hence now on the lower stair
> That scal'd by steps of Gold to Heaven Gate
> Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
> Of all this World at once (540ff.).

As in the *Paradiso* the steps are made of metal symbolizing holiness, sharply contrasted with Satan at the foot of the stairs. He is compared to a scout who after many perils reaches the top of a mountain from which he looks out over a foreign country or over

> some renownd Metropolis
> With glistering Spires and Pinnacles adornd,
> Which now the Rising Sun guilds with his beams.

[7] *In Patria,* pp. 333f.

[8] *De Gratia Contemplationum ... dictum Benjamin Major* (*PL* 196.70). Richard's ladder of contemplation – summarized by the author himself under the three stages 'cogitatio', 'meditatio', and 'contemplatio' – should not be confused with the later 'scala meditationis' discussed by Louis Martz in *The Poetry of Meditation,* New Haven, 1954, repr. 1965, pp. 331ff.

In the subsequent stanzas of the *Paradiso* 21 (34–42), innumerable "splendours" – angels compared to daws flying out at dawn to warm their wings – descend the ladder, some of whom fly away without returning, others come back, and yet others circle around as soon as all this "sparkling" strikes a certain step ('si come [sfauillar] in certo grado si percosse'). This "certain step" is the point of intersection where the mind is elevated from observable things to non-observable 'in ratione secundum imaginationem' (the third step in Richard's full series, the second in the reduced one). To this point can the spirits descend and Dante's mind ascend. If considered against the double infracontexts in Dante and Richard of St. Victor, the lower step of the ladder from which Satan watches the world takes on a certain significance by contrast. Stress is laid on the fact that he can only ascend the ladder of contemplation high enough to see what Richard in his eloquent way describes as 'rerum istarum visibilium forma ... cum obstupescentes attendimus, et attendentes obstupescimus, corporalia ista quae sensu corporeo haurimus quam sint multa, quam magna, quam diversa, quam pulchra vel iucunda, et in his omnibus creatricis illius superessentiae potentiam, sapientiam, munificentiam mirando veneramur, et venerando miramur' (*ibid.*). The 'magna', 'diversa', 'pulchra' and 'iucunda' can be read as a kind of paraphrase of the simile describing Satan's impressions: the 'Metropolis' with 'glistering Spires and Pinnacles adorned, / Which now the Rising Sun guilds with his beams'. This is the kind of thing the pure and virtuous mind in the *Paradiso* has left far behind, a point made explicit in 22.133ff., where Dante looks back at this vile world before turning his eyes again to Beatrice's, while Satan's eye is fixed on the lower world for good. To the virtuous and holy, the stairs are really 'let down' and their ascent is made easy; the sardonic mockery of 'whether to dare / The Fiend by easie ascent, or aggravate / His sad exclusion from the dores of Bliss' becomes doubly striking in this vertical context (see further p. 157 below). Besides, as Frye points out (p. 191), an element of irony is provided by the contrast between Satan at the foot of the ladder and God at its head; "Satan unwittingly parodies God". From the contact between Milton's lines and Dante-Richard's texts emerge important contrast effects which reinforce other numerous contrasts already implicit in the Jacob's Ladder episode in *PL*.

The significance of Milton's lines, which form a partly complex but chiefly simple code, is deepened and reinforced by the symbolism of the 'bright Sea ... / Of Jasper, or of liquid Pearle', which in its turn colours the meaning of the subsequent lines on the arrival of the blessed. Heylin reminds us that Milton himself in the introduction to the third book glosses the 'bright Sea' that 'flowd' as the 'waters above the Firmament' – the sea that surrounds the universe and reaches the gate of heaven; the

'Crystallin Ocean' of 7.271, the 'cleer *Hyaline*' and the 'Glassie Sea' of 7.619. Jasper occurs in *Rev.* 4.3, where it is the material to which the divine figure on the throne is compared, and in *Rev.* 21.11 and 18, where the light of the new Jerusalem resembles it and where the walls of the holy City are made of it. Some commentators on *Rev.* 4.3 say that jasper means the Divinity of Christ (Alcuin and Haymo), while Richard of St. Victor believes it stands for spiritual strength and evergreen eternity.[9] Annotators of the passages on Jerusalem think that jasper signifies the beauty of the virtue of saints (Primasius), ever-green faith (Bede), the strength and defence of faith, and the eternal life and immortality of the realm of God (Bruno Ast.[10]). These different meanings, converging in the semantic area "eternal life" and "holiness", merge with the symbolic sense of "the sea of glass" in *Rev.* 4.6, a passage which according to several editors suggested Milton's 'bright Sea of Jasper', *AV* 'And before the Throne there was a sea of glasse like vnto Chrystall: and in the middest of the throne, and round about the Throne, were foure beastes full of eyes before and behinde'. Vulg. 'mare vitreum simile crystallo' signifies baptism,[11] as unanimously attested by Victorinus, Augustine, Primasius, Bede, Alcuin, Strabo, Anselm Laud., Bruno Ast., Rupert, and Richard of St. Victor.[12] A powerful semantic cluster thus results from the merging of jasper and sea of glass, lending further richness and depth of meaning to the description of the celestial landscape. Also, the same commentators point out, just as glass is hard and precious, baptism signifies something permanent and incorruptible. Again, the function of baptism, a purifying sacrament, is also complementary to that of the Red Sea simile in book 7, where baptism annihilates evil. The celestial sea is found elsewhere in Jewish tradition, being identical with the waters above the firmament in *Gen.* 1.7, *Ps.* 148.4, and *The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Levi II[13]).

[9] Alcuin, *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 100.1116), Haymo, *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 117.1005), Rich. of St. Victor, *In Apocal.* (*PL* 196.746).

[10] Primasius, *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 68.927), Bede, *Explan. Apocal.* (*PL* 93.197), Bruno, *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 165.721, 724).

[11] See Whiting, pp. 96ff., 103f.

[12] Victorinus, *Schol. in Apocal.* (*PL* 5.324), Augustine, *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 35.2422), Primasius, *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 68.815), Bede, *Explan. Apocal.* (*PL* 93.143), Alcuin, *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 100.1117), Strabo, *Glossa Ord.* (*PL* 114.718), Anselm Laud., *Enarr. in Apocal.* (*PL* 162.1517), Bruno Ast., *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 165.627), Rupert, *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 169.910), Rich. of St. Victor, *In Apocal.* (*PL* 196.748). – The "enameled imagery" and "mystic oxymoron" of which Leland Ryken finds so many instances in *PL* (*The Apocalyptic Vision in 'Paradise Lost'*, Ithaca and London, 1970, pp. 75ff. and 88ff.) are thus invested with symbolic meanings which play an important part in exegesis (see Introduction, p. 32).

[13] See the note on *Rev.* 4.6 in Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John*, London, 1911; and Svendsen pp. 56ff.

As for 'liquid Pearle', not in the *Revelation* passage, the parable of the precious pearl in *Matt.* 13.45–46, as noted by W. H. Schofield,[14] elicited comments from twenty-three Latin Fathers. Schofield provides the following list of allegorical interpretations in patristic commentaries: "Christ; the Virgin; the Saints; those who enter into faith in the whiteness of all virtues, or are distinguished by one; supreme knowledge of the Word; resurrection, eternal life; the crown of every saint in Heaven; mysteries pertaining to the Kingdom; wisdom concerning God; gospel teaching; sweetness of the celestial life; love of one's neighbour; purity; grace; truth; holy religion, pure and immaculate; ourselves, whom we reclaim by giving all else in exchange", etc. In Greek patrology μαργαρίτης commonly stands for Christ or the eucharistic body of Christ.[15] 'Liquid' means "clear", "limpid", "transparent" and is reminiscent of 'liquidus' as used with such nouns as 'amnis', 'flumen', 'fons', 'ros', 'unda' in the Latin poets; Spenser uses it with waves and dew. Thus 'Jasper' and 'Pearle' mutually reinforce the symbolic meanings involved, and the accumulated, telescoped, and thus powerfully intensified significances suggested by the matrix – holiness, purity, divinity, truth, wisdom, virtue etc. – merge into a kind of luminous background for the arrival of the blessed. An important infracontext here was recognized by Keightley in the *Purgatorio* 2.16ff., where Dante sees an angel approach, guiding the blessed souls on their way to the mountain of purification, while the fiery steeds suggest Elijah's ascent to Heaven in *2 Kings* 2.11 (Todd). The light which is indirectly suggested by the numerous infracontexts underneath the bright flowing sea of jasper and pearl is answered by the beginning of the infracontext in Dante, ll. 13ff., 16ff., and 22ff., where the wanderer first sees a faint glimmer like that of Mars burning through the mists above the western horizon, and then a white light increasing and swiftly approaching over the sea, accompanied by another white spot. These different sources of light are the angel seen at a distance, his wings, and his vestment as he approaches, and this luminous whiteness also illuminates the angels guiding the blessed souls in Milton's poem. Again the effect of 'sailing arriv'd', 'Wafted', and 'flew ore the Lake' is enhanced by contact with the continuation in the *Purgatorio,* where Virgil calls Dante's attention to the angel moving without oar and sail, using only his wings (31ff.). The blessed souls in *PL,* like those in the *Purgatorio,* move in a way which is neither sailing nor flying, a kind of effortless soaring independent of all instruments necessary for human navigation. This account is in sharp contrast to the description of Satan laboriously making his way through the shapeless terrain of Chaos

[14] "Symbolism, Allegory, and Autobiography in *The Pearl*" (*PMLA* 24, 1909, pp. 634f.).
[15] *PGL* μαργαρίτης 1.

in bk. 2, an expedition where he has need of both oar and sail, and which in its turn is vertically contrasted with Mercury's easy flight in *Aen.* 1.301 (see p. 239). Again, unlike Satan's movements in Chaos, the angelic transport of blessed souls in Dante takes place with miraculous speed (ll. 40ff.). There is also of course an equally sharp contrast between the soaring of the blessed souls into Paradise and Satan's flight with his 'Sail-broad Vannes', a flight that nearly ends in disaster, and ultimately leads back into Hell.

The surface context in Milton is also affected by the vertical contrast built into the description of the angel guiding the souls in Dante's canto, which stands out in bold relief against the account of Charon ferrying the souls of the damned in *Inf.* 3.82ff. The one guides them to Salvation, the other to damnation; the one soars without oar and sails and blesses the souls with the sign of the cross, the other brutally strikes lingering souls with his oar and scolds and abuses his passengers; the celestial pilot is all light and "blessedness seemed written on him" (44), Charon is a demon with eyes of glowing coal.[16] The description of Charon is in its turn made more detailed by association with *Aen.* 6.298ff., where the grim ferryman is portrayed in full: terrible, squalid, dishevelled, with flaming eyes, dirty garb hanging on his shoulders, poling his gloomy craft and tending its sails. The passages in the *Purgatorio* reinforce Milton's words, but also, by evoking the contrasting descriptions in the *Inferno* and the *Aeneid,* indirectly suggest a world entirely opposite to the world of beatitude. This infernal world connects up with the world represented by Satan, for ever shut out from the 'Kingly Palace Gate'. The connections between the submerged motif of the Underworld and the surface motif of Satan's evil plans are again set off, contrariwise, against the motif of beatitude and holiness as suggested by l.522, 'Rapt in a Chariot drawn by fiery Steeds'. In the biblical infracontext, Elijah ascends to Heaven in a 'charet of fire, and horses of fire ... and Elijah went vp by a whirlewind into heauen'. According to patristic commentary, Elijah snatched up to Heaven in a chariot of fire prefigures the Ascension, and the fire in the biblical passage is the fire of God. Grotius (*Crit. Sacr.* 2.117) commenting on 'currus igneus et equi ignei' (Vulg. *4 Kings* 2.11) remarks, 'Angeli ea specie apparentes;' in *Matt.* 28.3 the angel guarding the tomb of Christ has a countenance like lightning. So unlike the lines on the angels wafting the souls across the sea of jasper and pearl, the element mentioned in l.522 is one which is also an inevitable ingredient in descriptions of the Underworld. But God's fire is a celestial, ethereal element; Satan's fire, the livid flames of Hell. The one word 'fiery' embodies the irreconcilable

[16] The set of reminiscences *e contrario* is outlined in detail by Scartazzini annotating *Purg.* 2.42.

difference between God's world and Satan's: at the same time as the symbolism narrows down and condenses into one word, it divides up into two kinds of incompatible reality.

This emphasis – overt or submerged – on the gulf separating Satan's world from God's would seem to be sustained in and to colour the subsequent description of the stairs and the passage down to earth, and to throw some further light on the question of Satan's situation outside the gates of Paradise:

> The Stairs were then let down, whether to dare
> The Fiend by easie ascent, or aggravate
> His sad exclusion from the dores of Bliss.
> Direct against which op'nd from beneath,
> Just ore the blissful seat of Paradise,
> A passage down to th' Earth, a passage wide,
> Wider by farr then that of after-times
> Over Mount *Sion,* and, though that were large,
> Over the *Promisd Land* to God so dear,
> By which, to visit oft those happy Tribes,
> On high behests his Angels to and fro
> Passd frequent, and his eye with choice regard
> From *Paneas* the fount of *Jordans* flood
> To *Bëersaba,* where the *Holy Land*
> Borders on *Ægypt* and th' *Arabian* shoare;
> So wide the op'ning seemd, where bounds were set
> To darkness, such as bound the Ocean wave. (523ff.)

The 'dores of Bliss' suggest biblical passages dealing with visions and revelations. In *Rev.* 4.1 'After this I looked, and beholde, a doore was opened in heauen', the celestial door is the door of revelation, in its turn suggesting *Mark* 1.10 'Hee saw the heauens opened, and the Spirit like a doue descending vpon him'; *John* 1.51 'Verily, verily I say vnto you, heereafter yee shall see heauen open', and, in the Old Testament, *Ezek.* 1.1 ... 'The heauens were opened, and I saw visions of God'. In the description of Satan's situation there is thus heavy irony in the use of words which suggest the divine communication of Truth and the revelation of beatitude accessible only to the holy visionaries. The infracontexts have the same function as the surface context with Jacob seeing the ladder in ll. 510ff.; the gigantic differences between Satan and Jacob, between the "arch-enemy of God" and the "chosen hand of God", Ricks feels, is a "disparity ... meant to be recognized".[17] It is however

[17] *Milton's Grand Style,* p. 128.

doubtful if, as Fowler thinks, "Satan like Jacob has fled retribution and is at a parting of the ways where he could still repent". It is not only true that Satan, unlike Jacob, "will go on to choose deeper damnation" – he has already chosen it, and it is no more possible for a rebel against the power of God to repent at this stage than it is in Eden before the temptation of Eve. Satan is no ordinary sinner capable of repentance; this is a sentimental and anachronistic idea.[18] There are degrees of damnation, but the damnation into which Satan has fallen is irrevocable and repentance an irrelevant and impossible matter:

> O then at last relent: is there no place
> Left for Repentance, none for Pardon left?
> None left but by submission; and that word
> Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
> Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduc'd
> With other promises and other vaunts
> Then to submit, boasting I could subdue
> Th' Omnipotent. (4.79ff.)

The passage down to the earth which pierces the surface of the outer shell and opens 'from beneath', 'Just ore the blissful seat of Paradise', surprisingly suggests *Argon.* 3.160ff. (Stillingfleet). In these lines it is described how Eros, after promising to wound Medea with his arrow, descends to carry out his mission: he makes his way from Zeus' palace through lush gardens and passes through the lofty gates of Olympus, from where a steep path leads down from heaven. Apollonius Rhodius also provides a counterpart to Milton's biblical 'dores of Bliss' by his πύλας Οὐλύμποιο (l.159), a detail derived from the *Iliad* where Homer describes a thick cloud serving as the door of Heaven on the top of Olympus (*Il.* 5.749).[19] The infracontext in the Greek poet thus reinforces the contrast effect sustained throughout the entire episode of Satan outside the gates of Paradise. In the *Argonautica* the theme of love prevails, and the messenger is under divine orders. In the wider perspective of Renaissance interpretation, Eros even in Christian thought represents a kind of love which is far from merely egotistical and sensual. Cartari (pp. 256f.) associates Cupid with the power which informs God, the angels, the saints, and which raises man to the contemplation of things divine. In medieval iconography, Cupid becomes the angel of Annunciation; in 16th- and 17th-century Christian emblems, pagan ele-

[18] See, among others, Steadman, *Milton's Epic Characters*, pp. 197, 233 and note; and see p. 267 below.
[19] See Mooney's edition of the *Argonautica*, p. 232.

ments illustrate Christian teaching, and Alciati makes Cupid symbolize divine love, while Georgette de Montenay and Vaenius identify him with Jesus.[20] Among the mythographers even Comes, who is far more interested in Cupid's lasciviousness than in his other characteristics, refers to 'Cupido caelestis' (pp. 119 v., 127 r.).

This infracontextual pattern prepares us on the horizontal level for the continued description of the broad passage leading down to the earth and of the angelic traffic up and down it (528ff.). The 'passage wide, / Wider by farr then that of after-times / Over Mount *Sion,* and ... over the *Promisd Land* to God so dear' is in sharp contrast to the 'passage broad, / Smooth, easie, inoffensive down to Hell' joining the wall of the 'fenceless World' in 10.304f., with its classical infracontexts on the 'facilis descensus Averno' (see p. 164 below). There are thus, as Verity remarks, two aerial paths for the descent of the angels: one leading from Heaven down on to Mount Sion, the other extending over the Promised Land. The passage over Mount Sion links up with *Is.* 2.3 on 'the mountaine of the Lord': 'For out of Zion shall goe forth the lawe, and the word of the Lord from Ierusalem'. The motif in l.530 of the path along which the revelation of divine truth shall flow out over the world thus connects with the submerged motif of Love descending down to the earth in l.528. In patrology, Mount Sion stands regularly for 'Ecclesia',[21] which in its turn, as Augustine explains, is a preliminary stage leading over to the realm of eternity, the promised land: 'Ipse habitat in Sion, quod interpretatur speculatio, et gestat imaginem Ecclesiae quae nunc est ... Praecedit autem speculatio visionem, sicut ista Ecclesia praecedit eam quae promittitur, civitatem immortalem et æternam'.[22] So the downward movement, the transmission of divine instruction, makes possible an upward movement from the earth to Heaven. The 'Promisd land' – geographically the land from Paneas in the north to Beerseba in the south, as explained in 535ff. – reminds us of the spiritual land adumbrated by Sion-Ecclesia. In the context, 'darkness' in the lines 'So wide the op'ning seemd, where bounds were set / To darkness, such as bound the Ocean wave' refers not only to chaos and metaphorically to "the darkness of pagan ignorance, bounded by the borders of the Holy Land" (Fowler), but above all to the darkness outside the order of the Holy Church and the Divine Truth. The 'Ocean wave' suggests baptism: just as in Greek

[20] See Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods,* London, 1940, repr. New York, 1961, pp. 103, 105, and 273; Praz, *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery,* pp. 45, 135f., 148, 149; and Panofsky, "Blind Cupid", in *Studies in Iconology. Humanistic Themes in The Art of the Renaissance,* Oxford, 1939, repr. New York, 1962, pp. 117ff.

[21] Augustine, *PL* 36.70, 122; Prosper, *PL* 51.370; Cassiodorus, *PL* 70.38, 696; Gregory, *PL* 79.530; Alcuin, *PL* 100.586, 589, 590, 631; Rupert, *PL* 169.71.

[22] *Enarr. in Psalm., PL* 36.122 (annotating *Ps.* 9.12 'Psallite domino, qui habitat in Sion').

mythology Oceanus sets bound to eternal night, so baptism shuts out spiritual darkness.[23]

The motif of angels ascending and descending Jacob's ladder in l.510 thus corresponds to that of the angels who 'to visit oft those happy Tribes, / On high behests ... to and fro / Passd frequent' along the path over Mount Sion and the Promised Land. These angels in their turn recall the motif of angels as the swift and tireless ministers of God as developed in infracontexts which add further meaning to the surface context, and which are in sharp contrast to the fallen angels who according to Beelzebub may be required to do God's errands 'in the gloomy Deep' in 1.152 (see p. 41 above). Anselm, as said previously, compares God's busy angels, flying between Heaven and earth, to diligent bees flitting between beehive and flowers. Bernard uses the same image several times, Marino in the *Sospetto d'Herode* 3 speaks of 'Api ingegnose', and Crashaw of 'Heav'n-labouring Bees' who 'with busie wing, / Suck hidden sweets, which well digested proves / Immortall Hony for the Hive of Loves'. All these writers are apparently referring to angels as messengers from God to man. At the beginning of canto 31 in the *Paradiso* there is the well-known description of the ranks of the blessed, forming the petals of a white rose; between it and God angels are flying like bees doing their work, dazzling with gold and celestial light (13ff.). Dante's lines form a powerful infracontext in contact with Milton's lines. 'Those happy Tribes' are the redeemed, their future lot adumbrated by Dante's introductory words about 'la militia santa, / Che nel suo sangue Cristo fece sposa' (2f.); the angels flying to and fro distribute peace and ardour among the holy in the Promised Land as the angelic bees do in Dante's Paradise; and the splendour and light in the *Paradiso,* unimpeded by the densely flying multitude, flows out over the universe much as the divine truth flows down along the wide aerial path in Milton's poem. Again, the light and sparkle suggested horizontally and vertically by Milton's lines on the celestial portal and the 'bright Sea' (ll.505ff. and 518ff.) connect up by submerged links with the angelic light in Dante's lines. Conversely, the contrasts to Satan's world which emerge from this whole pattern of surface and infracontexts are seen to be complex and numerous. The sustained emphasis on the theme of light, which is to the fore on surface- and infra-levels, is set off against the darkness theme always represented by Satan, just as this latter theme is in sharp contrast to the motif of the sun in ll.590ff. Again while the aim of Satan's upward movement from Hell via Chaos into the universe is to achieve a downward movement,

[23] This symbolic significance is frequently attested in exegesis: some instances are Rabanus Maurus, *PL* 111.311, Alcuin, *PL* 100.1117, Petrus Lombardus, *PL* 191.1618.

the Fall which opens up the road down to Hell, the angels in ll.511 and 533 maintain free communication between Heaven and earth, bestowing divine love and truth and guiding the blessed souls upwards towards eternal life in Paradise.

2. Milky Way

Another celestial path, called the Milky Way by mortals, links up in a natural manner with the 'stairs mysteriously meant', being in the same way connected with the striving towards the cosmic centre, the seat of God, and in the same way contrasted with the powers which try to hamper and divert that striving. Infracontexts underscore this double character of the motif. Christ is returning in triumph after the successful conclusion of the War in Heaven and the Creation (7.574ff.):

> He through Heav'n,
> That op'nd wide her blazing Portals, led
> To Gods Eternal house direct the way,
> A broad and ample rode, whose dust is Gold
> And pavement Starrs, as Starrs to thee appeer,
> Seen in the Galaxie, that Milkie way
> Which nightly as a circling Zone thou seest
> Pouderd with Starrs.

The horizontal links with other surface contexts run back by contrast to the description of Pandemonium in 1.728ff. and forward to the account of the infernal road in 10.293ff.; similarity links connect up with the celestial palace gate in 3.505ff. and the account of Raphael's mission in 5.250ff. In the description of Pandemonium in the first book, 'Op'ning thir brazen foulds' (724) is phonologically and verbally close to 'op'nd wide her blazing Portals' in 7.575, and the similarity serves to bring out the contrast all the more clearly (p. 293 below). Commentators observe that the 'blazing Portals', being connected with the 'Milkie way', are identical with the portals of the sun, the tropical signs Cancer and Capricorn, beyond which the sun's course does not extend. Fowler refers to Porphyry, Helpericus of Auxerre, and Macrobius, but the tradition is even more complex, intensifying the solar symbolism connected with Christ. There is a double tradition underlying the blazing portals, one based on the description of the palace of the Sun in *Met.* 2.1ff., and one on

neo-Platonic allegorization of Homer. As Heninger points out,[1] the four elements are involved in different ways in Ovid's description of the palace of the Sun and its doors: the gold and bronze of the house shine like fire; on the doors Vulcan has carved sea, earth, and the dazzling sky. The palace and its portico, in short, are a symbol of the ordered cosmos. At the same time the expression 'blazing Portals' immediately suggests Ovid's description of dawn in 2.113 when Aurora opens her purple gates, 'purpureas fores', and night flees away. Ovid's phrase is frequently echoed in Renaissance literature; particularly often in sacred contexts such as *Sospetto d'Herode* 16, where Lucifer sees a 'threefold Sun, with rich encrease, / Make proud the Ruby portalls of the East' ('Vede aprir l'vscio à triplicato Sole / La reggia oriental, che si disserra'). This is the miracle boding death to evil powers and to heathendom, and dawn symbolizes the Nativity. In 'To the Name above Every Name, the Name of Iesvs' 216f. (*Sacred Poems*), Crashaw describes Salvation in similar terms, seeing Life paradoxically against the background of death, the Slaughter of the Innocents: 'What did their Weapons but sett wide the Doores / For Thee: Fair, purple Doores, of loue's deuising'.

With the associations invested in these infracontexts – cosmic order, Salvation, the annihilation of evil – merge those bound up with the theme of 'Ηελίοιο πύλας, the portals of the Sun, as developed by Porphyry and later authors.[2] In the *De antro Nympharum*, a neo-Platonic allegorization of *Od.* 13.109–112, a Greek writer describes the pre- and postexistence of the soul and its relation to the universe. The doors of the Ithacan cave correspond to the solar portals which mark the limits of the sun's path and through which souls travel from heaven down to the earth and back again to immortality (through Cancer downwards, through Capricorn upwards). From Homer in 24.12 Porphyry adopts the expression for these portals of the sun and the souls, and the 'portae solis' recur in Macrobius as part of the same astronomical-metaphysical explanations (*Comm. in Somn. Scip.* 1.12.1). (In Macrobius' *Saturnalia* (1.17.63) and in Helpericus of Auxerre only the astronomical information is provided.) The meanings "dawn", "Nativity", "Salvation", "Christus triumphans" suggested by the sun and souls travelling between Heaven and earth stand out sharply against those evoked by the infernal 'dores / Op'ning thir brazen foulds' in 1.724. The contrast between the partial *paronomasia*, celestial 'blazing Portals' and infernal 'brazen foulds', is further heightened by the antithesis between the latter and the silver double doors of the solar palace: *Met.* 2.4 'Argenti bifores radiabant

[1] *Touches of Sweet Harmony*, p. 381.
[2] See W. H. Stahl, *Macrobius, Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, New York, 1952, p. 133, n. 2.

lumine ualuae'. The brazen folds opening of their own accord, as part of the infernal magic, again recall by contrast the departure of Raphael on his way to carry out the divine mission: The gate of Heaven 'self-op'nd wide / On gold'n Hinges turning, as by work / Divine the sovran Architect had fram'd' (5.254ff.), evoking Homeric and biblical associations (see p. 253).

The contrast is sustained in the continuation of the description in 7.577f. The 'broad and ample rode, whose dust is Gold / And pavement Starrs' is connected with the stars in 'the Galaxie, that Milkie way / Which nightly as a circling Zone thou seest / Pouderd with Starrs'. The vehicle of the comparison is highly relevant to the description since it suggests, as commentators point out, *Met.* 1.170 where the 'via lactea' is 'iter ... superis ad magni tecta Tonantis / Regalemque domum', a passage which forms an infracontext also for 4.976, where Satan scornfully speaks of the Cherubim drawing the Lord's triumphant chariot 'In progress through the rode of Heav'n Starr-pav'd'. Ovid's line forms part of the account of the gathering of the gods at which it is decided to punish the race of man for impiety. Annotating the passage on the Milky Way as the road leading to the abode of the gods, Regius and Micyllus refer the reader to Macrobius' commentary on the *Somnium Scipionis*. Macrobius (15.1) recalls that Paulus in the *Somnium* refers to the Milky Way as 'splendidissimo candore inter flammas circus elucens', and, pointing it out, observes that it is a reward for virtuous living and a meeting-place for the blessed, 'lacteum circulum uirtutibus debitum et beatorum coetu refertum'. These conceptions, the road of the gods and the haunt of the blessed souls, are further intensified by the associations invested in 'whose dust is Gold / And pavement Starrs'. These words evoke simultaneously *Il.* 4.2 on the gods holding assembly χρυσέῳ ἐν δαπέδῳ, "on the golden floor"; *Rev.* 21.21 on the new Jerusalem: 'The streete of the city was pure golde, as it were transparent glasse'; and numerous Renaissance descriptions of the Holy City, whose streets are said to be paved or powdered with stars (e.g. Giles Fletcher, *Christ's Triumph after Death* 38 'Her streetes in stead of stones, the starres did pave'). These contexts in their turn link up with the allegorical *in bono* meanings of 'gold' and with the motif of stars identified with angels and blessed souls.

3. Infernal Bridge

As Whiting[1] and others remark, a powerful contrast to the stairs leading up to Heaven emerges by contact with the passage on the infernal bridge

[1] *Milton and This Pendant World*, pp. 66ff.

constructed by Sin and Death along the track blasted by Satan across Chaos (2.1024ff.):

> Sin and Death amain
> Following his track, such was the will of Heav'n,
> Pav'd after him a broad and beat'n way
> Over the dark Abyss, whose boiling Gulf
> Tamely endur'd a Bridge of wondrous length
> From Hell continu'd reaching th' utmost Orbe
> Of this frail World; by which the Spirits perverse
> With easie intercourse pass to and fro
> To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
> God and good Angels guard by special Grace.

These phrases signal a group of classical infracontexts representing the outskirts of the Underworld as a broad and beaten track on which spirits pass unhampered, only that easy passage of course leads *down* into the nether world. The emphasis on the ease and comfort of the route seems to be traditional. Leonidas of Tarentum in an epigram[2] tells his readers not to worry when starting out on the road to Hades: Οὐ...ἐστὶ δύσβατος/ οὐδὲ σκαληνὸς, οὐδ' ἀνάπλεως πλάνης ("it is neither impassable nor uneven, nor is it full of error"); it is straight and always sloping downwards, even a blind man could find his way. An anonymous epigram in the *Greek Anthology* (10.3) begins, Εἰς ἀΐδην ἰθεῖα κατήλυσις ("the road to Hades slopes straight downwards") no matter where you start the journey. Leonidas' epigram is rendered by Hugo Grotius, ... 'non concaedibus, / Non tortuosis impedita anfractibus, / Sed tota recta, tota declivis via est',[3] and in a rather different form by John Owen, 'Lata via est et trita via est, quae duxit ad Orcum: /Invenit hoc, etiam se duce, caecus iter'. In Diogenes Laertius, Stobaeus, and Cicero there are variations on the theme of *G.A.* 10.3[4]. In *Hercules Furens* 1067, a line which precedes a passage mentioned by Thyer annotating *PL* 2.1037f. (see p. 247 below), the entrance to the Underworld is described as a huge abyss 'Latumque pandit omnibus populis iter'. These words are obviously another expression of the same theme. (These classical instances are quite different from the descriptions of "the hellish bridge", a common

[2] Printed in Cougny's supplement (3, p. 399) to Dübner's edition of the *Greek Anthology* (Paris, 1890).
[3] Cougny, *ibid.*
[4] In his edition of the *Greek Anthology*, (*Anthologia Graeca* 3, p. 812), Beckby quotes Owen and refers to the three classical authors.

feature of the infernal landscape itself, found in vision literature: Gregory's *Dialogues, The Vision of Tundale, St. Patrick's Purgatory,* and others.)[5] It would seem, then, that the beaten track leading *up* from the Underworld constitutes a theme without traditional parallels, while the mention of that leading *down* into it is a topos, represented as it is by a matrix, a homogeneous group of infracontexts.[6] Yet the two kinds of track are connected in being channels of communication between Hell/Hades and the outside world.

The idea of the easy, 'broad and beat'n way' which is to the fore briefly in 2.1024ff. – the road cleared by Satan and subsequently, with God's permission, taken by the powers of Hell to reach earth – recurs in 10.293ff., where Sin and Death work as constructors to make the road through Chaos trafficable and useful. The material worked on by Death is 'solid or slimie' (286); the solid part seems to be floating around, and Death therefore fixes it with his 'Mace petrific, cold and dry, / As with a Trident'; just as Delos, the floating island, was once fastened by Jupiter to the bottom of the sea.[7] As for the rest, i.e. the slimy parts, Death's 'look' makes them firm:

> ...the rest his look
> Bound with *Gorgonian* rigor not to move,
> And with *Asphaltic* slime; broad as the Gate,
> Deep to the Roots of Hell the gatherd beach
> They fast'nd, and the Mole immense wraught on
> Over the foaming Deep high Archt, a Bridge
> Of length prodigious joining to the Wall
> Immoveable of this now fenceless World
> Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,
> Smooth, easie, inoffensive down to Hell.

Fowler asks himself why Death uses his mace like a trident to treat some of the material of Chaos, and his 'look' for the rest. The answer may be that Neptune and the Gorgons are associated in mythology: in the *Theogony* 278 and *Met.* 4.791 and 6.119 Medusa is loved by the sea god, and Comes refers to a tradition that the Gorgons were descendants of the sea and the earth (7, p. 747). The connection between the trident-like

[5] See Howard Patch, *The Other World,* Cambridge, Mass., 1950, pp. 95f., 112f., 115, 125.
[6] The parallels to Milton's bridge in art provided by Roland Frye do not seem relevant. Like those discussed by Patch, they form part of the infernal setting and are hardly even discernible in some of the illustrations. I fail to see, for instance, that there is "a precise visual equivalent of Milton's bridge between Hell and Earth" in van Heemskerk's *Death and Judgment* (Frye, p. 144).
[7] The various strands of significance in this paragraph have been successfully disentangled by Fowler.

'Mace petrific' and the 'Gorgonian rigor' yields a complex pattern of meanings. There is a contrast between the life-giving Neptunian trident, which symbolizes the triple property and power of water – liquidity, fecundity, potability[8] – and the opposite lethal quality of Death's petrific, cold and dry mace. This contrast merges with that between the vital warmth infused by God into the mass of Chaos and the lifeless coldness imparted by Death. In addition to the further contrast between Neptune's trident and that of Satan, suggesting the infernal trinity Satan, Sin, and Death (Fowler), there is also that between the triple significance of the trident and the symbolism of the three Gorgons, 'tria terroris genera': terror weakening the mind, striking it with terror, and inducing blindness.[9] Between Death's look fixing the fluid part of Chaos and the 'Gorgonian rigor' there is a kind of massive symmetry and conformity which makes up an interesting and unusual contrast to the preceding complex pattern of contrasts. The sudden solidification of the connection between surface context and infracontext in the total parallelism between Death and the Gorgon, the complete correspondence between the two, suggests, on an abstract and indirect level as part of a complex code, the very matter described, the Gorgonian rigor. There is not even dynamic heightening or intensification, for the Gorgonian rigor petrifying Chaos symmetrically recalls *Phars.* 9.647 on Medusa threatening the world: 'Hoc potuit caelo pelagoque minari / Torporem insolitum mundoque obducere terram'; a passage that also serves as an infracontext for the description of Crudeltà's deadly power in the *Sospetto d'Herode* 48. Death's and the Gorgon's power coincide completely: both are capable of killing everything that moves in the universe. 'Of length prodigious' adds to these meanings: underneath 'prodigious' in the sense "enormous" we discern the meanings "abnormal", "unnatural", as the Gorgon was, as well as "ominous", "portentous" (*OED* 1): the bridge bodes ill for the world.

The punctuation in 10.297–98 is puzzling. 'With *Asphaltic* slime' can hardly be coordinate with 'with *Gorgonian* rigor': 'the rest – not to move' in 296–97 forms one syntactic unit, 'And with *Asphaltic* slime – They fast'nd' in 298–300, another. Trying to avoid emendations suggested by Bentley, some earlier commentators proposed changing the punctuation: a full stop after 'move', a comma after 'slime' (Pearce); or transposition of the comma after 'move' and the semi-colon after 'slime' (Richardson, Newton, Todd). However, the semi-colon does not seem to mark the

[8] Stressed e.g. by Fulgentius in *Mythologicon* 1.3 (p. 37). This is more to the point than Neptune the controller of waves, suggesting peace (Fowler). Unlike many other heathen gods, Neptune often seems to be a benevolent spirit in Christian literature.
[9] Fulgentius 1.26 (p. 61).

dividing-line between two clauses but is a "light" type of semi-colon comparable to a comma and used to indicate emphasis (of the same type as that at 10.31, 420, 443, 1056, 1094).[10] Death's look binds the fluid parts with Gorgonian rigour, and Death and Sin fasten 'the gatherd beach' deep to the roots of Hell 'with *Asphaltic* slime', thus laying the foundations of their bridge.[11] 'Slime' in 298 forms a repetitive figure with 'slimie' in 286, a combination of *polyptoton* and *antanaclasis:* from the sense "viscously fluid" in 286 there is a change to the sense "pitch" in 298. Fowler establishes a connection with *Ecclus.* 13.1 'He that toucheth pitch, shall be defiled therewith', but even more interesting is the continuation, 'and hee that hath fellowship with a proude man, shall be like vnto him', making the *Ecclesiasticus* verse into a synecdochic infracontext actualizing the motif of *superbia.* It is, however, also pointed out by Fowler that 'slime' is the *AV* translation of a Hebrew word rendered by ἄσφαλτος in *LXX Gen.* 11.3, where the builders of the Tower of Babel use pitch for mortar much as Death does to fix the foundations of the bridge. But the horizontal connection with 'Asphaltus' in 1.729, where this substance together with 'Naphtha' yields 'light / As from a sky' in Pandemonium (see p. 305 below), results in a superficial contrast effect: in 10.298 black pitch is a suitable substance for holding together a bridge joining Hell with 'this now fenceless World / Forfeit to Death'. Simultaneously both components of this contrast are characteristic of Hell, which is at the same time black as pitch and burning with quenchless flames.

The impact of the infracontexts called into play by the 'Bridge of wondrous length' in 2.1028 is felt to the full in 10.304f.: a direct connection can be established between them and the words 'a passage broad, / Smooth, easie, inoffensive down to Hell'. Commentators refer to *Aen.* 6.126f. 'facilis descensus Auerni; / Noctes atque dies patet atri ianua Ditis'; but 'smooth, easie, inoffensive' (= unobstructed) are words also directly supported by Grotius' and Owen's renderings of the Greek epigrams ('tota recta', 'tota declivis'; 'Lata via est et trita via est'). As compared with 2.1028ff., the description of the downward movement is naturally intensified by the combined wording of surface and infracontexts. In this new context the infracontexts are reinforced by the *Matthew* passage cited by Greenwood: 'Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat' (7.13). These infracontextual formulations, or rather formulae, are *sen-*

[10] This use of the semi-colon is discussed in Mindele Treip's *Milton's Punctuation,* London 1970, pp. 98ff. and note on pp. 147f. See also Percy Simpson's *Shakespearian Punctuation,* Oxford, 1911, pp. 62ff.

[11] Camé (1, pp. 414ff.) provides a discussion of the topography of the infernal bridge.

tentiae transforming Milton's lines on the downward path to a universally valid statement. The meaning suggested is that though the postlapsarian world lies forfeit to death moving up from Chaos, the downward movement is always stronger, and the spirit of the abyss will return to the place he came from. Whiting calls attention to the connection with the fall of the angels as described in the first book. Again, he points out, while Death and Sin invade the universe, Satan after seducing mankind returns down to Hell; the infernal bridge thus leads downward to damnation, the ladder upward to eternal life, Ladder and bridge are "symbols of contrasted movement: the one Christian, spiritual, virtuous, tending *upward* through humility and obedience to God and salvation; the other pagan, physical, sinful, leading *downward* through pride to hell and damnation".[12] To these contrasts should be added those on the purely verbal level in the descriptions of bridge and ladder. The infernal material of which the bridge is made contrasts sharply with the steps of gold symbolizing sanctity in all its aspects; and 'prodigious' with its overtones of something monstrous is set off against 'mysteriously' suggesting divine revelation.

There is thus a suggestion of the theme of defeat, implied on an infralevel in the description of the very arrangements made to secure success by Sin and Death, following up Satan's pioneer work. The submerged defeat motif is thrown into relief by the implied contrast with the 'gold'n chain' by which the world is fastened to Heaven (Fowler), and also with the motif of the "Bridge of Judgement", found in several Visions,[13] over which the righteous pass on their way to Paradise, but from which the wicked fall down into Hell. The defeat motif is however chiefly developed in 10.306ff. (Newton), comparing Death throwing a bridge between Hell and Earth to Xerxes 'bridging his way' across the Hellespont (306ff.):

> So, if great things to small may be compar'd,
> *Xerxes,* the Libertie of *Greece* to yoke,
> From *Susa* his *Memnonian* Palace high
> Came to the Sea, and over *Hellespont*
> Bridging his way, *Europe* with *Asia* joind,
> And scourg'd with many a stroak th'indignant waves.

Fowler summarizes several important points of similarity between the activities of Death and what Newton called a "very exact and beautiful"

[12] Whiting, pp. 66f.
[13] See Patch, pp. 87, 96, 110, 112, and 115.

simile believed to derive from Stephanus rather than Herodotus:[14] "Death and Xerxes both build bridges, both intend to subdue whole nations, are both proud and both strike the deep ... Less obviously, both are doomed to fail in spite of initial successes". Fowler also feels that the main force of the simile derives from the legend that Xerxes, reviewing his army, wept at the thought that such multitudes would all be dead within a century. Whether the source is Stephanus or Herodotus is irrelevant in a discussion of infracontexts, and there is one infracontext that seems to have been neglected by modern editors: Aeschylus' *Persae,*[15] to which attention was called first by Dunster and then by "a learned friend" of Todd's. The *Persae,* dealing with human endeavour, destiny, and the gods, invests Milton's lines with rich and diversified meaning emerging from a complex code and not brought to the fore by the brief annalistic piece of information provided by Stephanus. The signal pointing to Aeschylus occurs before the simile proper, in 10.300f., 'The Mole immense wraught on / Over the foaming Deep high Archt', recalling *Pers.* 71f. (where the choir describes the campaign): πολύγομφον ὅδισμα/ζυγὸν ἀμφιβαλὼν αὐχένι πόντου ("having thrown a well-fastened roadway like a yoke on the neck of the sea"). The 'Mole ... Over the ... Deep high Archt' corresponds to ζυγὸν ... αὐχένι, ("yoke ... neck"); also, αὐχήν is a pun on neck – strait. The yoke image recurs in 10.307, 'the Libertie of *Greece* to yoke', corresponding fairly closely to another line in the choir's narrative (50): the Persians vow ζυγὸν ἀμφιβαλεῖν δούλιον Ἑλλάδι, "to throw the yoke of slavery on Hellas". (The yoke indicating bridge and slavery is used elsewhere in the *Persae:* in the queen's dream 191 and 196, allegorizing Greece freeing herself from slavery, similarly in 594 (the choir) with the same sense, and 736 (the queen), again on the bridge yoking land to land). From these verbal signals radiate connections of a wider relevance, suggesting similarities between Death and Xerxes. The point and force of these suggestions are hinted at in 306, introducing the Xerxes simile, 'So, if great things to small may be compar'd'. This is a formula recurring at 2.921f. in the description of Chaos, and at 6.310f. in that of the War in Heaven, and as Verity observes is of Virgilian origin (*Ecl.* 1.23 'Sic parvis componere magna solebam'). It was given further currency by Vida using it in his *Arte Poetica* (2.283). The simile introduced by the formula merges with the figure *tapinosis,* which belittles and deflates the dignity of somebody

[14] Starnes and Talbert, *Classical Myth and Legend in Renaissance Dictionaries,* Chapel Hill, 1955, p. 285. However, it is hardly possible to pin down the exact source of the widespread tradition of Xerxes' bridging the Hellespont and scourging the waves.

[15] Like all Aeschylus' tragedies it was available to Milton and his readers in numerous editions: Venice 1518, Paris and Venice 1552, Geneva 1557, Antwerp 1580, London 1663 and 1664.

or something, and the formulaic colour of l.306 lends it a sententious character: the power of Death is compared to, and indeed stated to be in the nature of, that of a worldly tyrant.[16] The point of the Xerxes simile is thus that it stresses the specious character of Death's strength and power, and Xerxes' failure and defeat seem to be very much to the fore in the complex of similarities; this is the way *tapinosis* works here. The point is invested with a particular meaning by the fact that the Persian ruler's power is repeatedly and hyperbolically stressed by the choir, which at the same time significantly speculates on the irresistible might of the gods. The enumeration of the leaders of the Persian army at the beginning of the choir's monologue suggests inexhaustible military resources; no one can hold his ground against the overwhelming flood of their men (20–63). The king himself is "the furious ruler of populous Asia" (73); "a man equal to the gods, belonging to a race begotten of gold" (79f.); "the black glare of a murderous dragon blazes from his eyes" (81f.), etc. Besides these descriptions of Xerxes' power and dangerousness the play provides a number of hints of the opposite kind: who can escape the gods' wiles (107ff.) or the snares of reckless blindness? (111ff.); some divine power or fortune destroyed Xerxes' army (345ff.), and made him lose his judgement (725); building his bridge, foolish as he was, he thought he could sway even the gods (745ff.). Aeschylus thus emphasizes the strength of the forces which are capable of setting bounds to Xerxes' power. So besides many obvious and overt points of similarity between *PL* and the *Persae* there are important submerged ones: Death's power is not what it seems to be; the entity compared – Xerxes' lethal power –, though enormous, must yield to the will of the gods. Death, in short, is himself doomed to die and a horizontal connection with 3.252ff. establishes itself: 'Death his deaths wound shall then receive, and stoop / Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarmd', in its turn echoing the "deadly death" motif in *Hos.* 13.14 and *1 Cor.* 15.55, with patristic comments e.g. by Jerome.[17] Xerxes in the simile functions much as heathen tyrants do in Christian epics – Decius, Nero, Maxentius, Herod – powerful but doomed; the legendary scourging in 10.311 is useless, but the blow eventually directed against Xerxes and Death himself will be all the more effective.

A number of points in the account of the Infernal Bridge are sharply antithetic to details in the description of the celestial paths. The 'aggregated Soile ... his Mace ... cold and dry' (10.293f.) with its suggestion of barrenness, and the '*Asphaltic* slime' (298) suggesting blackness stand

[16] 'The dignitie and majestie of a high matter is much defaced by the basenesse of a word' (Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence* (1593), p. 168).
[17] *Comm. in Osee* 3.13 (*PL* 25.937).

out antithetically to the gold and stars in the passage in book 7 with all the associations evoked by them. Again, the 'Roots of Hell' (299) are in contrast to Heaven's 'blazing Portals' (7.575), the 'broad ... Gate' (298) and the 'passage broad, / Smooth, easie, inoffensive down to Hell' (304f.) to the 'broad and ample rode' (7.577). Infracontextually, the massive tradition of "easy descent into Hell" which underlies 10.304f. stands out in opposition to the infracontexts in Homer, Porphyry, Ovid, Macrobius, and the Bible which are relevant to the interpretation of the account in book 7 and which deal with the road to Heaven and with the blessed souls. The deeper significance of each is heavily stressed by these antitheses. Finally, while the comparison involved in 10.306ff., *tapinosis*-wise, moves from great things to small, from the hellish bridge to that built by Xerxes across the Hellespont, the comparison in bk. 7 compares great with great, the road leading to Heaven's gate resembling and indeed, infracontextually, being identical with the Milky Way.

4. Blasted Stars

We turn from the Infernal Bridge to the flight of its constructors winging their way from the 'brink of Chaos' to the earth, the last leg of the journey already made by Satan. The few lines on this event are charged with significance conveyed by infracontexts. To a great extent this richness and depth of meaning are due to the interplay of reinforcement and contrast.

Satan's conversation with Sin and Death in 10.354ff. ends with his sending them as 'substitutes', 'Plenipotent on Earth', in the hope that his new realm will be safe if their mission succeeds:

> So saying he dismissd them; they with speed
> Thir course through thickest Constellations held
> Spreading thir bane; the blasted Starrs lookd wan,
> And Planets, Planet-strook, real Eclips
> Then sufferd. (410ff.)

Satan for his part makes his way to Hell, where his followers are waiting for his report. Sin and Death on their way through the star-filled space strike the planets with panic, and Fowler feels that "the wild figures here approach the chaotic bomphiologia of bk. vi". The remark refers to the various grotesque and inflated details of the description of the War in Heaven. But the parallel is specious, and the account of the stars in confusion stands out as a homogeneous topos in epic poetry. Nor is the

description a piece of *bomphiologia,* for this figure – excessive inflation of words and matter – is a function of decorum and context, and neither indicates that the account of the terror caused by Death and Sin is excessively inflated. The horizontal connection does not involve details of the War in Heaven so much as the lines on the 'Gorgonian rigor' caused by Death's look when building the bridge (295ff.). Lines 410ff. in fact continue and develop the description of Death's activities begun in the earlier episode. Some of the relevant infracontexts are referred to by Newton, Thyer, and Todd.

If we take as our starting-point the earlier lines on Death petrifying some of the material of Chaos with his look, one fundamental infracontext is immediately brought into focus, *Pharsalia* 9.647 on the Gorgon who 'potuit caelo pelagoque minari / Torporem insolitum': while Death changing the non-solid parts of Chaos to stone recalls the words 'pelago ... minari', the panic-stricken stars threatened by the same power suggest the other half of the phrase, 'caelo ... minari'. The Gorgon, feared by her parents and even by her sister Gorgons (646f.), is, like Death, a menace to the entire universe. From the *Pharsalia* there is a link with Marino's *Sospetto d'Herode* 48 on Crudeltà frightening the stars (referred to by Todd), investing 'the blasted Starrs lookd wan, / And Planets, Planet-strook, real Eclips / Then sufferd' with pregnant meaning. In the *Sospetto,* Crudeltà, sent on her mission by Satan, is winging her way from the Underworld to Herod in order to incite him against Christ and inspire him with the idea of the massacre. If her eyes had not been covered with snakes, she would have brought disaster to the whole world: 'Potria col ciglio instupidir Natura, / Inhorridire il bel pianeta eterno, / Irrigidir le stelle, e gli elementi'; even so, she still has the power to wither flowers, blast the vegetation, and make birds fall dead to the ground.[1] The lines in the *Sospetto* are identical with the first version of a similar description in *L'Adone* (12.29, referred to by Thyer), where Gelosia ascends from her cave on her fatal expedition to Mars (resulting in due time in the death of Adone): 'Poria col ciglio instupidir Natura, / Inhorridire il bel Pianeta eterno, / Intorbidar le stelle, e gli elementi'. Marino's description is also coloured by Ovid's account of Invidia's flight in *Met.* 2.790ff. (blasting vegetation, polluting entire nations and cities and homes with her breath). While the intensity of the lines is increased by contact with Ovid's description, association with the flight of Crudeltà is of importance from a semantic point of view, since subliminally the figure of Christ enters the picture. Crudeltà's threat to life in the universe foreshadows her threat to Life itself, just as Death and Sin on their way to the earth will carry out Satan's scheme of revenge, culminat-

[1] *Marino and Crashaw: 'Sospetto d'Herode'. A Commentary,* pp. 237f.

ing in the attempt on the life of Christ the man as related in Vida's *Christiad*.

This theme of the threat is reinforced by yet other infracontexts. Sin and Death travelling through space 'Spreading thir bane' suggest another stanza in the *Sospetto* and its infracontexts: 32.3f., where Satan threatens Heaven with revenge on a cosmic scale in his council with the Furies: 'Armisi il mondo, e'l Ciel: de' cenni miei / Gli elementi, e le stelle hauran paura'. The effect on the stars is the same as that depicted in accounts of the War in Heaven. In st. 36 of Crashaw's rendering of the *Sospetto,* Lucifer reminds the Furies of their exploits during the great campaign: 'Stay of my strong hopes! you of whose brave worth, / The frighted stars tooke faint experience'; and in the nearest infracontext, Andreini's *L'Adamo,* Satan in a fiery speech to Belzebù and Lucifero calls to mind similar feats in his efforts to spur them on to fresh efforts: 'Pur quegli siam che nel gran fatto d'armi / De lo stellante agone / Tremar facemmo impallidito il Cielo' (360ff.). These details in their turn are based on accounts of the *Gigantomachia,* as in Manilius 1.421ff. when even Jupiter is alarmed when watching the upheaval of nature, and on various other classical passages on proud and evil powers challenging the gods and threatening the very foundations of the universe: furious Medea's words in Seneca's play, 'Inuadam deos / Et cuncta quatiam' (*Med.* 424f.), Allecto's threats during the Infernal Council in Claudian's *In Rufinum* 1.62ff., reminiscent of Satan's words in *L'Adamo:* 'Iam cupio Stygiis invadere nubibus astra, / Iam flatu violare diem, laxare profundo / Frena mari, fluvios ruptis immittere ripis / Et rerum laxare fidem', or Pluto threatening Jupiter in Claudian's *De Raptu Proserpinae* 1.115f. 'Obducam tenebris lucem, compage soluta / Fulgidus umbroso miscebitur axis Àuerno'. Similar details have inspired Satan's lines in Fletcher's *Apollyonists* 2.27, where in his speech to the fallen angels he says he will attack Heaven itself 'To shake the starres, as thick from fixed spheare, / As when a rustick arme with stubborne flayle / Beats out his harvest from the swelling eare'. In *Apoll.* 2.39, where the threat is carried out, the devils emerge from Hell: 'Heav'n shuts his eyes; / The starres looke pale, and early mornings ray / Layes downe her head againe, and dares not rise' (Todd). When Armida in *GL* (16.68) swears revenge on the Christians she calls up a swarm of infernal spirits, and 'S'empie il Ciel d'atre nubi, e in un momento / Impallidisce il gran pianeta eterno' (Todd). Milton's lines on the effect of Death on the stars thus link up equally with descriptions of impious wars waged on the gods and accounts of threats to their power. The impact of the lines is increased by this double, densely infracontextual pattern: the words suggest a second battle with God, no less bitter than the first, and one that the rebels promise will end differently.

Lines of communication with yet other infracontexts, however, fan out from Milton's lines, charging them on return with further significance. The blasted stars that look 'wan' – in the special sense applied to heavenly bodies: "faint", "sickly", "partially obscured" (*OED*) – combine with 'Planets . . . real Eclips / Then sufferd' to suggest an evil omen foreboding death to princes. They are in the same category as pallid or darkened sun, such as attended the assassination of Caesar (*Georg.* 1.467ff., Tibullus 2.5.75 and Plutarch, *Life of Caesar* 69) and appeared during the Slaughter of the Innocents (*Strage degli Innocenti* 3.3, see above, p. 101). The 'Eclips', suggesting the fall of a prince, ironically evokes the ultimate defeat of Death and Satan at the hands of Christ. The words combine with several other lines indicating the fall of the devil, while seemingly and on the surface relating his successes.

Nor is this all, for the account of Sin and Death holding their course with speed 'through thickest Constellations', spreading their bane and making planets, 'Planet-strook', suffer eclipse, connects with still another cluster of infracontexts. This further contact provides two kinds of effect. The first, of an intensifying type, emerges from association with Ovid's account of Phaëthon driving the sun-god's team across the heavens, causing havoc and chaos among the constellations (2.171ff.):

> Tum primum radijs gelidi caluere Triones
> Et uetito frustra tentarunt aequore tingui.
> Quaeque polo posita est glaciali proxima Serpens,
> Frigore pigra prius, nec formidabilis ulli,
> Incaluit, sumpsitque nouas feruoribus iras;
> Te quoque turbatum memorant fugisse, Boote,
> Quamuis tardus eras, et te tua plaustra tenebant.

The collocation of the accounts in Milton and in Ovid has various implications. Phaëthon's mad race violates the rules by which the universe is ordered and kept together, just as the appearance of Sin and Death has a similar effect on the world. Also, of course, Phaëthon is a symbol of *superbia* and was so interpreted as early as the medieval *Ovide Moralisé* (see p. 211 below), just as the actions of Sin and Death are ultimately caused by the pride of Satan rebelling against God for the second time. Among the details in Ovid's description there is one which invests the expression 'Planet-strook' with a particular meaning. People and things unfavourably affected by planets were planet-struck; the extent of the devastations of Sin and Death can be measured by the planets themselves being "struck" by evil forces even stronger than themselves. But 'Planet-strook' at the same time corresponds to one of the effects of Phaëthon's dropping his reins – when his horses become

aware of this they begin to race through the firmament in wild disorder and literally collide with the fixed stars: 'Altoque sub aethere fixis / Incursant stellis' (204f.). This of course is as contrary as possible to the laws of God and nature, which prescribe orbits keeping the stars firmly on course and out of the danger of collision. So there is more to the expression than the "preposterous pun" which Fowler thinks may be intended. 'Real Eclips / Then sufferd' also has a counterpart in the sorrow of the sun after the cosmic drama is over: he hides his face, 'et, si modo credimus, unum / Isse diem sine sole ferunt' (330f.).

The other effect produced by contact with infracontexts is one of powerful contrast. The two baneful monsters making their way through space constitute an evil counterpart to the motif of Christ-the-Infant-star as developed by Prudentius, and in a different and simplified form by Rabanus Maurus, the *Legenda Aurea,* and some Renaissance texts. The basis for the motif is the star of Bethlehem interpreted as the Infant star announcing its own birth. In Prudentius' *Apotheosis* 619ff., the peoples of the Orient say they have seen a Child cross the sky, obscuring the ancient stars, and the astrologer is struck with terror as he watches the constellations fleeing in panic before the new Morning Star:

> "Vidimus hunc" aiunt "puerum per sidera ferri,
> Et super antiquos signorum ardescere tractus".
> Diriguit trepidans Chaldaeo in vertice pernox
> Astrologus, cessisse Anguem, fugisse Leonem;
> Contraxisse pedes lateris manco ordine Cancrum;
> Cornibus infractis domitum mugire Iuvencum,
> Sidus et Hircinum laceris marcescere villis.
> Labitur hinc pulsus Puer hydrius, inde Sagittae,
> Palantes Geminos fuga separat: inproba Virgo
> Prodit amatores tacitos in fornice mundi,
> Quique alii horrificis pendent in nubibus ignes
> Luciferum timuere novum.

'Horrificis ... in nubibus' ("clusters") and 'timuere' answer to the state of the stars as described in Milton's lines, and 'blasted' is as it were specified in Prudentius' account of the havoc wrought among the constellations. 'Luciferum novum' is the 'stella splendida et matutina', though by contrast association the Lucifer of *Is.* 14.12 is brought to the fore: while the new Morning Star in Prudentius strikes the lesser stars with fear, making them abandon their orbits, evil Lucifer as apostrophized by the prophet falls himself from Heaven in his pride. But not only the ancient stars are afflicted by the appearance of the divine star,

even the sun ceases to move, aware of its coming eclipse (at the time of the crucifixion);[2] the classic motif of the solar omen thus recurs:

> Rota lurida Solis
> Haeret, et excidium sentit jam jamque futurum,
> Seque die medio velandum tegmine glauco,
> Splendoremque poli periturum nocte diurna
> Orbe repentinis caput obnubente tenebris (630ff.);

lines recalling the words 'real Eclips / Then sufferd'. While in Prudentius the ancient stars stand for the heathen world and the old deities, routed by Christ as the powers of darkness are routed by the Saviour in the first Hymn of the *Cathemerinon,* the stars in Milton's lines represent the ordered universe thrown into confusion by Sin and Death. The disastrous effects caused by good and evil powers respectively may be said to indicate the formidable character of the battle between the two, and the magnitude of the forces pitted against one another.[3]

The motif of the Infant star reappears in later texts though on a reduced scale and shorn of the cataclysmic character of Prudentius' account in the *Apotheosis*. Rabanus Maurus merely praises the luminosity and magnificence of the divine star as it makes its way across the heavens: 'Quibus vero radiis, quantove lumine illam Domini stellam antiqua credimus tunc inter astra fulsisse! Quantum in splendore praecessit, tantum praeibat in munere!'.[4] In the *Legenda Aurea,* Chrysostom is referred to as the authority for a legend compressed into a few lines: 'Magis super quendam montem orantibus, stella quaedam juxta eos apparuit, quae formam pueri pulcherrimi habebat et in ejus capite crux splendebat' (*De Nativitate*)[5]; a motif which recurs in art, i.e. Roger van der Weyden's *The Vision of the Three Magi.* In Renaissance texts the motif incorporates the theme of "the eyes of night"; the fading of the other stars is reinterpreted as the awe and wonder with which an assembly watches an impressive newcomer. Crashaw describes the star in this way, ... 'a new-borne light, / On which, as on a glorious stranger gaz'd / The Golden eyes of Night' (*Sosp.* 17); similarly Fletcher in *Christ's Victorie in Heaven* 78: 'Heav'n awaked all his eyes, / To see another Sunne, at midnight rise'. The post-Prudentian texts thus eliminate the entire theme of fright and confusion; only the admiration on the part of the universe is left, and if regarded as infracontexts these versions of the Morning Star motif thus provide another contrasting effect.

[2] See Patrides, *Milton and the Christian Tradition,* pp. 73ff., and see above, p. 101.
[3] On this great theme see also Roston, *Milton and the Baroque,* pp. 63, 65, 67f, 135f.
[4] *Comm. in Matt.* (*PL* 107.757).
[5] *Legenda Aurea,* ed. Graesse, Vratislaviae, 1890, pp. 43f.

To seventeenth-century readers aware of traditions, the "blasted stars" motif, forming a double code, is likely to have suggested a huge cluster of meanings and connotations, by resemblance or by contrast.

5. Dogs of Hell

Another infracontextually enriched paragraph on evil forces at work, 10.616ff., corresponds to Satan – the messenger's flight at the end of bk. 2 and to the baneful expedition of Sin and Death in 10.410ff. Sin and Death have reached Paradise, hold a brief colloquy and depart to carry out their missions of destruction. God, watching among the saints from his 'transcendent Seat', addresses the bright orders:

> See with what heat these Dogs of Hell advance
> To waste and havoc yonder World, which I
> So fair and good created, and had still
> Kept in that state, had not the folly of Man
> Let in these wastful Furies, who impute
> Folly to mee, so doth the Prince of Hell
> And his Adherents, that with so much ease
> I suffer them to enter and possess
> A place so heav'nly, and conniving seem
> To gratifie my scornful Enemies,
> That laugh, as if transported with some fit
> Of Passion, I to them had quitted all
> At random yeilded up to their misrule;
> And know not that I calld and drew them thither
> My Hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth
> Which Mans polluting Sin with taint hath shed
> On what was pure, till crammd and gorg'd, nigh burst
> With suckt and glutted offal, at one sling
> Of thy victorious Arm, well-pleasing Son,
> Both *Sin,* and *Death,* and yawning *Grave* at last
> Through *Chaos* hurld, obstruct the mouth of Hell
> For ever, and seal up his ravenous Jawes.
> Then Heav'n and Earth renewd shall be made pure
> To sanctitie that shall receive no staine:
> Till then the Curse pronounc't on both precedes.

God's speech is quoted in its entirety, being necessary as a background for the analysis of the Dogs of Hell at the beginning and the sealing up of

Hell at the end; the theology of the speech combines with the infracontexts to explain as fully as possible its beginning and end. The hellhounds in *PL* are the offspring of Sin raped by Death and, as Roland Frye says, "represent the myriad sins produced by the Original Sin" (p. 123). Fowler recalls Sin begirt with 'Hell Hounds' as described in 2.653f., and Frye provides illustrations in art (pp. 119, 123). It is well known that the dog was traditionally associated with the devil, and that "hellhound" was synonymous with "demon".[1] However, there seem to be yet other infracontexts adding to the meaning here. 'See with what heat these Dogs of Hell advance' is reminiscent of Sophocles' *Electra* 1384ff. (Newton), where the choir comments on the impending murders after Orestes and Pylades have just entered the palace of Clytemestra: "See how Ares approaches, breathing bloodshed hard to strive against. Now pass under the roof of the palace the inescapable hounds which pursue evil villanous crimes" (Ἴδεθ' ὅποι προνέμεται/τὸ δυσέριστον αἷμα φυσῶν Ἄρης./ βεβᾶσιν ἄρτι δωμάτων ὑπόστεγοι/μετάδρομοι κακῶν πανουργημάτων/ ἄφυκτοι κύνες.) The close contact between 'See' and Ἴδεθ', 'advance' and προνέμεται, 'Dogs of Hell' and ἄφυκτοι κύνες brings the deeper sense of the Sophoclean passage to the fore, as does the collocation of 'advance / To waste and havoc yonder World' and the special sense which is also found with προνέμω: "plunder", "spoil", "ravish", as appears from Stephanus' *Thesaurus* (4.1716). Possibly, as one editor of the *Electra* thinks, the word is "used of the devouring progress or spreading of fire, ulcers, tumours, etc.".[2] One is reminded of the 'pitchy cloud / Of *Locusts,* warping on the Eastern Wind' in 1.340f., spreading their bane and blasting vegetation. The word κύνες for the Eumenides recurs several times in Greek drama and epic. In Aeschylus' *Choephoroi* 1054 Orestes, his mother's blood on his hands, thinks he sees the Furies: "Truly, there they are, my mother's avenging hounds" (σαφῶς γὰρ αἵδε μητρὸς ἔγκοτοι κύνες); in the *Eumenides* 246f. the choir of Furies compares itself to a κύων tracking down a fawn by the dripping blood; in Aristophanes' *Ranae* 472 the Furies are Κωκυτοῦ ... κύνες, "hellhounds" always on the move. A text which we have had reason to discuss more than once in connection with *PL,* the *Argonautica,* describes Medea invoking the goddesses of death, devourers of life (4.1666f., Todd), "The nimble hounds of Hades, who whirl about through all the air and pounce on the living" ('Αίδαο θοὰς κύνας, αἳ περὶ πᾶσαν/'Ηέρα δινεύουσαι ἐπὶ ζωοῖσιν ἄγονται). At 3.1217 in the same epic Jason himself, doing sacrifice to Hecate, calls up the goddess

[1] Rowland, *Animals with Human Faces,* pp. 60f., and Rudwin, *The Devil in Legend and Literature,* Chicago and London, 1931, p. 39.
[2] F. Blaydes' commentary in his *Electra* edition of 1873, p. 240.

with her serpents and torches and χθόνιοι κύνες, "hounds of hell". In all these instances the Furies and the death demons are instruments of divine will and vengeance.[3] In the tragedies they pursue Orestes still guilty of his mother's death and not yet purged by the divine court; in Aristophanes' play, Aeacus frightens Dionysus by enumerating the infernal punishments; in the *Argonautica,* again with the gods' consent, the κῆρες, the quick hounds of Hades, cause the death of monstrous Talos who tries to stop the heroes by throwing crags at their ship (4.1665ff.), and Jason's sacrificial rites precede the successful accomplishment of his task under the protection of the gods. In *Pis.* 46 Cicero describes the Furies as represented on the stage: 'Homines consceleratos impulsu deorum terreri furialibus taedis ardentibus'. The tasks and activities of the classical Furies are similar to those allotted to Sin and Death, who are all the time used by God for his own purposes, as moral scavengers. The inextricable paradox of good and evil is thus involved here: Sin and Death are instruments of divine punishment which is visited on sinful mankind and are thus part of the divine plan; evil is used to good ends. Yet evil thus used must itself be overcome, punished, and rendered harmless, which would hardly be necessary unless the evil forces – as distinct from the classical Furies and death demons – constituted a danger to the moral order of the universe, being rebels. Sin and Death are untrustworthy tools. The idea of God's exploiting evil for good purposes is expounded by Augustine and Gregory among other patristic commentators; 'Utitur ergo Deus angelis malis, non solum ad puniendos malos ... verum etiam ad probandos et manifestandos bonos, sicut fecit in Job' (*Enarr. in Ps.* 77.28);[4] 'Iste occultae ejus justitiae nesciendo serviens, ministerium exsequi reprobationis conatur' (*Mor.* 2.38).[5] Thus Gregory, like Milton, stresses Satan's ignorance of the fact that he is being used by God to good ends while trying all the time to do as much harm as possible.

The paradoxical theme of evil unwittingly used to good ends though being itself irreparably evil is brought to the fore in a curious way in the lines on the evil trinity's scorn and laughter (620f., 625ff.). The 'wastful Furies' who impute folly to God, the 'scornful Enemies' who laugh 'as if transported with some fit / Of Passion' and as if their great adversary, struck with insanity, had surrendered to his enemies – these details are

[3] A similar sense is suggested by the lines on Caesar's spirit and the dogs of war in *Jul. Caes.* 3.1, with which Milton's lines have also been compared.

[4] *PL* 36.1001.

[5] *PL* 75.573f., and see also *RAC* 5.194. As for other instances of God's providential use of evil, Fowler refers to instances in bks. 1, 7, and 12. See also p. 63 above with references. Blessington (*'Paradise Lost' and the Classical Epic,* p. 44) contrasts the hell-hounds as servants of God with the "random scavengers" in the beginning of the *Iliad.*

reminiscent of some coarse mystery play with mocking, grinning devils and burlesque effects. A kind of ironic comment on their merriment is provided by *Ecclus.* 21.20 'A foole lifteth up his voyce with laughter, but a wise man doeth scarce smile a litle'. Again, contrasts are provided by passages which describe God and/or the angels smiling in supreme wisdom and bliss, as when God, smiling, addresses the Son in 5.718, or Raphael, smiling, answers Adam in 8.618. This kind of smile Satan, disguised as a cherub,[6] tries to mimic in 3.638. In *The Divine Comedy* the blessed often smile in their beatific vision; in *Par.* 9.103 Folco explains that in Heaven there is only laughter, and no repentance: 'Non però qui si pente; ma si ride'. Another group of contrasting infracontexts is supplied by such IC works as describe the defeated Satan and his followers exposed to the scorn and taunts of Christ the victor and the good angels. In st. 29 of the *Sospetto d'Herode* the fallen Lucifer is worried about prophecies predicting the Harrowing of Hell: 'Is hee not satisfied? meanes he to wrest / Hell from me too? And sack my Territories? /... / Must the bright armes of Heav'n rebuke these eyes? / Mocke me, and dazle my darke Mysteries?' Vida makes Satan in the customary speech to his followers ask the same question – 'Nec satis': is it not enough that Christ has robbed us of our realm? There are more dangers in store for the fallen angels: Christ attacking and sacking the nether world and releasing the souls confined there, and not only that –

> Fors quoque nos, nisi non segnes occurrimus, ipsos
> Arcta in uincla dabit, uinctosque inducet Olympo
> Victor, ouans, superi illudent toto aethere captis (p. 10).

This description of the rebels led in chains before the gods who scorn and mock the prisoners is a kind of ironical submerged comment on the unwarranted merriment and glee of the unholy trinity. Their premature scorn and laughter suggest the better founded joy of the real victor, whose attitude to his enemies comes to the fore in the Son's words in *PL* 5.735ff:

> Mightie Father, thou thy foes
> Justly hast in derision, and secure
> Laugh'st at thir vain designes and tumults vain.

When the wheel of the predestined events has come full circle and their mission in the service of God is completed, they themselves will have to

[6] See p. 259 below; Hughes, *Ten Perspectives on Milton,* pp. 199f., and Patrides, *Milton and the Christian Tradition,* pp. 155f.

'quit all' at the moment of retribution: the work of Salvation is fulfilled, and like Homeric heroes the victorious powers exult in Olympus, while the once proud adversaries are reduced to slaves.

From these hidden contrasting meanings runs a logical link with the final lines of the speech, dealing with the defeat of Sin and Death at the hands of Christ. Though these final lines primarily seem to refer to the Day of Judgement,[7] they simultaneously evoke different associations, suggesting the upheaval in nature on the occasion of the Crucifixion (*Matt.* 27.51f.). This infracontext, with preserved authority, is channelled down to Milton's text through Dante. As reported by Todd, Henry Boyd felt[8] that the lines on Sin and Death obstructing the mouth of Hell were inspired by Dante's description of the infernal ramparts toppling and blocking the road to Hell as a result of the earthquake during the Crucifixion. Whether Dante really "gave the hint" to Milton, as Boyd thought, is an open question, but the idea of the obstruction of Hell's mouth and the sealing of his 'ravenous Jawes' is precise enough to signal the infracontext in Dante. The relevant stanzas in Dante are in *Inf.* canto 12: on their way down to the Seventh Circle, where the Violent dwell, Virgil and Dante pass through a mass of broken rocks which had not yet toppled down when Virgil first passed the spot on his way down to Hell; the rock collapsed during the infernal upheaval which took place just before Christ's descent into Hell (37ff.). The earthquake derives from *Matt.* 27.52: 'Terra mota est, et petrae scissae sunt, et monumenta aperta sunt, et multa corpora sanctorum qui dormierant, surrexerunt'. In Milton, the collapse does not precede the Harrowing of Hell, but obstruction and defeat are part of the same event, and 'through *Chaos* hurld' harks back to 1.45ff. describing how Satan by the Almighty Power was

> Hurld headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie
> With hideous ruin and combustion down
> To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
> In Adamantin Chains and penal Fire,
> Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to Arms.

In this way the words in *Rev.* 20.14, 'And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire: this is the second death' as suggested by *PL* (Richardson), take on an unexpected meaning: this is the old defeat all over again. Moreover, while in Dante the infernal rocks cause the obstruction, it is

[7] See M. Fixler, *Milton and the Kingdoms of God,* London, 1964, p. 13; and Leonora L. Brodwin, "The Dissolution of Satan in *Paradise Lost:* A Study of Milton's Heretical Eschatology" (*MS* 8, 1975, pp. 165ff.). See also Introduction p. 28.

[8] Probably in his *Observations on the Characters of the Fallen Angels,* 1809. Boyd was a well-known translator of Dante.

the evil spirits themselves, hurled down through Chaos, that block the road to Hell – a grotesque idea, in fact one which can be fully explained only as a kind of heightening of the motif in the *Inferno*. 'Yawning *Grave*' corresponds closely to 'mouth of Hell' (well-known in pictorial art),[9] as if to stress the fact that the latter will be the death of the former. In this way one of the biblical infracontexts receives an unexpected, punning twist (a variant of the rhetorical figure *asteismus*): *Hos.* 13.14: 'O graue, I will be thy destruction' (Richardson). The act of Christ which leads to the fall of Sin and Death – 'One sling / Of thy victorious Arm, well-pleasing Son' – is compared by Todd to *1 Sam.* 25.29 'The soules of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a sling'. But the full infracontextual effect is brought out by contact with a comment on the Old Testament passage as found in Bede: the more they are driven by their lusts and passions in this world, the further away from God will the wicked be hurled and expelled: 'At vero reprobi, quanto licentius in hac vita voluptatibus propriis velut liberi dimittuntur, tanto longius in futuro a divinae visionis gloria projiciuntur, ut de eis merito dicatur: Et quidem ipsi de manu tua expulsi sunt'.[10] Consequently, as a tacit implication, Sin and Death will be hurled as far away as possible, down again to the bottom of the Abyss; infracontext and surface context coincide entirely on this point. In the same way God's vow concerning the purification of the universe and his curse (638ff.) link up closely with the apocalyptic vision in *2. Pet.* 3.7–13 referred to by Verity. The paragraphs on the infernal paths and on those who frequent them thus end on a note which again emphasizes the paradoxical character of this motif in *PL:* on the surface level, Milton's lines describe a fatal menace to mankind, but at the same time, reinforced by the infralevels, suggest that the evil powers, when the divine purpose has been served, will suffer defeat and humiliation.

[9] As appears from several of Roland Frye's illustrations of the theme of the infernal world.
[10] Bede, *In Libros Regum Quaest. XXX*, 1 (*PL* 91.719).

CHAPTER VI

More Complex Meanings

1. Satan's Troubled Thoughts

Many of the meanings and connotations traced so far are fairly complex, emerging within a pattern which extends between the two poles reinforcement/intensification (in both directions) and contrast. Advancing a step further into an area of increasing semantic complexity we are faced with a set of paragraphs dealing almost exclusively with Satan; his reactions to events, his "manner of doing", and his appearance in different situations. All such sections provide vertical context systems of some intricacy. Possessor of a devious mind and a victim of conflicting emotions, Satan is a figure whose thoughts and feelings are complex enough on a surface level, but become much more so when infracontexts enter the descriptive systems. Again, infracontexts not only aid and stratify interpretation, but also sometimes increase the sensuous and palpable character of the descriptions. Satan's flight through Chaos, for instance, takes on an almost tactile dimension through contact with various classical infracontexts. Such "Baroque" effects merge with and enrich meanings. In the case of many descriptions of Satan's appearance, complexity is due to the part played by synecdoche. Satan's real nature hidden behind a heroic and gigantic façade comes to the fore through infracontexts providing information not supplied on the deceptive surface level. There are, for example, such details as 'Satan dilated' at the end of the fourth book, Satan on his throne at the beginning of the second, and his various disguises. Inevitably, of the various dramatis personae in *PL*, it is Satan who becomes the centre of the intensest infracontextual activity. It is in conformity with this high degree of complexity that it is particularly difficult in the sections on Satan to make distinctions between denotation and connotation and between the simple and the complex code. We move much of the time in a borderline area in which the different types shade off into one another.

In the much-discussed monologue on Mount Niphates at the beginning of book 4, according to the Argument, Satan 'falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despare; but at length con-

firms himself in evil'. This is a description of the 'perturbatio mentis' which many rhetoricians regard as a mark of the *genus grande* style. Satan's many doubts are described at some length in 4.13ff.:

> Yet not rejoycing in his speed, though bold,
> Farr off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
> Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth
> Now rowling, boiles in his tumultuous brest,
> And like a devilish Engin back recoiles
> Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
> His troubl'd thoughts, and from the bottom stirr
> The Hell within him, for within him Hell
> He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell
> One step no more then from himself can fly
> By change of place: Now conscience wakes despair
> That slumberd, wakes the bitter memorie
> Of what he was, what is, and what must be
> Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
> Somtimes towards *Eden* which now in his view
> Lay pleasant, his grievd look he fixes sad,
> Somtimes towards Heav'n and the full-blazing Sun,
> Which now sat high in his Meridian Towre;
> Then much revolving, thus in sighs began.

What follows is Satan's 'conquestio', "lament", conforming to the rhetorical rules valid for a post-defeat speech as described in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (2.31). Satan reviews, explains, and deplores the disaster of the Fall, describes the defeat, curses God and his own misery, and swears revenge: ... 'all Good to me is lost; / Evil be thou my Good' (109f.).

The paragraph from 4.13ff. onwards, describing Satan's frame of mind and doleful appearance, derives additional meaning from infracontexts saturated with tradition. These infracontexts point to a more complex significance than that discussed by commentators. Empson[1] comments on Satan's horror, "so far from rejoicing or triumph", which overcomes him as he approaches the scene "where he must perform his first really wicked, that is, unkind action"; Empson also thinks that 'doubt' has its modern meaning: unless Satan now "doubted his theological position, he would not think it wicked at all to release our parents from their tyrant". But the imminent really wicked action is not Satan's first, but his second,

[1] *Milton's God*, London, 1961, p. 62.

and 'doubt' probably means "fear"[2] when coordinate with 'horror'. Fowler thinks that the text is self-explanatory, and that the "imminence of the actual aggression – *nigh the birth* – causes [Satan] to shrink in horror". He also takes 'rowl' to mean "move on", but at the same time points out that this sense refers to time, particularly to cyclic periods (*OED* II 14). It would seem, however, that the most natural meaning of intr. 'rowl' here is "revolve in the mind" (*OED* II 20).

As for the interpretation, a close connection with some infracontexts may serve as pointers. Satan's attempt 'Now rowling, boiles in his tumultuous brest' links up with the *Sospetto* 25 and 62 in Crashaw's version, which stanzas deal with the reactions of Lucifer and Herod, respectively, to the miracle of the Nativity. In 25, on Satan, 'new thoughts boyl'd in his enraged Brest', just as in 62 'boyles the fired Herods blood-swolne brest, / Not to be slakt but by a Sea of blood' after Cruelty has revealed to him the danger with which he is threatened by the Infant King and the 'ingratefull Rebells'. A *PL* reader with these lines in mind would be likely to put a certain construction on 'his dire attempt ... / Now rowling, boiles in his tumultuous brest', taking the words to refer to Satan's basic hatred and fear of God, though indeed at the moment he may be 'bold, / Farr off and fearless'. Similarly the absence of rejoicing and of a feeling of triumph on Satan's part, which by commentators is taken to refer to compunction and misery at the thought of the act about to be committed, may equally well refer to Satan's ever-present feeling of dejection at the memory of his defeat: 'Yet not rejoycing in his speed ... nor with cause to boast'. Satan's monologue in 32ff. does not seem to express remorse at the thought of what he is going to do, but at the thought that he was once rash enough to risk the hazardous enterprise which ended with his being brought down.

However, these passages may have yet another meaning, one which may also be to the fore in the 'Engin' which 'back recoiles / Upon himself' and in the horror and doubt which 'distract / His troubl'd thoughts'. 'Engine' has the double sense "recoiling piece of ordnance" and "plot" (*OED* † 3), and is used in the latter sense about the scheme of the plotters in the *Sospetto* 56, where 'wild Engines stand / On tiptoe in their giddy Braynes'. The lines in *PL* seem to convey the idea that sin means suffering for the sinner, a well-known classical and Christian thought. In the *Sospetto* 52, as pointed out previously, Herod is referred to as 'selfe-tormenting sin' (= sinner); Augustine[3] says a liar is mistaken

[2] *OED doubt* † 3. See also p. 87 above. Most – if indeed not all – critics interpret 'doubt' as Empson does; one of the most recent instances is found in Jacobus, *Sudden Apprehension*, p. 29.

[3] *Enchiridion ad Laurentium* (*PL* 40.240).

if he thinks his lies will not harm him, since every sin is a greater evil to him who commits it than to him who suffers in consequence of it; Plato[4] and Democritus[5] express the same idea. The conflicting feelings in Satan's 'tumultuous brest' seem hardly to be horror at the impending act + hatred of God + boldness enough to go through with the plan; but rather – if we can diagnose Satan's state of mind – fear and hatred of God + envy of man + sin's torments + despair at his defeat combined with a resolve to avenge it. This, I think, is what is briefly referred to in the Argument as his 'many passions, fear, envy, and despare', which are fundamentally the same emotions as come to the fore in books 1 and 2. Only in 4.358ff., after catching sight of Adam and Eve for the first time, does Satan feel anything like remorse and pity. But these feelings seem to be due to the beauty and innocence of the couple he is watching, not to his awareness that he is going to commit an evil deed. I do not think we should confuse the two; nor has 4.26, referring to the traditional view that a sinner is a sufferer, much to do with Satan's "shrinking in horror" at the imminence of his aggression.[6]

It seems, then, to be this hatred and fear of God and his power that 'from the bottom stirr / The Hell within him', a hell that Satan can escape no more than he can escape his own essence. Hatred of God inexorably involves the deepest evil and damnation, and the inseparability of Satan and Hell as a condition is a traditional and proverbial theme. According to Bede, wherever the devils are, in the air, on the ground or underground, 'suarum secum ferunt tormenta flammarum' (Bowle, quot. Todd). Landino remarks on the last canto of the *Inferno* that demons 'sempre portano seco il suo inferno' (Bowle); and there is of course *Dr Faustus* 2.1.123f. 'For where we are is hell, / And where hell is, must we ever be'. The same idea underlies *Comus* 383f., 'But he that hides a dark soul, and foul thoughts ... Himself is his own dungeon', and *PL* 4.75, Satan's monologue: 'Which way I flie is Hell; my self am Hell'. Hughes and others provide detailed analyses of the entire motif of 'Myself am Hell';[7] but the most pertinent commentary on the meaning of the quoted group of homogeneous infracontexts is that made by J. D. Jump, who in his *Faustus* edition refers to Chrysostom's *Hom. in Matt.* 23.9: the Greek Father observes that "ten thousand hells are as nothing in comparison with the loss of celestial bliss".[8]

[4] *Gorgias* 469 B.
[5] *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, ed. Diels 2, Berlin, 1912, p. 73.
[6] A critic well aware of the "wide range of human feelings" in the Mount Niphates soliloquy is Frank S. Kastor (*Milton and the Literary Satan*, Amsterdam, 1974, pp. 68f.).
[7] Hughes, *Ten Perspectives on Milton*, pp. 136ff.
[8] *Revels Plays* ed. of *Doctor Faustus*, London, 1962, p. 21. See also Robins on the similarity between Milton and Origen on this point (*If This Be Heresy*, p. 115).

This theme of agony is further developed in the subsequent lines on despair and bitter memory awakened, and worse sufferings resulting from worse deeds. Critics seem unanimous in assigning a modern sense to a word which in the 17th century could carry a meaning no longer current. 'Conscience' nowadays invariably means "moral sense", but I do not think this is what Milton meant, or what his readers took the word to mean. The now obsolete meanings "inward knowledge, consciousness, inmost thought, mind",[9] were common in Milton's day – obviously, for instance, this is the sense in 8.502 'Her vertue and the conscience of her worth' (Lockwood) – and it seems it is this inward knowledge, i.e. the consciousness of irreparable defeat, that 'wakes despair / That slumberd, wakes the bitter memorie / Of what he was, what is, and what must be / Worse', etc., words which will be discussed in more detail below (pp. 191f.). This interpretation is confirmed by the infracontextual matrix which makes up the traditional background here. In substance the lines cover the idea expressed in *PL* 1.84ff., *GL* 4.9–10, *L'Angeleida* 3.5–6, *De Lapsu Adae* 1, pp. 242, *L'Adamo* 385ff. and other similar passages (see pp. 195f.): Satan or one of his lieutenants remembers past bliss and the glorious existence before the fall, comparing them with the hideous existence in hell. In practically all IC texts these reflections of Satan's are described – or given vent to in direct speech – before he addresses his crew preparatory to the mission resulting in the attempt to corrupt mankind, as is the case in *PL* 1.84ff. The knowledge awaking Satan's despair and bitter memory in 4.23ff. issues in Belzebù's passionate words in *L'Adamo* 385ff., where he thinks back on the luminous empire, his true home, and compares his former angelic shape with his present revolting looks: 'E'n vece d'aureo crine, / E d'angelico aspetto, / Viperino è 'l capel, lo sguardo bieco'. The appearance of Milton's Satan has none of the monstrous features of the figure in Andreini's work, but his mood and frame of mind are identical. They are also described in the *Sospetto,* sts. 11, 12 and 27, where Lucifer 'calls to mind th' old quarrel, and what sparke / Set the contending sons of Heav'n on fire', and where this bitter memory gives him the idea of sending Cruelty on her mission to Herod. The words 'what must be / Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue' do not seem to refer to the sufferings in store for mankind, nor to Satan's alleged compunction, but to the suffering in store for the arch-sinner himself aware of his destiny, the inevitable result of Satan's Pyrrhic victory.

Another detail in the paragraph on Satan's conflicting emotions which is invested with a particular significance by the infracontexts is Satan's 'grievd look' directed now at Eden, now at Heaven and the sun (27ff.). In

[9] *OED conscience* I, † 1–2.

Soranzo's *Dell'Adamo,* Valvasone's *L'Angeleida*, and Andreini's *L'Adamo* the fallen angels either spontaneously raise their eyes to the light or are told by their leaders to do so. In the *De Lapsu* (p. 242) and *GL* 4.1 Satan himself shows his hatred and envy in this silent and eloquent way: 'Invidia stimulatur atrox habitator Averni / Aspiciens homines ad caeli culmen ituros'; 'Contra i Christiani i liuidi occhi torse'. In the *Sospetto* this detail is developed in a way which may have impressed Milton and which anyway is an important infracontext (st. 11):

> From Death's sad shades, to the Life-breathing Ayre,
> This mortall Enemy to mankinds good,
> Lifts his malignant Eyes, wasted with care,
> To become beautifull in humane blood.

All these cases of looking upwards are preliminary to Satan's savage speech of incitement, to the frenzy and excitement of the fallen angels – *Angel.* 3.7 'Disdegnando il lor nouello essiglio / Ne bestemmiauan la Giustitia eterna' – and to the launching of the mission intended to break God's power and avenge the shame and the disaster. Possibly the prototype of the "fallen-angel-watching-Eden-or-Heaven" group is Dante's lines as the two travellers catch sight of horrible Lucifer standing in the ice in the Giudecca, 'Et contra il suo fattore alzò le ciglia: / Ben dè da lui proceder ogni lutto' (*Inf.* 34.34f.). The first of these lines is rendered 'osò ribellarsi contro il suo creatore' by two distinguished 14th-century commentators, Jacopo della Lana and Andrea Lancia (Scartazzini's note; the interpretation recurs in several modern editions). In the code system the passages reviewed thus signify "challenge", "menace", "revolt". Against this background 'full-blazing Sun' and 'his Meridian Towre' take on an added significance beyond that proposed by Fowler, who takes the image to indicate "the symbolic noon" (just as the sun is hottest at the midday point, so will Christ be "in the centre of heaven and earth, that is to say, in Judgment") and who refers to Bersuire's *Dictionarium*, quoted from Panofsky.[10] An interpretation of the actual situation, however – Satan looking now at Eden, now at the 'full-blazing Sun' in his meridian tower, which in his speech he says he hates when remembering the fall – must centre on the obvious use of sun = God and the dense clusters of meaning evoked by 'Meridian Towre'. One cluster contains tower = "Heaven" ('arx' = 'caelum' occurs in all major Latin poets) and, emblematically, tower as a symbol of vigilance and loyalty.[11] An epigram

[10] Fowler considers the point to be thematically important since "Christ the Sun of righteousness" is placed at the poem's numerological centre.
[11] Henkel and Schöne, *Emblemata*, col. 1214.

expounding this meaning of the tower emblem and quoted by Henkel and Schöne begins, 'Cura vigil Regum, populos tutatur et urbis: / Hostis ne tacita fraude nocere queat' (Jacobus Bruk, 1618). This leads over to another, related significance of the 'full-blazing Sun' sitting high in his 'Meridian Towre'. In Pythagorean doctrine the centre of the universe is a body of fire called Διὸς φυλακή, the "watch-tower" or "guard-house of Zeus".[12] This tenet merges with and reinforces the meaning of 'Towre'. Further reinforcement derives from the common significance of 'tower', "Church", found as early as *Pastor Hermas:* Ὁ πύργος ... οὗτος ἡ ἐκκλησία ἐστίν (*Sim.* 9.13); the Church is the tower that guards and defends the faith. These infracontexts invest the collocation of "fallen angel watching Eden and Heaven" and 'Sun'-'Towre' with important meaning: Satan is preparing for his attack, but God, highest in his tower, is on his guard lest the enemy surprise and destroy his people. The devil's coming success is only temporary and illusory, forming part of God's plan, and the Fall will be followed by Salvation. The contrast is strong between the tower of God in book 4, symbolizing protection, and the 'Tower' with which Satan is compared in book 1: *superbia* and aggressiveness.[13]

Another semantic cluster adheres to the word 'Meridian'. A. R. Cirillo discusses the 'noon' concept in the context of divine providence in *PL.*[14] Noon, he points out, is the midpoint of day as well as of night. Satan sins at midnight and is defeated in Heaven at noon on the third day; the unsuccessful temptation of Eve takes place at midnight. The Fall occurs at noon, and "Satan thus defects at midnight and apparently succeeds at noon as, conversely, man apparently succeeds at midnight but fails at noon" (p. 376). So in the concept of noon are concentrated the crucial events of the epic. Faced with the Sun at noon, Satan simultaneously faces potential victory or defeat. Which way things are tending emerges from the exegetical traditions surrounding the noon motif. One of these, Cirillo observes, is based on the interpretation of *Psalm* 90, on the protection provided by God against the noonday devil ('Non timebis a timore nocturno ... ab incursu et daemonio meridiano'): at this crucial hour the influence of the noonday spirit is at its most dangerous (pp. 379f.). However, noon also involves the very opposite kind of influence: "Noon is an hour of stillness, a timeless moment during which the course

[12] Aristotle, *De Caelo* 2.13.1. See Heninger, *Touches of Sweet Harmony*, pp. 127 and 144.
[13] This significance of the tower image is emphasized by Anthony Low ("The Image of the Tower in Paradise Lost", *SEL* 10, 1970, pp. 171ff.). The tower suggests Satan's "pride, his overweening ambition, and his final downfall" (p. 171).
[14] "Noon-Midnight and the Temporal Structure of *Paradise Lost*" (*ELH* 29, 1962, pp. 372ff.). See also Cope, *The Metaphoric Structure*, pp. 130ff., Patrides, *Milton and the Christian Tradition*, pp. 107f., and Kerrigan, *The Prophetic Milton*, Charlottesville, 1974, pp. 130, n. 4, and 229f.

of nature is interrupted. It provides man with his best opportunity to communicate with the eternal world of spirits", thus also with God (p. 380). The double significance of noon is aptly characterized by M.-M. Davy:[15] "Midi est considéré comme l'instant immobile: le soleil semble s'arrêter, le vent se calme, c'est l'heure prestigieuse de l'inspiration divine et du pouvoir démoniaque, du chant des sirènes et des cigales, de l'intensité lumineuse symbolisant le face à face avec Dieu". M.-M. Davy also refers to another biblical text dealing with noon, the *Song of Songs* 1.7: 'Indica mihi, o quem diligit anima mea, / vbi pascas, vbi cubes in meridie; ne vagari incipiam / post greges sodalium tuorum'. Davy discusses the commentary by Guillelmus S. Theodorici on this text: the Bride, symbol of the soul and/or the Church, demands the revelation of the eternal day, for ever suspended in maximum heat and light, the eternal moment of wisdom, love, and blissful fruition, 'ubi [Deus] in aeterna beatitudine pascit de seipso tam angelorum, quam sanctorum hominum satietatem, semper plenam ob perfectionem beatitudinis; semperque in eum respicere desiderantem, ob pietatem et dulcedinem amoris'.[16] Earlier on, commentators had expounded the sense of 'meridies', a complex symbol. Referring to various biblical passages including *Songs* 1.7, Rabanus Maurus says it signifies 'Christus', 'tribulatio', 'fides', 'sacra Scriptura', and 'ardor charitatis'.[17] Alanus de Insulis, also annotating *Songs* 1.7, dwells on the association of noon with the hour when Christ was crucified.[18] The theme of God offering himself as food for the righteous, merging with the theme of Passion, in its turn combined with the meanings enumerated by Rabanus, is telescoped into the themes of the Church and God-as-guardian so as to produce a kind of powerful anti-Satan motif. As Cirillo reminds us (p. 387), this is Satan's first confrontation with the Sun, and the meeting as described by Milton spells Satan's coming defeat: offering himself to the world, with everything this act entails, God defeats the devil. The Sun sitting high 'in his Meridian Towre', in short, anticipates the victory of Christ: the meanings densely packed into the words are relevant far beyond the actual episode of which ll. 29 and 30 form part.

[15] *Initiation à la Symbolique romane*, pp. 51ff.
[16] Guillaume de St. Thierry, *Exposé sur le Cantique des Cantiques*, edd. J.-M. Déchanet and M. Dumontier, Paris, 1962, p. 150. The text is also provided in *PL* 180.491 (*Expos. super Cant. Cantic.*).
[17] *Alleg. in Sacr. Script.* (*PL* 112.998).
[18] *Elucid. in Cant. Cantic.* (*PL* 210.59).

2. Memory of Happiness Lost

The "joy and brightness before the Fall" motif briefly referred to previously occurs at various points in the narrative, merging with the theme of Satan's troubled mind – there is a complex reality behind the powerful heroic façade. In 1.54f. the 'thought / Both of lost happiness and lasting pain' torments Satan looking out over the waste and desolate infernal landscape; in the dialogue with Sin he remembers the 'dalliance had with thee in Heav'n, and joys / Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change / Befalln us unforeseen' (2.819ff.). In 4.23ff., 'in prospect of Eden' he feels his 'conscience' waking 'the bitter memorie / Of what he was, what is, and what must be / Worse'. These various lines form the surface of a homogeneous group of infracontexts, the basis of which is a widespread maxim met with from Euripides onwards and used in Italian as a proverb ('Ricordarsi al ben doppia la noia'). The apophthegm character of the saying and the repetition lends emphasis and universality to these passages on Satan's feelings, which moreover are invested with overtones by certain, mutually different passages. Some of these reinforce the meaning, others operate by contrast. Contact with Ambrose's *De Poenitentia* 2.11 supplies a fairly accurate commentary on one reason for Satan's feeling, and one which surfaces here and there in the poem, as in 1.126 where Satan is 'rackt with deep despare'. According to Ambrose, a man of considerable psychological insight, nothing is so painful as for someone to live in sin and consider his situation as it was before his fall.[1] Ambrose is primarily referring to envy, which is also to the fore in Aquinas' *Summa* 2.2.36.1 ('De Invidia'). Memory of past happiness is a reason for joy if we are still happy; if not, it is a reason for sadness, and not only that: happiness in others causes envy, since it is highly detrimental to our prestige. Aquinas then quotes Aristotle buttressing his own argument. There is thus ample authority behind Milton's lines, and Ambrose on the consequences of sin and Aquinas on envy both supply a kind of comment on Lucifer's feelings. A closer analogue is provided by the *Sospetto* 30f., where Lucifer finds himself in a situation identical with that in *PL* 1.54f. In a speech delivered during the Infernal Council Lucifer first dwells at some length on the bliss and glory of his former state as the fairest and foremost angel – 'Art thou not Lucifer? hee to whom the droves / Of stars that guild the Morne in charge were given?' – and then gives vent to feelings of *tristitia*: ... 'the reflection of thy forepast joyes, / Renders thee double to thy present woes'. Association with these lines of Crashaw's leads over to association with the description of the angel's former glory, which makes Milton's lines stand

[1] *PL* 16.522. The reference is provided by Gmelin 1, p. 121.

out in dark contrast to a bright background. The contrast is heightened by the *Sospetto* infracontext linking up with the beginning of Satan's speech to Beelzebub in *PL* 1.84ff., about which more in a moment:

> If thou beest hee; But O how fall'n! how chang'd
> From him, who in the happy Realms of Light
> Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst outshine
> Myriads though bright, etc.

Satan's melancholy words, however, suggest other infracontexts of a different semantic colouring. In Boethius' *Consolatio 2, pr.* 3–4 Philosophy tries to comfort and fortify the prisoner, reminding him of the happiness he has experienced in the past. The prisoner agrees, but adds that it is remembrance which makes him so unhappy: What is worst in misfortune is to have been happy once. Philosophy counters the argument by pointing out several sources of happiness which still remain intact, so there is no reason why the prisoner should give way to grief and despair. The context in Boethius is thus in every respect a contrast to the contexts in which Satan's melancholy reflections in *PL* are set: consolation versus hopelessness, steadfastness versus despondency. Another infracontext of a contrasting type is provided by the Paolo-Francesca episode in *Inf.* 5. Though carnal sinners, the couple are treated with pity and tenderness. After the words 'Quanti dolci pensier, quanto disio / Menò costoro al doloroso passo', Dante, deeply moved, asks Francesca to tell him the beginning of her love story, and she begins,

> Nessun maggior dolore,
> Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
> Ne la miseria, e ciò sa'l tu dottore. (121ff.)

Whereas Francesca's past is thus concerned with love and her story is a moving and poetic one, Lucifer's past is concerned with envy, pride and hatred. Against Francesca's love story, ennobled and exalted by Dante and told in the language of the *dolce stil nuovo*, Satan's reference to 'dalliance had with thee in Heav'n' stands out as a grotesque and blasphemous caricature. Another contrast effect is provided by the mention of 'l tu dottore' (Virgil), who stands for sublime poetry and the order and glory of the Roman empire, while Satan stands for fatal blandishments and chaos. Unlike the infracontexts in Ambrose, Aquinas and Crashaw, those in Boethius and Dante-Virgil thus throw Satan's moods and feelings into relief by providing sharp and as it were sustained contrast effects.

A similar double function results from contact with the infracontexts

underlying Satan's words to Beelzebub. The words 'O how fall'n! how chang'd / From him, who in the happy Realms of Light' etc. suggest two groups of passages with different significance. Directly, in view of the situation with one apostate angel addressing the other after the crushing defeat and the fall, the words echo Aeneas' words in *Aen.* 2.274ff. (Newton) on the ghost of Hector who appears in his dream in order to warn him of impending disaster, disfigured almost beyond recognition:

> Hei mihi qualis erat, quantum mutatus ab illo
> Hectore, qui redit, exuuias indutus Achilli:
> Vel Danaum Phrygios iaculatus puppibus ignes.
> Squallentem barbam, et concretos sanguine crines:
> Vulneraque illa gerens, quae circum plurima muros
> Accepit patrios.

The description of the dire change from victorious hero to pitiful shadow and the phrase 'quantum mutatus ab illo' make Aeneas' words into a kind of *ubi sunt* formula. As Di Cesare points out,[2] Virgil's lines are suggested by Vida's *Christiad* 5.858ff. (pp. 179f.), where Mary laments at the foot of the cross:

> Heu, quam nato mutatus ab illo,
> Cui nuper manus impubis, omnisque iuuentus
> Occurrit festam uenienti laeta per urbem,
> Perque uiam ut regi uelamina picturata,
> Arboreasque solo frondes, et olentia serta
> Sub pedibus strauere, Deum omnes uoce fatentes!

The similarity to Virgil's passage is made even more striking by another echo, in the description of Christ on the cross: 'Squalentem ut barbam, turpatum ut sanguine crinem' (820, p. 178). While Virgil's lines in part reinforce and enrich Vida's, there is a contrast relationship between the latter passage and Milton's; still, the *ubi sunt* significance is a feature common to all three passages. A similar picture of the contrast between former prosperity and power and present misery and woe is provided by Ovid's lines on Niobe, formerly proud and enviable to her friends, but now, in her frenzied grief, an object of pity even to her enemies (*Met.* 6.272ff.):

> Heu quantum haec Niobe Niobe distabat ab illa,
> Quae modo Latois populum summouerat aris,
> Et mediam tulerat gressus resupina per urbem
> Inuidiosa suis at nunc miseranda uel hosti.

[2] *Vida's Christiad and Vergilian Epic*, p. 151.

Hector is the mere shadow of the fallen warrior, twice removed from his glorious existence; Beelzebub, though immortal, is just as incapable of regaining his former life and power as Hector is. Niobe has not only her pride in common with the fallen angel, but also the fact that by this quality she has angered the deity and thus brought about her misery.

If this context system thus suggests the emptiness and transitoriness of power and glory and provides variations on the *ubi sunt* motif, a system of a different significance, also mainly forming part of a complex code, emerges if we read Milton's lines not as an expression of Satan's emotions but, from a moral point of view, as a description of the fallen angel's plight. If we tilt the text that way other infracontexts come to the fore – or rather push their way forward regardless of Satan's attitude – in the first place *Is.* 14.12f. (Newton) on the fate of the King of Babylon, which in patristic texts is taken to refer to the fall of the angel: 'Quomodo cecidisti de caelo Lucifer, qui mane oriebaris? Corruisti in terram, qui vulnerabas gentes? Qui dicebas in corde tuo, In caelum concendam, super astra Dei exaltabo solium meum'.[3] Association with these verses also brings to mind the Luke passage quoted earlier, 'Videbam Satanam sicut fulgur de caelo cadentem' and a number of variations on the theme in Renaissance texts: Valmarana's *Daemonomachiae* 1, p. 15, Fletcher's *Apollyonists* 1.19, Vondel's *Lucifer* 2167ff., but above all the apostrophe to Lucifer in the *Sospetto* 10. In this stanza the Italian original reads, 'Misero, e come il tuo splendor primiero / Perdesti, ò già di luce Angel più bello', lines expanded by Crashaw to

> Disdainefull wretch! how hath one bold sinne cost
> Thee all the beauty of thy once bright Eyes!
> How hath one blacke Eclipse cancell'd, and crost
> The glories that did guild thee in thy Rise!

Both versions of course in the first place suggest the prophet's diatribe, and unwittingly and ironically Satan condemns the false ideals represented by himself and his crew. The effect resembles that of Satan's false promises in books 2 and 10 (see pp. 197f.), and is a verbal parallel to the motif of Satan bringing destruction on himself (pp. 63f.). A reader remembering Marino's lines, however, cannot but sense a suggestion of the *ubi sunt* motif at the same time – 'misero' means "unhappy" as well as "wretched" –, a reading which is perhaps facilitated by Lucifer's subsequent description of his former glory in st. 30 (see p. 191 above). Impressions of the *Sospetto* stanza easily merge with those of Satan's speech, reinforcing one of the possible interpretations of Milton's lines.

[3] Douglas Bush briefly comments on the "allusions" to Virgil and Isaiah ("Ironic and Ambiguous Allusion in *Paradise Lost*", p. 633).

While in these various systems the "past glory" motif is opposed to the theme of "present misery", it occurs as part of a different but equally conventional opposition in book 2. In the dialogue between Sin and Satan the portress of Hell is amazed that Satan seems to have forgotten all about her – Sin's pre-existence as an angel with the others and the circumstances of her birth when, Athena-like, she sprang from the head of Satan (747ff.):

> Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
> Now in thine eye so foul, once deemd so fair
> In Heav'n, when at th' Assembly, and in sight
> Of all the Seraphim with thee combin'd
> In bold conspiracy against Heav'ns King [. . .]
> Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
> Then shining heav'nly fair, a Goddess armd
> Out of thy head I sprung.

The difference between infernal foulness and celestial fairness is a point made in many texts on the Infernal Council.[4] The laconic description in 2.748 resembles similar lines in *Inf.* 34.34 'S'ei fu sì bel, com'egli è hora brutto' (. . . 'ben dè da lui proceder ogni lutto'), which is part of the description of Satan standing in the ice of the Giudecca; as Gmelin observes (1, p. 488), it is up to the reader of this brief antithesis to imagine Lucifer's ugliness. Yet this kind of minimum description seems to be traditional in medieval Mystery Plays, for instance in the *Ludus Coventriae* (77f.) where the fallen angel exclaims, 'Now I am a devyl ful derke / þat was An Aungel bryht'. Among Renaissance versions of the Infernal Council motif, the *Os Novissimos* by Rolim de Moura provides two similar lines, 'Preside con tam fea catadura, / Quanto jâ foy fermosa creatura' (st. 12) in the section on Satan and his crew gathering in Hell to lay plans for the fall of man. Most Renaissance versions expand such antitheses, dwelling like Valvasone (*L'Angeleida* 3.1), Andreini (*L'Adamo* 392ff.) and Marino (*Sospetto d'Herode* 6) on the details of Satan's horrible appearance, or like Tasso (*GL* 4.10) on the horrors of Hell as contrasted with the brightness of Heaven, as described in Satan's speech to his followers:

> Et in vece del dì sereno, e puro,
> De l'aureo Sol, de gli stellati giri,
> N'hà quì rinchiusi in questo abisso oscuro.

[4] Steadman provides medieval and Renaissance Instances in "Archangel to Devil: the Background of Satan's Metamorphosis" (*Milton's Epic Characters*, pp. 287ff.).

These lines read like an intensified and elaborate version of the corresponding lines in Vida's *Christiad* (1.176ff., p. 9):

> ... pro syderibus, pro luce serena
> Nobis senta situ loca, sole carentia tecta
> Reddidit,

where, incidentally, a Virgilian phrase connects the lines with *Aen.* 6.461f. 'Sed me iussa deum, quae nunc has ire per vmbras, / Per loca senta situ' (''through bleak and untrodden lands'') 'cogunt, noctemque profundam, / Imperiis egere suis'; Aeneas' apologetic words to Dido in the Underworld. There is a trace of this description in *PL* 1.244f., where Satan contrasts 'this mournful gloom' with 'that celestial light'. In *PL* the contrast is heightened by the reference to Sin in her former capacity not only as an angel among others, but as 'shining heav'nly fair, a Goddess' (757). This characterization is in its turn offset by the name of Sin – forming a *paronomasia* with 'sign' /səin/ at 2.760: just as Satan tries to usurp the seat of God, so the birth of Sin is a ''black'' and blasphemous travesty of the generation of the Son traditionally allegorized as the birth of Minerva. Sin should be interpreted as ''guilt'', and a sign portending the revolt. This part of the description thus links up with 'foul', forming an independent context.

Infracontexts thus throw into relief various aspects of Satan's melancholy on remembering the past, and the ironic kind of effect achieved by contact with the first of them recurs – along with certain differences – in Satan's promise to set free the spirits of 'this dark and dismal house of pain' at 2.823. For parallels to this expression commentators refer to *Job* 30.23 'For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all liuing'; the word 'house' also occurs in 17.13 'If I waite, the graue is mine house; I haue made my bedde in the darknesse'. But the full significance of Milton's 'dark and dismal house of pain', as well as of the 'house of woe and paine' which receives the fallen angels in 6.877, is provided less by the biblical passages than by *FQ* 1.5.33, 'The house of endlesse paine ... / In which ten thousand sorts of punishment / The cursed creatures doe eternally torment', similarly connected with the rescue theme: the Queen of Darkness and Duessa descend into the Underworld to come to the aid of Sansjoy. In relation to these passages, Milton's lines on the plans of Satan himself operate by *auxesis*, intensifying the theme. The ring of Spenser's words in its turn suggests underlying passages in the Roman poets, particularly the much-imitated 'domos Ditis vacuas, et inania regni' into which Virgil and his companion make their way in *Aen.* 6.269, the 'tristeis sine sole domos, loca turbida' according to Deiphobos' shadow in his conversation with Aeneas at

6.534, and the 'opacam Ditis umbrosi domum' to which Medea appeals (*Med.* 741) at the beginning of her long invocation of all the powers of hell, entreating them to help her punish her false husband, an invocation including a description of the magic rites she performs. The associations induced by these instances of 'house' and 'domus', again, are supplemented by those evoked by the more abstract sense of 'albergo' and 'ostello' in the sense "centre of" in Italian poets: Guittone d'Arezzo calls himself 'ostal d'ogne tormento' (14.31); Dante calls Italy 'di dolor hostello' in *Purg.* 6.76; Petrarch says Avignon is an 'albergo di dolor' in *Canz.* 114.3. All these senses and subsenses are packed into the 'dark and dismal house of pain', enriching the associative power of the words. At the same time this use of 'house' is in contrast to the 'house not made with hand, eternall in the heauens' (*2 Cor.* 5.1) and to 'domus' = 'caelum' in the Roman poets. Milton's 'dismal', like 'hideous', is a typically "infernal" word: 1.60 'The dismal Situation waste and wilde', 2.572 'That dismal World; 8.241 'The dismal Gates' of Hell, 10.508 'A dismal universal hiss' of devils transformed to serpents, 11.469 the 'grim Cave' of death, 'all dismal'. The main point, however, as remarked earlier, is that the meaning becomes heavily ironical when we notice that Satan's plan to set free son, daughter, and 'all the heav'nly Host / Of Spirits that in our just pretenses armd / Fell with us from on high' reads like a black parody of the Harrowing of Hell motif, the wording being suggestive of phrases in the *Descensus Christi ad Inferos*, the second part of the apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus* and one of the most widespread of the apocryphal texts in the medieval and Renaissance periods. The relevant infracontext is the description of the *descensus* at the beginning of ch. 8 in the Latin A version: 'Et extendens dominus manum suam dixit: Venite ad me, sancti mei omnes, qui habetis imaginem et similitudinem meam ... Statim omnes sancti sub manu domini adunati sunt'. The theme recurs in a great many IC texts, for instance the *Sospetto d'Herode* 31 and *GL* 4.11, where of course the descent has already taken place: 'E venne, e ruppe le tartaree porte / E porre osò ne' Regni nostri il piede / E trarne l'alme a noi douute in sorte'. When God in 9.59 orders Michael to chase the demons back to hell ('Torni a le notti d'Acheronte oscure, / Suo degno albergo, a le sue giuste pene') Fairfax in his rendering of Tasso's line on Hell uses words suggestive of Spenser's and Milton's phrases: 'Fit house for them, the house of grief and paine'.

Infracontexts, in other words, invest the rescue theme with the same ironical and/or black-parody significance that is characteristic of many other details constituting a mainly complex code in the first two books (Satan addressing Beelzebub; Pandemonium parody of Heaven; Infernal Council parody of celestial council; Sin – Death – Satan parody of Holy Trinity; etc.). The inadequate promise to rescue the inmates of Chaos

and Hell is rendered null and void by the clash with the contrasting infracontexts. The Harrowing-of-Hell travesty recurs in 10.462ff., where Satan, his mission completed, in his great speech to the Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, and Powers repeats the promise earlier made to Sin and Death and partly almost in the same form:

> I call ye and declare ye now, returnd
> Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
> Triumphant out of this infernal Pit
> Abominable, accurst, the house of woe,
> And Dungeon of our Tyrant: Now possess,
> As Lords, a spacious World, to our native Heaven
> Little inferiour, by my adventure hard
> With peril great atchiev'd.

The irony here is double, the black parody a shade blacker: Satan's mission, as we know, is not 'successful beyond hope' but on the contrary destined to fail owing to the very act on the part of Christ which is here travestied; the hope for freedom held out to them is thwarted by the symbolical serpent shape into which they are transformed as a punishment 'to undergo / This annual humbling certain numberd days, / To dash thir pride, and joy for Man seduc't' (10.575f.). As concerns the 'spacious World, to our native Heaven / Little inferiour', among whose amenities has earlier been mentioned the 'buxom Air, imbalmd / With odours' (2.842f.), it is the world to which Sin and Death betake them 'several wayes, / Both to destroy, or unimmortal make / All kinds' (10.610ff.), an expedition causing God's comment on the Dogs of Hell. Milton's lines in 10.462ff. evoke by contrast David's prophecy about the deliverance from Hell in the *De Partu Virginis* 1.401ff. (p. 17), where the theme of victory is similarly emphasized:

> At nos uirginea praecincti tempora lauru,
> Signa per extentos caeli uictricia campos
> Tollemus, laetoque ducem clamore sequemur.
> Victor io, bellator io, tu regna profunda,
> Tu maneis Erebumque potestatesque coërces
> Aerias lethumque tuo sub numine torques;

deriving scriptural authority by expanding St. Paul's words on the *descensus* in *Col.* 2.15, 'Et expolians principatus et potestates, traduxit confidenter palam, triumphans illos in semetipso'. In the *Gospel of Nicodemus* B 10 'Deinde exivimus ex inde omnes cum domino, relinquentes Satan et infernum in tartarum'. The devils in *PL*, on the con-

trary, bring Tartarus with them into the world. The inverted Harrowing-of-Hell passages in Satan's speeches bring into focus the hollowness and inadequacy of his predictions and promises, his imminent defeat. Satan's promises to Sin, Death, and the fallen angels link up with and form a contrast to Christ's promise in 3.250ff., showing what in reality Satan and his crew can expect instead of freedom:

> But I shall rise Victorious, and subdue
> My Vanquisher, spoild of his vanted spoile;
> Death his deaths wound shall then receive, and stoop
> Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarmd.
> I through the ample Air in Triumph high
> Shall lead Hell Captive maugre Hell, and show
> The Powers of darkness bound;

a passage, as Hughes has pointed out annotating l. 253, which may be inspired by the version of the *descensus* in the *De Partu Virginis*.

3. Satan Portrayed

After listing the devils in 1.589ff., every one of whom is characterized in a few lines, Milton turns his attention to Satan. The arrangement with a summary list followed by a more detailed description of Lucifer roughly follows the same patterns as that in Vida and Tasso: after describing the crowd of devils summoned to the council both poets portray Satan at some length, after which his speech is quoted. While Satan in Vida and Tasso appears as a fire-belching monster quite stripped of human features (see below, p. 207),[1] Milton's hero is entirely human, and some of his characteristics may derive from details in the *Sospetto*, though Marino's and Crashaw's portraits mainly follow those provided by Vida and Tasso. Mario Praz, commenting on the difference between Tasso-Marino's and Milton's Satan, observes that Milton has conferred upon the figure of Satan all the charm of an untamed heroic rebel which already belonged to the Prometheus of Aeschylus and to the Capaneus of Dante, though pointing out at the same time that Marino had "preceded him in the same path".[2] Steadman, however, has conclusively demonstrated the particular character of Satan's heroic virtues used for evil ends:

[1] The same kind appears in *L'Angeleida, L'Adamo,* and Beaumont's *Psyche*. For Satan-the-monster in art, see Roland Frye on the "hideous fiends", pp. 71ff. and illustrations.

[2] *The Romantic Agony*, 2nd ed., London, 1970, pp. 57f.; also *The Flaming Heart*, p. 314.

heroic virtues have no intrinsic ethical value, which is acquired only if heroism is used for good purposes. Otherwise, specious virtues merely aggravate evil and make it truly diabolical.[3] Satan, Steadman points out, has certain affinities with three kinds of heroes: Achilles, proud and jealous, Agamemnon, the 'dux', and Odysseus, the schemer. In particular, Satan's pride and arrogance closely resemble similar traits in Achilles.[4] Satan perverts the ideal of heroism: in him the heroic is a façade, and true heroism in *PL* is represented by Christ.[5]

The portrait in Milton's lines is made up of features equally suggesting present misery and partial preservation of angelic glory, an ambiguity emphasized and supported by infracontexts. Above the rest, Satan 'In shape and gesture proudly eminent / Stood like a Towr' (1.590f.). In the same way Aias in *Il* 3.225ff. (Stillingfleet) is described by Priam as bold and tall, "towering above the Argives with his head and broad shoulders", and by Helen as ἕρκος Ἀχαιῶν, "the defence of the Achaeans". Mezentius in the battle, the 'contemptor divom', is compared to 'rupes, vastum quae prodit in aequor, / Obuia ventorum furiis, expostaque ponto' (*Aen.* 10.693f.). In *Purg.* 5.14f. (Todd), the closest analogue, Dante tarries, held up by the spirits flocking round him in amazement, and Virgil reassures him: 'Stà, come torre ferma, che non crolla / Giamai la cima per soffiar de' uenti'. Satan in Hell stands out as 'eminent' among his fallen comrades; Dante is the sole flesh-and-blood creature among shadows. Interestingly, Broadbent[6] associates Milton's phrase with what he calls "the Biblical 'tower of strength'" – this is how the devils regard their leader, whose "'towering and steadfast height' is an image of his 'royal dignity'", whereas to Milton's readers he is a "Tower of Babel". But the deeper significance evoked by the infracontextual phrase emerges to the full only when we trace its provenance in more detail. After all, the proverbial "tower of strength" is what Richard calls himself in *Rich. III* 5.3.12, something he says his adversary lacks: 'The King's name is a tower of strength, / Which they vpon the adverse faction want'. The irony of 'Stood like a Towr' in a description of Satan is thus heavy if the words are brought into contact with Shakespeare's, and the heaviness increases when the infracontext underlying the earlier text is

[3] *Milton and the Renaissance Hero*, pp. 16f.; and Blessington, *'Paradise Lost' and the Classical Epic*, pp. 1ff.

[4] See Maurice B. McNamee's analysis of the Achillean concept of heroism (*Honor and the Epic Hero. A Study of the Shifting Concept of Magnanimity in Philosophy and Epic Poetry*, New York, 1960, pp. 8ff.).

[5] *Milton and the Renaissance Hero*, pp. 31, 139, 144ff. See also Steadman's "'Conquest Fraudulent': Satan and the Strategy of Illusion" (*Milton's Epic Characters*, pp. 229, 231f., 234f.), and the excellent chapter "Satan the Anti-Hero" in John E. Seaman, *The Moral Paradox of 'Paradise Lost'*, The Hague-Paris, 1971, pp. 59ff.

[6] "Milton's Hell" (*ELH* 21, 1954, p. 166.).

actualized in its turn: *Prov.* 18.10 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe'. And this accumulated irony is heightened still further if we remember that, as various critics have pointed out,[7] Christ is traditionally symbolized as a tower. From 'Stood like a Towr' there also runs a horizontal connection with the "meridian tower" in 4.30 discussed previously.

From these contexts, suggesting strength and invincibility, the description as it were tapers off via the sun-misty-and-eclipsed metaphor down to the portrait of a troubled and passionate figure (1.591ff.):

> ... his form had yet not lost
> All her Original brightness; nor appeard
> Less then Arch-Angel ruind, and th' excess
> Of Glory obscur'd: As when the Sun new ris'n
> Looks through the Horizontal misty Air
> Shorn of his Beams; or from behind the Moon
> In dim Eclips disastrous twilight sheds
> On half the Nations, and with fear of change
> Perplexes Monarchs. Dark'nd so, yet shon
> Above them all th' Arch-Angel: but his face
> Deep scarrs of Thunder had intrencht, and care
> Sat on his faded cheek, but under Browes
> Of dauntless courage, and considerat Pride
> Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
> Signs of remorse and passion to behold
> The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
> (Farr other once beheld in bliss) condemnd
> For ever now to have thir lot in pain.

The significance of the sun hidden by mists and the sun eclipsed has been commented on by a succession of critics. Thus his double identity has been pointed out: "He is the early sun, about to 'scatter the mists' ... and the ominous sun in eclipse, a thing of good made evil";[8] the fate of Samson seems suggested by 'Shorn of his Beams';[9] Satan is an "impaired source of light".[10] The lines have also been seen as an illustration of "the progressive degradation of beauty, light, and goodness".[11] Re-

[7] For instance Cope, *The Metaphoric Structure in 'Paradise Lost'*, p. 98; Fowler, note; and Di Cesare, "Advent'rous Song : The Texture of Milton's Epic" (*Language and Style in Milton*, p. 15).
[8] Svendsen, p. 70. 'Mist', Di Cesare remarks, is "linked to Satan" (p. 15).
[9] Broadbent, "Milton's Hell", p. 167; MacCaffrey, p. 173, Cope, pp. 98f.
[10] MacCaffrey, p. 174.
[11] See for example the discussion in Hughes, *Ten Perspectives on Milton*, pp. 66f.

cently, reference has been made to *Matt.* 16.2–3 on discerning the signs of the times (a 'red and lowring' sky in the morning means foul weather), and to mist traditionally standing for evildoers, error, and ignorance.[12] But some other infracontexts add to the meaning here. As Dunster remarked, Milton's lines suggest the comparison of the King in *Richard II*, discontented and indignant, with the blushing discontented sun. 'Mark King Richard how he looks', says Bolingbroke,

> As doth the blushing discontented Sunne,
> From out the fierie Portall of the East,
> When he perceiues the enuious clouds are bent
> To dimme his glory, and to staine the tract
> Of his bright passage to the Occident. (3.3.70ff.)

These lines provide the definitive characterization of Richard and predict his end, just as in *PL* the "darkening is the outward and visible sign of Satan's inward and spiritual disgrace".[13] This links up with the passages in *Eikonoklastes* cited by Gorecki (p. 105), in which Milton scorns the idea of associating King Charles with the sun. 'Disastrous', along with the obvious meaning, refers to the etymological sense of the substantive, "an unfavourable aspect of a star or planet".[14] But the similarity between Milton's and Shakespeare's lines extends further. York adds (75ff.):

> Yet lookes he like a King: behold his Eye
> (As bright as is the Eagles) lightens forth
> Controlling Maiestie: alack, alack, for woe,
> That any harme should staine so faire a shew,

a reflection which reads like a sad comment on the previous lines, much as Milton's 'yet shon / Above them all th' Arch-Angel' and 'under Browes / Of dauntless courage, and considerat Pride' changes little in the previous description of Satan and indicates qualities which are ultimately of no avail. More direct than the reminiscences of Shakespeare's lines is the echo of the apostrophe to the fallen Lucifer in Crashaw's version of the *Sospetto* 10:

[12] James F. Hoy, "A Meteorological Image in *Paradise Lost*", pp. 171f.; J. Gorecki, "Milton's Similitudes for Satan and the Traditional Implications of Their Imagery", pp. 105f.
[13] MacCaffrey, p. 173.
[14] *OED disaster* † 1.

Disdainefull wretch! how hath one bold sinne cost
Thee all the beauty of thy once bright Eyes!
How hath one blacke Eclipse cancell'd, and crost
The glories that did guild thee in thy Rise!

The reminiscence stresses the enormity of Satan's sin and at the same time his punishment, the irretrievable loss of his glory and beauty; 'dim Eclips' is as it were echoed and strengthened by 'blacke Eclipse', where the adjective means "malignant" as well as "black", lending some of this meaning to 'dim'; and the astrological imagery points forward horizontally to the comet metaphor in the second book of *PL* and vertically down to that in st. 7 of the *Sospetto*.

The lines on care sitting on Satan's faded cheek – "the descriptive method is verbal, its effect abstract", Broadbent feels[15] – may of course elicit the same comment as that made by Praz on the first two lines in Marino's description of Lucifer (p. 54): Satan is "sad because he is conscious, above all else, of being a fallen angel". But Milton's lines, as well as Marino's 'Ne gli occhi, oue mestitia alberga, e morte' (st. 7) and Crashaw's 'Lifts his malignant Eyes, wasted with care' (st. 11) may have a wider background. It is possible that 'oue mestitia alberga, e morte' directly echoes two lines in *L'Angeleida* 2.31, where Valvasone describes the face of Satan in the Underworld: 'Vn sdegnoso sembiante, una aria fosca, / Ch' alberga in mezzo la Mestitia'. But these particulars in their turn may be traditional and form a matrix, recurring as they do in descriptions of Saturn, another victim of a superior god, dethroned and hurled down to Tartarus by Jupiter. Though Saturn does not seem to be expressly associated with the devil by the mythographers, the connection is pretty close in some of them. The medieval author of the *Ovide Moralisé* speaks of his 'malice' and 'cruauté' (1.783f.); in the Renaissance, Ross says the Romans were 'injurious to heaven, when they called such a bloudy butcher the son of heaven; who should rather have been named the son of hell, to which by *Jupiter* he was thrust down'.[16] In medieval mythography Saturn is described as 'maestus', 'senex', 'canus' (Neckam), 'incessu gravior tristisque senecta' (Petrarch), 'homo senex, canus, curvus, tristis et pallidus' (Bersuire, Albrichus Philosophus).[17] The background of these features is descriptions in Macrobius and Martianus Capella, and traces are also found in iconography. In Cartari's *Imagini dei Dei de Gli Antichi* two Saturns are represented (pp. 16 and 18), both in different ways illustrating the 'tristitia' and 'mestitia' which go with

[15] "Milton's Hell", p. 167.
[16] *Mystagogus Poeticus*, pp. 380f.
[17] Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods*, p. 176. See also Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology*, p. 78.

the 'freddezza' and 'mala natura' of this deity. The complexity and interaction of mythological motifs in the Renaissance are well known, and the sadness of Satan's eyes, natural enough in itself, may at the same time be a reflection of a traditional feature, the melancholy appearance of Saturn.

Similarly the 'Browes / Of dauntless courage', the 'considerat Pride / Waiting revenge', and the 'cruel eye', though natural in the figure created by Milton, are symptoms of an attitude found in a good many IC versions. They are a reflection of the vigorous end of Satan's speech in 661f., 'Warr then, Warr / Op'n or understood must be resolv'd'. Similar challenges, inciting the fallen angels to wage relentless wars on God – directly or indirectly by corrupting man, occur for instance in Mantuan's, Grotius', Valvasone's, Valmarana's, Tasso's and Andreini's versions, and the future revenge of the devils is depicted by many of them as a large-scale military enterprise. Marino and Crashaw side whole-heartedly with this branch of the tradition, which in Crashaw's translation issues in the lines,

> And yet whose force feare I? have I so lost
> My selfe? my strength too with my innocence?
> Come try who dares, Heav'n, Earth, what ere dost boast
> A borrowed being, make thy bold defence.
> Come thy Creator too, what though it cost
> Mee yet a second fall! wee'd try our strengths (st. 32).

As in Tasso and in other IC poets, the signs of Satan's rage are his bestial glowing eyes and fire-belching mouth, in Marino-Crashaw also his ghastly shrieks which echo in the Underworld and have been transformed by Milton into more human manifestations of anger and defiance. Another feature of Satan's reaction in *PL* which has a counterpart in the *Sospetto* but takes on another meaning and is interpreted in a new context is the 'Signs of remorse and passion to behold / The fellows of his crime', condemned for his sake to a plight in hopeless pain. In this context 'remorse' and 'passion' both mean "pity", "compassion", but in the *Sospetto* Lucifer and Herod, his representative on earth, experience remorse of a rather different character. In st. 9 of the *Sospetto* Lucifer says, 'Il suo regno, e se stesso abhorre, e sdegna', rendered by Crashaw, 'His Scepter and himselfe both he disdaines', lines which evoke *Luke* 11.17 on Satan divided against himself ('Si autem et Satanas in se ipsum diuisus est, quomodo stabit regnum eius?'). The theme recurs in the description of Herod's emotions (st. 52) in Crashaw's rendering, which speaks significantly of 'selfe-tormenting sin', the last word being used in the concrete sense ("sinner"). That sin means suffering for the sinner is a

well-known theme (see above, p. 191), and there is a connection between this detail in the description of Lucifer-Herod's emotions in the *Sospetto* and of Satan's in *PL*: the feeling in Marino-Crashaw's poem is reinterpreted in Milton's, being directed towards a different goal – Satan blames or hates himself for bringing disaster on his comrades.

4. Teneriff and Atlas

Satan's apparent fortitude, strength, and noble determination thus conceal inward traits of a very different sort: moral viciousness as well as vacillation and confusion due to his dissociation from the divinely ordered world. Satan's great strength and dangerous character both come to the fore in the paragraph where Satan, menacing and terrible, is surrounded by the angelic squadron at the end of the fourth book (see pp. 84ff. above):

> On th' other side *Satan* allarmd
> Collecting all his might dilated stood,
> Like *Teneriff* or *Atlas* unremov'd:
> His stature reachd the Skie, and on his Crest
> Sat horror Plum'd; nor wanted in his graspe
> What seemd both Spear and Shield. (985ff.)

Fowler, with Broadbent, emphasizes the contrast between this threatening behaviour on the part of Satan and his grumbling retreat a few lines further down, and compares Satan's transformation with that of the devils into dwarfs in the first book. Also, the "mock-epic" quality of the episode is pointed out. 'Allarmd', as Keightley was the first to realize, means "roused to action", "urged on" (*OED* † 2), and 'dilated' is invested with meaning by horizontal contexts: by the preceding 'Collecting all his might', by the following 'Like *Teneriff* or *Atlas* unremov'd', and by a detail in the first book, 1. 572 on Satan's heart which 'distends with pride' when he inspects his followers in array of battle. The three horizontal surface contexts all suggest something expanded and inflated: Satan literally swelling with all his power and strength like towering mountains, the echo from 1.572 stressing his chief emotion, pride. The overall significance of 'dilated' is thus "puffed up" and "distended" by vigour and arrogance. Very likely 'dilated', as Thyer thought, is imitated from *GL* 19.12, where 'fiero Argante' in his duel with Tancredo is described as 'disteso'. It is significant, however, that Milton does not take over the whole phrase in Tasso, who is merely concerned with

Argante's way of wielding his sword in the duel, and the line reads, 'Ma disteso, ed eretto il fiero Argante' ("standing upright and erect" – Fairfax quite correctly renders the words by 'bolt upright'). Milton thus uses 'disteso' in a different way from the Italian poet, and the echo from Tasso has a special significance conveyed by the context in *GL*: Argante is one of the Christians' worst enemies, in 2.59 characterized as 'Ne l'arme infaticabile ed inuitto, / D'ogni Dio sprezzator', just as Mezentius in *Aen.* 7.648 is 'contemptor divom'. In the fight with Tancredo he is defeated in spite of all his pride and terrifying exterior, an event suggested by what happens to Satan at the end of bk. 4: Satan is in a sense defeated when he 'fled / Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night'.

Also the Teneriff and Atlas images are invested with additional meaning when related to the infracontexts. Fowler says Atlas was a rebel against the supreme deity, Ann Gossman has similar associations,[1] and according to Fowler Satan also "sustains the pressure of the angels as *Atlas* sustained the weight of the stars". The text, however, hardly warrants such a reading, and mythographers pay no attention to Atlas' rebellious (or, rather, stubborn) character. Nor do passages in *Il.* 4.442 on Discord and *Aen.* 4.176f. on Fama (Newton) – their heads reach the sky – offer much of interest for the appreciation of the figure of Atlas in *PL*. Far more important infracontexts are found in passages quoted by some other commentators. Keightley pointed out the resemblance to Virgil's lines on Aeneas who, when hearing the name of Turnus, rushes out of his fortress, breaks off what he is doing and, in his joy and eagerness, thunders on his arms, like Athos, like Eryx,

> aut ipse coruscis
> Cum fremit ilicibus quantus, gaudetque niuali
> Vertice se attollens pater Appenninus ad auras. (12.701ff.)

The three-membered simile with the greatly expanded third member and its descriptive details – the deep murmur of quivering oaks illustrating the din of Aeneas' arms and 'gaudet niuali vertice' emphasizing his joy at the imminent duel – convey an impression of enormous, elementary forces. The image is one of those which, as Di Cesare reminds us, represents Aeneas (and thus not only Turnus) as a destructive force.[2] Nor is this all, for Virgil's triple mountain simile is in its turn modelled on *Il.* 13.754 where Hector in full armour, attacking his enemy, is compared to a snowy mountain (ὄρεϊ νιφόεντι ἐοικώς). The two images accumulate

[1] "Satan: From Toad to Atlas" (*MQ* 10, 1976, pp. 10f.).
[2] "*Paradise Lost* and Epic Tradition" (*MS* 1, 1969, p. 50, n. 17).

meaning which further enriches the Teneriff-Atlas simile in *PL*: 'nivali' -νιφόεντι– for instance, adds gigantic height to 'unremov'd'.[3]

To these classical infracontexts, which emphasize the theme of Satan's terrible power and strength, can be added others which hint at the real nature of this strength. In *GL* 4.6, as Thyer observed, Satan is portrayed as an inhuman monster:

> Nè tanto scoglio in mar, nè rupe alpestra,
> Nè pur Calpe[4] s'inalza, o'l magno Atlante,
> Ch'anzi lui non paresse un picciol colle,
> Sì la gran fronte, e le gran corna estolle.

Satan's gigantic stature is only one of the features of Tasso's careful description of his terrifying exterior; other details (imitated by Milton in *In Quint Nov.* 35 ff.) are his eyes like comets, his gory lips, smoke and sparks issuing from his throat like sulphurous fumes from Etna. These details in *GL* are suggested, synecdochically, by '*Teneriff* or *Atlas*'. Tasso's portrait in its turn forms part of an entire group of Satan-the-monster descriptions with similar features in Vida's *Christiad*, Valvasone's *Daemonomachiae*, Andreini's *L'Adamo*, and other works (see p. 220 below). So the words 'His stature reachd the Skie' in Milton connect with Renaissance portraits of the monstrous devil, and these build up the infracontextual matrix which invests Milton's lines with additional meaning by association: no matter how hero-like Milton's Satan may be on the surface, a reader familiar with other, less flattering descriptions can make out the traditional devil figure behind him. Milton's devils, says Richardson, have no monstrous features: "He must be read Without Such Images, His are Seen to be Angels still, though Scarr'd, and Disfigur'd" (p. 39). But it should not have been difficult to read Milton's text with "Such Images" in mind. As Harding pointed out,[5] 'and on his Crest / Sat horror Plum'd' also suggests the lines on Turnus' helmet in *Aen.* 7.785f.: 'Cui triplici crinita iuba galea alta Chimaeram / Sustinet, Aetnaeos efflantem faucibus igneis'. These lines, with their mention of Etna's fire and the Chimaera, evoke the same infernal world as the descriptions of devils in Vida, Tasso, Valvasone, and Andreini.

As for 1014f., after the description of the celestial sign indicating Satan's defeat, Fowler provides a comment on the time of Satan's flight. It is probable that Satan flees immediately after midnight, as suggested by the position of Libra: "At midnight the powers of light and darkness

[3] The cumulative effect is not unlike that achieved in the Argonaut passage at the end of book 2 (see p. 245).

[4] 'Calpe' is the rock of Gibraltar.

[5] *The Club of Hercules*, pp. 49ff. See also Hughes, *Ten Perspectives on Milton*, pp. 181f.

are for a moment in equal balance. Then the *shades of night* begin to flee, and they continue to do so during the six hours that intervene before sunrise''. The indication of the time when Satan flees admits contact with a group of infracontexts which lend additional meaning to the lines. 'Fled / Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night', as Dunster pointed out, evokes two lines in *GL* (9.65) which, incidentally, indicate the sense of 'murmur', which means ''complain'' and ''lament'' rather than ''mutter discontentedly''. The Archangel Michael, sent out by God, chases the devils back to the Underworld, and 'Essi *gemendo* abbandonar le belle / Region de la luce, e l'auree stelle'. At the same time the lines in *PL* evoke a deeper infracontextual stratum made up of accounts of the Nativity and the Harrowing of Hell. In both, the appearance of Christ scatters the evil shadows of night: in Prudentius' *Hymnus Matutinus* the light of Christ chases away the shadows, similarly in the *Cathemerinon* 1.71f., in Venantius Fortunatus' Paschal hymn, and in the Adoration scene in Mantuan's *Parthenice Mariana* 3.153f. ('Iubar immensum caelo deduxerat Infans / Illustrique die noctis disiecerat umbram'.) In Crashaw's *Sospetto*, st. 15, Lucifer sees 'how in that blest Day-bearing Night, / The Heav'n-rebuked shades made hast away'. These and similar passages are naturally concerned with the light of dawn, and association with them as it were reduces the distance between midnight and morning in Milton's lines. Above all, echoes from the Nativity passages suggest and foreshadow the Incarnation, the work of Salvation, and the definitive retreat of Satan (see further p. 247f.).

5. Comet, Ophiucus, and Morning Star

If there is, as it were, a certain distance between the Teneriff-Atlas image and the infracontexts which intensify its meaning, the infracontexts evoked by the comet simile in book 2 are more easily recognizable. Also, the deeper meaning of the image itself was readily accessible to contemporary readers. Satan is compared to a comet after the dialogue with Death: not recognized by his son and threatened by him, he assumes a menacing appearance suggestive of the way he looks and behaves when surrounded by the fiery squadron of angels –

> Incenst with indignation *Satan* stood
> Unterrifi'd, and like a Comet burnd,
> That fires the length of *Ophiucus* huge
> In th' Artick Sky, and from his horrid hair
> Shakes Pestilence and Warr. (707ff.)

Being elsewhere in *PL* used chiefly about God's reaction to evil,[1] 'incense' provides a kind of contrast effect. The comet suggests traditional descriptions of omens; comets forebode disasters and the death of princes,[2] and here this significance is twofold: the comet image foreshadows the disasters that Satan unleashes over the world, but also, conversely, suggests his ultimate defeat. Within this general framework of comet symbolism, certain specific infracontexts stand out, enriching the meaning by association. The most important infracontextual parallel[3] occurs in the *De Raptu Proserpinae* 1.232ff., where Claudian compares the shining path beneath Diana's feet to a comet rushing headlong, a terrible omen:

> Augurium qualis laturus in orbem
> Praepes sanguineo dilabitur igne cometes
> Prodigiale rubens –

where 'sanguineo igne' as it were expands Milton's 'burnd ... fires', just as 'praepes ... dilabitur' is a kind of kinetic variation on 'the length of', suggesting the giant size of the comet. 'Huge', incidentally, is used several times about the devils and their world in books 1 and 2: 1.57, 196, 209, 547, 710, 2.434, 709, 874, probably often with the force of 'ingens' in the sense ὑπέρμεγας: 'informis', 'immanis', 'enormis', 'stupendus', and particularly suggesting a menace.[4] Again, Claudian dwells on the consequences of the omen:

> Non illum nauita tuto,
> Non impune vident populi, sed crine minaci
> Nunciat aut ratibus ventos, aut urbibus hostes;

'crine minaci nunciat ... urbibus hostes' being heightened in Milton's 'from his horrid hair / Shakes Pestilence and Warr'. Milton's comet image stands out powerfully against the background of Claudian's lines; also, the comet appears in works which both deal with the prince of the Underworld. Again, the comet passages link up with the 'fierie red' angelic squadron in book 4: infracontextually, 'sanguineo igne' connects with κύκλος ... ἐρευθόμενος (a halo, blushing red) in Aratus (see p.

[1] 2.94, 3.187, 5.847, 8.235, 9.692, 12.338. At 6.130 the word refers to Abdiel's reactions, at 9.1162 to Adam's.
[2] For details see e.g. Svendsen, pp. 91f. and 266; and S. K. Heninger, *A Handbook of Renaissance Meteorology*, Durham, 1960, pp. 89ff.
[3] More important than that pointed out by Newton in *Aen.* 10. 270ff. (the flames erupting from Aeneas' shield-boss are compared to a comet).
[4] *ThLL ingens* 1536 and 1538.

85); horizontally, 'burnd' and 'fires' with 'fierie red'. All four details combine to intensify the picture of the glowing omen boding ill for Satan's victims as well as for himself, the angelic anger at Satan's presumption being part of the horizontal context. And the red glow at the same time links up with the infernal punishment in book 1.

At least two more infracontexts, from Tasso, can be superimposed on the *De Raptu* passage: *GL* 7.52 (Newton) and *Rinaldo* 12.23. Argante in *GL* planning death for the Christians and about to incite his men against their army is compared to a comet 'con le chiome sanguinose horrende', overthrowing realms and boding pestilence, watched by a frightened tyrant; his appearance is horrible, and 'Spirano gli atti fieri horror di morte / E minaccie et morte il uolto spira'.[5] In *Rinaldo* the evil Mambrino, marching up with his paladins to his final and unsuccessful battle, 'Qual sanguigna cometa e i crini ardenti, / O Sirio appar di sdegno acceso in vista', emitting baneful light and burning rays. The passage on Satan himself naturally works as an intensifier against the background of these cases of evil-tyrants-as-comets passages. A different case is the description of Pluto's eye in *GL* 4.7 – 'Come infausta cometa, il guardo splende' (Thyer) –; even more eloquent in the *Sospetto* 7, where Crashaw in his rendering expands the simile: 'Such his fell glances as the fatall Light / Of staring Comets, that looke Kingdomes dead'. Merging with the lines in *PL*, these various infracontexts underscore the theme of the devil boding imminent disaster; details like 'chiome sanguinose horrende' and 'crini ardenti' link up with Milton's 'from his horrid hair / Shakes Pestilence and Warr'. Horizontally, of course, 'horrid hair' also links up closely with the 'horror' which "sat plumed" on Satan's crest in the Virgil-inspired passage in 4.988ff.

The associations evoked by Ophiuchus (2.709ff.) have been traced by several commentators. Milton, says Svendsen, "may have made a mistake in placing Ophiucus, the serpent-bearer" ['In th' Artick Sky'], "but more probably, he simply manipulated details to strengthen the relationship between Satan and the comet and the serpent" (p. 92). Fowler feels that 'Artick' is due not only to comets being traditionally associated with the north, or "because that is Satan's place ... but also because the Serpent held by Ophiuchus is described by Ovid as 'lying nearest the icy pole'". Harding, too, believes that Ophiuchus was mistakenly located in the Arctic sky because of the traditional role of ruler of the north assigned to Satan (p. 65). To Fowler's remark it might be added that the

[5] The passage on Satan as comet belongs to the group of Satan portraits which according to Edward Weismiller clearly show that Milton had Argante in mind, "however magnificently expanded these [portraits] are beyond the lines that provided inspiration for them" ("Materials Dark and Crude: A Partial Genealogy for Milton's Satan", *HLQ* 31, 1967, p. 89).

description of the Serpent occurs in the Phaëthon episode, the connection Phaëthon-Lucifer being easily perceived, probably, by Renaissance readers; in the *Sospetto d'Herode*, Marino calls Lucifer 'empio Fetonte'. However, Milton does not speak of the Serpent but of the Serpent-bearer, whose activity is described in detail by at least three classical writers on astronomy well known to Milton's age: Aratus, Manilius, and Hyginus. In the *Phaenomena* 82ff., Aratus describes Ophiuchus' hands clutching the serpent's body, which wreathes around his waist while his feet, firmly planted, trample the Scorpion, μέγα θηρίον, "a huge monster". In Munckerus' edition of Hyginus' *Poeticon Astronomicon* (1681), which describes the location of Ophiuchus in relation to the other constellations, an illustration on p. 433 shows the traditional positions of Serpent, Serpent-bearer, and Scorpion. In the *Astronomicon* 1.329ff. Manilius describes Ophiuchus in great detail: he tries to stretch out the Serpent whose enormous coils wreathe around his arm, and to loosen the knots and loops. However, 'Respicit ille tamen molli ceruice reflexus, / Semper erit paribus bellum, quia viribus aequant'. Annotating Milton's lines, Hume thought Ophiuchus might refer to Hercules squeezing serpents, or Æsculapius represented as a man holding a snake, or else Ophiuchus as invoked by Medea and asked to let the snake shed his venom (*Medea* 698f.). More to the point, Sherburne (1675) in his translation of Manilius' first book refers to Kepler's *De Stella Nova Serpentarii* where Ophiuchus, mythologically speaking, is said to represent Laocoon in the *Aeneid* (ch. 14[6]): 'At nihil accomodatius Laocoonte Virgiliano'. A modern commentator, W. D. Hunter, also calls attention to Kepler, suggesting that the comet which 'fires the length of *Ophiucus* huge' was the phenomenon described in the *De Stella Nova* – which was not a comet, incidentally, but a supernova which appeared in the region of Ophiuchus in 1604.[7] In 17th-century discussions, no clear distinction was made between comets and supernovae (Hunter, pp. 19f.). So there is a literal significance to Milton's lines, evoking the memory of a fairly recent dire portent (whose meaning was discussed by Kepler), and a symbolic significance in the association of Satan with Ophiuchus, in his turn identified with a mythological figure who had offended the gods and paid the penalty: the snakes are sent by the divine powers as instruments of vengeance. It appears from Manilius' description that the Serpent-bearer will never succeed in extricating himself from the Serpent's coils. There is a similar situation in the *Sospetto d'Herode* 6, where Satan is wound round and fettered by snakes. In the wider horizontal and infracontextual

[6] *De Stella Nova in Pede Serpentarii*, Pragae, 1606 (edited in *Gesammelte Werke* 1, *Mysterium Cosmographicum de Stella Nova*, München, 1938, p. 220).
[7] "Satan as Comet: *Paradise Lost II*. 708–711" (*ELN* 5, 1967, pp. 17ff.).

pattern, however, the symbolism may be reversed and Satan represented under his traditional guise, the Serpent, forever held in check by his eternal enemy.[8]

'Comet' and 'Ophiucus' in the description of Satan lead over to the cloud simile in the description of the encounter between Death and Satan in 711ff. They glower at each other

> as when two black Clouds
> With Heav'ns Artillery fraught, come rattling on
> Over the *Caspian*, then stand front to front
> Hov'ring a space, till Winds the signal blow
> To join thir dark Encounter in mid air:
> So frownd the mighty Combatants, that Hell
> Grew darker at thir frown, so matcht they stood.

The cloud simile is traditionally taken by commentators to echo two passages in *OI* depicting the clash of battling armies: 1.2.2 and 1.16.10. In these stanzas in Boiardo's poem, however, the cloud simile has a formulaic character, and its relevance as an infracontext for the *PL* surface context is limited. The same, I think, goes for the similarity pointed out by Sims[9] between Milton's black cloud simile and that used by Camoëns to describe the confrontation of Vasco da Gama and Adamastor, the spirit of the Cape of Storms: 'Over our Heads appear'd a sable Clowd / Which in thick darkness did the Welkin shrowd' (5.37, transl. Fanshawe). Here the cloud is not an image, and it is not used the way it is in *PL*.

More interesting is the cloud simile illustrating Argante's fury during the encounter between him and Tancredi (*GL* 6.38, Newton). The barbarian tries in vain to speak,

> ma'l suono esce confuso,
> Si come stride d'animal, che rugge,
> O come apre le nubi, ond' egli è chiuso,
> Impetuoso il fulmine, e sen fugge;

on certain points in Fairfax's version more intimately connectible with Milton's lines:

[8] To these connotations another, in my opinion less relevant one, is added by Donald C. Baker ("On Satan's Hair", *NQ* 202, 1957, pp. 69f.), who associates the Serpent-bearer with Medusa. After all, Medusa's hair did not shake 'Pestilence and Warr', dire though it was.
[9] "Christened Classicism in *Paradise Lost* And *The Lusiads*" (*CL* 24, 1972, pp. 350f.).

Out from his lips flew such a sound confus'd
As lions make in deserts thick which roare:
Or as when clouds, together crush'd and bruised,
Pour down a tempest by the Caspian shore.

This may owe something to Spenser's line on the difficulties in life, comparable to the troubles of him 'Who swelling sayles in Caspian sea doth crosse' (*FQ* 2.7.14), in its turn suggesting the series of symbols of violent sorrow and passion – albeit transitory – in Hor. *Carm.* 2.9.1ff. ('Non semper imbres nubibus hispidos / Manant in agros, out mare Caspium / Vexant inaequales procellae').

All this material collected from commentators, ramified and stratified, however, mainly reinforces the theme of violence and vigour inherent in the passage. Other associations are bound up with the mention of 'Heav'ns Artillery', which in the first place means rain and hail,[10] but which also evokes the motif of the War in Heaven as waged by the devils with infernal artillery. In *PL* the motif is to the fore in 6.482ff. and 571ff.; before Milton it was used, as observed by Watson Kirkconnell, by Ariosto in *OF* 11.23 and by Valvasone in *L'Angeleida* 2.20, where Satan and his crew load their cannon and fire volleys at the army of God. It is also found in *FQ* 1.7.13.[11] As Roland Frye has shown, the motif also occurs in the visual arts.[12] In *PL* 6.589ff., pieces of ordnance

Thir devilish glut, chaind Thunderbolts and Hail
Of Iron Globes, which on the Victor Host
Leveld, with such impetuous furie smote,
That whom they hit, none on thir feet might stand.

The battle motif of 'Heav'ns Artillery', echoing the subsequent description in book 6, thus links up with the fight motif underlying the Ophiuchus image. While in *L'Angeleida, OF* and *FQ* the artillery theme is bound up with the activity of devils, the 'Thunders mouth' in st. 36 of Crashaw's version of the *Sospetto* refers to the army of God on which the devils make their useless attack. – The comet-Ophiuchus simile, limited as it is to a few lines and in no way comparable to the classic Homeric type of simile, is thus nonetheless invested with multiple meaning by infracontexts of different kinds.

The celestial phenomenon in the second book, showing Satan for what he is, contrasts with that in the fifth, showing him for what he is not. This

[10] See Heninger, *A Handbook of Renaissance Meteorology*, pp. 77 and 83.
[11] Kirkconnell, *The Celestial Cycle*, Toronto, 1952, repr. New York, 1967, pp. 81, 577f.
[12] Frye, pp. 48f.

is where Satan, misleading his followers with false arguments, incites them to disobedience and revolt. The apostate angels obey their leader's 'superior voice',

> for great indeed
> His name, and high was his degree in Heav'n;
> His count'nance, as the Morning Starr that guides
> The starrie flock, allur'd them, and with lyes
> Drew after him the third part of Heav'ns Host. (706ff.)

There has been some discussion about the propriety and indeed the meaning of Satan's 'countenance' telling lies. Bentley as expected found fault with the construction and suggested an improbable emendation; Pearce regarded 'count'nance' as *pars pro toto*, and alternatively made a distinction between Satan's foul heart and his lying face; Dunster tried to refute Bentley by suggesting an ellipsis of the subject pronoun; according to Newton, quoting "a very learned and ingenious friend", it is "Satan's countenance that allures them like the morning-star, but it is Satan himself that draws them after him with lies"; Keightley stuck to 'count'nance' as the subject of 'Drew' but was puzzled by the grammar, "unless by *lies* we understand its fallacious appearance"; Fowler says "the point lies in the allusion to *Rev.* xxii. 16, where Christ is the true *morning star*: the bright face of 'Lucifer, son of the morning' (*Is.* xiv. 12) is itself a mendacious impersonation". It is true of course that the passage must be contrasted with *Rev.* 22.16, but it is less probable that the words in *Isaiah* refer to a "mendacious impersonation". The point seems to be that 'countenance' does not mean "face" but "mere appearance or show, feigned or assumed appearance, pretence".[13] This sense, of course, easily solves the semantic and syntactical difficulties of the text. As for the verse in *Isaiah*, it should be read in its proper context. The Vulgate provides 'Quomodo cecidisti de caelo lucifer, qui mane oriebaris? corruisti in terram, qui vulnerabas gentes?'; *AV* 'How art thou fallen from heauen, O Lucifer, sonne of the morning? how art thou cut downe to the ground, which didst weaken the nations'? The point in *Isaiah* is the contrast between proud ascent and inglorious fall, a point also made in patristic commentary. Jerome dwells on the ignominious end of him who proudly talked about defeating Heaven; Haymo annotates the *Isaiah* passage in a similar way, comparing Lucifer's fate to Nebuchadnezzar's.[14] The theme of pride is conspicuously to the fore in the infracontext which is particularly important here – Lucifer boasting

[13] *OED countenance* † 2b. The last recorded instance of this meaning is from Swift.
[14] Jerome, *Comm. in Is. Proph.* (*PL* 24.161f.); Haymo, *Comm. in Is.* (*PL* 116.791).

of his former glory and threatening revenge in Crashaw's version of the *Sospetto d'Herode*, more precisely the great lines in st. 30 which may have stuck in Milton's memory and are easily associated with his own words:

> Art thou not Lucifer? hee to whom the droves
> Of stars that guild the Morne in charge were given?
> The nimblest of the lightning-winged Loves?
> The fairest, and the first-borne smile of Heav'n?

The theme of pride and arrogance in these lines is heightened by Lucifer's appropriating descriptive details applied to Christ. 'Smile of Heav'n' renders ' 'l riso de gli Angeli' in st. 23 of Marino's poem, a phrase which means 'the joy of the angels' and in its turn derives from expressions in medieval hymns such as 'gaudium (laetitia, exsultatio) angelorum',[15] referring to Christ or the Virgin. Also, 'first-borne' usurps an epithet for Christ derived from *Col.* 1.15: 'Imago Dei inuisibilis, primogenitus omnis creaturae'. A classical infracontext adding to the connotations here is the description in the *Aeneid* of Pallas, the proud warrior riding in the midst of the heroes flocking round Aeneas preparing for battle (8.589ff., Newton):

> Qualis, vbi Oceani perfusus Lucifer vnda,
> Quem Venus ante alios astrorum diligit ignes,
> Extulit os sacrum caelo, tenebrasque resoluit.

This theme of the short-lived Luciferian morning star in its pride is sharply if implicitly contrasted with the theme of Christ-the morning star in *Rev.* 22.16, symbolical of opposite values: Vulg. 'Ego sum radix et genus Dauid, stella splendida et matutina'; *AV* 'I am the roote and the offspring of Dauid, and the bright and morning starre'. The Church Fathers and later exegetes are as clear on the meaning here as they are on the interpretation of *Isaiah* 14.12. To Ambrose, Primasius, Alulfus, Haymo, and Bede the morning star stands for the light of life which illuminates the dark world; to all of them except Ambrose it also stands for Resurrection. The star of Lucifer symbolizes pride, that of Christ suggests humility, the road to a new life.

Line 710, 'Drew after him the third part of Heav'ns Host' is naturally, like 2.692 'Drew after him the third part of Heav'ns Sons', based on *Rev.* 12.4 'Cauda eius trahebat tertiam partem stellarum caeli, et misit eas in

[15] *Anal. Hymn.* 15, p. 27; 35, p. 257, 41, p. 50 (Christ); 15, p. 67, 36, p. 12, 39, p. 71, 40, p. 98, 42, pp. 71 and 129 (the Virgin).

terram'. Commenting on 'drew after him', Empson feels that "the inversion acts as part of the conflict of feeling; he leads them only towards night";[16] while according to Fowler "Satan as morning star mimes the brightness of Christ – a point amplified here by his role as shepherd". But 'with lyes / Drew after him the third part of Heav'ns Host' is an explanatory variation on 'as the Morning Starr that guides / The starrie flock': since the real theme of these words is Lucifer's pride and its consequences, the epexegetical lines 709–10 foreshadow the coming defeat and fall, while primarily referring to the rebellion. Though there is a contrast between the two morning stars, there is hardly any miming by one of the other: Lucifer-the-morning-star is based on an Old Testament theme, and as Empson says the apostate stars are led towards night, while the followers of the divine morning star are led towards day and new life. If there is no impersonation on the part of the morning star, Satan-the-false-shepherd is not a likely interpretation.

There are a number of horizontal connections. 'Countenance' links up particularly with 1.522ff., where defeat and survival evoke mixed feelings in the fallen angels, which 'on his count'nance cast / Like doubtful hue: but hee his wonted pride / Soon recollecting, with high words ... gently rais'd / Thir fainted courage', and where the fallen angels came flocking – a more disorganized army than the 'starrie flock' in 5.709, but a Lucifer of identical arrogance. By contrast, 'countenance' also links up with Christ's 'conspicuous count'nance, without cloud / Made visible', where 'th' Almighty Father shines' in 3.385ff., and with the Son's 'countnance [into terrour chang'd] ... too severe to be beheld / And full of wrauth bent on his Enemies' in 6.824ff. In all these lines 'countenance' has the usual sense, "face". The starry flock guided by the proud morning star in 708f. is finally in sharp contrast to the scene in 3.56ff. where the Almighty sitting on his throne in the Empyrean looks out over his works:

> About him all the Sanctities of Heaven
> Stood thick as Starrs, and from his sight receiv'd
> Beatitude past utterance,

while on his right 'The radiant image of his Glory sat, / His onely Son'. In the one case the apostate stars are damned for trying to help Lucifer to conquer God's throne; in the other they live in bliss, absorbed in contemplating the Almighty exercising his power from that very throne.

[16] *Some Versions of Pastoral*, p. 185.

6. Satan on Throne

The deceptive nature of Satan's outward appearance transpires even in passages where this appearance is all splendour and magnificence. This is the case above all in the description of Satan sitting in state, presiding over the 'great consult' in Pandemonium (2.1ff.):

> High on a Throne of Royal State, which farr
> Outshon the wealth of *Ormus* and of *Ind*,
> Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
> Showrs on her Kings *Barbaric* Pearl and Gold,
> Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd
> To that bad eminence; and from despair
> Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
> Beyond thus high, insatiat to persue
> Vain Warr with Heav'n, and by success untaught
> His proud imaginations thus displaid.

On the contextual surface level there are links with details in the description of Pandemonium at the end of Book 1: the barbaric splendour has its counterpart in the 'fretted Gold' and the 'wealth and luxurie' not equalled by Babylon or great Alcairo with their idols and their Kings (717ff.). The paragraph on Satan's throne continues and expands the lines in the first book (see pp. 303ff.).

The infracontextual pattern is a complex one. One obvious context seems to be altogether missing in the discussion, namely *Rev.* 2.13 on the very same topic: 'Οἶδα ποῦ κατοικεῖς, ὅπου ὁ θρόνος τοῦ σατανᾶ, ('I know ... where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is'). Patristic commentators and later exegetes[1] are unanimous as to the significance of θρόνος τοῦ σατανᾶ: it means false and evil people, and Richard of St. Victor explains the difference between those typified by Satan's ambulations, in whom evil may be transitory, and those symbolized by his throne, in whom evil becomes ingrained and permanent. The splendid trappings of Satan's royal seat thus conceal a sinister meaning which foreshadows the consequences of the Fall.

As to other contexts which unfold underneath Milton's description of Satan on his throne, the parallel most often quoted by critics (from Stillingfleet onwards) is the passage on Pride on her throne in *FQ* 1.4.8,

[1] Augustine, *Quaestiones in Apocal.* (*PL* 35.2421), Primasius, *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 68.806). Bede, *Explan. Apocal.* (*PL* 93.138), Haymo, *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 117.972), Richard of St. Victor, *In Apocal. libri septem* (*PL* 196.722), Zegerus (*Crit. Sacri* 8.355), Hugh of St. Cher (6.341).

where, according to Upton, Spenser had "his eye on the Persian pomp, and on their magnificent Kings" (Greenlaw *et al.*, 1, p. 214). A rich throne stands beneath a 'cloth of State', 'bright as sunny day', on which is sitting a maiden queen in royal and gorgeous robes, gleaming with gold and jewels; and this brightness the throne, as if envious, tries to surpass. In st. 10 Pride is looking towards Heaven, disdaining earth, for 'lowly she did hate'. Pride thus represents a lower and simpler stage than Satan, the arch-representative of *superbia*, and Milton's description works *auxesis*-like, intensifying the theme. Pride and Satan are both placed 'high', a word which comes first in the respective passages and which reads like a "black" paraphrase of *Is.* 6.1 on the vision of God in his glory: 'I saw also the Lord sitting vpon a throne, high and lifted vp' ('Vidi Deum sedentem super solium excelsum et eleuatum'.) The verse in *Isaiah*, as pointed out in a previous discussion, is echoed in Milton's lines on God on his throne in 7.584f., 'The holy mount / Of Heav'ns high-seated top, th' Imperial Throne / of Godhead'. Pride and Satan seem to be making a bad imitation of God.[2] Again, while 'of State' in Spenser's phrase 'a cloth of State' means "splendid", "magnificent" – 'cloth of State' is "canopy" (Hamilton) –, the 'Throne of Royal State' in Milton has a similar and at the same time more general meaning with a heightening effect: "A throne of royal dignity and splendour". Also, while the throne of Pride is described in general terms as 'bright as sunny day', Satan's throne is depicted in a detailed variant of the "dismissive comparison" as far outshining the wealth of *'Ormus* and of *Ind'*, just as in 1.717f. neither Babylon nor great Alcairo could rival the magnificence of the infernal palace. Satan sitting high on a throne of royal state similarly works as an intensifier compared with Tasso's picture of the Egyptian monarch's magnificent throne in *GL* 17.10, placed on a dais under a silver canopy. The names Ormus and Ind, like those in the description of Pandemonium, suggest barbarous splendour and magnificence. Rajan points out that Ormus was known to Heylin (1652) as 'one of the richest empories in all the world' and to Hakluyt (around 1600) as 'the most famous Mart towne of all East India'. 'Ind', of course, was the very symbol of wealth and luxury. Hughes associates the lines with passages on oriental despotism in Plato's *Gorgias* and *Politics*, referring also to Wright's discussion of Satan's guise as a tyrant of the East.[3] At the same

[2] As Cullen remarks (*Infernal Triad. The Flesh, The World, and the Devil in Spenser and Milton*, Princeton, 1974, p. 100, n. 2), the Fletcher brothers' descriptions of the palaces of Vainglory and Aequivocus (*Christ's Victory on Earth* and the *Apollyonists*) are both indebted to Spenser's Palace of Pride in *FQ*. That Satan on his throne is a parody of God's state has been pointed out by several critics.

[3] Hughes, "Satan and the 'Myth of the Tyrant'" (*Ten Perspectives on Milton*, pp. 168ff.), Wright, *Milton's 'Paradise Lost'*, pp. 108ff.

time, as observed by Hughes (ed.), 'Ormus' suggests some lines in the last scene of Fulke Greville's tragedy *Alaham*, 'Is this Ormus? Or is Ormus my hell / Where only Furies, and not Men, doe dwell?' The name Ormus links up with an infernal theme, and the plot of the play in part suggests Satan's plans: Prince Alaham is an unnatural usurper, guilty of murder and treason in his ambition to seize the throne of Ormus. In the end, after various revolting acts of violence, he is himself outwitted and dies. This submerged theme of crime, again of course highly intensified in Milton's lines on Satan, has some affinity with the theme suggested by the idols Belus and Serapis mentioned in 1.720. Serapis is the equivalent of Hades, and *Jer.* 51.44 reads, 'And I will punish Bel in Babylon'.

Also the lines 'Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand / Showrs on her Kings *Barbaric* Pearl and Gold' evoke infracontexts which add to the double motif of vainglorious pomp and impiety. Keightley, Warburton, Rajan, and other editors and critics have strongly emphasized the theme of oriental, heathen and barbaric luxury,[4] the very antithesis of Christian ideals; and Fowler mentions the description in Euripides' *Iphigeneia at Aulis* 74 of Paris' gaudy clothing, sparkling with gold and with barbaric luxury. To mythographers Paris is the follower of the earthly Venus and consequently dies, whereas Aeneas, following the celestial Venus, survives.[5]

There are also submerged links with the zero-part continuation of Spenser's account of Pride on her throne. References to the seven deadly sins are generously scattered over the stanzas; a concentrated summary of the story of Phaëthon is provided (9); the queen's name is Lucifera, daughter of 'griesly *Pluto*' and 'sad *Proserpina* the Queene of hell'; significantly, on top of all this, she is described as usurping realm and sceptre 'with wrong and tyrannie', ruling not with laws but with fraud, 'And strong aduizement of six wisards old, / That with their counsels bad her kingdome did vphold' (12). These lines might apply without modification to Satan, if for the six wizards we substitute the lieutenants who take part in the great consult in book 2. Also synecdochically, then, Milton's description works as an *auxesis*.

However, perhaps the most suggestive of the non-biblical infracontexts is one that has so far gone unnoticed: the beginning of the second book of the *Strage degli Innocenti*, the *Consiglio de' Satrapi*. It is in this book that Herod, after some discussion pro and contra – just as in the second book of *Paradise Lost* –, decides to massacre all infants under

[4] Various commentators since Callander refer to 'the gorgeous East' in *Love's Labour's Lost*, 4.3.223, where of course the context is different.

[5] See Don Cameron Allen, *Mysteriously Meant. The Rediscovery of Pagan Symbolism and Allegorical Interpretation in the Renaissance*, Baltimore and London, 1970, pp. 150 and 158.

two years of age in order to do away with the threat to his power. The tyrant is seated on a magnificent throne that once belonged to King David; like the Egyptian King in *GL* he is sitting in state high above the rest of the congregation; the throne is shaped like a heart and made of ruby. It is in fact David's ancient throne usurped by the tyrant, and its form in the context is a heavy piece of "black" irony since 'cor' traditionally symbolizes the love of Christ and God; the ruby is another piece of symbolism, the ruby ('sardius') standing for martyrs' blood and suffering in patristic and later exegetic literature.[6] The most pertinent gloss on the ruby adorning Herod's throne would seem to be that of Marbodius: 'Significat martyres sanguinem suum pro Christo fundentes'.

The relationship between the description in Marino and that in Milton leads over to that between the accounts in Tasso/Spenser and in Milton. Herod is traditionally a type of the devil and like Satan, of course, tries to kill Christ in order to eliminate the threat to his realm. So the two descriptions merge by association, Milton's intensifying the theme by comparison. Furthermore, Herod's outward appearance suggests other infernal portraits which emphasize the true physiognomy of Satan. In later stanzas Herod rolls his dark eyes, shakes his sceptre, and expressions of sorrow and pain break from his swollen lips, 'l'enfiate labbia', when he addresses his retinue. These details link up with the account in *GL* 4.7 of Pluto's forbidding exterior as he sits on his throne about to incite his followers against the Christian army: wielding his 'scettro ruuido e pesante', fierce in his 'Horrida maestà', etc. From this description it is but a short step to Marino-Crashaw's stanza on dehumanized Lucifer whose eyes startle the dark with their comet-like glow, whose nose and lips spread a hellish stench, and who flogs his sides of steel with the lash of his tail (sts. 6–7). A synecdochic contrast effect is thus exerted via Marino's text on the description in *PL* 2.1ff. A further step takes us to Vida's and Valvasone's descriptions of a monstrous Satan with a hundred hands and a hundred fire-belching mouths like Briareus, an enemy of the gods. So the link between Milton's description of Satan on his throne and the infracontext in the second book of the *Strage* leads on, or leads downwards, step by step, towards increasingly hideous portraits of Satan in other infracontexts, which ramify and/or are superimposed on one another in a matrix made up of a descending series. These infracontexts, as we have seen, also put a certain construction on Satan towering in his rage and resembling Teneriff and Atlas in book 4. Satan's outward exterior, lacking in the surface text, is thus as it were

[6] Bede, *Explan. Apocal.* (*PL* 93.199), Strabo, *Glossa Ord.* (*PL* 114.748), Anselm Laud., *Erran. in Apocal.* (*PL* 162.1379), Bruno, *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 165.726), Martinus, *Expos. Apocal.* (*PL* 209.410), Marbodius, *Liber de Gemmis* (*PL* 171.1773).

supplemented, and the true nature of the fallen angel on his throne is again suggested. In this connection an interesting point is made by Roland Frye, who remarks that artists used a "visually debased throne" as a means of ridiculing Satan or adding to his monstrous features (the Florentine Baptistry, the Pisa Camposante, Bosch's *Garden of Earthly Delights;* Frye p. 138). Such iconographic infracontexts merge with the literary ones in Vida or Valvasone so as to emphasize the revolting reality behind the gorgeous façade. The ties connecting *PL* with the stanzas on Herod in the second book of the *Strage*, incidentally, are strengthened by the zero-part continuation of the story, the Infernal Council: like the advocates for or against a continued battle against God in *PL*, Urizeo and Burucco in the *Strage* dissuade from and recommend, respectively, Herod's cruel plan to massacre the infants.

The words 'Satan exalted sat' are thus undermined by infracontexts and charged with irony. The irony is sustained by the continuation 'by merit rais'd / To that bad eminence; and from despair / Thus high uplifted beyond hope'. While the infracontexts paint a comprehensive background of hideous monsters showing what Satan really looks like, they also provide the ironic background for one particular point which recurs in these lines. 'Exalted' evokes by a "black" association ἐπηρμένως and 'excelsus' in *Is.* 6.1 on God's exalted throne (see p. 148); the oxymoron 'bad eminence' combines two meanings of the substantive, 'lofty or elevated position'[7] and 'superiority'. In both senses, Satan's eminence is bad: like a sardonic glossator on the passage in 2.5, he explains in 1.97f. (Fowler) that he will not change his fixed mind and 'high disdain, from sense of injur'd merit'. His merit is the merit he feels has not been duly appreciated; as Hughes says,[8] his sense of injury due to hatred of God's command that the angels worship the Son inflates his conviction of merit. He is now full of pride and vindictiveness; these have led him to his lofty position on the throne. At the same time 'merit' has here a different meaning, "that which is deserved or has been earned, whether good or evil; due reward or punishment", Greek ἀξία. Insofar as this (now obsolete) sense[9] can be assigned to 'merit', the significance is that Satan, as punishment for his *superbia* and his revolt, has been placed on a throne in Hell. With this ironic interpretation, particular stress is put on 'bad'. By contrast, as Hughes (pp. 8ff.), Bush, and Fowler observe, Messiah 'by right of merit Reigns' (6.43 and other passages) – the merit in its usual sense based on holiness and moral perfection has raised him to his throne in Heaven. On the other hand, D. Berthold feels,[10] the concept

[7] *OED eminence* 1 b, II 4.
[8] "'Merit' in *Paradise Lost*" (*HLQ* 31, 1967, p. 5).
[9] *OED merit* † 1. The last instance is attested in Prior 1706.
[10] "The Concept of Merit in *Paradise Lost*" (*SEL* 15, 1975, pp. 153, 154f.).

'merit' is "apparently ambiguous enough to serve the varying interpretations of Adam, the Son, and Satan", and suggests the "difficulties inherent in the ethical *topos*". After all, Satan's claim to merit has a foundation in his "properly and naturally deserving something", and he had a high rank in the angelic hierarchy. His hellish deeds have earned him the merit of being Prince of Hell, so 'bad eminence' is a sensible oxymoron in the context. But this is an interpretation only valid within Satan's own system of values; if considered within the infracontextual pattern – and from the poet's point of view – 'merit' has undeniably a strong ironical colouring. The repetitive figure running like a burden through the passage on Satan on his throne: 'High' – 'exalted' – 'rais'd' – 'eminence' – 'high uplifted' – 'high', indirectly lays heavy emphasis on the pride motif, intensified by contributions from the various infracontexts and thrown into relief by ironic effects derived from contact with the motif of God on his throne as described in *Isaiah*.

A horizontal link runs from the description in bk 2 of Satan's throne in Pandemonium to that in 10.441ff., where the head of the fallen angels returns from his expedition in order to give a report of the course of his mission:

> Hee through the midst unmarkt,
> In shew plebeian Angel militant
> Of lowest order, passd; and from the dore
> Of that *Plutonian* Hall, invisible
> Ascended his high Throne, which under state
> Of richest texture spred, at th' upper end
> Was plac't in regal lustre. Down a while
> He sate, and round about him saw unseen:
> At last as from a Cloud his fulgent head
> And shape Starr-bright appeerd, or brighter, clad
> With what permissive glory since his fall
> Was left him, or false glitter: All amaz'd
> At that so sudden blaze the *Stygian* throng
> Bent thir aspect, and whom they wishd beheld,
> Thir mighty Chief returnd.

The acclaim is loud and the 'consulting Peers' approach to congratulate their leader, who calls for silence and begins to speak.

Infracontexts here are mostly biblical, though classical voices are also heard. There is a "black" and blasphemous link between the first two and a half lines and 10.213ff., where in the passage on man as judged by God after the Fall it is remarked that Christ 'disdaind not to begin / Thenceforth the forme of servant to assume'. Satan assumes the form of

'a plebeian Angel militant / Of lowest order', 'unmarkt' in the midst of his peers, just as Christ assumes the shape of a servant, a passage suggesting *Phil.* 2.7 on the humility of Christ (Hume): 'But made himselfe of no reputation, and tooke vpon him the forme of a seruant, and was made in the likenesse of men' (*AV*; ... 'formam serui accipiens'; μορφὴν δούλου λαβών). But while Christ humiliates himself in order to redeem mankind by his suffering and is for this reason exalted by God – as explained in the continuation, *Phil.* 2.9 'Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and giuen him a Name which is aboue euery name' – , Satan enters anonymously in order to unmask himself with effective suddenness, probably also to "check on the loyalty of his followers" (Fowler); but the result is humiliation, not exaltation. Milton adds to the complexity by using the word 'plebeian', otherwise non-existent in his poetical works. In the sense 'of low rank' it suggests servant, 'servus', δοῦλος, but also, with a different contrast association, 'plebs' in its common biblical and patristic sense "the faithful", "the people of God": *Ps.* 27:8 'Dominus fortitudo plebis suae', *Luke* 7.16 'Quia Deus visitauit plebem suam', *Rom.* 11.2 'Non repulit Deus plebem suam quam praesciuit'. The lowly angel of 'the people' to whom Satan transforms himself is a "black" counterpart to a member of the people of God.

Commentators also adduce other parallels to Satan passing unnoticed through the crowd of devils and to his looking around unseen. Newton thought Milton had copied these details from Virgil's account of Aeneas entering Carthage unseen, veiled by his goddess mother in a cloud – 'septus nebula ... neque cernitur vlli' (*Aen.* 1.439f.), an episode in its turn imitated from *Od.* 7.40ff., where Odysseus on Athena's bidding enters the city of the Phaeacians unseen after the goddess has covered him with a magical mist. In both cases the reader is expressly given to understand that both heroes, themselves invisible, can observe anything that goes on around them. While in the classical texts the invisibility is thus part of the divine plans for the fulfilment of the heroes' missions, it becomes in some Renaissance texts a topos indicative of fraud and evil intentions. Lured into Armida's enchanted castle, Tancredo fights a duel with the traitor Rambaldo, while Armida, herself unseen, is watching the fighters (*GL* 7.36): 'Et in eccelsa parte Armida siede, / Onde, senz'esser uista, et ode, e uede'. Fairfax's rendering comes close to the words used by Milton: 'Within a terrace sat on high the queene, / And heard and saw, and kept herself unseene' (Bowle). In *Hamlet* 3.1.33f. the King and Polonius 'Will so bestow our selves that, seeing unseene / We may of their encounter frankely judge'. Contact with such infracontexts provides on the one hand a contrast effect between divine and satanic, universal order and revolt; on the other a similarity effect between Satan's despot-like behaviour and the spying activities of a sorceress

and an evil tyrant. 'Under state / Of richest texture' harks back to the 'Royal State' in 2.1 with a twist of meaning: from 'dignity', 'magnificence', the meaning is concretized to 'canopy' and thus links up with the *Strage* 2.5 where Herod's throne is overhung by an 'Ombrella imperial', while Satan's canopy is described in the same way as the carpet which covers the floor of Herod's dais, 'Of richest texture spred' evoking 'Tutto di drappi d'or rigido splende'. In 10.445f. we are thus again reminded of the evil despot who tried to kill the Saviour, and in a complex code the motif of the Innocents is foreshadowed by the collocation of surface- and infracontexts.

To the elements of irony in the passage is added the heavily ironic effect provided by the lines on Satan when he becomes visible to his followers –

> At last as from a Cloud his fulgent head
> And shape Starr-bright appeerd, or brighter, clad
> With what permissive glory since his fall
> Was left him, or false glitter.

This is the last time Satan appears in this way before the general transformation of him and his crew into hissing serpents. Hunter (pp. 20f.) aptly relates the lines to the Ophiuchus passage in book 2 where Satan seems to appear as a supernova, not merely as a comet, and again the context involves serpents. There is in the line a reminiscence of Satan beguiling his followers 'as the Morning Starr that guides / The starrie flock, allur'd them, and with lyes / Drew after him the third part of Heav'ns Host'. Here too, Satan is about to deceive his retinue, and the contrast between appearance and reality is heightened by contact with the infracontext in the *Argonautica* 1.239 (observed by Todd), where the Argonauts about to embark are surrounded by a crowd which has gathered, and οἱ δὲ φαεινοὶ/ἀστέρες ὣς νεφέεσσι μετέπρεπον, "they shone forth like bright stars among clouds". The rare word 'fulgent' – which occurs only here in the Milton poetic corpus and only once in Spenser where it is a name (*FQ* 2.10.57; not used by Shakespeare, Marlowe, or Donne) – is a fair rendering of φαεινός and suggests 'fulgere' as used particularly often about stars and the light of the gods and of God. 'Starr-bright', a combination similarly used only once in Milton's poems, links up closely with the passage in the *Argonautica* where the verb μεταπρέπω "distinguish oneself", "shine", signals Homer who often uses the word about heroes. Apart from this, the entire passage in *Argon.* is probably modelled on *Il.* 11.62 (Mooney), where Hector in the battle is compared to a "baleful star, all gleaming", bright among the clouds when he commands his warriors, now in the front rank, now in the

rear. Milton's rare and elevated diction, the light and brilliance of the great classical warriors acting and fighting under the auspices of the gods, with triumphs in store for them, is in glaring contrast to Satan appearing in front of his audience after his second act of treason and facing the disastrous change, the anticlimax after his misleading and boastful speech. The contrast emerging from this contact between surface- and infracontexts is sustained by that between the universal shout and high applause in l.505 and the dismal universal hiss to which it is immediately transformed in l.508.

Nor is this all, since 'or brighter, clad / With what permissive glory since his fall / Was left him, or false glitter' suggests the vestment theme as expressed at the very beginning of the poem, in Satan's mournful speech to Beelzebub in 1.84ff. This is where Satan dwells on the dire change 'From him, who in the happy Realms of Light / Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst outshine / Myriads though bright'. The *ubi sunt* formula used by him about Beelzebub is now thrown back at himself; as in 1.97 he is 'chang'd in outward lustre', and the glory which he is permitted to retain, still bright as a star or brighter, gives an idea of what the unreduced divine light of God and the angels is like. But in the next line in *PL* the light left for Satan is defined as 'false glitter', and we are reminded of his 'countenance', his false show and appearance in 5.708, which like a specious morning star 'allur'd' the rebellious angels and made them follow him. At the same time, 'false glitter' hints that Satan's real appearance is quite different.

There is another complex infracontextual situation in 5.755ff., where Satan with his rebellious host arrives at his stronghold in the north in order to plan the attack on God and the faithful angels. They traverse the boundless celestial regions, 'which having past'

> At length into the limits of the North
> They came, and *Satan* to his Royal seat
> High on a Hill, farr blazing, as a Mount
> Rais'd on a Mount, with Pyramids and Towrs
> From Diamond Quarries hewn, and Rocks of Gold,
> The Palace of great *Lucifer*, (so call
> That Structure in the Dialect of men
> Interpreted) which not long after, hee
> Affecting all equality with God,
> In imitation of that Mount whereon
> *Messiah* was declar'd in sight of Heav'n
> The Mountain of the Congregation call'd;
> For thither he assembl'd all his Train,
> Pretending so commanded to consult

About the great reception of thir King,
Thither to come, and with calumnious Art
Of counterfeted truth thus held thir ears.

As said before, the 'limits (region) of the North' to which the rebels withdraw are traditionally the home and haunt of devils, and the idea of the rebellion is already invested in the word 'North', evoking, with the Mountain of the Congregation, *Is.* 14.13 (Newton): 'For thou hast said in thine heart; I wil ascend into heauen, I wil exalt my throne aboue the starres of God: I will sit also vpon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the North'. It is well known that the lines in *Isaiah*, referring to the King of Babylon, were taken by patristic and later exegetes to deal with the rebel angel (see above, p. 35).[11] Milton's 'to his Royal seat / High on a Hill' thus as it were constitutes the first step towards the sentiment expressed by 'I wil exalt my throne aboue the starres of God' and harks back to the repetitive figure on 'high' in 2.1ff. and the infracontext on Pride in *FQ* 1.4.10.

A word-group immediately suggesting another infernal motif is 757f. 'as a Mount / Rais'd on a Mount', which evokes a well-known detail of the motif of the *Gigantomachia* as found in Homer, Virgil, and Horace (in part mixed up with the *Titanomachia*) – the piling of Ossa, Pelion, and Olympus on top of one another. *Od.* 11.315, *Georg.* 1.281ff. and Hor. *Carm.* 3.4.51f. report the story of the rebel giants trying in this way to carry Heaven by assault, and describe the inevitable result: 'Ter pater extructos disiecit fulmine montes' (*Georg.* 1.283). The motif of the fight and the defeat of the Giants recurs in many Renaissance texts, always with a hint at the ensuing defeat on the part of the attackers.

There is, however, a different and more precise contrast effect implicit in the lines 'High on a Hill, farr blazing, as a Mount / Rais'd on a Mount, with Pyramids and Towrs'. This set of 'vertical' words indicating the urge and striving upwards are antithetic to the description of the new Jerusalem in *Rev.* 21.2 where the visionary 'saw the holy City, new Hierusalem comming down from God out of heauen, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband'; and again 21.10 'And he caried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountaine, and shewed me that great citie, the holy Hierusalem, descending out of heauen from God'. While the Satanic mountains, pyramids, and towers strive upwards like symbols of aggression and the urge for power, the Holy City descending from Heaven is regarded by patristic and other commentators as the Church coming

[11] See also Patrides, *Milton and the Christian Tradition*, pp. 91f.

down from Heaven through the grace of God.[12] There is also of course a horizontal connection between the 'Pyramids' and the 'Pyramid of fire' in 2.1013, typifying Satan's hatred and vindictiveness. Again while Satan's mountain is a symbol of pride, the Church Fathers regard the mountain as a symbol of Christ.[13] Primasius, referring to *Isaiah* 2.2, 'Mons domus Domini in vertice montium, et elevabitur super colles', affords a particularly pointed contrast to a 'Mount / Rais'd on a Mount': 'Omnibus tamen praecellens eminet Dominus Christus tanquam mons in vertice montium, de cuius plenitudine nos ... accepimus, et gratiam pro gratia'[14] – a contrast which links up with the contrast implicit in the merit of Christ and Satan, respectively. We shall return to similar contrast motifs in the discussion of Pandemonium later on.

7. Mammon's Speech and Satan's

Before we leave the theme of heroic appearance and unheroic reality, of inward evil coupled with outward fortitude and magnificence, there remains one instance in the account of the Infernal Council to be discussed. This is the part of Mammon's speech which begins at 2.249. We have here another complex paragraph which takes on different shades of meaning and evokes different connotations according as we relate it to different infracontexts – and also, on the horizontal level, to other contexts in *PL*:

> Let us not then persue
> By force impossible, by leave obtaind
> Unacceptable, though in Heav'n, our state
> Of splendid vassalage, but rather seek
> Our own good from our selves, and from our own
> Live to our selves, though in this vast recess,
> Free, and to none accountable, preferring
> Hard liberty before the easie yoke
> Of servil Pomp.

That Mammon and Satan represent entirely different philosophies is no great news, but Mammon's speech – and Satan's praise of freedom in

[12] Augustine, *In Joan. Apocal. Expos.* (*PL* 35.2450), Primasius, *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 68.921), Bede, *Explan. Apocal.* (*PL* 93.195), Haymo, *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 117.1192), Martinus, *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 209.904).
[13] Ambrose, *In Apocal. Expos.* (*PL* 17.946), Augustine, Primasius, Bede, Haymo and Martinus *ibid.*
[14] *PL* 68.923.

book 1 too – are more complex than would appear at first sight. After all, when Mammon counsels his fallen comrades no more to seek a state of 'splendid vassalage', but to be enough unto themselves and "live to themselves", free and responsible to no one, he strikes a note superficially similar to Satan in his proud words in 1.250ff., and his speech deals with this matter at about the same distance from the beginning of the book as Satan's does: if Mammon had not lain stunned with his comrades when Satan was stating his case in book 1 he might well have been imitating it in book 2. Satan praises the free mind indifferent to surroundings and prefers the state of ruler in Hell to that of servant in Heaven. Mammon's 'Live to our selves ... Free, and to none accountable, preferring / Hard liberty before the easie yoke / Of servil Pomp' almost seems to echo Satan's 'Here at least / We shall be free ... Here we may reign secure ... Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav'n' (1.258ff.). But surface contexts and infracontexts alike emphasize the fact that in reality the declarations mean almost opposite things. Satan's 'To reign is worth ambition though in Hell: / Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav'n' is a maxim which gives his speech to Beelzebub an air of finality intended to strengthen character and tighten discipline. The infracontextual matrix reaches down into deep strata involving Aeschylus' *Prom.* 966f.: the hero assures Hermes that he would never exchange his hard plight for the divine messenger's servitude. Younger strata include Plutarch's *Life of Caesar* 11.2: travelling through a poor and barbaric village, Cæsar says he would rather live first there than second in Rome. The formula becomes fixed in a large number of Renaissance texts dealing with the fallen Lucifer: *Purple Island* 7.10 'In heav'n they scorn'd to serve, so now in hell they reigne'; *Apollyonists* 1.20 'To be in heauen the second he disdaines: / So now the first in hell, and flames he raignes'. In Anthony Stafford's moral treatise, *Niobe, or His age of teares*, Satan makes a remark of the same kind. In the *Sospetto d'Herode* 34 the weird sisters assure Lucifer, 'Here thou art Lord alone / Boundlesse and absolute. Hell is thine own'.[1] The statement, then, like a fairly faithfully copied inscription, appears in approximately the same form everywhere, and derives its force from being a *sententia* stating a universally valid, practical truth.

A curious, ironic dimension is added to Satan's statement by contrast with a very different declaration – Achilles' well-known words to Odysseus who tries to console him in the Underworld by pointing out that at

[1] As Fowler remarks, similar maxims are to be found in *Psalm* 84.10 and in Serafino della Salandra's *Adamo Caduto*. Very likely there are many other instances. Hughes ("Satan and the 'Myth' of the Tyrant", *Ten Perspectives on Milton*, pp. 190 f.) also discusses the group of passages mentioned by Fowler.

least he is the ruler of the dead (*Od.* 11.481ff., noticed by Bush). The dead hero replies that he would rather be a labourer (θητευέμεν) in the service of some poor man than the lord over all those undone by death. So, in spite of his leadership, Achilles hates the vanity and emptiness of the life of the dead; for Satan, the tyrant, existence in the Underworld, empty and painful though it be, is the only true life provided it affords absolute power and possibilities of revenge.

The tenor of Satan's statement is reinforced by the preceding lines (1.252ff.), which do not seem to have received quite the attention they deserve in recent discussions. Addressing Hell, Satan assures that it has received as possessor

> One who brings
> A mind not to be chang'd by Place or Time.
> The mind is its own place, and in it self
> Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.
> What matter where, if I be still the same,
> And what I should be, all but less than hee
> Whom Thunder hath made greater?

Discussion has centred too much, it seems, on the question of the nature of Hell. Beeching compares *Dr Faustus* 119f. where Mephistopheles declares that Hell is where the evil spirits are; Verity makes the same reference but also quotes *Religio Med.* 51 'Every devil is an hell unto himself; he holds enough of torture in his own *ubi*', pointing out that Hell in the *PL* passage is a mental state, not a place (see p. 186 above). Hughes 1 refers to Jacob Boehme for a similar view and to stoic belief as instanced in Seneca and Cicero, and Hughes 2 following Don Cameron Allen[2] refers, beyond this, to Amaury de Bene's medieval heretical doctrine that Heaven or Hell are states of mind found in everyone's heart, and expands the note on the stoics, who taught that Tartarus is nowhere except in the heart of sinners and that the soul is master of its fate. Fowler, with Allen, distinguishes between the heresy of regarding Heaven and Hell as states of mind and the "ubiquism" of Mephistopheles, and refers to MacCaffrey's remark that there is irony in Satan's denial of the effects of the fall – a denial "belied by his shock at the change in Beelzebub" – but omits references to stoical doctrine. Yet surely the whole point of the passage is its strong stoical colouring, which was observed by Thyer contributing to Newton's edition, and analysed in detail by Hughes in an article on the various aspects of Hell lore,

[2] "Paradise Lost I, 254–5" (*MLN* 71, 1956, pp. 324ff.).

referred to in a note in his second edition.[3] Satan's highly stoical view of himself as unchangeable and always faithful to his own nature presupposes control of passions and trust in the power of reason, a form of pride. These very qualities, along with the pagan character of stoicism generally, have been shown by H. W. Sams to have been in some quarters regarded as anti-Christian features singled out for attack and criticism in 17th-century England and later.[4] Satan thus represents an attitude felt by many seventeenth-century readers to be objectionable in itself, but he does so only superficially. He is not above his passions or in control of them, but the victim of hatred and envy; nor does he trust the power of reason overmuch, for, as an adversary of God, he is to embark on an enterprise which will end in his own defeat. There is some similarity between this situation and the scene in the *Sospetto d'Herode* 58, where Crudeltà tries to encourage Herod by repeating stoical slogans, which are merely intended to make the monarch implacable in trying to do away with Christ the Infant. Satan in *PL* says he wants to rule in Hell rather than be a servant in Heaven, but his subsequent actions lead to his own transformation from ruler to prisoner. Satan, in other words, is cheering himself up[5] with the aid of maxims and formulae massively backed by a solid tradition of proverb and doctrine, but what he says is later contradicted on every point by what he does. This is not being wise after the event since Satan could have foreseen the outcome: God is after all 'th' Almighty' in 1.259.

Besides other differences, Mammon's speech has a very different background. The lines in 249ff. have been found to be a patchwork of reminiscences of lines in Horace's first *Epistle*, *Prometheus Bound*, Sallust's *Orations*, and the *Gospel of Matthew* (Newton, Todd, Hughes), just as 263ff.

> This deep world
> Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
> Thick clouds and dark doth Heav'ns all-ruling Sire
> Choose to reside, his Glory unobscur'd,
> And with the Majesty of darkness round
> Covers his Throne

[3] "Myself am Hell" (*MP* 54, 1956, pp. 80ff.) reprinted in *Ten Perspectives on Milton*, where *PL* 1.252ff. is discussed on pp. 153ff.

[4] "Anti-Stoicism in Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England" (*SP* 41, 1944, pp. 65ff.).

[5] One recalls T. S. Eliot's words in "Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca": "Stoicism is the refuge for the individual in an indifferent or hostile world too big for him; it is the permanent substratum of a number of versions of cheering oneself up ... The stoical attitude is the reverse of Christian humility" (*Selected Essays*, London, 1951, pp. 131f.).

obviously recall passages in *Psalms* 18 and 97 (11 and 2, Newton), see below). But these resemblances, signalling lines and words which suggest fortitude and lofty determination, and which we shall consider in a moment, are all on the surface, are resemblances that Mammon as it were would *want* us to discover. The really important infracontext here is Valvasone's *L'Angeleida* 3, stanzas 18 and 19, which also provide the background for the essential passage, Mammon's words in 270ff.:

> This Desart soile
> Wants not her hidd'n lustre, Gemms and Gold;
> Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
> Magnificence; and what can Heav'n shew more?

In *L'Angeleida*, one of the fallen angels does his best to comfort Satan who has just finished a speech on their glorious exploits in the past, gloomily envisaging the necessity to live 'nel Tartareo seno'. He has lost Heaven where he was second in rank, his follower replies, but no matter, he will be ruler in another realm with its gems and ore, the property of Hell:

> Tu se' Re de la terra, ella ha nel seno
> Gemme, ferri, Oricalchi, argenti, & ori,
> Che faran vago il mondo, e'l faran pieno
> Di varie degnità, varij lauori;

the earth also has mountains, valleys, herbs, flowers, and other amenities, the sea is full of fish, the woods of birds, etc. (3.18–19). Possibly, it is from *L'Angeleida* that Milton derived the theme of easily available riches, which will make the devils' banishment endurable. Anyway, agreement with Valvasone's version throws Mammon's message into relief: "Let us by all means settle down here in Hell and make the best of the situation; after all, the place is full of riches which with some patience may be used for the purpose of making Hell a magnificent abode. We may even get accustomed to these hostile elements"; in short:

> All things invite
> To peaceful Counsels, and the settl'd State
> Of order, how in safety best we may
> Compose our present evils, with regard
> Of what we are and where, dismissing quite
> All thoughts of Warr: ye have what I advise. (278ff.)

If the stoic ideas advocated by Satan amount to an *ataraxia*-and-*nil-admirari* philosophy belied by his aggressive intentions and his later

activity, the well-known classical and biblical reminiscences evoked by Mammon's phrases are window-dressing embellishing and in a way obscuring his real meaning – a passive appeasement policy enabling him to enjoy without disturbances the riches in Hell. No one more perceptively than Steadman[6] has uncovered the real meaning of the speeches of Satan, Beelzebub, Moloch, Belial, and Mammon; the discrepancy between "rhetorical pretense and ethical reality", between *dianoia* and *ethos*. Mammon, Steadman observes, ennobling the "production of wealth by representing it as the reward of 'endurance' and a sign of 'greatness', inverts the order of good and evil by associating Hell with strenuous liberty and Heaven with servile ease, 'a state of splendid vassalage'" (p. 254). The complex-code infracontexts lurking underneath Mammon's words aid the reader in unmasking the speaker and revealing the true character of his speech. The advice 'live to our selves' recalling (and truncating) Horace's pious wish 'Ut mihi vivam / Quod superest aevi, *siquid superesse volunt dij*' and the proud words on 'Hard liberty' to be preferred 'before the easie yoke', echoing part of the final paragraph in the speech by which Sallust makes Aemilius Lepidus oppose the tyrant Sulla ('potior ... visa est periculosa libertas quieto servitio'), are little more than adornments. Again, the echo of *Prometheus Bound* 966ff., fainter than that in Satan's speech, is blasphemous coming from Mammon. Both speeches have contacts in common with the *Prometheus* passage, but in the horizontal and vertical context this passage plays different parts and has different meanings in the two cases. Satan's *sententia* is an expression of his *superbia* and lust for power; the motivation behind Mammon's Promethean words is avarice pure and simple. Also, the 'easie yoke / Of servil Pomp', imitating the words of Christ in *Matt.* 11.30 'For my yoke is easie', is a fatuous combination, and the references to *Psalms* 18.11 on the Lord whose 'pauilion round about him, were darke waters, and thicke cloudes of the skies' and 97.2 'Clouds and darkenesse are round about him', lead up, bathetically, to the sophistic and not very perceptive conclusion, 'As hee our Darkness, cannot wee his Light / Imitate when we please?' Not unnaturally, the phrases which constitute as it were the surface and the outward appearance of Mammon's speech are much closer imitations than those which reveal the speaker's true intentions. If – as a final remark – we take Mammon, like the other devils, to be fundamentally identical with Satan or to be Satan as expressed in a certain shape, then the deceptive similarity between their utterances illustrates the convoluted way Satan's mind works: a parallel, on an abstract level, to the convolutions of the infernal Serpent.

[6] "'Semblance of Worth'. Pandaemonium and Deliberative Oratory" (*Milton's Epic Characters*, pp. 241ff., particularly pp. 251 and 253ff.).

8. The Infernal Argonaut

Among the various descriptions of Satan's person there are thus such as show him now as a powerful and magnificent Homeric hero and leader, now as an oriental despot with all his lavish trappings. At the same time these façades conceal widely different emotions: now the fallen angel is 'rackt with deep despare', now he feels remorse and passion; later, in the fourth book, he is not above horror and doubt (in a different sense than that generally assumed). Again, behind the giant and the heroic leader lurk the ugly and revolting monster and liar.[1] Satan's flight in book 2 operates on different levels; on one of them it seems to typify his inner self: his manoeuvres in infernal/chaotic space read like a kind of projection of what is going on in his 'tumultuous brest'. Again, after the account of the devils' arduous expedition on ground level in the Underworld, Satan's flight towards the boundaries of Hell gives the impression of being almost equally laborious – an impression strengthened by the description of his continued flight in 927ff. At the same time, the wings foreshadow the subsequent account of Satan's complete disguise as a cherub; in fact Satan has reassumed part of the shape he had before his fall (2.629ff.):

> Mean while the Adversary of God and Man,
> *Satan* with thoughts inflam'd of highest design,
> Puts on swift wings, and toward the Gates of Hell
> Explores his solitary flight; som times
> He scours the right hand coast, som times the left,
> Now shaves with level wing the Deep, then soares
> Up to the fiery Concave touring high.

Satan's 'thoughts inflam'd of highest design' suggest several contexts on the horizontal level and some on the infralevel. Occurring in the line after the 'Adversary of God and Man', the word 'inflam'd' links up with the same form as used in 4.9 where Satan, 'now first inflam'd with rage, came down, / The Tempter ere th' Accuser of man-kind'. 'Highest design' suggests such details as 1.646, where Satan proposes that the devils continue to 'work in close design', and 2.386, where his plan is referred to as his 'bold design' – all these examples are as it were

[1] A recent appraisal of Satan's person has been made by J. Wooten, objecting to the common one-sided disparagement of the figure. Though oversimplifying (and sometimes misrepresenting) critical opinion, Wooten is obviously right in declaring that Satan is "heroic *and* asinine, grand *and* absurd, impressive *and* ridiculous" ("Satan, Satire, and Burlesque Fables in *Paradise Lost*", *MQ* 12, 1978, p. 53). A late representative of the Blake tradition, Tillyard says about Satan that "the odds are against him, but still he struggles, and wins our profoundest sympathy and admiration" (*Milton*, London, 1930, repr. 1961, p. 278).

coordinate and colour each other; the other cases of 'design' modify 'highest design' in 2.630. A different kind of effect results from the combined horizontal-vertical contact of 'highest design' with 1.98. In that line Satan, unrepenting, vaunts his 'fixt mind / And high disdain', the two groups 'highest design' and 'high disdain' forming a *paronomasia* combining Satan's steadfastness with his vindictiveness. Again, 'high disdain' is a well-known Italianism used, as Thyer observes, in the description of the Knight during his fight with the monster in *FQ* 1.1.19 ('His gall did grate for griefe and high disdaine'), and by Harrison, Sylvester and many others, imitated from 'alto sdegno'. The *paronomasia* thus lends some emphasis to the theme of Lucifer's pride. Wider infracontexts provide resonance for the account of Satan's zeal and passion: the promise during his monologue in *Adamus Exsul* that 'Perpetua bella pertinax animus geret' (130), Pluto's words in his speech to the devils in *GL* 4.17, 'Sia destin ciò, ch'io uoglio', and the concluding words of his monologue in *l'Adamo* (1.2.347ff.), 'Troppo ostinato e duro / E il mio forte pensiero / In mostrarmi implacabile e severo / Contra il Ciel, contra l'Uom, L'Angelo e Dio' – words which echo and amplify Medea's threat in Seneca's play (*Med.* 724f.), 'Inuadam deos, / Et cuncta quatiam'. A further degree of amplification is provided by stanzas 31–32 in the *Sospetto d'Herode,* in which to the theme of Lucifer's rage and vindictiveness are added wild threats hurled at Heaven and the Creator. The various infracontexts and the connection with other surface contexts affect the 'thoughts inflam'd of highest design': contact with the surface contexts makes the inflamed thoughts somewhat ambiguous, while influence from the infracontexts unequivocally reinforces and intensifies them: Satan puts on his wings in a mood traditionally fierce, proud, and implacable – like his frame of mind during the War in Heaven, described by himself in *L'Adamo*: 'Io son, io che per voi la nobil mente / Armai di forte ardire' (466f.).

Todd connects the words 'Puts on swift wings' in the description of Satan's preparations with the passage in the *Iliad* (24.340ff.) where Hermes, asked by Zeus to accompany Priam to the Achaeans' camp, puts on his beautiful sandals which carry him swift as the wind over land and water. The connection is one of multiple contrast. Whereas Satan's solitary flight seems hampered by difficulties of orientation and carries him right and left, up and down, Hermes arrives at once – αἶψα – in Troy. The impression of Satan's difficulties as an aviator is heightened by the verb 'Explores', as commentators remark a latinism used in the sense 'put to the proof'.[2] Again Hermes serves the divine will, while Satan has

[2] See E. Holmes, "Some Notes on Milton's Use of Words" (*Essays and Studies* 10, 1924, p. 106). Hughes and Fowler adopt the interpretation.

detached himself from the divine order: 'solitary' means not only that Satan flies alone but that he is outside the universe organized by God. Another contrast, of a horizontal kind, connects the words in 2.631 with 6.827 where 'the Four spred out thir Starrie wings' in order to take part in the War in Heaven and in so doing contribute to the defeat of evil, whereas Satan undertakes his flight planning to corrupt the innocent and thus revenge himself on God. Newton, citing Greenwood, pointed out the similarity between Milton's account of the last phase of Satan's somewhat erratic flight – 'scours' ... 'right' ... 'left' ... 'shaves' ... 'soares' – and the *Aeneid* 5.217, where the course of Mnestheus' vessel during the race is compared with the swift and easy flight of a dove which 'Radit iter liquidum, celeres neque commouet alas'. Commentators compare *Argon.* 2.935 on Argo in full sail, suggesting to the poet the effortless flight of a hawk εὐκήλοισιν ἐνευδιόων πτερύγεσσιν ("floating in the clear sky on steady wings").

Double infracontexts, one superimposed on the other, thus suggest on a submerged level an image which comes to the surface in *PL* 2.636ff.:

> As when farr off at Sea a Fleet descri'd
> Hangs in the Clouds, by *Aequinoctial* Winds
> Close sailing from *Bengala*, or the Iles
> Of *Ternate* and *Tidore*, whence Merchants bring
> Thir spicie Drugs: they on the Trading Flood
> Through the wide *Ethiopian* to the Cape
> Ply stemming nightly toward the Pole. So seemd
> Farr off the flying Fiend.

Fowler summarizes part of Empson's analysis[3] of this simile, which illustrates "M's power in maintaining multiple correspondences between tenor and vehicle: 'the ships ply nightly because Satan was in the darkness visible of Hell; are far off so that they hang like a mirage and seem flying like Satan ... and are going towards the Pole because Satan (from inside) is going towards the top of the concave wall of Hell'. They carry *spicy drugs* because Satan is going to barter for Eve's innocence the fragrant fruit of the forbidden tree". Empson adds that the spices carried by the ships "stand for paganism and earthly glory", and also points out that the mention of a fleet instead of one ship indicates "the imaginative wealth of polytheism and the variety of the world". It could be added that the conception of a mirage, of the ships "hanging in the clouds", links up with the account of Pandemonium in the first book (711) rising 'like an Exhalation' – something unsubstantial and unreal; and also with

[3] *Some Versions of Pastoral*, p. 171.

the comparison of the numberless devils to the vision of the belated peasant who sees or thinks he sees revelling elves. Satan is real and unreal at the same time, a negative force who has a part in the existence founded and upheld by God, being allowed to play a part in the plan of Salvation. It could also be added that however interested Milton's countrymen might have been in the trade with the East Asian places (a theme discussed by many critics and a succession of editors),[4] which had to be reached by way of the Ethiopian Sea (the Indian Ocean), there was no need for the poet to mention expressly either Bengala, Ternate, or Tidore.[5] The point is how they work in the specific context, and these heathen names parallel the brief list of names in 578ff. in the description of the infernal topography – the Serbonian bog, Damiata, and Mount Casius, bracketed by the names of the infernal rivers – and recall the names in the enumeration of the heathen gods and their activities in the first book. Sims associates the mention of the Cape of Good Hope – again used in sailing imagery at 4.160 when Satan is approaching Eden – with Vasco da Gama's rounding the Cape in the *Lusiads*.[6] Indeed, in the context of Satan's arduous crossing of Chaos, the name evokes the "physical hurdle" which the Cape is to East India voyagers. Satan's subsequent meeting with Death, Sims remarks, also suggests Vasco's with Adamastor (see p. 212).[7]

Nor is this all, for there is an interesting infracontext providing a contrast to the fleet simile, a contrast relevant also in subsequent naval imagery connected with Satan. The mention of merchant vessels evokes a passage in Pseudo-Chrysostom's *Homilia in Matthaeum* 23[8] (Christ asleep in the vessel), which reflects the common identification of the Church with a ship:[9] 'Et non dubium est navem istam Ecclesiam figurasse, secundum quod per Salomonem de ea Spiritus sanctus loquitur, dicens, "Facta est tamquam navis mercatura longinqua" (*Prov.* 31.14):[10] id est Ecclesia, quae navigantibus apostolis, gubernante Domino, flante

[4] There is a detailed discussion in ch. 5, "Similes from Voyages of Discovery" in Wright's *Milton's 'Paradise Lost'*, pp. 107ff.

[5] Though it may be true that the names might have suggested Drake's circumnavigation of the globe (Wright, p. 111).

[6] "Camoëns' *Lusiads* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*: Satan's Voyage to Eden" (*Univ. of Tulsa Monographs Series*, 8, 1969, pp. 36ff.), and "Christened Classicism in *Paradise Lost* And *The Lusiads*", pp. 349ff.

[7] Still, it is an exaggeration to call Milton's "allusions" to the Cape a "unifying center for the sailing imagery of the voyage" (*CL* 24, p. 349), particularly since Sims also, surprisingly, includes Satan's "valediction to Hope and to Good" at 4.108f. – a rather feeble joke.

[8] *PG* 56.755f. (Latin text).

[9] In Latin patrology for instance in Hilarius *PL* 9.958, Cassiodorus *PL* 70.772, and Gregory *PL* 76.28; later in Rabanus Maurus *PL* 112.1004. In Greek patrology the identification is similarly well-known.

[10] More explicitly in *LXX*, ναῦς ἐμπορευομένη μακρόθεν, "a ship trading from afar", and Vulg. 'nauis institoris de longe portans panem suam'.

Spiritu sancto, praedicationis verbo ubique discurrit, portans secum magnum et inaestimabile pretium, quo omne genus hominum, vel potius totum mundum sanguine Christi mercata est' – the precious cargo by which mankind and all the world is redeemed. This image provides a set of glaring contrasts to Satan and his mission, not least the "inestimable prize" *he* has in mind. The patristic author goes on to emphasize the sturdiness and stability of the divine ship, capable of weathering every storm and arriving at the safest of all ports: 'Unde et quamvis infestatione inimici Ecclesia, vel saeculi tempestate laboret, quibusvis tentationum fluctibus pulsetur, naufragium facere non potest, quia Filium Dei habet gubernatorem ... Navigat enim instructa fidei gubernaculo, felici cursu, per hujus saeculi mare, habens Deum gubernatorem, angelos remiges, portans choros omnium sanctorum, erecta in medio ipsa salutari arbore crucis, in qua evangelicae fidei vela suspendens, flante Spiritu sancto, ad portum paradisi et securitatem quietis aeternae deducitur'. Satan the vessel does not suffer shipwreck either, because he is needed by God as an essential part of the plan of Salvation. However, while the ship of the Church arrives safely in the harbour of Paradise in accordance with the laws of divine order, Satan arrives in Eden trying to disrupt this very order and partly succeeding – but while the Church stands victorious, Satan's partial success turns into ultimate defeat.

Satan's expedition through Chaos after he has left the gates of Hell is related in the much-quoted lines 927ff., where the ship simile recurs in a different form. He first stands 'on the brink of Hell', looking a while and 'pondering his Voyage' and listening to the deafening din from the 'wilde Abyss, / The Womb of Nature and perhaps her Grave';

> At last his Sail-broad Vannes
> He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoak
> Uplifted spurns the ground, thence many a League
> As in a cloudy Chair ascending rides
> Audacious, but that seat soon failing, meets
> A vast vacuitie: all unawares
> Fluttring his pennons vain plump down he drops
> Ten thousand fadom deep, and to this hour
> Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
> The strong rebuff of som tumultuous cloud
> Instinct with Fire and Nitre hurried him
> As many miles aloft: that furie stayd,
> Quencht in a Boggie *Syrtis*, neither Sea,
> Nor good dry Land, nigh founderd on he fares,
> Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
> Half flying; behoves him now both Oare and Saile.

The syntactic structure of this paragraph – mainly coordinate clauses tacked on to one another in a chain with little periodic organization – as it were mirrors Satan's fall from one level to another. The turbulence of Chaos agrees with the conditions of a place where everything is in disorder and the elements are engaged in a continuous struggle. If Satan has orientation troubles during his flight in Hell, he seems utterly at the mercy of conflicting elements during his expedition through Chaos. The 'Sail-broad Vannes' have behind them an impressive substratum of infra-contexts which direct our associations into different channels depending on which context is in focus. The most interesting classical passages which equate flying with sailing or voyaging are *Agamemnon* 52, Lucretius 6.743, and, as Newton points out, the *Aeneid* 1.300f. The closest contact is provided by Lucretius' lines, where the poet explains the name Avernus ("hostile to birds"); an entrance to the Underworld was said to open up near the lake. Like Lucifer, birds passing over the Avernian lake drop headlong in their flight, forgetting "the oarage of their wings" and slacking their sails – 'remigi oblitae pennarum uela remittunt / Praecipitesque cadunt ... in terram ... aut in aquam, si forte lacus substratus Auerni' – a fate that Lucifer would have shared had not a blast – the 'rebuff' of a 'tumultuous cloud' – hurled him aloft again. In Christian authors, 'Avernus' is synonymous with Hell. At the same time the surface context in *PL* and the infracontext in Lucretius evoke Lucifer's fall as set forth in the first book, where he is described as 'Hurld headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie' (45). Again, 'Fluttring his pennons vain plumb down he drops' – 'Praecipitesque cadunt' – is also reminiscent of an infracontext in Valvasone's *L'Angeleida* 2.92, corresponding closely as it does to the Italian poet's words about the defeated rebel angels: 'Quasi palustri augelli / ... / Caggion d'alto a piombo ogni hor percossi'. Valvasone's lines, like Marino's account of demonic Crudeltà's effect on flying birds – *Sospetto* 47 'Con la vista ... Fè piombar gli augeletti à mezzo'l volo' – are probably modelled on Lucan's laconic description of Medusa's face petrifying all creatures (*Phars.* 9.649); even birds suddenly fall dead to the ground. The headlong plunge of disabled angels/birds is also represented in medieval iconography, for instance in MS illustrations of an Old Spanish Apocalypse, in the Italian *Treatise on the Seven Vices,* and the 15th-century *Très Riches Heures du Duc du Berry* (Frye, p. 61 and ills. 43 and 45). These illustrations show winged demons plunging sheer downward, as if killed instantly, towards gaping Hell. All these infracontexts suggest destruction and utter defeat, and Satan's drop 'plumb down' not only evokes his first overthrow, but also prefigures his second.

The second classical infracontext, that in *Agamemnon* 52, invests Milton's lines with emotive colouring: the war-cry of the furious Argives

on their way to meet the enemy is like the scream of vultures who, grieving for their (lost) brood, wheel forlorn above their nests πτερύγων ἐρετμοῖσιν ἐρεσσόμενοι "propelled by the oarage of their wings". The theme of grief and fierce hostility is not out of keeping with Satan's frame of mind as he continues his flight towards his goal, nor is the bleak and desolate scene sketched by Aeschylus alien to the atmosphere evoked by Milton's description.

To these infracontexts the third classical passage on flying-sailing affords a contrast – the account of Mercury's mission in *Aen.* 1.300f. The god is sent down in order to induce a propitious attitude on the part of the Carthaginians towards Aeneas and his comrades:

> Volat ille per aera magnum
> Remigio alarum, ac Libyae citus astitit oris.

This description contrasts on several counts with the picture of Satan in *PL.* With the aid of 'remigio alarum' – suggestive of πτερύγων ἐρετμοῖσιν – Mercury flies quickly, 'citus', to the Libyan shore, whereas Satan's aeronautical difficulties are all too evident. Mercury acts under the direction of the supreme god, Satan ultimately aims at revenging himself on God; Mercury's mission is supposed to create friendship and concord; Satan's is inextricably interwoven with hostility, hatred, and fraud; Mercury-Hermes is elsewhere in *PL* (5.285) compared and associated with Raphael, the guiding angel.[11]

The other group of infracontexts metaphorically fusing sailing and flying are of interest from a more limited point of view, investing the attribute 'sail-broad' with special significance. The infracontexts comprise a number of Renaissance passages probably based on Dante's picture of imprisoned Lucifer in the *Inferno* 34.46ff. Dante first describes Satan's three faces, in the middle and above each shoulder, and then goes on to give an idea of what his wings are like: never did he see sails so large; they had no plumes but were exactly like bats' wings. Dante thus illustrates the size of the giant imprisoned in the ice; also, his evil nature is indicated by the bat-like form – as Gregorio di Siena remarks, 'Del Pipistrello, perchè ha in odio il Sole, si fece antichissimamente il simbolo de' perfidi, degl'invidiosi e de' maligni; cui offende il chiarore della luce e della virtù' (Scartazzini 1, p. 611). Another point stressed by Dante is Lucifer's helplessness as emphasized by the wings flapping in vain though so violently that three winds seem to be raised by them. Though

[11] See Helga Spevack-Husmann, *The Mighty Pan. Miltons Mythologische Vergleiche*, Münster, 1963, pp. 4ff., 102ff.; and Blessington (below, p. 254).

the wings of Milton's Satan are obviously bird's wings, not bat's wings, the impressions of a reader familiar with Dante's account are likely to be coloured by its details, particularly as some points – Satan's gigantic size and helplessness – are strongly reinforced by Marino-Crashaw's stanzas on Lucifer fettered in Hell (18, Todd): spreading his huge, sail-like wings, but in vain, fettered as he is by an unbreakable chain. Milton's Satan is equally gigantic but his helplessness is neither total nor is it due to fetters. Yet the theme of Satan at the mercy of chaotic elements, summarized by the contrast between his 'Sail-broad Vannes' spread out for flight and his headlong fall, is reinforced and intensified by the contexts in Dante, Marino and Crashaw, where the flapping of his enormous wings is sharply antithetic to his imprisonment.

Other comparisons of wings to sail are less complex, simply illustrating as they do the terrifying size of evil monsters, yet at the same time affording some of the contrast more obviously present in the infracontexts just discussed. Such monsters and dragons appear in *OF* 33.84 (Warton), in *FQ* 1.11.10 (Newton), and in Phineas Fletcher's *The Purple Island* 12.58–59 (Warton). In Fletcher's poem the evil dragon 'mounted on his flaggie sails aloft' and 'rose upon his stretched sails', both formulations suggesting Milton's 'At last his Sail-broad Vanne / He spreads for flight'. The defeat of the dragon is imminent, Satan's more remote, but the implied antithesis between power and weakness, proud rebellion and overthrow, is present in both.

The main relevant infracontext contributing to the sense of 929ff., descriptive of Satan's fall through 'A vast vacuitie', is Hesiod's account of Tartarus in the *Theogony* 738ff.[12] (Todd): ... "Horrible and dark places, which even the gods detest, a vast abyss whose bottom no one would reach even though an entire year had passed after he had once entered within the gates; one terrible hurricane upon another would hurl him hither and thither". The beginning of the passage ("Horrible – detest") makes a double impact by recurring in – or being borrowed from – *Il.* 20.65, where it describes the realm of Hades in danger of being laid open during the quarrel of the gods. The lines in the *Theogony* form part of the description of the gulf into which the Titans were hurled down after being defeated by the gods, and this wider background of the infracontext cited merges with the passages on Satan in fetters in Dante-Marino-Crashaw so as to enhance, as parts of a complex code, the double motif of defeat and punishment. These details, again, have a

[12] This part of the *Theogony* is sometimes regarded as an interpolation, omitted in a number of late editions. However, various 16th- and 17th-century editions include the paragraph on Tartarus: Basileae 1564, Witebergae 1601, Lugd. Bat. 1622 (Heinsius), Amsterodami 1646, Lugd. Bat. 1653 and 1658, Lipsiae 1684.

submerged connection with Hesiod's lines on the fate of the Titans in Tartarus (717ff.): "They (the gods and their helpers) bound in painful fetters (the proud ones whom their hands had vanquished)". The reinforcement also affects the details, and the English words are invested with added significance by the Greek words which can be discerned underneath: a complex counterpoint connection between the Greek and English texts. 'A vast vacuitie', superimposed on χάσμα μέγα ("vast abyss"), takes on a more concrete meaning: 'vacuitie', "cosmic space empty of matter" (*OED*) has a scientific colouring, but χάσμα is "a yawning chasm" and is used again in Euripides' *Phoenissae* 1605 for the Underworld: Ταρτάρου ... εἰς ἄβυσσα χάσματα "to the bottomless chasms of Tartarus". 'The strong rebuff of som tumultuous cloud / Instinct with Fire and Nitre' has elicited commentaries on contemporary science and its explanations of thunder and lightning (Hughes, Rajan, and Fowler referring to E. H. Duncan and Svendsen among others). Above all, however, the 'strong rebuff of som tumultuous cloud' is charged with meaning by θύελλα θυέλλῃ ("hurricane upon hurricane"), and 'hurried him ... aloft' is similarly heightened by ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα φέροι πρὸ ("would hurl him hither and thither"). Besides intensifying the surface context, contact with the infracontext ranges Satan with any wretched creature at the mercy of uncontrolled storms. Another infracontext reinforcing the significance here is that in *Inf.* 5.43, where the infernal storm, which never ceases, whirls the evil spirits around: 'Di quà, di là, di giù, di sù gli mena'. On a horizontal level, the tumultuous horror of conflicting elements contrasts with the 'vast Ethereal Skie' and 'the buxom Air' through which Raphael sails down on gorgeous wings in 5.267ff. (pp. 254f. below). The contrast is still more poignant in the account of Satan's subsequent labours as a traveller through Chaos (see below).

Satan's difficulties thus do not cease after his fall through space is over. Making his way across amorphous terrain, 'neither Sea, / Nor good dry Land, ... the crude consistence' compared with 'Boggie *Syrtis*' – areas of quicksand described by Lucan and Apollonius Rhodius and mentioned in *Acts* 27.17 (Fowler) – Satan now has need of both oar and sail. The words take on an ironic ring when connected with the 'Sail-broad Vannes' which are the only instruments needed in 927ff.; there is also an ironic difference between the oar and sail and the 'remigium alarum' with which Mercury speedily flies to Libya in *Aen.* 1.301. Satan moves in the same laborious way as the infernal Dragon in *FQ* 1.11.8, 'Halfe flying, and halfe footing in his hast' (Newton); ultimately, like the dragon, facing defeat. The gryphon persecuting the (gold-stealing) Arimaspian in 943ff. is compared with Satan; according to Rabanus Maurus, as Fowler observes, he is associated with Satan, and Scythia, his cold

country, signifies those who are alien to the warmth of the Holy Spirit.[13] A more important piece of allegory, however, occurs in another part of the *De Universo* where Rabanus Maurus repeats the description of gryphons given by Isidore of Sevile,[14] including the information that they tear to pieces living human beings, with the added remark: 'Hi possunt significare ferocitatem persecutorum, et elationem superborum, qui infesti sunt hominibus, qui simplicitatem Christianam sequuntur et rationabiliter vivunt'. This function of the gryphon interlocks with the surface context describing Satan on his way to corrupt innocent Man. At the same time, Rajan points out, Thomas Browne in the *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* (11.3) says the gryphon typifies 'attention, celerity of execution, courage, audacity, tenacity, and magnanimity' and is thus applicable to 'Princes, Presidents, Generals, and all heroick Commanders'. In other words the gryphon takes us back to the theme of Satan-the-hero, in the context signifying heroism as a vicious quality because put to evil ends (p. 200 above).

After the conversation with Chaos and ancient Night Satan continues his journey with renewed hope in 1010ff. Chaos in a brief speech tells him the way,

> and *Satan* staid not to reply,
> But glad that now his Sea should find a shore,
> With fresh alacritie and force renewd
> Springs upward like a Pyramid of fire
> Into the wilde expanse, and through the shock
> Of fighting Elements, on all sides round
> Environd wins his way; harder beset
> And more endangerd, then when *Argo* passd
> Through *Bosporus* betwixt the justling Rocks:
> Or when *Ulysses* on the Larbord shunnd
> *Charybdis*, and by th' other whirlpool steard.
> So hee with difficulty and labour hard
> Mov'd on, with difficulty and labour hee;

and soon after, when man fell, Sin and Death followed Satan, paving the 'broad and beat'n way / Over the dark Abyss'. The words and expressions 'glad', 'fresh alacritie', 'force renewd', 'springs upward' support one another in illustrating Satan's energy and new hope when continuing his journey. As observed by several critics, the first seven lines also flow with ease and rapidity, unhampered by *asprezza*, complexity of con-

[13] *De Universo* (*PL* 111.342).
[14] *Etymologiarum libri* (*PL* 82.436). Rabanus' note is in *PL* 111.222.

struction, or by syllabic accumulation. As for the 'Pyramid of fire', commentators praise the magnificence of the simile (Beattie), or adduce parallel pyramids from other poets (Todd, Chambers), or claim, referring to the 'Pyramids and Towrs / From Diamond Quarries hewn' of Satan's royal seat in 5.758f., that the symbolism of the word is clarified by Milton's sentence in *Reason of Church-Government* 1.6, 'Prelaty's pyramid aspires and sharpens to ambition ... it is the most dividing, and schismaticall forme that Geometricians know of' (Fowler), or observe that pyramids in Milton usually connote "tyranny and oppression" (Low, p. 176), or point out that a frequent symbolic meaning of the pyramid is destruction or danger, and Satan as a pyramid in 2.1013 is "chaos sharpened to a fine destructive point aimed at the new creation" (Gorecki, p. 105). But the 'Pyramid of fire' with which Satan is compared when springing upward ... 'on all sides round / Environd' (by fighting elements) seems less relatable to Chaos than to 1.297ff., where the 'torrid Clime / Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with Fire': Satan, it appears, cannot escape from hell-fire even when he has left the infernal region. Again, to the symbolic meaning of the pyramid stressed by Gorecki could be added the fact that fire here stands for vindictiveness, wrath and similar passions, which dominate Satan's emotions at this stage of the story. In his disquisitions on the significance of 'ignis',[15] Rabanus Maurus lists – by the side of many obvious meanings, 'poena æterna', for instance – 'ignis' = 'dolus Antichristi': ... 'Quod dolus maximus procedet ab Antichristo, et occidet sanctos viros Ecclesia'. Also, 'ignis' is 'indignatio', and 'iracundos exprimit', and Rabanus adds the eloquent comment, 'dracones virulentissimi sunt desperatissimi'. The fire of anger is of course a commonplace. The supposed etymology of the word is also important. Discussing it, Stephanus in his *Thesaurus* says 'uno omnes consensu a πῦρ derivant' (2.639); a 'Pyramid of fire' is thus a pleonastic intensification of the infernal element. Ann Gossman seems right in assuming that 17th-century learned readers would know the word's etymology.[16] The fire simile in 2.1013 is a synthesis of different but related meanings, and the pyramid is a natural expression of the idea that the infernal fire and the fire of destruction and unholy passions are now lashing out, in elongated form, in the direction of the place which is the goal of Satan's flight, and which he hopes to contaminate with those very passions. At the same time the pyramid of fire springing upward is in sharp contrast to the upward-moving fire with which the essence of love is compared in *Purg.* 18.28: love, a spiritual movement, does not rest until it unites with its object, 'Com'il foco muouesi in altura / Per la sua

[15] *Allegoriae in Sacram Scripturam* (*PL* 112.967ff.).
[16] "Milton's *Paradise Lost II. 1013*" (*Explicator* 19, 1961, p. 51).

forma'. On a submerged level, hatred intent upon its aims is thus opposed to love striving towards its object.

Ever since Newton, commentators on the passage have indicated the story of Argo's passage between the Symplegades as told by Apollonius Rhodius in 2.317ff. and 552ff. as the background for the comparison of Satan with the famous vessel in 1017ff. The first interesting thing about the contact between surface and infracontext here is the introduction to the perilous journey as provided by the speeches of Phineus and Chaos, respectively. The former, punished by the Harpies of Zeus for misusing his gift of prophecy, is saved from his misery by the Argonauts and foretells the future course of their journey. He describes in detail the expedition in store for the heroes, dwelling at some length on the passage of Argos between the jostling "Cyanean rocks", and repeatedly stresses the necessity of resigning themselves to the will of the gods (324ff., 336ff., 423f.). In *PL* 988ff., Chaos says he recognizes Satan – 'I know thee, stranger, who thou art' (990) – words addressed, as Fowler points out, to Jesus by a devil in *Luke* 4.34, but also words corresponding to Phineus' words to Jason and his men (212): ὑμεῖς ἀτρεκέως ("certainly you are they"). The identity of the Gospel line with the line in *PL* points up the contrast between Satan and Christ (Fowler), the specious coming victory of the former being set off against the real victory of the latter. The contrast is also heightened by contact with the limited infracontext in the *Argonautica*: what Phineus recognizes is a team of heroes on their way to ultimate victory after facing and braving dangers, and acting under the protection of the gods. Chaos in *PL* describes the rout and fall of the rebel angels as observed from his vantage-point, an ingression which colours in an ominous way the subsequent account, and then outlines the route to be taken by Satan: an expedition intended to thwart the divine will instead of furthering it as in the *Argonautica*. Phineus ends on a pessimistic note as far as he himself is concerned, speaking gloomily of his eyesight lost for good and saying he longs for immediate death which will bring him perfect bliss. Chaos ends with threatening and implacable words which might have been uttered by Satan himself: 'Havock and spoil and ruin are my gain'.

The points of contact between the *Argonautica* and *PL* in the account of Argo-Satan's passage bring out several interesting features. Rajan observes that Argo was the first ocean-going ship and Satan the first to cross Chaos voluntarily; Fowler adds that Argo was preceded by a dove as Satan was preceded "by Messiah and by the creative spirit of God, who 'Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss'". The concentrated description – or rather indication – of the difficulties encountered by Satan in forcing his passage towards the bounds of Chaos ('harder beset', 'more endangerd', 'with difficulty and labour hard', 'with difficulty and

labour') elicit, by way of association, the detailed, graphic, and vivid account in the *Argonautica* of the dangers attending the passage of Argo in 2.552ff.: the rumble of tumultuous sea and crashing rocks, the din of breakers washing over the shore, the narrow escape between the parted rocks on the crests of enormous waves. Not only does the impact of Milton's text work through the 'more-then' contact with this wider and more detailed infracontext, which as it were fills in the outlines; the effect is further heightened by the *Argonautica* passage being in its turn intensified by an infracontext on a deeper level – the account in *Od.* 12.234ff. of the passage of Odysseus' ship between Scylla and Charybdis. Just as Phineus predicts the destiny of the Argonauts, so Circe does that of Odysseus and his crew. The din and thunder and horror and danger as described by Apollonius Rhodius are amplified by Homer's account of the sea seething like an enormous cauldron as Charybdis alternately sucks in and belches forth masses of water while pale fear seizes the sailors. The Homeric description, the second member of Milton's dismissive comparison, at the same time directly colours 1019–20 in *PL*: ... 'Or when *Ulysses* on the Larbord shunnd / *Charybdis,* and by th' other whirlpool steard', the substantive 'whirlpool' reproducing the verb form which depicts the seething and whirling water (κυκωμένη). In the same way the 'justling Rocks' in 1018 is a kind of distant echo of the expressive δοῦπος ἀρασσομένων πετράων, "the thunder of crashing rocks", in the *Argonautica* 2.553. Behind the entire description in Milton we can hear the remote rumble and din of enormous, mythical forces in the two classical accounts, one reinforcing the other.

According to another comment by Rajan, the repetition in 1021f. "underlines the contrast that follows. The link with exploration also contributes to the effect. The first voyage is always difficult and dangerous; but the route, once pioneered, becomes a highway of commerce". There is also of course a contrast between the 'broad and beat'n way' in 1026 paved by 'Sin and Death amain / Following his track' and the 'dark Abyss' and 'boiling Gulf' in 1027; and again between this latter line and 1028ff.: the boiling gulf

> Tamely endur'd a Bridge of wondrous length
> From Hell continu'd reaching th' utmost Orbe
> Of this frail World; by which the Spirits perverse
> With easie intercourse pass to and fro
> To tempt and punish mortals, except whom
> God and good Angels guard by special Grace.

A more interesting, submerged contrast on the vertical plane, however, is that between this paragraph and the information provided by Apollo-

nius Rhodius (604ff.) that the Symplegades were rooted fast as soon as Argo had passed between them, a thing that had been destined by the blessed gods; in other words, safe passage had been made possible thereafter. So what in *PL* is effected by Satan's achievement is a result of divine decree in the *Argonautica*; and to the passage opened in this way to any seafarer in the classical text corresponds the route open to traffic by Sin, Death and Spirits perverse in *PL*: trade, commerce and other propitious activities are contrasted with the fatal and destructive enterprise of evil forces (see pp. 165f.). The contrast between Argo in the surface comparison, illustrating Satan's troubles, and Argo in its original infracontext is further heightened by the interpretation of Argo as made by Ross in the *Mystagogus Poeticus:* ... 'Such a ship is the Church, in which we are sailing towards heaven. She is a speaking ship, counselling us to avoid danger, to repair to him who is only able to expiate our sins' (p. 196). Scylla and Charybdis, according to the same allegorizer (p. 383), stand for difficulties, temptations, and traps lurking in the path of the virtuous man; 'therefore, ... let us keep the middle road, which is the way of vertue'.

The pattern of contrasts continues in the remainder of the second book, being most conspicuous in the description of Satan finally passing the limits of Chaos, emerging into a different element. The account of the attack of light on darkness in 1034ff. –

> But now at last the sacred influence
> Of light appears, and from the walls of Heav'n
> Shoots farr into the bosom of dim Night
> A glimmering dawn; here Nature first begins
> Her fardest verge, and *Chaos* to retire
> As from her outmost works a brok'n foe
> With tumult less and with less hostil din,
> That *Satan* with less toil, and now with ease
> Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light –

elicits a comment by Rajan to the effect that Milton's imagery is that of "the frontier of an empire, identified with civilization, so that the 'broken foe' becomes the defeated barbarian and the 'outmost works' of Nature stand guard against the inroads of chaos". But it is doubtful if Milton or his contemporary readers would have quite understood this remark. According to Thyer, Milton's 'dubious light' and 'glimmering dawn' are allusions to Seneca's description in *Herc. Fur.* 668ff. of the twilight in the cave that forms the entrance to Pluto's realm. This description immediately succeeds the words on the broad downward path into Hades mentioned before:

Ingens vorago faucibus vastis patet,
Latumque pandit omnibus populis iter.
Non caeca tenebris incipit primo via;
Tenuis relictae lucis a tergo nitor
Fulgorque dubius solis afflicti cadit
Et ludit aciem.

Apparently inspired by Thyer, Fowler feels that 'dubious light' "echoes a phrase in Seneca's account of the passage of Hercules out of hell" (Thyer speaks of "Seneca's elegant account of Hercules's passage out of Hell"). But Seneca's description does not form part of the account of Hercules emerging from Hades, which takes place later in the play (813ff.), though it is of course possible that 'fulgor dubius' has coloured 'dubious light'. Anyway this limited resemblance is much less interesting than the similarity between Milton's and Seneca's lines on the downward path into Hades, which form part of a group of infracontexts on a traditional topos (p. 164). I think it would have come much more natural to a contemporary reader to identify Milton's lines with the theme of the advent of Christ and his victory over evil powers, traditionally symbolized by light defeating darkness. In the *Sospetto d'Herode* 15, Lucifer has a vision of the shadows and horrors of night routed and scattered by the divine light on the night of the Nativity (see p. 208). This theme of the defeated powers of darkness ('I tenebrosi horrori / ... vinti da gli angelici splendori') is the same as that of Chaos forced 'to retire / As from her outmost works a brok'n foe'. The ultimate background of the image of retreating Chaos is Prudentius' *Cathemerinon* 1.42ff. on the flight of evil spirits at dawn, 'Invisa nam vicinitas / Lucis, salutis, Numinis, / Rupto tenebrarum situ / Noctis fugat satellites'. The beginning of the second hymn of the *Cathemerinon*, the *Hymnus matutinus*, describes Christ's coming in similar imagery:

Nox, et tenebrae, et nubila,
Confusa mundi et turbida,
Lux intrat, albescit polus,
Christus venit, discedite.

Caligo terrae scinditur
Percussa Solis spiculo,
Rebusque iam color redit,
Vultu nitentis sideris.

The image of 1034ff., 'The sacred influence / Of light ... Shoots farr into the bosom of dim Night / A glimmering dawn' suggests the dart imagery

of ll. 5f. in Prudentius' hymn: 'Caligo terrae scinditur / Percussa Solis spiculo'. Milton's 'influence' is the "immission or infusion of ... divine power",[17] 'bosom' is "cavity" and in the context "abyss". The combined co-themes of divine light descending into the dark abyss and of divine power scattering evil forces point backwards and forwards by way of association outside the immediate context. Backwards to the defeat of the rebel angels at the hands of Christ and the good angels – in 1.175ff. 'red Lightning' and 'shafts' have pursued them down into the vast and boundless Deep; forwards suggesting the Harrowing of Hell, the ultimate consequence of Satan's expedition and traditionally conceived of as light defeating the power of darkness: 'Ad inferum supervenit in forma hominis dominus maiestatis, et aeternas tenebras illustravit et indissolubilia vincula disrupit' (*Gospel of Nicodemus*, A version, 5). On a deeper level there is thus heavy irony in the contrast between Satan about to be defeated and for ever imprisoned, and the ease and 'less toil' with which he soars towards his goal by 'dubious light'. Further irony is involved in the partially close correspondence between 'now with ease / Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light' and *PR* 1.103f where Satan, planning the temptation of Christ, assures himself and his followers that 'a calmer voyage now / Will waft me; and the way found prosperous once / Induces best to hope of like success'. The temptation, we know, will fail, and the success Satan is hoping for will not materialize, just as his triumph at the "way once prosperous" will prove premature.

The entire paragraph on Satan laboriously emerging from Chaos, blazing a trail easily frequented by later destructive forces, and on the divine light penetrating down into the chaotic gloom, is thus coloured by various infracontexts so as to suggest a complex interplay of upward and downward movement. In this interplay the downward movement predominates, as if in the vertical pattern of infernal-divine relationship there must always be a predominance of the divine influx, of God imposing his will on everything, including evil, and as if it were against a universal law for the Underworld to move upwards and outwards.

The pattern of vertical contrasts is sustained in the final part of the paragraph on the infernal Argonaut:

> And like a weather-beat'n Vessel holds
> Gladly the Port, though Shrouds and Tackle torn;
> Or in the emptier waste, resembling Air,
> Weighs his spred wings, at leasure to behold
> Farr off th' Empyreal Heav'n, extended wide
> In circuit, undetermind square or round,

[17] *OED influence* † 3.

With Opal Towrs and Battlements adornd
Of living Saphire, once his native Seat;
And fast by hanging in a gold'n Chain
This pendant World, in bigness as a Starr
Of smallest Magnitude close by the Moon.
Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge,
Accurst, and in a cursed hour he hies. (1043ff.)

The contrasts here work on different levels and their function is again heavily ironical in the same way as the light-darkness and good-evil contrasts discussed previously. Most of them emerge from the contact between *PL* and the *Argonautica* except for those inherent in the lines 'And like a weather-beat'n Vessel holds / Gladly the Port, though Shrouds and Tackle torn'. Infracontexts suggested by these lines are primarily a group of emblems referred to in a different context, "storm-tossed ship making for harbour". In one of Vaenius' emblems (no. 55) the conceit illustrated by a ship in a stormy sea makes the point that the voyage of a storm-tossed ship is to no purpose unless the vessel gain the port she is making for. The emblem "corresponds to Alciati's emblem for Spes proxima".[18] Another, more important emblem by Juan de Boria represents a ship entering a port; the conceit in prose declares that a good and experienced skipper should try to reach port while the wind makes it possible, keeping in mind the words of Horace: 'Fortiter occupa portum' (the motto of the emblem).[19] The Horatian words signal *Carm.* 1.14.2ff.: the ship in that ode, with damaged oars, broken mast, creaking yards, and without tackle, is asked to make for port before the storms get hold of it anew – a well-known allegory warning the state of Rome not to be dragged into another civil war. Not only does Milton's description of the condition of the ship resemble Horace's, but the word 'hold' is a latinism, as Verity pointed out. This editor assumed that Milton was thinking of 'tenere', but 'hold' in fact corresponds equally well to 'occupare' in the same sense, "make for and reach". There are thus a number of points suggesting the Horatian ode and in so doing ironic contrasts: the classical-emblematic advice to the ship suggests wisdom and sound judgment, Satan personifies cunning and deceit; in the ode the order and welfare of the state is the prime concern, Satan represents the very opposite of these ideals; the port means safety and rescue, Satan is heading for an adventure predestined to end with disaster. The contrasts are similar to those discussed on pp. 239 and 254.

[18] Praz, *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery*, p. 114.
[19] Henkel and Schöne, *Emblemata*, cols. 1468f.

To return to the relationship between Milton's lines and Apollonius Rhodius', the resemblances are obvious enough. Satan enjoys the freedom of the elements, Hell being left behind and Chaos receding into the background; similarly, in the classical poem, "They breathed freely after their chilling fear, and at the same time saw the sky and the main of the sea extending far away; for they felt they had escaped from Hades" (2.607ff.). The sense of relief is the same in both texts, but while the Argonauts feel they have escaped for good the horrors of their dangerous passage, Satan has only temporarily left Chaos and will return en route to the Underworld. The Argonauts carry out their mission in a pious mood and the sky they see is the home of friendly gods, while the Heaven beheld by Satan – 'Farr off' and τῆλε in *Argon.* correspond – is the realm of an enemy on whom he hopes to wreak his vengeance; Satan wafts on the calmer wave in a destructive mood, as he does in *PR* 1.103f. Again in 611ff. Tiphys gratefully acknowledges the divine help received by the heroes, while Satan continues his flight 'full fraught with mischievous revenge, / Accurst, and in a cursed hour'. Jason in 641ff. emphatically says he will never feel fear again even if he were to traverse the chasms of Hades; Satan, we know, will have reason for fear after his return to the Underworld. Though no contrast effects are conveyed on similar points of detail by the infracontext in the *Odyssey*, there is a wider contrasting pattern pointed out by Blessington. Odysseus' journey across the ocean is undertaken for the purpose of restoring his kingdom and establishing order and civilization, while Satan's flight is intended to substitute chaos for order. "Satan is the destroyer, not the preserver of society".[20]

The irony of Milton's account is heightened by the obvious resemblance between 'Weighs his spred wings, at leasure to behold / Farr off th' Empyreal Heav'n' and Tasso's line on the Archangel Gabriel's flight to Lebanon (*GL* 1.14, Thyer) – 'E si librò su l'adeguate penne' – to inspire the Christians with courage and promise them victory. The irony is still further sharpened by a point of dissimilarity: while Satan struggles with the contending elements in Chaos and almost, like Argo, falls a victim to them, Gabriel with his white gold-tipped wings 'Fende i venti, e le nubi, e va sublime / Soura la terra, e soura il mar con queste'. A further contrast effect emerges from contact with yet another Italian infracontext, *Par.* 9.138, where Dante refers to Nazareth 'doue Gabriello aperse l'ali', a phrase closely resembling Milton's 'Weighs his spred wings'. Dante's words probably refer to the Annunciation: in pictorial art the archangel is traditionally represented with outspread wings.[21] So while

[20] Blessington, p. 15. On other points Blessington's comparison of the *Odyssey* with *Paradise Lost* is less convincing.

[21] See Gmelin 3, p. 186, F. Maggini, "'Là dove Gabriello aperse l'ali'" (*SD* 19. 1935, pp. 125ff.), and *Marino and Crashaw*: *'Sospetto d'Herode'. A Commentary*, pp. 131f.

Gabriel approaches Mary to announce the birth of Life and Salvation, Satan is on his way to Eve to bring death and damnation into the world. It could be added that Dante's journey to the heavenly paradise is compared twice to Argo's voyage (*Par.* 2.16 and 33.94ff.). The Christian interpretation of Argo made by Ross has already been referred to. A powerful contrast is thus concentrated in the same symbol.

Milton stands in much the same relation to Apollonius Rhodius in this episode as Tasso stands to Dante in the account of the devils' mission after Pluto's speech in bk 4:

> ... Ma four uolando, a riueder le stelle
> Già se n'uscian da la profonda notte,
> Come sonanti, e torbide procelle,
> Che uengan fuor de le natie lor grotte
> Ad oscurar il Cielo, a portar guerra
> A i gran regni del mare, e de la terra. (18)

As pointed out by Morpurgo annotating this passage, the first line imitates the last line of the *Inferno*, describing the moment when the travellers have emerged from the Giudecca and the expanse of the starry sky of the south lies before them: 'E quindi vscimmo a riueder le stelle'. Dante is on his way to greater virtue and deeper insight and the word 'stelle', which ends each of the three books of the *Comedy*, is symbolic of the main theme of the poem. In Tasso's poem the appearance of the stars is a sign to the demons that they are near their goal and can begin their destructive work. The relationship between Tasso's poem and Dante's on this point, though peripheral, merges with the other infracontextual patterns investing the episode in *PL* with additional meaning.

9. Raphael's Flight

A surface context serving as an effective foil to the entire story of Satan's difficult flight from the Underworld through Chaos up to the borders of the ordered universe is of course provided by the story of Raphael's mission when sent by God from the celestial Paradise down to Adam and Eve in Eden. The main pattern of correlation and contrastive correspondence falls into three main sub-patterns: 2.871ff. the gates of Hell and Satan's difficulties in emerging from the Underworld – 5.246ff. the celestial gate and Raphael's easy descent from Heaven; 2.927ff. Satan's

difficult passage through Chaos – 5.257ff. Raphael's effortless flight through the ether; 2.1016ff. Satan-Argo – 5.270ff. Raphael-Phoenix.[1]

In the passage making up the first part of this contrastive pattern, the beginning of the description of Satan's expedition (2.871ff.), the troubles in store for the traveller are foreshadowed. Only Sin is capable of opening the gates of Hell, but not of closing them again. Taking the key,

> Forthwith the huge Porcullis high up drew,
> Which but her self not all the *Stygian* Powers
> Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole turns
> Th' intricat wards, and every Bolt and Bar
> Of massie Iron or sollid Rock with ease
> Unfast'ns: on a sudden op'n flie
> With impetuous recoile and jarring sound
> Th' infernal dores, and on thir hinges grate
> Harsh Thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
> Of *Erebus*. She op'nd, but to shut
> Excelld her power; the Gates wide op'n stood,
> That with extended wings a Bannerd Host
> Under spred Ensigns marching might pass through
> With Horse and Chariots rankt in loose array;
> So wide they stood, and like a Furnace mouth
> Cast forth redounding smoak and ruddy flame. (874ff.)

Outside and beneath the opened gates extends the amorphous ocean without bounds where ordered space and time are equally absent, the realm of Chaos and Night. The unceasing battle of atoms is described, the confusion and disorder, the sway of chance. It is this cosmic wilderness into which Satan looks down with some trepidation – 'no narrow frith / He had to cross' – before he ventures out on his expedition. The corresponding scene in the fifth book, where the gates of Heaven open up for Raphael, has a very different character. The Archangel flies 'through the midst of Heaven', the angelic choirs on all sides making way for him,

> till at the Gate
> Of Heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-op'nd wide
> On gold'n Hinges turning, as by work
> Divine the sovran Architect had fram'd. (253ff.)

[1] Naturally the contrast between Satan's and Raphael's flights has been commented on by several critics. Interesting observations on the horizontal contrast patterns have been made for example by Daniells, *Milton, Mannerism and Baroque*, pp. 97f., and Jacobus, *Sudden Apprehension*, p. 73. See also p. 255, n. 5 below.

The very brevity of the account suggests the automatic ease and instantaneousness of the process, highly unlike the ironic 'ease' with which Sin operates the complicated lock and massive bars obstructing the way to Hell. While the infernal doors fly open with a jarring sound and amidst much grating and thunder, there is no sound in the description in bk. 5. The most important connection with 5.253ff. seems to be one with the surface context in 7.205ff. to which Todd and recently Frye (p. 197) have called attention, describing Christ's exit through the heavenly gates and dwelling on a sound very different from that emitted by the infernal doors:

> Heav'n op'nd wide
> Her ever during Gates, Harmonious sound
> On gold'n Hinges moving, to let forth
> The King of Glorie, in his powerful Word
> And Spirit coming to create new Worlds.

The close similarity to 5.253ff. puts a certain construction on the earlier passage, heightening and intensifying the solemn ring of the lines describing Raphael leaving Heaven.

As to the scenery which extends beyond the gates, differences are of course conspicuous but at the same time suggested in an unobtrusive manner. In Chaos there are eternal anarchy, noise of 'endless wars' and confusion (893ff.); no outlines, no contours; the warring elements bring their atoms into battle; there is neither 'Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire, / But all these in thir pregnant causes mixt / Confus'dly' (912ff.). In the ether into which Raphael floats out on extended wings, the earth, unobstructed by other celestial bodies, stands out in the immense clear space with astounding sharpness (5.257ff.):

> From hence, no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
> Starr interpos'd, however small he sees,
> Not unconform to other shining Globes,
> Earth and the Gard'n of God, with Cedars crownd
> Above all Hills. As when by night the Glass
> Of *Galileo*, less assur'd, observes
> Imagind Lands and Regions in the Moon:
> Or Pilot from amidst the *Cyclades*
> *Delos* or *Samos* first appeering kenns
> A cloudy spot.

While, as Fowler points out, the lunar surface features in the moon simile in 1.288ff. are really taken at their face value, their imaginary character is

stressed in the fifth book: the approach to truth seems to be of some importance in the account of Raphael's flight. There is also a difference between the description of Eden at a distance in 5.259ff. and that of the 'pendant World' which Satan is approaching. Satan cannot perceive the earth with Eden through the 'opacous globe', the universe (3.418), whereas Raphael can discern it, however small the earth and not unlike other heavenly bodies.[2]

As to the second point, the flight, Satan buffeted by the chaotic turbulence in 2.935ff. and beset by 'difficulty and labour hard' on his way 'Into the wilde expanse' (1014ff.) has a journey very different from Raphael's in 5.266ff.:

> Down thither prone in flight
> He speeds, and through the vast Ethereal Skie
> Sailes between worlds and worlds, with steddie wing
> Now on the polar windes, then with quick Fann
> Winnows the buxom Air –

lines which editors compare to Hermes' flight in *Il.* 24.341ff. (helping Priam) and in *Aen.* 4.252ff. (ordering Aeneas in Libya to continue his journey); and to *GL* 9.60ff. (the Archangel Michael sending the demons back to Hell). *Il.* 24.341ff. is least interesting in this context, only very briefly characterizing Hermes' flight as swift as the wind, and mentioning his prompt arrival in Troy. More important is another Homeric passage on Hermes, that in *Od.* 5.51ff., pointed out by Thompson and Aryanpur[3] (Hermes is sent to Calypso, instructing her to allow Odysseus to leave). From the point of view of content, *Aen.* 4.252ff. and *Od.* 5.51ff. are closely similar,[4] as are also the accounts of the divine messenger's flight: in both texts he quickly descends to the surface of the sea, skimming the waves like a bird looking for fish; doubling shores and circling cliffs (Virgil), wetting its plumes in the waves like a sea-gull (Homer). Homer's and Virgil's flights round shores and cliffs become Milton's sailing between worlds and worlds; the narrow perspective of his errand in the classical texts widens into a cosmic one in Milton's poem; the *auxesis*

[2] Since as Low observes ("The Astronomy of *Paradise Lost*", *ELN* 8, 1971, p. 266) Raphael cannot see through solid objects, "Raphael, the hole in the world's outer shell, and the mount of Paradise on earth are all in line". The earth must thus be stationary and on the line passing through the centre, one reminder among others that the Ptolemaic system is essential in Milton's universe.

[3] J. A. K. Thompson, *Classical Influences in English Poetry*, repr. New York, 1963, pp. 52f.; M. Aryanpur, "*Paradise Lost* and *The Odyssey*" (*Texas Studies in Lit. and Lang.* 9, 1967, pp. 164f.).

[4] Blessington (pp. 25ff.) provides a detailed comparison of Mercury's mission to Aeneas with Raphael's to Adam.

here is striking. While thus of course Milton "finely emulates" these descriptions, the Virgilian and Homeric passages also provide submerged double similes and in so doing add to the impression of effortless elegance, speed and rhythm conveyed by Raphael's flight. The combined effects of the three descriptions are in marked contrast to the lines on Satan's flight through Chaos, and 'with steddie wing / Now on the polar windes, then with quick Fann / Winnows the buxom Air' reads like a kind of inverse counterpart to 2.933ff. 'Fluttring his pennons vain plumb down he drops / Ten thousand fadom deep . . . had not . . . som tumultuous cloud . . . hurried him / As many miles aloft'. The contrasts here extend down to some of the words used. 'Pennon' is a neologism in the sense "wing" and is first used in this passage (*OED*), as against the poetical 'Fann', probably modelled on the Italian 'vanni' (when 'Vannes' occurs in the paragraph, Satan has not yet begun his flight). Satan is 'fluttring' his wings, drops 'plumb down', and is helplessly hurried aloft by the 'rebuff of som tumultuous cloud'; Raphael 'sailes ... with steddie wing', the air is 'buxom' ("obedient", "yielding") and "winnowed"; these two words belong logically together. The lines on Raphael's flight also provide a contrast to those on Satan's expedition towards the gates of Hell in 2.631ff.: Satan's wings are swift rather than steady, and his darting along the 'coast' now to the right, now to the left, his skimming the deep and his soaring upwards, recall the movements of a bird frantically trying to locate the exit in an enclosed space. The contrast becomes even more marked when the infracontextual account in the *Theogony* is pitted against the bird similes in Homer.

As for the stanza on Michael's descent from Heaven in *GL* 9.60–63, the infracontextual function is different. Here there can be no question of Milton's emulating the Italian poet, for Tasso's four stanzas form a magnificent and rhetorically very sophisticated episode much superior to Milton's lines: Michael's spreading his golden wings 'Rapido sì, ch'anco il pensiero eccede'; winging his way through light and fire in the ethereal realm of the blessed, seeing the ordered world of stars and planets in their orbits, entering the sublunar sphere, scattering the darkness and dispersing the horrors of night like sunshine after rain or a falling star; finally scolding and rebuking the host of the demons (63.5–65.4), and attacking them with his lance so that 'Essi gemendo abbandonâr le belle / Region de la luce, e l'auree stelle'.[5] The function of the episode is twofold: to some readers, at least, its splendour as it were overflows into Milton's description, colouring it by association, and at the same time

[5] See p. 247 above. I cannot here of course enter into an analysis of all the sophisticated rhetorical artifice in Tasso's stanzas. A good but rather brief analysis is provided by Th. Greene in *The Descent from Heaven. A Study in Epic Continuity*, pp. 198ff.

adds a significance only indirectly apparent from Milton's text. That Raphael's mission is ultimately directed against Satan and his schemes has to be deduced from God's instructions: Raphael is told to inform Adam of the danger: 'What enemie / Late fall'n himself from Heav'n is plotting now / The fall of others from like state of bliss ... by deceit and lies; this let him know'.

Finally, the opposition Argo-Phoenix is similarly charged with meaning. Whereas Argo in *PL*, making contact with the infracontext in the *Argonautica*, largely operates in a complex pattern of similitude and contrast – the difficult voyage affording similitude, the pious sailors aided by Athena, contrast – the Phoenix symbol is an entirely homogeneous device into which uniform meanings have been packed to breaking-point:

> ... till within soare
> Of Towring Eagles, to all the Fowles he seems
> A *Phoenix*, gaz'd by all, as that sole Bird
> When to enshrine his reliques in the Suns
> Bright Temple, to *Ægyptian Theb's* he flies.
> At once on th' Eastern cliff of Paradise
> He lights, and to his proper shape returns
> A Seraph wingd; six wings he wore (270ff.),

which are then described in concentrated detail. Fowler summarizes the best known significances: the classical 'unica semper avis'; the Christian Phoenix as an emblem of the triumph of eternal life over death, and of regeneration; the secular Phoenix standing for uniqueness, virtuous constancy, and ideal true love. Fowler also feels that Raphael – the Phoenix in this context is the friend of man and a marriage counsellor; that he is unique in flying so high, bound for a solar shrine, and above all that he manifests the virtue of the Elect.[6] There are still other meanings, some of which are suggested by emblem plates, while one emerges by horizontal contrast with a later passage in *PL* and from there suggests infracontexts discussed already. Thus the Phoenix also stands for martyrdom (Beza) and the bliss of martyrdom (Covarrubias), and for the steadfastness and trust of Christian man (Pers).[7] According to Valeriano, the Phoenix is an image for the sun[8] and thus for Christ (p. 199). As for the meaning suggested by contact with 10.410ff., the Phoenix soaring among eagles 'gaz'd by all' is in sharp contrast to Sin and Death making their way

[6] Fowler refers to studies by Starnes and Talbert, Tervarent, Hubay and Leroy, Kermode, and Whaler; and to emblems in Ripa and Camerarius. See also Greene, *The Descent from Heaven*, pp. 379f.
[7] Henkel and Schöne, *Emblemata*, cols. 795f.
[8] *Hieroglyphica*, p. 199.

among blasted stars looking wan and planets suffering eclipse. The contrast is heightened by the connection between the Phoenix in this situation and the theme of Christ-the-star as developed by Prudentius and later poets. The Phoenix 'gaz'd by all' also evokes the *Sospetto d'Herode* 17 on the Nativity, where Heaven blossoms 'with a new-borne light, / On which, as on a glorious stranger gaz'd / The Golden eyes of Night'. As for the eagles wheeling around the Phoenix, Ambrose and Rabanus Maurus say eagles stand for the souls of the elect ('justorum, electorum animae'),[9] and to this meaning can be added other symbolical meanings with which the eagle is invested in patrology: Christ, St. John the Evangelist flying towards the city of God (the best known symbolical meaning), the soul, and saints.[10] Furthermore, in emblematics the eagle is the incarnation of a variety of morally commendable qualities.[11] So the Phoenix and the eagles, parts of a simple yet intricate code, evoke meanings which are directly relevant to the context, and simultaneously suggest more peripheral meanings which enrich the significance of the lines. In the centre of all this, Phoenix and eagle embody life, salvation, the victory of good over evil, proximity to God and holiness.

To these meanings may finally be added two which emerge from the lines' making contact with particular infracontexts involving the Infant Saviour, one possibly based on the other. In the *De Partu Virginis* (2.414ff.), a host of angels exulting in the skies on the occasion of the Nativity surround a phoenix and marvel at its beauty: it has shining purple wings, a dark yellow head, a blue tail and a body adorned with red spots, and surpasses the sun in beauty.[12] The Phoenix is here obviously associated with the Infant Saviour, and the colours have symbolical significance. In the *Strage degli Innocenti* 2.133 the angel who protects the Holy Family during its flight from Egypt is compared to a phoenix, unique in its kind, with rubies for eyes and wings of sapphire and purple; he is again surrounded by a crowd of admiring birds. The link with Raphael, also a guardian angel, is conspicuous. These splendid symbols of holiness and divinity at the same time operate as counterparts and contrasts to the spurious magnificence of the satanic serpent approaching Eve in the ninth book.

All these meanings, packed as it were into Milton's lines under tremendous pressure, act by their very density as an extremely forceful

[9] Ambrose, *Expos. Evang. sec. Luc.* (*PL* 15.1781f.), Rabanus Maurus, *Allegor. in Sacr. Script.* (*PL* 112.862). The proximity of Phoenix and eagle in Milton may be due to Calepine's or R. Stephanus' Dictionaries (Starnes and Talbert, pp. 272f.).

[10] Eucherius, Gregory, Rabanus Maurus, Peter Damiani.

[11] Henkel and Schöne, *Emblemata*, cols. 757ff.

[12] The ultimate source for the description of the Phoenix's colours was Pliny, whose account is also copied in R. Stephanus' Dictionary (Starnes and Talbert, p. 273f.).

antithesis to the satanic theme and the meanings it embodies, reinforced by the infracontextual infernal theme in the *Theogony*. It is as if the lines on Raphael-Phoenix are a centre of power capable of driving back the forces of evil on its own, and suggesting that Raphael's visit to Adam is a pledge of God's continued fight against Satan on earth.

10. Satan as Cherub

The episode of Satan disguising himself as a cherub in 3.636ff. similarly derives its full meaning from a matrix made up of a massive tradition as well as of easily recognizable infracontexts. As Steadman has demonstrated,[1] Satan's assumption of animal forms is based on a heroic convention: the hero resorts to disguises of an ignoble kind in order successfully to undermine enemy resistance and to ensure the success of force by using fraud. In this way Odysseus in the *Iliad* enters his palace disguised as a beggar, and in Euripides' *Rhesus* and *Hecuba* he spies on the enemy in Ilium in a similar shape.[2] The Satan-cherub episode is an instance of what may be called "the reassuring disguise" convention: in order to conceal his infernal and frightening appearance, a demon assumes some shape intended to inspire confidence as Satan does when encountering Uriel. He thus succeeds in infiltrating enemy positions, evil getting the better – at least temporarily – of good. In the same way Satan appears to Judas in the shape of his kinsman in the *Christiad* 2, Allecto to Solimano disguised as the old and wise counsellor Araspe in *GL* 9, Bacchus to the Moslem priest assuming the form of the Prophet in the *Lusiads* 8, Crudeltà to Herod in the guise of his brother Giuseppe in the *Sospetto* 53, Satan to the Pope masquerading as a Franciscan friar in *In Quint. Nov.* The prototype of these cases would seem to be *Aen.* 7.415ff., where Allecto, concealing her terrible appearance, appears to Turnus disguised as the old priestess Calybe. It is doubtful if there is an "immediate allusion", as Fowler thinks, to the "'false apostles ... transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ' ... 'Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light'" in *2 Cor.* 11. 13f. The significance of the episode in *PL* hardly points in the direction of this New Testament passage.

[1] "Satan's Metamorphoses and the Heroic Convention of the Ignoble Disguise" (*MLR* 52, 1957, pp. 81ff.).
[2] Steadman, pp. 83ff.

The disguise assumed by Satan, natural enough in his encounter with an angel, is more detailed than would at first seem warranted by the context:

> And now a stripling Cherube he appeers,
> Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
> Youth smil'd Celestial, and to every Limb
> Sutable grace diffus'd, so well he feignd;
> Under a Coronet his flowing haire
> In curles on either cheek plaid, wings he wore
> Of many a colourd plume sprinkl'd with Gold,
> His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
> Before his decent steps a Silver wand.

In view of the situation, the brief piece of information stating that Satan assumed a cherub's shape would have been quite enough; the story could have developed quite satisfactorily if no more had been said. The passages on disguises in Virgil, Vida, Tasso, Camoëns, Marino, and *In Quint. Nov.* are differently motivated. Kranidas feels that humour and theatricality are obvious in the account of Satan's disguise as a cherub:[3] his curls are less manly and dignified than Adam's, his wings "less stunning and less strong" than Raphael's, his "theatrical glitter" not comparable to the radiance of Uriel described a few lines earlier. Also, the disparity between Satan and his disguise, though necessary and "proper", is "laughable". Greene asks himself whether there is "a faint touch of scornful pride in the bedecking of Satan in these worn lineaments of literary tradition".[4] But there may be a different explanation of why the story slows down at this particular point, making room for the extended description of the cherub. In part the reason seems to be one of symmetry and correspondence: the portrait of the cherub corresponds to and contrasts with the detailed description of the serpent and its nature in 9.494ff. On a different level it also corresponds to and contrasts with the description of Raphael-the Phoenix in the fifth book. The chief significance of the paragraph on the cherub, however, seems to emerge from a comparison with the matrix, the fairly homogeneous infracontexts. Early commentators, from Newton onwards, refer to passages in *FQ*, in *GL* – the original and Fairfax's translation – and in the second book of the *Strage*. In *FQ* 2.8.5ff., after Guyon's return from pseudo-inferno, he lies in a swoon on the ground, and at his side there sits a "fair young man" whose appearance bears an unmistakable similarity to the false cherub in

[3] "Satan's First Disguise" (*ELN* 2, 1964, pp. 13ff.).
[4] *The Descent from Heaven*, p. 375.

PL; he is 'Of wondrous beautie, and of freshest yeares', a tender bud beginning to blossom, fairer than his peers; he has a snow-white forehead, golden locks, a face like Phoebus shining divinely and wings like 'painted Iayes'. In a subsequent Homeric simile he is compared to Cupid who, having left aside his bow and arrows, plays with his fair mother and the three Graces. This detailed description of angelic features and of the incarnation of love contrasts with the description of sins and infernal torments at the end of the preceding canto, and foreshadows Guyon's salvation from the dangers which threaten him from the Paynim knights (8.10ff.).

These effects are heightened by those produced by the infracontext in *GL* 1.13–14, already discussed in a different connection. Sent down by God to encourage the Christians and promise them victory, Gabriel is described in a way strongly resembling the *FQ* and *PL* passages, with the same emphasis on youth, divine appearance, angel's wings:

> Humane membra, aspetto human si finse,
> Ma di celeste Maestà il compose;
> Tra giouane, e fanciullo età confine
> Prese, ed ornò di raggi il biondo crine.
>
> Ali bianche vestì, c'han d'or le cime,
> Infaticabilmente agili, e preste,
> Fende i venti, e le nubi, e va sublime
> Soura la terra, e soura il mar con queste,

and finally, as said before, Gabriel 'si librò su l'adeguate penne'. The similarities between the *PL* passage and the *GL* stanzas are accentuated by the interlink of Fairfax's translation. The archangel was like a 'stripling', 'thrice five winters olde', and radiant beams adorn his golden locks;

> Of silver wings he took a shining paire,
> Fringed with gold, unwearied, nimble, swift,
> With these he parts the winds, the clouds, the aire,
> And over seas and earth himselfe doth lift;

while the final line is rendered by 'And shook his wings with rorie May-dews wet'. The mention of the angel's nimbleness and swiftness connects the Fairfax version with Milton's 'His habit fit for speed succinct', as does the detail of the gold-tipped wings; while 'stripling' in the same text perhaps indicates the origin and meaning of Milton's 'stripling Cherube'. Both these details, swiftness and golden wings, serve to

emphasize qualities conspicuous in angelology. According to Anselm, as said before, angels 'alacri discursu jugiter meant inter caelum et terram, quasi apes negotiosae inter alvearia et flores'; Gregory of Nazianzus and Tertullian point out that angels are everywhere simultaneously and cover great distances without difficulty.[5] Gold is traditional in descriptions of angels' wings, and its allegorical meanings, as mentioned earlier, are carefully defined in patristic literature.[6] The sense "excellence of sanctity" is obviously essential in Dante's use of golden wings in the *Paradiso* 31.14, where the angels, with faces of vivid flame, have 'l'ali d'oro, et l'altro tanto bianco, / Che nulla neue a quel termine arriua'.

Yet another angel portrait forms part of the infracontextual pattern relevant to the meaning of the surface context in *PL*. In the second book of the *Strage degli Innocenti* (94ff.) Marino provides a detailed and magnificent description of the Archangel Gabriel sent by God to the house of Sleep, asking Vision to warn Joseph of the impending massacre. Marino's detailed stanzas on the angel are composed in his flamboyant manner and afford an idealized and rather sensuous description of human beauty: the divine messenger, shaping his limbs and colours out of light air, descends through the white light of the lower heavens and arrives on earth in the shape of a youth with bare shoulders, gold-and-azure tunic falling in undulating folds held together by a gem-studded clasp. His wings are large and shimmering, his flowing golden locks are perfumed, garlands of immortal rubies surround his ivory forehead, his dancing feet are adorned with gold and jewels. He is indeed, as Greene says, described "with elegant virtuosity" (p. 250). As Pozzi has shown, this description in its turn has affinities with details in Sannazaro's lines on the angel in the Annunciation episode of his *De Partu Virginis* – 'pulcherrimus ... versicolore ... pluma' (reminiscent of the cherub's 'many a colourd plume' in l. 642 of *PL*); also with Marino's stanzas on Amore descending from the heavens (*L'Adone*, 1.38f.: 'Come prodigiosa acuta stella, / Armata il volto di scintille e lampi'), and with Ovid's portrait of Iris on her way to the House of Sleep, dressed in a mantle of a thousand colours (*Met.* 11.589). Frye demonstrates how these literary infracontexts in their turn are reinforced by a large number of adolescent cherubs in art, particularly in 15th-century Italy (pp. 176ff.).

If related to these different infracontexts, Milton's description of the satanic cherub in 3.634ff. takes on a particular significance. With their insistence on youth, golden wings and veils, swiftness and dazzling

[5] On Anselm see above, p. 41; Gregory Naz., *Or.* 28.31 (*PG* 36.72); Tertullian, *Apologeticus* (*PL* 1.407).

[6] See *Marino and Crashaw: Sospetto d'Herode. A Commentary*, pp. 133f., and p. 168 above.

beauty, the homogeneous infracontexts as it were stress the corresponding details in Milton's description, reinforce the portrait and throw it into relief, while at the same time affording a double contrast. The cherub is on every point identical with a genuine angel as described infracontextually, and yet is false and satanic; the cherub is also described in such detail as is otherwise only used to emphasize the coming fortunate course of events, yet in Milton's poem is a harbinger of coming disaster. The details and the submerged contrast effects operate as pointers suggesting the real extent of the fraud perpetrated by Satan in a disguise conforming, in all its details and in the horizontal and vertical contexts, to the models it imitates. Not only is Satan skilful enough to deceive Uriel, albeit only for an hour; his disguise is so well made as to suggest both a divine wearer and a herald of good and happy events. The description is a measure of the dangerousness of Satan to the world.

To these meanings may be added yet another, which emerges from Frye's analysis of the significance of the cherub's two attributes: the silver staff and 'his habit fit for speed succinct', which means girded up so as to allow free movement. Frye shows that these attributes have a special function, indicating the wearer to be a guardian angel. Raphael often appears as such in iconography; in Netherlandish art, for example, he and other angels with a guardian's function are frequently represented with both attributes, staff and girded robes (Frye p. 178). These attributes as worn by Satan thus have a heavily ironic significance: Satan appears not only as an angel but masquerades as a guardian and protector of human souls, and "the nexus of associations takes on a new depth of meaning" when it is recognized that Satan in his first disguise assumes the appearance associated with Raphael and what he signifies (Frye p. 179). Satan is a "black" counterpart to Raphael, not only as far as the description is concerned, but also the function: Raphael, Frye observes (p. 179), was apparently chosen as instructor for Adam and Eve owing to his "traditional role as guardian angel *par excellence*". Again, while Satan is disguised, Raphael on his way down from Heaven of course appears in his genuine celestial splendour. The irony of the episode has a sardonically earnest twist to it: the guidance provided by Satan, the very opposite of that of Raphael, is temporarily successful, and the wand and the girded robe seem to indicate, symbolically, that Satan's disguise is complete and fatal.

11. Satan as Wolf and Cormorant

The sharp contrast on the horizontal level between the episode of Satan-the-cherub and that of Satan in the guise of wolf and cormorant – shapes which are openly indicative of Satan's real character – is reminiscent of that between Satan as morning star and as comet.

After the double Homeric similes in 4.183ff., comparing Satan in turn to a 'prowling Wolfe' driven by hunger and attacking a flock of sheep in their fold, and to a thief breaking into a rich burgher's store-house though securely bolted and locked, Milton arrives at the tenor, merging it with the vehicle part of the simile: 'So clomb this first grand Thief into Gods Fould: / So since into his Church lewd Hirelings climbe'. The various significances packed into the wolf symbol – sexual rapacity, violence, falseness, misuse of secular and religious power[1] (the last-mentioned theme earlier found in Peter Damiani and Alvaro Pelayo[2]) – and the stress on the thief theme, supported by tenor and vehicle alike, prepare us for the meaning of the subsequent lines. These are however also invested with further and more precise significance by a group of infracontexts:

> Thence up he flew, and on the Tree of Life,
> The middle Tree and highest there that grew,
> Sat like a Cormorant.

The collocation of 'Cormorant' and 'Tree of Life' is charged with meanings derived from a complex cluster of infracontexts. 18th-century critics like Addison and Pope felt that the cormorant's origin was Homeric. Addison referred to "that passage in the *Iliad*, where two deities are described, as perching on the top of an oak in the shape of vultures";[3] in other words 7.58ff., where Apollo and Pallas in bird disguise enjoy the sight of embattled armies and a forest of lances, helmets and shields. Pope, however, thought that Satan-the-cormorant was suggested to Milton by Sleep sitting in the shape of a bird in a fir-tree in order to plunge Zeus into a deep slumber at Hera's instigation (14.286ff.).[4] But these two Homeric passages have little relevance as infracontexts to Milton's cormorant; nor have other possible classical accounts. There can be little doubt that the only relevant infracontexts are of Christian origin. Bowle thought Milton might have got the idea from Avitus' enumeration of Satan's disguises, among others his assuming the shape of a bird (*De Orig. Pecc.* 63ff., *PL* 59.331). But why a cormorant? Bush says the

[1] See Rowland, *Animals with Human Faces*, pp. 161ff.
[2] See Gmelin 1, p. 302.
[3] "Observations on *Paradise Lost*", Todd 1, p. 317.
[4] According to Todd annotating Addison's "Observations".

cormorant was "a traditional symbol of greed"; Fowler, that the cormorant stands for greedy rapaciousness, particularly often in references to "hireling clergy", as in Nashe's *Anatomie of Absurditie* (and of course in 'Lycidas'). One interpretation of the cormorant perched on the tree of life (the tree being mentioned in *Rev.* 2.7, 22.14), according to Fowler, is that "hirelings want a corner in immortality". He also feels that the cormorant, like other forms assumed by Satan, foreshadows Judgement, referring to *Is.* 34.11 on Edom laid waste by the avenging God: 'The cormorant and the bitterne shall possesse it'. The same text goes on: ... 'the owle also and the rauen shall dwell in it, and he shall stretch out vpon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptinesse'. In v. 10 it is described how Edom goes up in smoke and shall lie waste for generations. But the cormorant is the reading only in *AV*,[5] and 'Judgement' does not seem to be one of the basic meanings implied. Patristic Latin commentary on the passage is based on the Vulgate list of predatory birds: 'Et possidebunt illam onocrotalus et ericius, et ibis, et coruus habitabunt in ea; et extendetur super eam mensura, vt redigatur ad nihilum, et perpendiculum in desolationem'. The Vulgate 'coruus' would seem to be the closest equivalent of 'cormorant' ('coruus marinus'), and the four animals signify impious idolaters inhabiting Jerusalem laid waste after the expulsion of the Jewish people (Jerome), or different kinds of idolatrous and wicked people invading the ground where faith no longer reigns; 'coruus' symbolizes 'nigredinem peccantium vel infidelium' (Hervaeus).[6] Some Greek fathers, following the *LXX* list ὄρνεα – ἐχῖνοι – ἴβεις – κόρακες (birds, hedgehogs, ibises and ravens), provide a different interpretation: the animals enumerated are impure spirits reigning in godless people's minds (Cyrillus, Theodoretus).[7] So the raven-cormorant as interpreted by these commentators stands for evil and for godless sinners, a significance heightened by Augustine's discussion of the symbolism of 'coruus' as opposed to that of 'columba': the dove's sweet moanings are expressive of the love of God, while the croaking voice of the raven symbolizes the love of carnal and transitory things.[8] In Sedulius' *Hymn* 1, 104 (alluding to *Gen.* 8) the opposition 'coruus-columba' recurs: 'Discedant corui, sola columba redit'; Remigius comments laconically, 'corui: impii; columba: ecclesia'.[9] There is then a

[5] The Coverdale, Matthew's, and Bishops' Bibles give 'Pelicans, Storkes, great Owles, and Rauens'; Geneva provides 'Pelicane, hedgehog, great owle, and rauen.' There is considerable uncertainty as to the meaning of the second animal; *AV* 'bitterne' is another possibility.

[6] Jerome, *Comm. in Is. Proph.* (*PL* 24.372), Hervaeus, *Comm. in Is.* (*PL* 181.326f.).

[7] Cyrillus, *In Is. lib. III* (*PG* 70.745); Theodoretus, *In Is. cap. XXXIV* (*PG* 81.389).

[8] *In Joann. Evang. Tractatus* 6.2 (*PL* 35.1425f.).

[9] Sedulii *Opera Omnia* (*Corpus Script. Eccles. Latin.*, 10th ed. Huemer, Vindobonae, 1885, pp. 162, 358).

submerged contrast to the Dove-like spirit 'brooding on the vast Abyss' in 1.21, a contrast that recurs in the account of Satan hovering over the abyss in bk. 2. Another sharp contrast, as pointed out by Riggs, builds up between Satan-the-cormorant and Raphael-the Phoenix:[10] the former stands for sin and fall, the latter for holiness and resurrection.

Thus the chief meaning of the 'cormorant' seems suggested by converging infracontextual indications, parts of a simple code. The basic text on the tree of life in *Gen.* 2.9 reads, 'And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow euery tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and euill', and in 3.22, God's words after the Fall: 'And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of vs, to know good and euill. And now least hee put foorth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eate and liue for euer: 23 Therefore the Lord God sent him foorth from the garden of Eden', etc. The tree reappears in *Rev.* 2.7, 'To him that ouercommeth will I give to eate of the tree of life, which is in the middest of the Paradise of God', and 22.14, 'Blessed are they that do his commandements, that they may haue right to the tree of life, and may enter in thorow the gates into the citie' (of God). It is thus not surprising that Milton's *De Doctrina Christiana* 1.10 or Willer's *Hexapla in Genesin* of 1608, as Fowler observes, interpret the tree of life as a symbol of immortality on condition of obedience. As Williams, Steadman, and Evans among others have shown, this is the opinion of a vast majority of commentators, early and late.[11] Some of them call the tree a sacrament, an opinion apparently not held by Milton.[12] Certain Fathers and medieval commentators, for example Ambrose, Augustine, and Godefridus, add that the tree of life may signify holy wisdom, enabling those who possess it to recognize and annihilate evil and to meditate on God and things celestial.[13] The tree of life is also often identified with Christ and the cross; I shall return to this identification below (pp. 268f.).

Ann Gossmann[14] feels that the various allegorical meanings attributed in patristic commentary to the tree of life are irrelevant to an interpreta-

[10] The arch-angel's ministry suggests "the example of immortal Christ; in contrast, Satan, the infernal minister, is transferred here into a deadly fisher – of men" (*The Christian Poet in 'Paradise Lost'*, pp. 107f.).

[11] Williams, *The Common Expositor,* Chapel Hill, 1948, pp. 102ff.; Steadman, "The Tree of Life As Messianic Symbol" (*Milton's Epic Characters,* pp. 82ff.); Evans, *'Paradise Lost' and the Genesis Tradition,* Oxford, 1968, pp. 153, 169. See also J. E. Duncan, *Milton's Earthly Paradise. A Historical Study of Eden,* Minneapolis, 1972, p. 135.

[12] Fowler, note, Williams, p. 103. See also Sister M. I. Corcoran, *Milton's Paradise with Reference to the Hexameral Background,* pp. 24ff.

[13] Ambrose, *In Apocal. Expos.* (*PL* 17.966), Augustine, *De Genes. contra Manich.* 2.9 (*PL* 34.203), Godefridus, *Hom. Dominicales* (*PL* 174.146). See also Evans, pp. 757.

[14] "The Use of the Tree of Life in *Paradise Lost*" (*JEGP* 65, 1966, pp. 680ff.).

tion of *PL* as compared to the tree as an image, a manifestation of one of the major themes. It is an element in the great antithesis between good and evil; it is "not *the* Tree of Life any more than the four rivers are the cardinal virtues, but an analogous or metaphorical tree of life as expounded by Raphael" (p. 686). So, unlike the tree of knowledge with its rich and complex meanings, explored through action and dialogue, "stands the Tree of Life, bearing silent witness to all that Adam and Eve ignored: Christlike humility, obedience, love, and wisdom" (p. 687). But these various interpretations are not mutually exclusive, and surely this is a point where the poem loses a lot of meaning unless attention is paid to the significance conveyed by the infracontexts. The surface context is so far from being sacrificed, if we regard it as part of a vertical context system, that it is on the contrary enriched: symbolizing immortality and/or holy wisdom, in turn subsumed by such meanings as Christ and the cross, the tree of life diffuses significance in both directions within the framework of the poem. It reinforces the meaning of the dialogues in Eden and the Council and the War in Heaven, and provides contrasts to that of the Infernal Council motif in the first two books.

Satan sitting like a cormorant on the tree of life is thus obviously a symbol of sin and godlessness, invading and corrupting purity and ruining the hope of immortality; the cormorant perched on the tree foreshadows the Fall. Lines 196ff. in fact confirm this interpretation, expounding the significance of Satan's act:

> ... yet not true Life
> Thereby regaind, but sat devising Death
> To them who liv'd; nor on the vertue thought
> Of that life-giving Plant, but onely us'd
> For prospect, what well us'd had bin the pledge
> Of immortalitie. So little knows
> Any, but God alone, to value right
> The good before him, but perverts best things
> To worst abuse, or to thir meanest use.

Before we discuss this significance we must review the opinions of earlier commentators on these lines and on the biblical infracontexts. How could Satan have put the tree to good use? Being himself immortal, how could he regain true life? Hume, in a comment only referred to by Masson, thought that if Satan had known about the virtue of the tree he might have made Adam and Eve eat of its fruit *after* tasting the tree of knowledge, and so made them immortal in "Immutable Misery". Regarding this as "supersubtle" but not wholly rejecting it, Masson feels that Satan may have used the tree "for the mean purpose of prospect

only'', unconcerned about its mysterious virtue and the higher use he might have made of it. Thyer felt that 'well us'd' refers to Adam and Eve; Newton, objecting that 'well us'd' and 'onely us'd' must refer to the same person, thought a reasonable sense might be that Satan could have ''taken occasion ... to reflect duly on life and immortality'', thereby putting himself in a position to regain both. According to Richardson (p. 145), Keightley, Verity, and Fowler Satan, though already immortal, might by obedience, by considering the virtue of the tree, have regained true life, a blissful existence.

Now it appears from the *Revelation* passages and from exegetical comments that bliss and immortality can only be conferred on those who have overcome evil. When God in *Gen.* 3.22 directs that fallen Adam must not eat of the tree some commentators naturally conclude that the prohibition is a just kind of punishment: man sins, therefore is excluded from eternal life.[15] But 3.22 implies that even after committing the sin man might obtain immortality, so other authorities feel it was an act of pity on the part of God to prevent fallen man from eating of the fruit: he would otherwise have had to live in sin and misery for ever. Evans (p. 84) shows that this argument seems to originate with Philo and to be elaborated by Theophilus; it is also found in Angelomus (sinful man, if immortal, would be comparable to the devil), in Chrysostom and Procopius, and in Fagius and Castalio among the Critici Sacri.[16] Rupert[17] thinks that Satan obviously did not know the virtues of the tree of immortality: had he known, he would no doubt have made man eat of its fruit too, thereby making him eternally miserable. Hume refers to Rupert's point and his own argument is thus not without foundation, but ll. 201–204 would seem to show that his interpretation is indeed oversubtle. However, the point made by later commentators that Satan might have regained true life had he considered the virtue of the tree and been obedient is not convincing either: if he had been obedient he would not have been in Eden in the first place. The archsinner has certainly debarred himself from any chance of regaining eternal blissful life;[18] as far as mere immortality is concerned he possesses it already. Satan, in the situation in which he finds himself, would thus have taken no personal interest in the virtue of the tree. Considering this and the fact that man has not yet sinned, what possible sense could lines 196–204 convey? Linguistically, there is no indication that the words 'yet not true Life / Thereby regaind'

[15] Augustine, *De Gen. contra Manich.* (*PL* 34.217), Bede, *Hexaem., Gen.* 3 (*PL* 91.61), Hugh of St. Cher on *Gen.* 3.22 (*Crit. Sacr.* 1).
[16] Angelomus, *Comm. in Gen.* (*PL* 115.145), Chrysostom, *In Cap. Gen. Hom.* 18 (*PG* 54.151), Procopius, *Comm. in Gen.* (*PG* 87.224), *Crit. Sacr.* 1, *Gen.* 3.22.
[17] *De Trin. et Oper. Ejus* (*PL* 167.317).
[18] See Patrides, *Milton and the Christian Tradition,* pp. 119f.

refer to Satan, as Newton and others take for granted. It would rather seem that 'not true Life / Thereby regaind' and 'but sat devising Death', forming an antithetic chiastic pattern, both qualify 'To them who liv'd' construed ἀπὸ κοινοῦ : though sitting on the tree of life he did not regain true life for those who lived, but devised death for them instead. *Genesis* does not say that prelapsarian man is immortal; but apparently he is not mortal either, since death forms part of the punishment meted out in 3.17–19. Apparently Milton regarded prelapsarian man as potentially mortal or immortal ('posse non mori'), depending on his use of the tree of life and the tree of knowledge. According to Evans (p. 17 and n. 2), this was in fact the opinion of the Rabbis, the Greek Apologists, and Augustine.[19] If Satan had used the tree well and considered its virtues without evil intention, he would have regained life for those who already lived, but Life in its true form: blissful immortality. Instead he chose to "pervert best things to worst abuse or to their meanest use", perversely using the tree of life as a place to plan the act which would end in expulsion and death for man. In addition to the meaning "a place affording an extensive view" (Lockwood), 'prospect' also means "a mental looking forward; consideration or knowledge . . . of something future".[20] Since however in patristic and later commentary the tree of life also stands for Christ,[21] the lines on the cormorant perched on the tree have a further significance beyond that of evil corrupting purity: they prefigure Satan's different attempts on the life of Christ the man, the last of which proved successful.

Further semantic intensification is bound up with the medieval tradition associating the tree of life not only with Christ and the cross, the "world tree" (the cross on Golgatha was believed to have been made from the tree of life) but with the tree of the Phoenix and with the tree of Jesse.[22] Again, according to Ambrose, Christ is both the tree of life and the tree of knowledge: 'Qui ergo beatus est, imitator erit Domini Jesu,

[19] See also Williams on Renaissance commentators' views of the immortality problem (*The Common Expositor,* pp. 104f.); and W. R. Parker, *Milton. A Biography,* Oxford, 1968, 1, p. 488.

[20] *OED prospect* 8.

[21] 'Lignum vitae' = 'Christus': Hilarius, *Tract. in Ps. Prim.* (*PL* 9.255), Augustine, *De Gen. ad Litt.* (*PL* 34.376), *De Civ. Dei* 33.21 (*PL* 41.395), Haymo, *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 117.1212), Bruno Ast., *Expos. in Gen.* (*PL* 164.163), Alanus de Insulis, *Elucid. in Cant. Cantic.* (*PL* 210.66), Origen, *Jesu Nave, Hom.* 18 (*PG* 12.868), John of Damascus, *De Fide Orthodoxa* 2.11 (*PG* 94.918). See also Grabar, *Christian Iconography,* p. 143.

[22] See W. Molsdorf, *Christliche Symbolik der Mittelalterlichen Kunst,* Leipzig, 1926, pp. 192ff.; F. Utley, "The Prose *Salomon and Saturn* and the Tree called Chy" (*Med. St.* 19, 1957, pp. 68f.); Ann Gossman, "The Use of the Tree of Life in *Paradise Lost*", p. 684; M.-M. Davy, *Initiation à la Symbolique Romane,* pp. 258f.; G. Schiller, *Ikonographie der Christlichen Kunst* 2, Gütersloh, 1968, pp. 145f.; and Duncan, *Milton's Earthly Paradise,* pp. 68, 211, and 246.

qui est lignum vitae, lignum sapientiae' (*In Psalm. I Enarr.*).[23] As for the tree of knowledge and its significance, Patrides calls attention to exegetic passages connecting it with the cross[24] and found in Anselm of Canterbury and in several places in Irenaeus; the motif also occurs in Tertullian's *Adversus Judaeos*, in Avitus' *De Mosaicae Historiae Gestis*, and in the *Missale Romanum* (*Praefatio de St. Cruce*). In all these texts the idea is expressed in antithetic formulae, for instance 'Quod perierat olim per lignum in Adam, id restitueretur per lignum Christi' (Tertullian, *Adv. Jud.* 13), 'Et tamen adveniet tempus, cum crimina ligni / Per lignum sanet, purgetque novissimus Adam' (Avitus, *De Mos. Hist. Gest.* 3.20f.); 'Qui in ligno vincebat, in ligno quoque vinceretur' (*Miss. Rom.*).[25] (In the same way Eve is typologically contrasted with the Virgin: a woman wrought the Fall, a woman achieved the Redemption).[26] Now Evans has demonstrated that both trees, that of life and that of knowledge, were amalgamated in one branch of the tradition, as by Cyprian in his poem *Heptateuchos,* which describes one tree with a double function: 'Gignitur haec inter pomis letalibus arbos / Coniunctum generans uitae mortisque saporem'. The same idea is found in Gregory of Nyssa and can be traced in Prudentius and Dracontius.[27] Later, it appears in Middle English plays and in William of Shoreham's poem on the Trinity. In the English texts, the fusion may be due to the treatment of the motif in the Rood legend.[28] In other words: even on the infracontextual level there is a powerful heightening and intensification of the symbolic significance of the tree of life, different meanings merging and reinforcing one another – often expressed in striking formulae increasing the impact – and further heightening is provided by the amalgamation of the two trees according to a tradition represented in England. These fusions colour and deepen the symbolism of the tree of life in Milton's surface context, and the symbolism thus intensified increases the contrast between the cormorant perched on the tree and Christ hanging on the cross. The cormorant, symbolizing the impending Fall, at the same time paradoxically prefigures the very opposite, the Salvation, which is so often promised in later books in the poem.

[23] *PL* 14.941.
[24] *Milton and the Christian Tradition*, p. 133.
[25] Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo* 3 (*PL* 158.364); Irenaeus, *Proof of the Apostolic Teaching*, transl. Joseph P. Smith (*ACW* 16, 1952, p. 69; the Armenian text is printed in *PO* 12.653ff.); *Adversus Haereses* 5.16.3, 17.3, 19.1 (*PG* 7.1174ff.); Tertullian, *Adversus Judaeos* (*PL* 2.636), Avitus, *De Mos. Hist. Gest.* (*PL* 59.337). See also the sentence from pseudo-Ambrose quoted in *RAC* 2, p. 25: 'Per arborem mortui, per arborem vivificati'.
[26] For example in Irenaeus' *Adv. Haer* 5.19.1. See also A. C. Labriola, "The Aesthetics of Self-Diminution: Christian Iconography and *Paradise Lost*" (*MS* 7, 1975, pp. 292ff.).
[27] Evans, *'Paradise Lost' and the Genesis Tradition*, p. 139.
[28] Evans, p. 188 and n. 2.

There is yet another cluster of infracontexts derived from a small group of IC stories which pay some attention to the disguise motif. This occurs in those IC texts in which, as a result of the Infernal Council, a messenger is to prepare the ground for the persecution of Christ and/or the Christians. Possibly Milton got the original idea of transforming Satan into a cormorant ('like' = "in the guise of") from either of two such texts, Mantuan's legend of St. Catarina (*Secundae Parthenices* 1) and Fracastoro's poem *Ioseph*, translated by Sylvester. In Fracastoro's work Satan, 'full of desp'rate rage' (an addition of Sylvester's), watches Isaac's seed multiplying; determined to do something about it he sends a demon who in various shapes and by different means tries in vain to corrupt Joseph. Driven back by a heavenly guardian, the demon in the shape of an owl perches on the roof of the house of Iempsar, who has recently been given a hellish potion inflaming her passion: 'Alitis oti / Effigiem capit, et tecto se sistit in alto' (fol. 191r.) in order to watch developments, in much the same way as Satan uses the 'prospect' of the tree of life. In the legend of St. Catarina Jupiter, incensed at the success of Christianity, tells Proserpine to make Maxentius reinstate the ancient gods. In the shape of a raven she flies to Rome and, perched on the Tarpeian Rock, laments the fate of the city which has turned away from its ancient glorious ideals. The structural resemblance in these two texts to the Satan-the-cormorant episode – infernal emissary planning to corrupt and tempt man in defiance of God, disguise as raven perched high to survey the scene of the temptation, ultimate failure of mission – is thus close enough to weld the three episodes together into one group. Of these, the *PL* part operates as a powerful intensifier: sender and messenger are rolled into one, lesser demon becomes prince of evil, Joseph and saint become Adam and Eve. Fracastoro's and Mantuan's infracontexts are thus foils to Milton's surface context, so that the result is a vertical *auxesis* effect. This significance is of marginal importance as compared to the essential effects based on the contact between the surface context and the biblical infracontext. The vertical context system of Satan-the-cormorant is thus an instance of the limited semantic importance of a possible source – albeit offering all the basic details that recur in the surface context – as compared with an infracontext which provides limited resemblances on points of detail but supplies essential meanings on a deeper level.

12. Satan as Serpent

Structurally and semantically – and of course thematically – the serpent episode forms a climax coming after the paragraphs on Satan-the-cherub, Satan-as-wolf-and-cormorant, and Satan-as-lion-tiger-and-toad in books 3 and 4. In a curious way the ship imagery is used again in the episode on Satan-as-serpent in 9.510ff. The meaning of the passage emerges in full only in the two-dimensional context: horizontally, after Satan's monologue while preparing to address Eve and after the magnificent description of his disguise (496ff.); vertically, invested with meanings derived from contact with infracontexts in the Old Testament with exegetical comments and in various Greek and Latin poets: a double code. It is necessary to look closely at the surface context in *PL* from 9.463ff. onwards.

The theme of revenge is emphatically stressed in the first few lines of this paragraph. After Satan has stood for a moment 'abstracted ... From his own evil', disarmed of enmity, guile, hate, envy, and revenge, his real nature soon takes the upper hand. Hot Hell always burns in him, and the old thoughts of hate and revenge overwhelm him once more.[1] The syntax of his monologue in 473ff. is irregular, elliptic, broken, staccato-like, as if the words stick in his throat; it is an instance of *asprezza* used to convey the sudden irresistible urge of Satan's inmost feelings. With the lack of syntactic symmetry, the jerky brief clauses and qualifiers (486f. 'Foe not informidable, exempt from wound, / I not', etc.), goes a sustained pattern of antithetic repetitional figures, also of course adding to the emphatic, forcible character of the speech, and characteristic of the beginning and the end of the monologue: 475ff. 'hate – not love – nor hope – hope – pleasure – pleasure – destroy – destroying'; 489ff. 'fair – fair – fit Love – Not terrible – terrour – Love – stronger hate – Hate stronger – Love'. Hammering home the good-evil polarity at this critical point in the epic, Satan decides to take advantage of the situation when Adam is absent. The decision to concentrate his efforts on Eve, Todd points out, reflects Satan's reasoning in Zieglerus' *Protoplastus* (1547): 'Heus, non virum tentabimus; *mulier* erit / *His rebus aptior*; viri ingenium, scio, / Flecti nequit, frangi potest muliere duce', and in the translated version of Rabbi

[1] On the much-discussed question of Satan's motives see for example E. C. Baldwin, "Some Extra-Biblical Semitic Influences upon Milton's Story of the Fall of Man" (*JEGP* 28, 1929, pp. 374ff.); Williams, "The Motivation of Satan's Rebellion in *Paradise Lost*" (*SP* 42, 1945, pp. 253ff.) and *The Common Expositor*, pp. 223ff.; Evans, *'Paradise Lost' and the Genesis Tradition*, pp. 223ff.; Stella P. Revard, "Satan's Envy of the Kingship of the Son of God: A Reconsideration of *Paradise Lost*, Book 5, and Its Theological Background" (*MP* 70, 1972, pp. 190ff.); and Stephen Wigler, "The Poet and Satan Before the Light: A Suggestion about Book III and the Opening of Book IV of *Paradise Lost*" (*MQ* 12, 1978, pp. 59ff.).

Eliezer's account of the Fall: 'Si alloquor Adamum, scio illum mihi non obtemeraturum; quia vir semper difficilior est quam ut avellatur a sententiâ suâ, sed vero mulierem affabor, cujus levis et instabilis est sententia'.[2] Satan is an astute psychologist with a superior intellect, a trait which aggravates the evil in him and makes him more dangerous. Some pessimistic lines in Dante (*Inf.* 31.55ff.) read like a kind of comment on Satan's monologue in *PL*:

> Che doue l'argomento dela mente
> S'aggiunge al mal uolere, ed alla possa,
> Nessun riparo vi può far la gente.

Pietro Alighieri (mid-14th century) was the first commentator to trace this idea back to Aristotle's *Politics* (1.9, *antica translatio*): 'Sicut homo, si sit perfectus virtute, est optimus animalium, sic, si sit separatus a lege et justitia, est pessimus omnium, cum habeat arma rationis'. The statement is commented on by Aquinas,[3] as is a similar observation in Aristotle's *Ethics* (7.6) on evil man doing much more harm than a bestial creature. Aquinas remarks (p. 240): ... 'Unus homo malus decies millies potest mala facere quam bestia, propter rationem quam habet ad excogitandum diversa mala'. The passages in Aristotle and Aquinas serve as a kind of intensifying gloss on Satan's reasoning in *PL:* if what they say is true of rational and evil man, how much more so of Satan.[4]

The fallen angel's only pleasure is thus to destroy, 'other joy / To mee is lost' (477ff.). He keeps up "the character" he has assumed in the fourth book ('Evil be thou my Good'), much as Lucifer in the *Sospetto d'Herode* states that 'all my cheere / Is the solemnity my sorrow beares, / That Mankinds Torment waits upon my Teares' (27). Similarly, Satan's reflection in 9.486f. that he is not 'exempt from wound', (unlike Adam), 'so much hath Hell debas't, and paine / Infeebl'd me, to what I was in Heav'n' harks back to the comparison between Satan painfully making his way across the burning marl and the steps he once took on Heaven's azure (1.295ff.). The final lines of Satan's soliloquy, where he says Eve is fair and 'fit Love for Gods',

> Not terrible, though terrour be in Love
> And beautie, not approacht by stronger hate,
> Hate stronger, under shew of Love well feignd,
> The way which to her ruin now I tend,

[2] Todd on 9.480. Baldwin discusses the point in rabbinical tradition ("Some Extra-Biblical Semitic Influences", pp. 369ff.).
[3] *Opera Omnia* 21, p. 371.
[4] The passages in Dante, Aristotle, and Aquinas are discussed by E. Proto, "I Giganti" (*GD* 20, 1912, pp. 230ff.), and by Gmelin (1, p. 453).

are a chopped-up, as it were inhibited, convulsive piece of language, as if Satan found it difficult to express his thoughts, which even in a non-elliptical, periphrastic form are involved enough: "Eve is not terrible though love and beauty have an element of terror in them, unless they are approached with a passion which is stronger than love, i.e. hate; and hate is all the more effective if concealed by a mask of love, which is the way I have chosen to corrupt her". It is curious that Petrarchism, of all things, has coloured these lines on Eve's charms: 'Terrour be in Love / And beautie' is a variation on the Petrarchistic commonplace that the lady is a destructive force whose beauty, Medusa-like, petrifies the lover, or drains him of energy and life.

After these spasmodic, rugged lines the account of Satan's disguise has a flow and rhythm which combine with the magnificent description to form a sharp contrast with the preceding paragraph, a contrast between the elliptic obscurity of painful emotional processes and the concreteness of an outward phenomenon described almost with gusto:

> So spake the Enemie of Mankind, enclos'd
> In Serpent, Inmate bad, and toward *Eve*
> Addressd his way, not with indented wave,
> Prone on the ground, as since, but on his reare,
> Circular base of rising foulds, that tour'd
> Fould above fould a surging Maze, his Head
> Crested aloft, and Carbuncle his Eyes;
> With burnisht Neck of verdant Gold, erect
> Amidst his circling Spires, that on the grass
> Floted redundant: pleasing was his shape,
> And lovely, never since of Serpent kind
> Lovelier, not those that in *Illyria* chang'd
> *Hermione* and *Cadmus*, or the God
> In *Epidaurus*; nor to which transformd
> *Ammonian Jove*, or *Capitoline* was seen,
> Hee with *Olympias*, this with her who bore
> *Scipio* the highth of *Rome*. (494ff.)

Baldwin, Williams, Patrides, Fowler (note), Steadman, and Frye[5] provide comments on the upright posture of the Serpent – based either on the tradition that this was the way the Serpent moved until the curse, or

[5] Baldwin, "Some Extra-Biblical Semitic Influences", pp. 386ff., Williams, *The Common Expositor*, p. 116; Patrides, *Milton and the Christian Tradition*, p. 107; Steadman, "'Triumph to Shame': Satan's Humiliation and the Serpent's Doom" (*Milton's Epic Characters*, pp. 300ff.); Frye, *Milton's Imagery*, pp. 108f.

that he did so while being used by Satan – and on Milton's fusing the two images of Error (monster and labyrinth) kept apart by Spenser in *FQ* 1.1.11–15 (Fowler). As for the carbuncle, it is pointed out that reddish eyes suggest rage (*Coriolanus* 5.1.64) and that there is an allusion to the elegy on the King of Tyre in *Ezek.* 28.13, who lived in Eden covered with precious stones, carbuncles among them, a verse which was used about Satan in Augustine's *Civ. Dei* 11.15 (Fowler, see p. 277).[6] This will be discussed in a moment. The problem of infracontexts is in fact a very complicated one.

First of all, the symbolic value of the carbuncle is clear enough. In the lapidaries, the stone is praised because it illuminates the night, glowing like a piece of burning coal, and is therefore called ἄνθραξ by the Greeks.[7] It signifies Christ who is the true light and came down to shine for the people in the dark.[8] Its bearer cannot be defeated, and it is the foremost of precious stones just as Christ was the foremost among the apostles.[9] It also symbolizes the ardour and fervour of Heaven.[10] In Hildefonsus' *Libellus de Corona Virginis* 14, the carbuncle is one of the precious stones in the Virgin's crown, illuminating the darkness just as the wearer illuminates the world by the light of her supreme goodness.[11] If we focus attention on these infracontexts the resulting effect of the word in 9.500 in *PL* is a "black" and blasphemous one, much as in the *Sospetto d'Herode* the walls of Crudeltà's palace are made of 'Diaspro impenetrabile', impregnable jasper, a mineral associated with faith, eternal life, and spiritual strength. The contrast between the ways it is used in surface- and infracontexts is heightened by the preceding and succeeding references to winding movements, the labyrinth suggesting Error (Fowler): 'Circular', 'foulds', 'Fould above fould', 'Maze' – the word is indicative – 'circling Spires', 'Floted redundant'.

A different construction, however, can be put on 'Carbuncle' as a rendering of ἄνθραξ. Eyes glowing like coals and fire are stock attributes of evil monsters in classical and Renaissance epics; instruments of the gods or the devil. The closest infracontext here is Grotius' paragraph on Satan's disguise in *Adamus Exsul* 4.1ff. (Newton). The evil serpent approaches and is described in detail by Eve:

[6] Fowler's suggestion of an allusion to Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius* 3.8 (Gyges' ring) seems less relevant.

[7] See Isidore, *Etymol.* 14.1 (*PL* 82.578); Marbodius, *Liber Lapidum* 23 (*PL* 171.1754); *English Mediaeval Lapidaries* edd. Evans and Serjeantson (*EETS* 190, London, 1933, pp. 14 and 82); and *Anglo-Norman Lapidaries*, edd. Studer and Evans, Paris, 1924, pp. 110, 175.

[8] *English Mediaeval Lapidaries*, p. 149 (possible confusion with the ruby).

[9] *Anglo-Norman Lapidaries*, p. 89.

[10] Hugh of St. Cher annotating *Ezek.* 28.13 (4, 219 v.).

[11] *PL* 96. 303.

Quod illud animal tramite obliquo means
Ad me volutum flexili serpit via?
Sibila retorquet ora setosum caput,
Trifidamque linguam vibrat: oculi ardent duo.
Arrecta cervix surgit, et maculis nitet
Pectus superbis: caerulis picti notis
Sinuantur orbes, tortiles spirae micant
Auri colore: lubricos longos sinus
Tendit volumen, terga se in gyros plicant.

'Oculi ardent duo' is practically the same thing as 'Carbuncle his Eyes' (Todd); and a number of details correspond to an extent which makes the two passages look like a kind of double exposure: 'Fould above fould a surging Maze' – 'volutum flexili serpit via'; 'burnisht Neck of verdant Gold, erect / Amidst his circling Spires' – 'Arrecta cervix surgit ... tortiles spirae micant / Auri colore'; 'Floted redundant' – 'lubricos longos sinus / Tendit volumen'. Again, this type of *ekphrasis* – which might just as well represent a precious objet d'art[12] – recurs with similar details in *GL* 15.48 (Bowle), describing the first of the monsters encountered by Carlo and Ubaldo on the island of Armida:

Inalza d'oro squallido squamose
Le creste, e 'l capo, e gonfia il collo d'ora:
Arde ne gli occhi, e le vie tutte ascose
Tien sotto il ventre, e tosco, e fumo spira:
Hor rientra in sè stesso, hor le nodose
Rote distende, e se dopo se tira.

The erect crested head, the golden scales, the fiery eyes and winding coils recur here, merging with the same details in *Adamus Exsul* so as to reinforce the description in *PL*. At the same time Milton's portrait of the Serpent has as it were been purged of such details as add nothing to the account of its movements and "pleasing and lovely shape". Gone, of course, are the spurting of poison and smoke in Tasso's stanza – a conventional feature of the dragon – and the neck swollen with rage. Gone are the hissing mouth, the forked tongue and the spots on its breast which are found in the description of Spenser's Errour in *FQ* 1.1.17: her 'speckled taile' (meaning, as Upton says, "infamous, scandalous").[13] The bristly head in Grotius, 'setosum caput', is replaced by a 'Head / Crested aloft'. It is as though the serpent had shed all attributes which are repulsive or somehow indicative of his true nature. Only the charac-

[12] See Frye, pp. 108f., and Koehler, "Milton's Use of Color and Light", p. 78, n. 21.
[13] Pointed out in Greenlaw-Osgood-Padelford 1, p. 183. See also Hamilton's note on the words in his *FQ* edition.

teristics that afford esthetic pleasure would have been left for Eve to admire, had she but noticed his approach:[14] the agreeably sinuous movements, the crest, the jewels, and the gold. 'Lovely', of course, means "exceedingly beautiful". Another description of Satan as serpent, that in Avitus' *De Originali Peccato* 98ff., is less interesting as an infracontext since the Ovid-inspired poet is chiefly interested in the transformation of devil to serpent: his neck is elongated, his back hardened, covered by scales and besprinkled with bright spots; he emerges like a snake warmed by the spring after the torpor of winter, his burning eyes are getting used to the sun. He fawns upon Eve, producing a kind of melody with his triple tongue.

Underneath this group of serpent portraits there are other, classical infracontexts, above all *Met.* 3.32ff., the description of the serpent sacred to Mars which was killed by Cadmus. This is a brief portrait in a few lines –

> Martius anguis erat, cristis praesignis, et auro;
> Igne micant oculi, corpus tumet omne veneno,
> Tresque vibrant linguae, triplici stant ordine dentes –

containing the basic features selected and elaborated by the Renaissance poets: the crest, the gold, the fire-flashing eyes; also the poison-swollen body and the triple tongue retained by Tasso and Grotius but omitted by Milton. 'Dira micant oculi' in Avitus 112 seems based on Ovid's 'igne micant oculi'. All the monsters of course have a further characteristic in common, that of being defeated by heroes: the serpent in *PL*, *Adamus Exsul* and *De Orig. Pecc.* by Christ, the monster in *GL* by Ubaldo, the serpent in the *Metamorphoses* by Cadmus.

These complex-code infracontexts are reinforced by other accounts of evil monsters whose burning eyes reveal their true nature: the two serpents in *Aen.* 2.210ff. (Bush), infernal instruments of vengeance sent by the gods, with breasts erect and sanguine crests; also, 'sinuat ... immensa volumine terga' ('circling Spires ... Floted redundant'); again, they have 'ardenteis ... oculos suffecti sanguine, et igni'.[15] A remote

[14] Jacobus stresses the fact that Eve ironically does not see the Serpent approaching in all his splendour: "His attempts to lure Eve, right down to the often remarked passage 'Of rusling Leaves' (519) fail until he stands directly before her and 'bowd / His turret Crest, and sleek enameled Neck' (524–525)" (*Sudden Apprehension*, p. 152). The situation in *PL* thus differs from that in *Adamus Exsul.*

[15] Blessington (*'Paradise Lost' and the Classical Epic*, p. 59) feels that Milton's and Virgil's passages are "so unique in epic poetry that there can be little doubt that Milton is emulating Virgil, as Virgil frequently emulated Homer, yet this source has been strangely neglected". But in the infracontextual pattern Virgil only represents one version out of many, though of course Ovid, Tasso, Grotius, and Milton may all have had Virgil's serpents in mind.

synecdochic effect may also be exerted by these lines on the Ophiucus image in book 2 (see p. 211). The burning eyes recur in Tasso's and Marino's descriptions of Pluto and Lucifer on their thrones (4.7 'Rosseggian gli occhi, e di veneno infetto, / Come infausta cometa, il guardo splende'; 7.1f. 'Ne gli occhi ... Luce fiammeggia torbida, e vermiglia'); in the picture of Leviathan in *Job* 41.11, and in *Inf.* 3.109 'Charon dimonio con occhi di bragia'. Incidentally, there is a horizontal link between 'Carbuncle his Eyes' and the fallen angel's 'Eyes / That sparkling blaz'd' in 1.193f., where Satan has not yet left the fiery lake.

Contact with the verse on the King of Tyre in his splendour in *Ezek.* 28.13ff., indicated by Fowler, invests Milton's account with additional meaning. The text in *AV* reads – we need the entire paragraph – 'Thou hast beene in Eden the garden of God; euery precious stone was thy couering, the Sardius, Topaze, and the Diamond, the Beril, the Onyx, and the Iasper, the Saphir, the Emeraude, and the Carbuncle' (Hebrew *borqăt, LXX* ἄνθρακα, Vulgate 'carbunculus') 'and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee, in the day that thou wast created. 14 Thou art the annointed Cherub that couereth: and I haue set thee so; thou wast vpon the holy mountaine of God; thou hast walked vp and downe in the middest of the stones of fire. 15 Thou wast perfect in thy wayes from the day that thou wast created, till iniquitie was found in thee. 16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they haue filled the middest of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as prophane out of the mountaine of God: and I wil destroy thee, O couering Cherub, from the middest of the stones of fire. 17 Thine heart was lifted vp because of thy beautie, thou hast corrupted thy wisedome by reason of thy brightnesse: I will cast thee to the ground: I will lay thee before Kings, that they may behold thee'. No extensive commentary on these verses is necessary to remind us that it is a close parallel to the *locus classicus* on the pride and overthrow of Lucifer, Is. 14.12. The King of Tyre is obviously a symbol of arrogance; his situation in Eden is similar to that of prelapsarian Lucifer in Heaven; his ultimate fate is the same. Augustine in *Civ. Dei* 11.15, as Fowler observes, points out the obvious, explicitly connecting the passages in *Isaiah* and *Ezekiel*: 'Isaias ait, sub figurata persona principis Babyloniae diabolum notans, "Quomodo cecidit Lucifer, qui mane oriebatur"; ... sive quod Ezechiel: "In deliciis paradisi Dei fuisti, omni lapide pretioso ornatus es?" ubi intellegitur fuisse aliquando sine peccato' (*PL* 41.330). What is thus conjured up by Milton's account of the Serpent if connected with the infracontexts in *Ezekiel* and Augustine is the theme of Satan's magnificent prelapsarian existence as Lucifer. To some extent the account in bk. 9 thus interlocks, aided by these infracontexts, with 5.756ff. 'His Royal seat / ... farr blazing ... with Pyramids and Towrs / From Diamond

Quarries hewn, and Rocks of Gold, / The Palace of great *Lucifer*'. The Serpent approaching Eve – if viewed as part of the vertical-horizontal context system described – is depicted in a way which up to a point, stressing his splendour, suggests Lucifer the unfallen angel, a creature on a par with Raphael and his comrades, a good power from whom Eve would seem to have nothing to fear. The disguise, as it were, takes on a new dimension, is invested with a further meaning. The details of the outward description in a sense interlock with the simile in 670ff. comparing the Serpent with 'som Oratour renound / In *Athens* or free *Rome*' where, as Frye remarks, Milton "adds depth and dignity to the figure of the Tempter" (p. 109). However, in addition to the other effects of the description there is also an implied contrast with a conventional picture of postlapsarian Satan, a repulsive monster as unlike his former self as possible: 'S'ei fu sì bel com' egli è ora brutto' (*Inf.* 34.34; see p. 195 above).

The list of names in 505ff. has been commented on by critics interested in the significance of the names individually. But the function of the list as such is no less important. In the context, these classical names in book 9 obviously serve to emphasize Satan's true identity. The detail 'chang'd' in 505, repeatedly discussed by editors, supports this meaning. Dunster and Todd added a comma after 'chang'd', and Fowler says this is what modern punctuation would require, "but this would resolve an ambiguity". If we retain the punctuation, he adds, the line can be an inversion of "Hermione and Cadmus changed (i.e. became) serpents". Fowler in support of this refers to 10.540f., but the easy construction 'for what they saw, / They felt themselves now changing' is something very different from 9.505f. regarded as an inversion. Keightley and Verity, sticking to the text, paraphrase, "not those *serpents* that changed *into themselves* Hermione and Cadmus", and Keightley compares the use and meaning of 'mutare'. Hughes renders 'chang'd' by "metamorphosed". Newton had earlier construed the lines in a similar way, and his explanation is probably the right one: "The serpents *chang'd Hermione and Cadmus*. The form of serpents was superinduc'd, but they still retain'd the same sense and memory; and this Ovid says expressly" (*Met.* 4.595 etc.). "They were therefore still Hermione and Cadmus, though chang'd; as the Devil was still the Devil, though inclos'd in serpent". In the same way, says Newton, Aesculapius was still the same though changed in appearance, "*In serpente deus*, as Ovid calls him". The construction suggests Greek usage, particularly the use of μεταρρυθμίζω, glossed 'transformo', 'traduco', 'retraho' by Stephanus.

Cadmus had angered the gods by killing a serpent sacred to Mars. Fowler feels that Milton "almost certainly intends an allusion to Vulcan's fatal gift to Hermione, which made all her children impious and

wicked''. What is meant is a tradition handed down by Statius, *Theb.* 2.277ff., Hyg. *Fab.* 148, and later mythographers: Vulcan's gift was due to his vindictiveness after Mars' and Venus' deceit. Hyginus describes the gift as a garment causing crime and evil deeds, Statius as a magnificent necklace invested with evil powers and wrought, among other things, of 'viridum ... draconum / Lucentes a fronte iubas'. The subsequent wearers met with violent deaths; the Cadmus-Hermione couple, iceberg-fashion, thus suggests crime and punishment. Though the serpent shape of Aesculapius, 'the God / *In Epidaurus*', was associated with his healing powers, he too was among those who had angered the gods, going too far in exercising his faculty of reviving the dead and therefore, Prometheus-like, being punished by Jupiter. As for the third member of the serpent-group in the paragraph from 505 to 510, the serpents 'to which transformd / *Ammonian Jove,* or *Capitoline* ... Hee with *Olympias*, this with her who bore / *Scipio* the highth of *Rome*', commentators refer to the tradition that Jupiter Ammon in a serpent's guise was the father of Alexander the Great by Olympias, and Jupiter Capitolinus in the same shape of Scipio Africanus. Svendsen (pp. 169f.) quotes Camerarius on the significance of the Serpent, which is Lechery. (At the same time of course the serpent carries many other *in malo* meanings.) As Svendsen points out, referring to this tradition, ''Satan's lust has been so established earlier in the poem and in the tradition that the inference of sexual sin is inescapable'' (p. 170).[16] What we have, then, is two serpent groups suggesting sexual sin, Cadmus-Hermione and Ammonian and Capitoline Jove, flanking the Aesculapius serpent indicating the pride-and-arrogance motif always associable with Satan, and thus significantly placed in the centre. But there is a further dimension to the dismissive comparison – ''not lovelier'' than the glittering satanic serpent are beasts whose beauty really does not amount to very much. Cadmus' serpent form is far from attractive: Cadmus 'ut serpens in longam tenditur aluum / Durataeque cuti squammas increscere sentit / Nigraque caeruleis uariari corpora guttis / In pectusque cadit pronus' (4.576ff.); Hermione's ophidian shape is not described. Of the Aesculapius serpent's outward appearance we only get a few isolated details (15.669f. 'Cum cristis aureus altis ... praenuncia sibila mouit / ... / 673 pectoribusque ... sublimis ... oculos circumtulit igne micantes'). As for Ammonian and Capitoline Jove, his serpent shape does not interest the authors, who refer to Alexander's and Scipio's mythical parentage. In other words the terms of comparison, as long as we stick to the descriptions provided by the texts, are ironically reducible to almost nothing, and Satan-the-Serpent's ''loveliness'' seems

[16] On the same idea in Jewish tradition see Baldwin, pp. 375ff.

to have a dimension of unreality to it – much as the siren of the woods, whose beauty is a delusion. The magnificent description in 496ff., the implied comparisons seem to tell us, is a phantom.

The subsequent account of the Serpent's actions and movements, in which the ship simile recurs, calls up a number of different infracontexts:

> With tract oblique
> At first, as one who sought access, but feard
> To interrupt, side-long he works his way.
> As when a Ship by skilful Stearsman wrought
> Nigh Rivers mouth or Foreland, where the Wind
> Veres oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her Saile;
> So varied hee, and of his tortuous Traine
> Curld many a wanton wreath in sight of *Eve*,
> To lure her Eye; shee busied heard the sound
> Of rusling Leaves, but minded not, as us'd
> To such disport before her through the Field,
> From every Beast, more duteous at her call
> Then at *Circean* call the Herd disguis'd.

Earlier commentators discussed a number of infracontexts suggested by the lines on the Serpent's oblique movements: Ramsay's *Poem. Sacr., Aen.* 5.274ff., *Met.* 15.670ff. and 737f., *Argon.* 4.1541ff., and Nicander's *Theriaca* (264ff.). These different contexts in various ways supplement one another in completing the pattern of connotations evoked by the lines on the Serpent's movements. The most important infracontext, however, is the description in the *Adamus Exsul* quoted earlier in a different context, the very first lines of the portrait of the Serpent provided by Eve: 'Quod illud animal tramite obliquo means / Ad me volutum flexili serpit via?' The first feature of the serpent that strikes Eve is thus also one of those which reveal his real nature, since the 'tract oblique' signifies the devious and fraudulent character of Satan: 'tract oblique' sounds like an echo of 'tramite obliquo'; the vertical *paronomasia* knits the two expressions together. The word 'tract' in the sense "course", "path", or "route" is not a common one generally and occurs only here in Milton's poetry. (Possibly 'tract' is a latinism; 'tractus' used of a serpent's movements means "creeping", "crawling", as in *Georg.* 2.154). Anyway the word heightens the impression of something special, rare, unusual; thus in a sense continuing the mood of the description earlier in the paragraph. 'Trames', "side-way", "by-path", has in its very sense an element covered by 'obliquus'; the word is often qualified by such adjectives as 'transversus', 'occultus', 'devius'. The use of it in a context where movement is described is as unusual as 'tract' is in

Milton; the sense here is "slantwise path" (Kirkconnell). Of the fairly few instances in Virgil, on whose style Grotius seems to have modelled his own, one is particularly interesting owing to the contrast effect provided. In *Aen.* 6.676 Virgil and the Sibyl have arrived at the Groves of the Blissful and their white-filleted inhabitants. Asking for the whereabouts of Anchises, the Sibyl is invited to follow Musaeus 'facili tramite' until he points out the 'campos nitentis'. The easy path in the lower world leads from the just in the Grove to the just in the shining fields; the slantwise path in the earthly Eden on the top of its mountain is taken by the devil on his way to corrupt and destroy. The expressions in Milton and Grotius, merging in a vertical *paronomasia*, are set off effectively by the infracontexts supplying a contrast effect on several points ('obliquus-facilis'; good-evil, Otherworld-Eden). The reason for Satan's sidelong movement, ... 'sought access, but feard / To interrupt', has a sardonic-ironic ring in the wider horizontal context: Satan's ultimate aim is after all not only to interrupt Adam's and Eve's existence in Paradise but to see to it that they will never return there.

Another relevant infracontext in close contact with 510ff. is the account in Nicander's *Theriaca* 264ff. of the cerastes' movements. Attention was called to the passage in Nicander by Meen[17] in a lengthy communication to Todd's edition. Meen felt that "no inconsiderable portion of [Milton's] esteem was reserved for Nicander". Be that as it may, the lines in the *Theriaca* supplement the infracontext in Grotius, not least by anticipating the new ship simile in 513ff. In his list of serpents Nicander compares the viper and the cerastes: the former moves straight ahead; the latter in a quite different way: "But it rolls along slantwise with coiling movements of its middle, winding its way on a tortuous path with its rough back, like the dinghy of a trading vessel[18] dipping its whole side into the sea, sailing against the wind, as it makes its way windward when driven back by a fresh western wind". The tortuous "discontinuity of movement in the Cerastes" (Gow), aptly illustrated by the image of the ships out of rhythm wallowing in the heavy sea, is as it were an eloquent comment on Grotius' and Milton's accounts. Nicander's οἶμον ... σκολιὴν, "tortuous path", corresponds closely to Grotius' 'tramite obliquo' and Milton's 'tract oblique'. There is a kind of semantic intensification with increasing verbal depth: 'oblique' in earlier English can have the sense "deviating from right conduct or thought", "morally ...

[17] Identical with Henry Meen, classical scholar and translator, authority on Lycophron.

[18] Τράμπιος ὀλκαίης ἀκάτῳ ἴσος. Goraeus in his 1557 edition takes the text to refer to the wallowing movements of one ship, and so does a 19th-century editor. But Gow's interpretation is no doubt the right one and follows Nicander's text: "Like to the dinghy of a merchantman". It is the characteristic movement of the cerastes that is illustrated (see quotation from Gow above).

perverse'' (*OED*), but that sense seems much rarer than the other meanings of the word including ''queer'', ''off'', which is found in Shakespeare. In post-classical Latin 'obliquus' = ''hostile'', ''envious'' is attested in a fairly large number of pagan and Christian authors, and the sense ''unjust'', ''unrighteous'' – ''depraved'' in the Fathers – is a still more common meaning of σκολιός. So some vertical connections stress the moral, allegorical connotations of the word describing the Serpent's movements in *PL*. Synecdochically, the subsequent account of the results of the cerastes' poisonous bite in the *Theriaca* adds to the total impact of the entire cluster of passages: the victim, even if he should survive, faces long drawn-out and intense suffering. At the same time an *auxesis* effect is achieved in Milton's text in relation to Nicander's. This intensifying effect can best be described in Meen's words: Milton ''was then busily employed in depicting a new and another serpent: more alluring in its aspect, and more malignant in its purposes, than any of that sinuous brood, which Nicander had described''.

In 514ff. the ship simile, infracontextually submerged in the *Theriaca*, surfaces in Milton's text, establishing contact with other infracontexts investing his lines with further meanings. Lines 513ff., 'As when a Ship by skilful Stearsman' etc. epexegetically expand 'as one who sought access', and in the first place links up with *Argon.* 4.1541ff. (Todd) describing Argo seeking an exit from the Tritonian lake, probing along the beach and looking for a passage now here, now there. The infracontext in the *Argonautica* provides a kind of curiously inverted commentary on Milton's lines: in *PL* the three lines on the ship illustrate and clarify the serpent's movements; in the *Argonautica* the lines on the serpent illustrate and clarify Argo's nosing her way along the coast: ''Just as a serpent moves winding along his tortuous path when the dazzling rays of the sun burn him, and he turns his head from side to side, hissing, and his eyes glow like sparks of fire in his rage, until he slides down into his lair through a fissure – in the same way Argo, searching for a ship-frequented outlet from the lake, roamed about for a long time''. Thus the serpent part of the paragraph in the Greek poem operates as a description horizontally illustrating Argo's movements, and at the same time as an account vertically supplementing the lines in *PL*: lines 510–12 in Milton's poem merely describe the movements, whereas the *Argonautica* tells us in detail what the moving serpent looked like. There is thus an exchange of tenor and vehicle: the image in the Greek text merges with and supplements what the image describes in the English: the serpent; the brief statement about Argo is expanded, as it were, in the image in *PL* telling us about steersman, shore, veering wind, and sail. The result of this interweaving and intertwining of the passages is a kind of complementary distribution in which one context provides more or

less graphic particulars where the other is less elaborate. The resulting effect is a complex, multi-dimensional account of the evil serpent's hesitant, probing movements. At the same time the key words 'tract oblique' are again reinforced and stressed by the same expression as that in the *Theriaca*, σκολιὴν οἶμον, which takes on the same meanings. A further infracontext reinforcing the meaning of Milton's lines and siding with the account in the *Argonautica* – even though the serpent motif is only indicated in one word – is the simile in Ramsay's *Poemata Sacra* pointed out by Newton. The devil is tempting Christ, and when one temptation fails he at once tries out another, like a ship that cannot reach the harbour on a straight course in the hard wind and therefore tries an oblique move instead:

> ... tendere rectā
> Qua nequit, incurvo radit vada caerula cursu;
> Sic gnarus versare dolos, et imagine falsa
> Ludere Tartareus coluber, contingere metam
> Se non posse videns primo molimine, cursum
> Mutat, et ad palmam converso tramite tendit.

Satan tempting Eve and Satan tempting Christ use the same method and the accounts of the identical approach equate the two temptations, making them into identical attempts on the part of Satan to avenge himself on God. The 'Tartareus coluber' is elaborated in detail in Grotius and in Milton's surface context and 'converso tramite' links up with the other formulae, strengthening their chain.

There is thus a centre of vertical context systems held together by the hard core of the superimposed word-groups 'tract oblique' – 'tramite obliquo' –σκολιὴν οἶμον-'converso tramite' and focusing attention, with the aid of the ship motif, tropical or not, on the serpent's probing movements when seeking access and target. Outside the Grotius-Nicander-Apollonius Rhodius-Ramsay group of infracontexts there are other, more peripheral ones within the same wide thematic framework but suggesting other meanings of a more subsidiary character, yet adding to the total effect of the surface context. One such more peripheral infracontext, shorn of the 'tract oblique' formula but retaining the serpent-ship comparison, presents the serpent as crushed and half-dead, thus anticipating the sequel of the evil serpent's story. This is *Aen.* 5.272ff.,[19] describing in a highly realistic way the crippled condition of Sergestus' ship, damaged during the contest and compared to a maimed serpent writhing on the road:

[19] Mention of this passage was made in passing by R. Richardson in his pamphlet of 1747 against the "invidious charges" levelled against Milton by W. Lauder (Todd).

Qualis saepe viae deprensus in aggere serpens,
Aerea quem obliquum rota transiit, aut grauis ictu
Seminecem liquit saxo, lacerumque viator;
Nequicquam longos fugiens dat corpore tortus,
Parte ferox, ardensque oculis, et sibila colla
Arduus attollens; pars vulnere clauda retentat
Nexantem nodis, seque in sua membra plicantem:
Tali remigio nauis se tarda mouebat.
Vela facit tamen, et plenis subit ostia velis.

The two alternative ways of fatally wounding the serpent – half flattened aslant by a brazen wheel or crushed by a traveller's heavy stone – suggest by association in the vertical system the ultimate fate of the serpent. 'Obliquum' evokes 'oblique,' 'obliquus,' σκολιός as describing the path taken by the serpent in *PL* and the Latin and Greek infracontexts. The lack of coordination between the furious writhing of the uninjured part of the animal and the immobilized maimed part recalls Nicander's account of the violent movements of the two vessels out of rhythm in a gale. The serpent still retains his power to hurt and to do evil: 'Parte ferox, ardensque oculis, et sibila colla / Arduus attollens' is not far from Grotius, 'Trifidamque linguam vibrat: oculi ardent duo. / Arrecta cervix surgit', or from Milton's 'his Head / Crested aloft, and Carbuncle his Eyes'. The condition of Virgil's serpent, still furious and ready to bite though in part rendered harmless, is as it were commented on in a different context within the symbolic Christian sphere in Avitus' 'Non tamen in totum periit: pars magna retentat / Vim propriam summaque cluit virtute nocendi'.[20] Naturally, within the same system the maimed serpent above all suggests *Gen.* 3.15 'Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem, et semen tuum et semen illius; ipsa conteret caput tuum, et tu insidiaberis calcaneo eius'. As in the *Argonautica*, the serpent in *Aen.* 5 makes up the tropical part of the description and is far more detailed than the non-tropical part, the lines on the ship struggling along in spite of the damage: in relation to the surface context it thus operates, like the paragraph in the *Argonautica*, by a kind of complementary distribution. It introduces, beyond the matter covered by the Greek text, the theme of the deadly wound, in so doing linking up directly with the biblical motif on the vertical scale, and with numerous references on the horizontal level to the defeat of Satan in *PL*. From *Gen.* 3.15 runs a connective link to *Rom.* 16.20 'Deus autem pacis conterat Satanam sub pedibus vestris velociter'.

Thus the entire cluster of infracontexts in contact with Milton's de-

[20] *De Origine Peccati* 95f.

scription of the satanic Serpent approaching Eve forms a highly complex, double-code pattern reinforcing some parts, putting a certain construction on others, and affording contrasts to yet others. A heightening function is to the fore in that part of the description which concerns the Serpent's movements and the 'tract oblique'; the deeper significance of these details, the theme of fraud and cunning, is stressed by contact with infracontextual key-words. Another intensifying effect is caused by the use of 'carbuncle', which underscores the monster-like nature of the Serpent. At the same time, contrast is afforded by other, *in bono* meanings of 'carbuncle'. Apart from this, infracontexts provide contrasts of different kinds, and in so doing as it were suggest the unreal, specious character of the Serpent's magnificent appearance. He has shed the repulsive features characteristic of his forbears: hidden away underneath the surface, these reveal his true nature and intentions. His unreal beauty is unmasked by the infracontexts. Association with the King of Tyre makes the carbuncle an attribute of the proud rebel in his glory, which is soon to be exchanged for fall and defeat. This latter part of the associative pattern, again, is stressed by the proximity of the crushed serpent theme in *Aen.* 5. Again the name list, besides linking up with the demon lists in bk. 1 and consequently with similar lists in descriptions of Satan's court in IC texts, recalls crime-and-punishment motifs in classical myth. The "complementary distribution" of vehicle-tenor emerging from contact with the infracontext in the *Argonautica* lends emphasis to the complex, multi-dimensional pattern of meanings elicited by the entire Miltonic description of the Serpent.

In the lines from 516 onwards, words link up immediately with the preceding details in chiastic fashion, stressing the guile-and-deceit theme. 'Varied', 'tortuous Traine', 'Curld', 'many a wanton wreath' continue the 'veres-steers-shifts' sequence and are immediately succeeded by the final infinitive 'To lure her Eye', while the 'turret Crest' and 'sleek enameled Neck' in 525, surrounded by 'bowd', 'Fawning', and 'lickd', connect up with the 'Head/Crested aloft' and the 'burnisht Neck' in 499ff. The phrase 'turret Crest' with its collocation of oddly feudal-sounding words is a last reflection of the bright and glittering portrait of the satanic Serpent.[21] When 'Crest' reappears in the episode – the last time in the poem – it is in the paragraph 9.631ff. when Satan leads Eve astray making 'intricate seem strait', and when 'Hope elevates, and joy /

[21] The word 'crest' in *PL* is always associated with Satan: at 4.988, where it may be based on the description of Turnus' helmet in the *Aeneid* (see p. 207); at 6.188 and 191, used about Satan's helmet in the fight with Abdiel; and in the two passages in book nine discussed here.

Bright'ns his Crest'. In this part of the episode the bright-crested serpent leading Eve astray is elaborately compared to a deluding will-o-the-wisp:

> ... as when a wandring Fire
> Compact of unctuous vapor, which the Night
> Condenses, and the cold invirons round,
> Kindl'd through agitation to a Flame,
> Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends,
> Hovering and blazing with delusive Light,
> Misleads th'amaz'd Night-wanderer from his way
> To Boggs and Mires, and oft through Pond or Poole,
> There swallowd up and lost, from succour farr.
> So glisterd the dire Snake, and into fraud
> Led *Eve* our credulous Mother, to the Tree
> Of prohibition, root of all our woe. (634ff.)

The involved, Chinese-box-like syntax stresses the significance of this extended and complex simile, which functions much as the infracontext in the descriptive paragraph in 494ff. does – revealing the feigned, fraudulent, and illusory nature of the Serpent's splendour. At the same time the 'wandring Fire' simile connects up with the deluding-elves image in 1.781ff., another simile emphasizing the unreal, make-believe nature of the demonic world.

But not only the satanic Serpent moves in an atmosphere of false appearance and evil – the impending Fall is foreshadowed in the lines on Eve not minding the rustling sound caused by Satan approaching. She is used to all sorts of noise from animals 'more duteous at her call / Then at *Circean* call the Herd disguis'd' (521f.). According to Hughes,[22] Circe in the Renaissance stands for "the *libido* which, unless reason prevents, transforms the delicately balanced microcosm ... into various beasts; the lustful into hogs, the wrathful into lions, etc." (p. 397). Fowler remarks that the men changed to lions and wolves by the sorceress surprised Odysseus and his followers by "*fawning* on them like dogs" (*Od.* 10.212ff.). As for the classical infracontext, however, it is true that Homer uses the verb περιαίνω, "fawn upon", but Hume cited a closer infracontext in Ovid's version of the story in *Met.* 14.45f., where he uses the synonym 'adulare', describing the same scene that Milton does and where the animals fawn on Circe herself: on her way to take vengeance on her rival Scylla, Circe leaving her palace passes through a crowd of men changed to animals, 'Caerulaque induitur uelamina, perque ferarum / Agmen adulantum media processit ab aula'. Besides corresponding

[22] "Spenser's Acrasia and the Circe of the Renaissance" (*JHI* 4, 1943, pp. 381ff.).

more closely to the version in *PL*, the account of the 'ferarum agmen adulantum', the animals fawning on Circe, takes on a special meaning in view of the Renaissance significance of the myth. The imbruted men fawn on personified Lust and Excess; 'adulare', incidentally, is frequent in the sense "flatter" in late, medieval, and Renaissance Latin. Behind 'duteous' in its ordinary sense of "subservient", "obedient", we can discern this more special significance, and the figure of Eve in this vertical context pattern suggests carnal desire dominating and subjugating reason; Eve-Circe in the role of a follower of Satan is foreshadowed. At the same time there is some truth in Leonora L. Brodwin's remark[23] that two "additional and progressively less embruting temptations" are bound up with the figure of Circe: effeminating sex and enervating idleness, exerting an "unconscious effect" on Satan. Augustine refers to the Circe myth in *Civ. Dei* 18.17–18,[24] where he declares that demons have power over human beings, even though they cannot literally change them into animals, and though they can do nothing against the will of God. But since the danger is there, man should turn to God all the more tenaciously for help: 'Quanto quippe in haec ima potestatem daemonum majorem videmus, tanto tenacius Mediatori est inhaerendum, per quem de imis ad summa conscendimus'. Augustine's words thus run parallel, as a kind of moralistic marginal comment, to Milton's equation of Eve with Circe, and as a kind of interpretation introducing the contrast theme of Salvation in the way several other infracontexts do.

[23] "Milton and the Renaissance Circe" (*MS* 6, 1974, pp. 21 and 58).

[24] See the discussion in Hughes' article, pp. 395f. The Augustinian passage is in *PL* 41.573f.

CHAPTER VII

The Largest Choir

1. Pandemonium

The description of the apostate angels' home and fortress in Hell, 1.710ff., provides information of a paradoxical sort. Pandemonium rises out of the ground like a mirage, but not at the wave of a magician's wand; the process is the result of careful and laborious preparation. True, the builders of the Tower of Babel (the reference is of course indicative, signifying pride) and other 'Monuments of Fame' would need 'an age', and more, to accomplish what the fallen angels can do in an hour. Yet even so a good deal of hard, though magically quick work is necessary before the 'Fabrick huge' begins to acquire its form: one group of workers digs up ribs of gold, another melts them down, severing each kind, and scumming the dross; a third prepares a mould, etc. These various items of labour afford one of the numerous instances of space associated with effort (and later with pain) in the world of the fallen angels.[1] After the account of these laborious preparations, ll.710ff. achieve a kind of contrast effect, depicting as they do the airy effortlessness with which the completed building suddenly, as it seems, rises out of the ground:

> Anon out of the earth a Fabrick huge
> Rose like an Exhalation, with the sound
> Of Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet:
> Built like a Temple, where *Pilasters* round
> Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
> With Gold'n Architrave; nor did there want
> Cornice or Freeze, with bossy Sculptures grav'n;
> The Roof was fretted Gold.

[1] See Cope, *The Metaphoric Structure,* pp. 56ff., and pp. 48f. above. Frye shows that the description in *PL* of an industrious infernal crew erecting a building in Hell is supported by a visual tradition going back to the early Middle Ages (pp. 136f.).

There is magic even in the contrast between 'Rose like an Exhalation' and such concrete and palpable terms as 'Temple', 'Pilasters', 'pillars', etc., an impressive set of architectural details. 'Exhalation' has elicited a considerable number of comments, the most relevant remarks being that exhalations turn into meteors, comets or lightning and thus are ominous for man,[2] that the word suggests something elusive and mystifying;[3] also that Milton's lines are reminiscent of descriptions of the machinery used in masques (see below p. 291), and thus of something "artificial, temporary, illusory" (Broadbent). The word 'exhalation' in *PL* is elsewhere used in coordination with mist and/or vapour, as in 5.185, 425, 10.694, and 11.741, and some contemporary readers may have remembered a couple of lines in a well-known text, Cicero's *Tusc. Disp.* 1.19.43: 'Omne caelum hoc (this atmosphere) ... quod et humidum et caliginosum est propter exhalationes terrae'. This usage suggests the patristic view that air instead of celestial fire is the fallen angels' essence (see p. 48); the treacherous and changeable sublunar atmosphere of mist and darkness is the devils' element. The construction of Pandemonium and the building itself thus suggest something unreal and deceptive – a demonic delusion like the appearance of the devils themselves at the end of the book, existing and non-existent at the same time. These connotations are reminiscent of an infracontext in *GL* 16.70, where Armida's castle – a rotunda enclosing a garden, surrounded by a labyrinth – proves to be transitory and illusory. The sorceress Armida tries in vain to retain her lover Rinaldo, the Christian knight, swears revenge in a fit of fury, calls up a host of spirits while the sky darkens and the sun pales; and the palace vanishes in a violent storm. Both buildings are simultaneously substantial and insubstantial; both are described in architectural detail, and to the exhalation of Pandemonium corresponds the comparison of Armida's palace to a mirage formed by clouds in empty air or a feverish vision. Since Armida and her palace, though perilous enough to the Christians and their cause and belonging to the demonic world, do not compare in dangerousness with the devils themselves and their headquarters, the description in *PL* works *auxesis*-wise, as an intensifier against the background in *GL*. However, some contrasts are obvious. Armida's palace vanishes, Pandemonium rises, a 'Fabrick huge'; the disappearance takes place amid infernal noise – 'Sibili, ed urli, e fremiti, e latrati' (68) –, the growing of Pandemonium amid 'the sound / Of Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet' (711f.). Yet the differences do not affect the deeper meaning. Pandemonium has only a spurious existence; the dulcet symphonies are only seemingly harmonious, being infernal and

[2] Svendsen, p. 87; Heninger, *A Handbook of Renaissance Meteorology*, pp. 42ff.
[3] Broadbent, *Some Graver Subject*, pp. 101f.

therefore not in unison with the ordered world. The palace of the devils might disappear just as easily as it comes into existence; to the divine ear the harmony is dissonance. Another contrast is similarly of a kind that unifies rather than divides: Armida's castle vanishes after the sorceress has failed to corrupt Rinaldo; Pandemonium is constructed as a kind of base where the corruption of Man is planned. But the temptation, we know, though superficially successful, is bound to fail in the end, so at the final stage, Pandemonium as a stronghold is bound to prove useless.

The 'Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet', to the sound of which the walls of Pandemonium rise magically, suggest the description of Thebes rising to the music of Amphion's lyre.[4] This episode is referred to in *Inf.* 33.11 and in various Roman poets: Horace's *Ars Poetica* 394ff., Propertius 3.2.5f. ('Saxa Cithaeronis Thebas agitata per artem / sponte sua in muri membra coisse ferunt'), and Statius' *Theb.* 10.868ff. This latter passage is of particular interest as an infracontext in touch with the 'sound / Of Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet'. In the *Thebaid*, furious Capaneus heaps scorn on Thebes, whose walls he is shortly to smash to pieces with his bare hands:

> Humilesne Amphionis arces,
> Pro pudor, hi faciles, carmenque imbelle secuti,
> Et mentita diu Thebarum fabula, muri?
> Et quidnam egregium prosternere moenia molli
> Structa lyra?

'Carmen imbelle' is suggested by 'Dulcet Symphonies', 'molli lyra' by 'voices sweet', and in the process the entire, scornful passage on the 'humiles arces' is called to mind, merging into the *PL* context. The walls of Pandemonium are as loosely built as the walls of Thebes; as liable to destruction and ruin as the edifice raised by the sound of Amphion's lyre. The theme of *superbia* is suggested by the mention of Amphion: according to one myth, the master musician taunted Apollo and Diana with lack of skill and was duly killed by their mother Latona. His example, according to Ross describing the *in malo* meanings of Amphion, shows the danger of the 'insolency and pride of some men, when they have got some perfection in an art'[5]. 'Dulcet Symphonies' and 'voices sweet' link

[4] See Douglas Bush, *Paradise Lost in Our Time*, New York, 1948, p. 99. Fowler adds, referring to Wittkower's *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism* (London, 1952), that musical proportions were believed, in the Renaissance, to govern the forms of architecture. Also referring to Wittkower, Riggs says the construction of Pandemonium is a parody of creation, being described "by a paradigmatic analogy between material measure and musical harmony" *(The Christian Poet in 'Paradise Lost'*, p. 171).

[5] *Mystagogus Poeticus*, p. 20.

up by contrast with the '*Dorian* mood / Of Flutes and soft Recorders' in 1.550f., the sound to which the devils begin their march with 'Deliberat valour ... firm and unmov'd'; the contrast being sharpened by 'carmen imbelle' and 'molli lyra' in Statius. The infracontext in Statius also suggests the theme of the blaspheming rebel: Capaneus, railing at the gods, is struck down by Jupiter's thunderbolt. The account in the *Thebaid* reminds us of the fate in store for Satan and his followers even while they are in the act of consolidating their power. Before hurling his bolt at Capaneus – just as God strikes the apostate angels with 'Thunder, / Wingd with red Lightning and impetuous rage' (1.174f.) – Jupiter laughs at him, 'furentem risit', alluding to the *Gigantomachia*: 'Quaenam spes hominum tumidae post proelia Phlegrae!' (see the discussion of *PL* 10.616 p. 180). Christ similarly in 5.735ff., before the War in Heaven, addresses God: 'Mightie Father, thou thy foes / Justly hast in derision, and secure / Laugh'st at thir vain designes and tumults vain'. The infracontext in Statius, in a word, acts as a network implicating associations relevant to the meaning suggested by the lines on the building of Pandemonium in *PL*.

The description of the details of the 'Fabrick huge' in 1.713ff.,

> Built like a Temple, where *Pilasters* round
> Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
> With Gold'n Architrave; nor did there want
> Cornice or Freeze, with bossy Sculptures grav'n;
> The Roof was fretted Gold,

has elicited references to various buildings and monuments ancient and modern, real and literary. People have seen in it an ironic allusion to the sun-god's palace in *Met.* 2.1ff.; have noticed its classical design, like that of Pantheon; have suggested that its roof is made of the same material as the pavement of Heaven; and have compared it to the *Forum Vulcani* near Naples, to St. Peter's in Rome, and to various passages in *FQ* (summary in Fowler). To begin with, however, the most important infracontext, linking up with the theme of pseudoexistence and insubstantiality, seems to be that provided by Todd quoting one of Charles I's Sunday Masks and elaborating Peck's suggestion that Inigo Jones's stage set may have inspired Milton's lines (the quotation is also found in Keightley, Beeching, Rajan, and Hughes referring to Todd, and is discussed by various critics): ... "There ROSE UP a richly-adorned PALLACE, seeming all of goldsmiths-work, with porticos vaulted, on pillasters of rustick work; their bases and capitals of gold. – Above these ran an architrave freese, and coronis of the same; the freese enrich'd with jewels. – When this pallace was arriv'd to the hight, the whole scene was

changed into a peristilium of two orders, Dorick and Ionic". The pilasters, the gold, the Doric style, the architrave, cornice and frieze (all instances of technical vocabulary, as Peck pointed out)[6] thus recur in this account of Inigo Jones's stage sets – as does Milton's 'Stood fixt her stately highth' (723, see below) – thus adding the suggestion of something artificial, unnatural and deceptive to the meaning of the lines in *PL*. Roston feels that Pandemonium is a baroque structure such as Milton had seen during his visit to Italy, and Hollington is quite sure that such is the case: "Pandemonium is unmistakeably a Baroque building, and its description unmistakeably satiric".[7] Frye calls attention to the promiscuous joining of different architectural elements in the construction of Pandemonium – a "bastard compound" of Doric and Gothic elements, an example of *goût de la surcharge* (pp. 136f., 135). This medley of styles stresses still more the artificial and specious character of the infernal edifice.[8]

Commenting on Milton's description, Stillingfleet was the first to call attention to similarities in the section on the Cave of Mammon in *FQ* 2.7. This connection operates through the money god who, we learn in *PL* bk. 2, takes an active part in the Infernal Council. Opinions differ as to the symbolic significance of Guyon, Mammon, and the Cave in Spenser's text.[9] The problem is complicated, but it seems reasonable to assume, after Cullen's analysis, that the Cave of Mammon episode suggests the Harrowing of Hell as well as the Temptation in the Wilderness, but that Guyon is not simply a figure of Christ, the Cave not simply a figure of Hell. However, Guyon and the Cave are in various ways *associable* with Christ and Hell, and anyway Mammon is surely a type – or rather a representative – of the devil. Mammon tempts Guyon just as Satan is to tempt Eve; one fails, the other succeeds. In mythography, the figures of Mammon (Plutus) and the god of the Underworld merge: Boccaccio (*De Gen. Deor.* 8.6, 1, p. 401) and Comes (p. 176) both see Pluto as the god of wealth. This identification, which was made by the ancients, is also referred to by Gyraldus (cols. 197 and 201f., in the latter passage with a

[6] "Peck on Milton's Style" (*Milton 1732–1801. The Critical Heritage*, p. 112).

[7] Roston, *Milton and the Baroque*, p. 32; Hollington, "Milton and the Baroque" (*ES* 60, 1979, p. 143).

[8] For further comments on the "disparity" of Milton's description of Pandemonium see Seaman (*The Moral Paradox of 'Paradise Lost'*, p. 78). See also Bush's note on the passage.

[9] See for instance Frank Kermode, "The Cave of Mammon" (*Elizabethan Poetry, Stratford-upon-Avon Studies* 2, London, 1960, pp. 151ff.); H. Tonkin, "Discussing Spenser's Cave of Mammon" (*SEL* 13, 1973, pp. 1ff); Cullen, "Guyon Microchristus" (*Infernal Triad*, pp. 68ff.); and G. A. Moore, "The Cave of Mammon: Ethics and Metaphysics in Secular and Christian Perspective" (*ELH* 42, 1975, pp. 157ff.). See also Hamilton's introductory note on 2, sts. 9–63 (*FQ* edition, p. 225).

brief comment on the mistaken identity Plutus/Pluto). There are also of course various similarities between Pandemonium itself and the House which Mammon shows Guyon, and again Mammon is a link between the two. Gold is a material lavishly used in both buildings: in *PL* 714f. Doric pillars are overlaid with golden architrave, in 717 the roof is fretted gold. In the Cave of Mammon 'Roofe, and floore, and wals were all of gold' (29); the broad gate is 'all built of beaten gold' (40); in the room which houses the assembly 'Many great golden pillours did vpbeare / The massy roofe, and riches huge sustayne' (43).

The *in malo* significance of gold as used in the description of Pandemonium is discussed by James A. Freeman,[10] whose conclusions also have a bearing on the meaning of gold in the description of the Cave of Mammon. In Roman literature ceilings and roofs of gold are morally objectionable, and this kind of opulence is frequently used by Roman authors to indicate the presence or the threat of strife, violence, greed, seductiveness, and ambition. This is the case in several passages in Lucretius, Horace, Statius, and Virgil (Dido's castle, see below); in Lucan's description of Cleopatra's palace, Suetonius' of the House of Nero, and elsewhere. Gold as used in the construction of Pandemonium thus combines with numerous other features (technology, idolatry, baroque extravagance, despotism, and deceptive masque machinery) in enhancing the negative qualities of the infernal abode.

There are other details which intensify the contact between Pandemonium and the Cave of Mammon. After pacifying Disdain and averting his attack on Guyon, Mammon with his unwilling guest enters the hall (43): 'The rowme was large and wide / As it some Gyeld or solemne Temple weare'; in *PL* 724ff. the 'brazen foulds discover wide / Within, her ample spaces' as the curious multitude enters the newly erected building. Another close contact is formed indirectly between the lines introducing the paragraph in *PL* and some other stanzas in *FQ*. In both, the process by which gold is extracted is described. In his account of the impious age, Guyon tells how 'Then gan a cursed hand the quiet wombe / Of his great Grandmother with steele to wound, / And the hid treasures in her sacred tombe, / With Sacriledge to dig' (17); in *PL* 685ff., taught by Mammon's suggestion, 'Men ... Ransackd the Center, and with impious hands / Rifl'd the bowels of thir mother Earth / For Treasures better hid.'[11] As Hume observed, there is a similar account in *Met.*

[10] "The Roof Was Fretted Gold" (*CL* 27, 1975, pp. 254ff.). See also the reflections on gold symbolism in Koehler, "Milton's Use of Color and Light", p. 59.

[11] Seaman (*The Moral Paradox*, p. 78) remarks that the materials used for the construction of Pandemonium "are mined from nature's womb in what amounts to a rape of the created order". See also Freeman, p. 256.

1.138ff. of the brazen age, an age of folly and godlessness, when 'itum est in uiscera / Quasque recondiderat, Stygiisque admouerat umbris, / Effodiuntur opes, irritamenta malorum'. The lines in Milton immediately precede those on the activities of Mammon's crew, who, in preparation for the work on Pandemonium, 'Op'nd into the Hill a spacious wound / And diggd out ribs of Gold' (689f.). The third stage in the preparatory process is described in 700ff., where 'in many cells prepard',

> That underneath had veins of liquid fire
> Sluc't from the Lake, a second multitude
> With wondrous Art founded the massie Ore,
> Severing each kinde, and scummd the Bullion dross;

lines resembling details in Spenser's description of Mammon's forge in 35–36, where 'Deformed creatures, horrible in sight' are working 'To melt the golden metall, ready to be tride, and ... Some scumd the drosse, that from the metall came; / Some stird the molten owre with ladles great; / And euery one did swincke, and euery one did sweat'. Spenser's stanzas are reinforced by another infracontext, that in Valvasone's *Angeleida* 3.19, where the fallen devils cheer up their master by pointing out that his new realm, though dark and forbidding, 'ha nel seno / Gemme, ferri, Oricalchi, argenti, et ori / Che faran vago il mondo' (see p. 231). In *PL* 2.270ff., of course, Mammon encourages Satan by the same means.

The points of contact between the description of Pandemonium and of Mammon's house in *FQ* open up channels of communication leading to further zero-part details in Spenser's stanzas. On their way to the House, Guyon and Mammon pass a group of grisly figures guarding the gate of Hell, which is next door to Mammon's dwelling: Payne, Strife, Reuenge, Despight, Treason, Hate, Gealosie, etc. (21ff.); and outside Mammon's own door 'selfe-consuming Care' is on guard (25). The motif is well-known from descriptions of Hell in classical and Renaissance texts: in *Aen.* 6.273ff. Morbi, Senectus, Metus, Fames, Egestas and others guard the entrance to the realm of Dis; in Claudian's *In Ruf.* 1.30ff. Discordia, Fames, Senectus, Morbus, Luctus, Timor, Audacia, Luxus, Egestas, Auaritia, and Curae take part in the Infernal Council. Assemblies of similar hateful monsters are to be found in Giles Fletcher's palace of Vainglory in *Christ's Victorie on Earth* and in the House of the World in Phineas Fletcher's *Apollyonists*, which Cullen regards as the closest analogue of Milton's Pandemonium, portraying as it does a "council considering Rome's strategy against Protestantism".[12] Gorgons,

[12] *Infernal Triad*, p. 100, n. 3 (see above, p. 82, and below p. 301). Fletcher's description, however, provides fewer points of semantic contact than the other analogues of Pandemonium.

sphinxes, centaurs, hydras, chimaeras and so on appear in the Underworld descriptions in Vida, Tasso, Rolim de Moura, and Mellius de Sousa. The list of serpents discussed previously (p. 111) belongs here too. Another feature aids in revealing the true nature of Mammon's abode: though of gold, it is shrouded in dust and old decay, and like all hells

> hid in darkenesse, that none could behold
> The hew thereof: for vew of chearefull day
> Did neuer in that house it selfe display,
> But a faint shadow of vncertain light (29) –

in other words, a kind of darkness visible.

The descriptions of Armida's palace in *GL*, of the construction of Thebes in the *Thebaid*, and particularly of the Cave of Mammon in *FQ* thus provide semantically important infracontexts in contact with the paragraph on Pandemonium. The systems form a complex code and a comprehensive *auxesis* pattern, in which Milton's descriptions operate as powerful intensifiers.

At a greater distance from the surface context in *PL* there are two groups of synecdochic infracontexts which invest the Pandemonium lines with further significance. One reinforces the theme of deception and illusion, portraying beautiful and magnificent edifices which hide something evil; the other reveals the deeper meaning behind the infernal façades by describing structures which are wholly abhorrent, without any embellishing features. Though being superficially opposites both types thus convey the same sense, and to some extent merge in the description of the Cave of Mammon. As for the first group, G. Goebel[13] has shown that the description of Armida's castle in *GL* is part of a succession of sorcerers' and witches' palaces in Renaissance epics: the transparent castle in Bernardo Tasso's *Amadigi*, Angelica's marvellous island palace and Dragontina's labyrinth in Bojardo's *OI*, the magic castles in *OF*, Acratia's palace and garden in Trissino's *Italia Liberata dai Goti*, and later Falsirena's residence to which a labyrinthine staircase gives access in Marino's *L'Adone* 12.132ff. Here also belong the palace and garden of Vainglory in Giles Fletcher's *Christ's Victorie on Earth* (see Cullen above). It forms part of the account of the Temptation in the Wilderness and is probably based on Spenser's stanzas on the Palace of Pride. These edifices in their turn continue the tradition of fairy palaces in the medieval epic. In many such descriptions the enchanted castles are centres of demonic powers engaged in struggles against heroes whom

[13] *Poeta Faber, Erdichtete Architektur in der italienischen, spanischen und französischen Literatur der Renaissance und des Barock*, Heidelberg, 1971, chs. 1 and 2: 2 (particularly pp. 23ff. and 69ff.).

they try to corrupt or destroy. The element of delusion is often emphasized: what Orlando takes for marble in Dragontina's palace (*OI* 2.4.24f.) proves to be common enamel; Alcina's castle in *OF* 6.59ff. is surrounded by an enormous wall of gold which, the poet adds, may not be pure gold at all but erected by alchemy. The miraculous garden of Alcina,[14] who embodies *voluptas* and Circe-like transforms her lovers into plants, fountains and beasts, contains various magnificent details (st. 71), but as in the case of the golden wall the poet voices his doubts as to the reality of these things: 'O uero, o falso, ch' al' occhio risponda, / Non e cosa più bella, o più gioconda'. In Aequivocus' palace in the *Apollyonists* the 'Portall seemes (farre off) a lightsome frame; / But all the lights are false' (3.28). As Heninger has pointed out,[15] Lucifera's palace in *FQ* 1.44 presents similar features: high, gold-covered walls, lofty towers, and a sun-dial on the roof revealing its deceptive, illusory character, a structure subject to time and decay (as we have seen, the stanzas on Lucifera's palace link up with the lines on Satan's throne in bks. 2 and 10). In the description of Armida's garden in *GL* 16.1 the delusive feature of the labyrinth is emphasized:

> D'intorno inosseruabile, e confuso
> Ordin di loggie i Demon fabri ordiro;
> E tra le oblique vie di quel fallace
> Rauuolgimento impenetrabil giace.

Armida's garden is full of wonderful objets d'art and of all the attractions of the *locus amoenus*, to which Carlo and Ubaldo prove as unresponsive as Ruggiero is undaunted by the monsters crowding in on him in *OF*, and from which he is finally rescued. The episodes and descriptions in these Renaissance epics thus embody the same elements of deception, threat, resistance, and salvation as form part of the significance of Pandemonium in *PL*: to some extent explicitly in Milton's poem, in the description of the infernal palace and the subsequent Council held in it, and in part implicitly as being the result of developments after the Fall.

The other group of architectural descriptions, made up of sections on *loci terribiles*, have prototypes in the House of Mars in the *Thebaid* and in Boccaccio's imitation in the *Teseida*, in its turn imitated in the stanzas on the Palace of Mars in *L'Adone* 12.35 and on the House of Crudeltà in the *Sospetto d'Herode* 39ff. In Statius' and Boccaccio's poems the

[14] Detailed analyses of the enchanted garden motif are supplied by A. B. Giamatti, *The Earthly Paradise and the Renaissance Epic*, Princeton, 1966. See also Duncan, *Milton's Earthly Paradise*, p. 26.
[15] *Touches of Sweet Harmony*, pp. 353ff.

palaces are what the implacable owners make us expect, and the edifices are largely built of iron. This material recurs in the dismal palace of Mars in *L'Adone*, where it dominates the entire structure: floor and roof, pillars and arcs, balconies, partitions, loggias and walls are of solid iron. In Crudeltà's house in the *Sospetto* other materials such as rough flint and jasper are used, but the foundations are similarly of iron. All these buildings are fitted with objects indicative of Mars' and Cruelty's activities. The material used for these buildings suggests the line on Pluto's palace in *Inf.* 8.78, 'Le mura mi parea, che ferro fosse'. Discussing the symbolic meaning of iron, Rabanus Maurus says it signifies trouble and distress, and also the crafty devices of an enemy.[16] These different "negative" infracontexts as it were transform the precious, falsely glittering material, Mammon's and the devils' favourite metal, to the joyless murky substance it really is, just as the infracontextual monsters lurking behind impressive Satan disclose his true nature. The edifice, as Broadbent remarks, is a "façade for the ugly discomforts of Hell".[17]

Some of these gloomy abodes are surrounded by weird gardens, basic opposites of the miraculous bowers of bliss surrounding the enchanted castles. Proserpina's garden in the Cave of Mammon episode (2.7.51ff.) is a melancholy place, 'Fit to adorne the dead, and decke the dreary toombe'; cypresses, trees of bitter gall, poppy, and black hellebore grow there with coloquintida and other poisonous herbs. As observed by Upton, Spenser's description resembles Dante's lines on the Wood of the Suicides in *Inf.* 13.4ff., presenting as it does a sombre landscape without flowers and fruit, and contrasted with a verdant garden:

> Non frondi verdi, ma di color fosco,
> Non rami schietti, ma nodosi e'nuolti,
> Non pomi v'eran, ma stecchi con tosco.

Dante's lines are also suggested by Marino's description of the forest surrounding Gelosia's cave in *L'Adone* 12.7, where a similar series of negatives recurs. It is a 'foresta negra' full of poisonous plants, cypresses and horrible shadows: 'Quasi meno che notte e piu che sera', the last line suggesting the darkness visible in the first book of *PL*. The "Totenwald der Hölle", as Gmelin calls the Wood of the Suicides in Dante, also surrounds Crudeltà's palace in the *Sospetto d'Herode* 44 with the same lethal plants and shadows, and in addition with sighs and tears, the latter detail connecting with another feature of the wood in the *Inferno*, the wailing heard everywhere. While Dante's wood is infested with repulsive

[16] *De Universo libri* 17.18 (*PL* 111.480).
[17] *Some Graver Subject*, p. 102.

harpies, Marino's forests and caves are inhabited by a variety of monsters similar to the conventional list of Satan's crew in IC texts. Of the same kind as these descriptions of infernal forests and gardens is the picture of the scenery around Jerusalem in *GL* 3.56: completely arid, without stream, well, plant, or tree – 'Se non se in quanto oltra sei miglia un bosco / Sorge d'ombre nocenti horrido, e fosco' (repeating the rhyme in Dante). It is a place of horrors, haunted by witches and avoided by man, the scene of the necromancer's anti-Christian rites (13.3ff.).

These death-infested anti-gardens, contrasts to natural fertility and blossoming trees and flowers, have a counterpart in book 10 of *PL* (Hamilton): near Pandemonium a grove had sprung up simultaneously with the changing of the devils into serpents (547ff.). The grove is 'lad'n with fair Fruit, like that / Which grew in Paradise, the bait of *Eve* / Us'd by the Tempter'. The devils 'parcht with scalding thurst and hunger fierce', on trying to eat the fruit, chew bitter ashes instead. This detail interlocks with the legend of the apples of Sodom mentioned by Josephus (Todd) and Augustine:[18] apples which look ripe but dissolve in smoke and ashes when touched – a parody of the temptation of man, at the same time equating ashes with delusion (Steadman, p. 305). The fruit in the devils' grove resembles the poisonous produce of the weird gardens and calls up the punishment of Tantalus (*FQ* 2.7.58), striving in vain to satisfy thirst and hunger in Proserpina's garden with its golden apples.[19] There is also a triple relationship between the pomegranate eaten by Proserpina in spite of warnings, the apple eaten by Eve,[20] and the fruit turned to ashes in the devil-serpents' mouths. The first two cases are associated with fraud and temptation not withstood; the third with punishment following the crime of arrogance and godless pride. The submerged zero-part links branching out from the description of Pandemonium thus surface at the horizontal level in book 10, charged with meaning accrued subterraneously, meanings which then in their turn double back to enrich the significance of the basic description of the devils' hall in the first book. Just as the specious magnificence of the devils' throne in the second book is unmasked by infracontextual additions, so infracontexts filling in the picture of Pandemonium reveal the House of Horrors concealed behind the splendid exterior.

*

[18] See Svendsen, *Milton and Science*, pp. 28f., and Steadman, "'Triumph to Shame': Satan's Humiliation and the Serpent's Doom" (*Milton's Epic Characters*, pp. 304ff.).
[19] Tantalus, as Kermode remarks, is a "type of blasphemous and intemperate knowledge" ("The Cave of Mammon", p. 163).
[20] The connection Proserpina-Eve has been made by several critics, recently and interestingly by Hieatt, *Chaucer, Spenser, Milton: Mythopoeic Continuities and Transformations*, Montreal and London, 1975, pp. 203ff. See also Hamilton, notes on *FQ* 2.7.53ff.

In sharp contrast to these evil infracontextual abodes is a group of "good" buildings – the word "good" to be taken in senses varying from "not tainted by evil" to good indicating "symbolic of divine power". To the "neutral" category belong several classical palaces described in ancient literature, for instance, Alcinous' palace (*Od.* 7.84ff.) gleaming like sun and moon, with bronze walls and thresholds, golden doors, door-jambs of silver, and a cornice of blue enamel. It is surrounded by a garden, a marvel of flowering abundance and fruitfulness simultaneously. Not surprisingly, Alcinous' garden is equated with Paradise by Christian writers early and late,[21] and is used in a comparison in the description of Eden in *PL* 9.441f. In Renaissance texts, the palace of Venus at the beginning of Marino's *L'Adone* is another instance of the "not tainted" symbolic abode, which derives its meaning partly from being antithetic to the palace of Mars, which is synonymous with the palace of Death as appears from Marino's description. In the palace of Venus the workings of Love are indicated everywhere in the numerous and splendid architectural details. True, the goddess owner of the palace is associated with the dangerous seductresses of Homer, Ariosto, and Tasso (6.6), but as Goebel remarks (p. 87) this is to be taken as sophisticated irony and as a playful use of the tradition. The point is that the palace of Venus is not a trap for Christian heroes; no demonic tool has been designed to be used in fights against God.

An important contrastive infracontext is Ovid's picture of the sun-god's palace in *Met.* 2.1ff., an account to which various critics and commentators have called attention. Ovid devotes four lines to the general features of the building:

> Regia Solis erat sublimibus alta columnis,
> Clara micante auro, flammasque imitante pyropo,
> Cuius ebur nitidum fastigia summa tegebat,
> Argenti bifores radiabant lumine ualuae.

Not unexpectedly the dazzling light emitted by the structure is emphasized, a feature only paralleled at the end of Milton's paragraph (726ff.), after the dismissive detour telling us that famous oriental monuments were unable to equal the splendour of Pandemonium:

> From the arched roof
> Pendant by suttle Magic many a row
> Of Starry Lamps and blazing Cressets fed
> With *Naphtha* and *Asphaltus* yeilded light
> As from a sky.

[21] See Duncan, *Milton's Earthly Paradise*, pp. 25 and 27.

While thus the brightness shining from the Sun's palace is the first thing noted by Ovid and is a property of the materials themselves, the light provided in Pandemonium is entirely artificial – as is that in Aequivocus' Roman palace – and placed last in the description. In a region where darkness visible obtains, all light must be created by 'suttle Magic'. In the account in *Met.* 2, the detailed part of the description deals with the reliefs made by Vulcan and representing water, land and sky with their inhabitants: the divinities of the sea and the Nereids; the cities and forests, men and beasts, rivers, nymphs, 'et cetera numina ruris'. All this is a tableau of an ordered world in which everything has its predestined place and function, and contrasts sharply with the hyperbolic lines in *PL* on Babylon and Alcairo, which suggest the boasting and blustering of the fallen angels and the incurable *superbia* of their leader: Milton "links Satan and his host with the barbarous and mighty empires of the heathen orient, empires which are the very synonym of human pride long since overthrown, as such things must always be".[22] A reader of Regius' commentary on Ovid's lines knows that this editor associates the Roman poet's description with an architectonic symbol of the power of the Roman empire: 'Videtur autem Ouidius Regiam solis describere ad imitationem Palatij Romani uel Capitolinij'. There is a similar contrast between the 'Starry Lamps' and 'blazing Cressets' yielding light as from a sky and Ovid's two lines on the real sky as reproduced by Vulcan, the divinely organized firmament with its beautiful symmetry: 'Haec super imposita est caeli fulgentis imago, / Signaque sex foribus dextris, totidemque sinistris' (17f.).

The contrast between Ovid and *PL* extends further, beyond the description proper. The description of the Sun on his throne and his retinue has a symmetry corresponding to that in the account of Vulcan's picture of the sky. The sun-god in a gleaming robe is sitting in the middle; on his left and right are Day, Month, Year, Century, and Hours; Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter are all present in their appropriate garb. The group embodies the regularity and cyclical progression of time, and therefore its constancy and permanence. Commenting on the lines, Sandys stresses the Sun's capacity of being king of the other stars who receive their honour from him: 'His courtiers, the Houres, Dayes, Months, Yeares, and Ages; the Spring, Summer, Autumne, and Winter: being not only their Lord and moderator, but their father; the measure and vicissitude of Time proceeding from his motion'.[23] In *PL*, on the contrary, after the proclamation that a council be held immediately at Pandemonium, there follows a picture of restless, impatient movement

[22] Bush, *'Paradise Lost' in Our Time*, p. 100. See also p. 218 above.
[23] Sandys' commentary, p. 65. See also Heninger, *Touches of Sweet Harmony*, p. 381.

(760ff.: 'They anon / With hunderds and with thousands trooping came / Attended'), contrasting with the static symmetry of Ovid's description, and a kind of close-up of swiftly moving, disordered masses[24] antithetic to the few, well-ordered figures in the classical paragraph. Milton's lines also call up infracontexts which emphasize the sinister purpose of the devils' hurrying to the Infernal Council. In particular, as mentioned previously, it evokes the *Sospetto d'Herode* 64 where Herod, after the nocturnal apparition has incited him against Christ, calls a meeting to discuss the threat. In due course the meeting results in the decision to kill all infants in Herod's attempt to remove the Infant Saviour, just as the meeting in Pandemonium results in the decision to corrupt Man and thus to take vengeance on God. Contact with the infracontext in the *Sospetto* lays stress on the revenge theme which is to dominate the later books in *PL*, and which implies an attempt to disrupt the order embodied in the infracontext in Ovid. Demonic chaos is thus sharply set off against divine order by means of vertical context systems.

Speaking of classical infracontexts, mention should also be made of two details in the *Aeneid*. Discussing the cressets in Pandemonium, Blessington (with Newton, Keightley, and Bush among the editors) points out the similarity to the lamps in Dido's palace, *Aen.* 1.726f. (the same line number as in *PL*): 'Dependent lychni laquearibus aureis / Incensi, et noctem flammis funalia vincunt'. According to Blessington the parallel in Virgil suggests the contrast between Dido, a victim portrayed sympathetically, and Satan who arouses feelings of antipathy: "By remembering sympathy for Dido, the reader feels the contrast with the ignoble and un-tragic Satan".[25] But I doubt that these would have been the associations elicited in 17th-century readers. The lighting of Dido's sumptuous palace illuminates the golden ceiling whose symbolic *in malo* significance is discussed by Freeman (see p. 293 above). Dido rather typifies concupiscence ('gravi saucia cura'), as she does in Boccaccio's *De Genealogia Deorum* (14.13),[26] where it is described how her blandishments have a special attraction for Aeneas, exiled and shipwrecked in a foreign country, and saved for a higher destiny only by the intervention of a messenger from the gods. The 'lychni incensi' and the 'funalia' in their setting in Dido's palace thus range themselves with the attractions of the enchanted palaces, and Dido is a charming precursor of Armida, Alcina, and the other seductresses. Indeed, we may possibly go so far as to regard her as the prototype of these fascinating ladies.

[24] A good example of Milton's technique of working with a "zoom lens" (see Shumaker, *Unpremeditated Verse: Feeling and Perception in 'Paradise Lost'*, Princeton, 1967, p. 110).
[25] *'Paradise Lost' and the Classical Epic*, p. 8.
[26] See Don Cameron Allen, *Mysteriously Meant*, pp. 217f.

The other detail of infracontextual interest in the *Aeneid* occurs in the sixth book. As Darbishire points out, *PL* 1.756f., where Pandemonium is referred to as the 'high Capitol / Of Satan and his Peers', recalls 'Capitolia ... alta' in *Aen.* 6.836.[27] However, not only do Milton's words evoke Virgil's: *Aen.* 6.836 forms part of the grand finale to the sixth book where the future greatness of Rome is revealed to Aeneas in Elysium, the words about the Capitol referring to Rome's triumph over her enemies. As Seaman points out, Aeneas' peregrination was a traditional type of Everyman's pilgrimage towards the eternal city of God.[28] There is thus a heavily ironic contrast between the demons' pretentious and barbaric palace, a type of disorder, and the symbol of the order and greatness of the Roman empire, established and ruled under divine protection; also of course between the dim future of Pandemonium and the glorious one of Rome.

The dismissive comparison in 717ff.,

> Not *Babilon,*
> Nor great *Alcairo* such magnificence
> Equald in all thir glories, to inshrine
> *Belus* or *Serapis* thir Gods, or seat
> Thir Kings, when *Ægypt* with *Assyria* strove
> In wealth and luxurie –

links up horizontally with an identical construction in a similar, though much more elaborate description in 4.268ff. dealing with the garden of Eden:

> Not that faire field
> Of *Enna*, where *Proserpin* gathring flours
> Her self a fairer Floure by gloomie *Dis*
> Was gatherd, which cost *Ceres* all that pain
> To seek her through the World; nor that sweet Grove
> Of *Daphne* by *Orontes*, and th' inspir'd
> *Castalian* spring, might with this Paradise
> Of *Eden* strive; nor that *Nyseian* Ile
> Girt with the River *Triton,* where old *Cham,*
> Whom Gentiles *Ammon* call and *Libyan Jove,*
> Hid *Amalthea* and her Florid Son
> Young *Bacchus* from his Stepdame *Rhea's* eye;

[27] "Textual Commentary", 1, p. 290. 'Capitol' is the original reading, changed by a later hand to 'Capital'.
[28] *The Moral Paradox of 'Paradise Lost'*, p. 31.

Nor where *Abassin* Kings thir issue Guard,
Mount *Amara*, though this by som suppos'd
True Paradise under the *Ethiop* Line
By *Nilus* head, enclos'd with shining Rock,
A whole dayes journey high, but wide remote
From this *Assyrian* Garden, where the Fiend
Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
Of living Creatures new to sight and strange.

There are superficial differences and deep-lying similarities between the paragraphs. As has often been pointed out, Babylon and Alcairo, Egypt and Assyria are places and countries symbolic of heathendom, sin and damnation, as are the gods Belus and Serapis who were worshipped in Babylon and Egypt. More specifically, however, Alcairo, Egypt, and Assyria link up with Dante's words to Virgil in *Inf.* 8.70ff. when he makes out the City of Dis in the distance: 'Maestro già le sue meschite / Là entro certo nela valle cerno / Vermiglie, come se di foco vscite / Fossero' – glowing mosques, suggesting Moslem heathendom and penal fire. In the fourth book, it is true, the names of places and people are of course not similarly tainted, but as mentioned previously Proserpina's eating of a pomegranate, preventing her from leaving the Underworld for good, suggests Eve's eating the forbidden fruit, and the names of Daphne and Cham evoke "other dark myths of a menacing nature".[29] As for the occurrence of the dismissive comparison in the background texts, there is a wide variety of uses, idealizing as well as pejorative; and all sorts of phenomena and conditions are described and characterized by dismissive comparisons. However, the device in Milton suggests one particular instance within the framework of the "dangerous castles with surroundings": a stanza on the garden of Vainglory in Fletcher's *Christ's Victorie on Earth*, a place used by the devil to entice the Saviour to sensual delights (40):

Not lovely Ida might with this compare,
Though many streames his banks besilvered,
Though Xanthus with his golden sands he bare,
Nor Hibla, though his thyme depastured,
As fast againe with honie blossomed.
  Ne Rhodope, ne Tempes flowrie playne,
  Adonis garden was to this but vayne,
Though Plato on his beds a flood of praise did rayne.

[29] Don Cameron Allen, *Mysteriously Meant*, pp. 292f. See also Hieatt, p. 236f.

Viewed against this device regarded as an infracontext, Milton's Pandemonium passage again operates *auxesis*-wise: from Vainglory's demon-inspired temptations we come to their very source, the satanic origin of all evil. As to the passage on Eden, it may be suggested that an associative link with Fletcher's demonic garden enhances the element of sensuous delight, the potential danger to Man in Milton's description.

The Greek substratum[30] for the construction in 722f., 'Th' ascending pile / Stood fixt her stately highth' – apparently a Greek adverbial or specifying accusative – is coloured by the preceding description of wealth and magnificence and in its turn adds to the impression of something unusual and exotic. The subsequent lines derive their full meaning by contact with various surface and infracontexts in addition to the *FQ* lines discussed above. The doors which opening their 'brazen foulds discover wide / Within, her ample spaces, ore the smooth / And level pavement' point forward by contrast to the account of Raphael leaving Heaven for his mission to Eden (5.251ff.): the angelic crowds give way, and Heaven's gate 'self-op'nd wide / On gold'n Hinges turning, as by work / Divine the sovran Architect had fram'd'. These lines in their turn, as Fowler remarks, suggest *Acts* 12.10 where St. Peter, delivered by the angel from the prison of Herod, came to 'the yron gate that leadeth vnto the citie, which opened to them of his owne accord'. So the contrast becomes more marked as we move from the second surface context to the infracontext in contact with it. Raphael descending on his mission to explain to Adam the mysteries of the creation is in less specific contrast to 1.723ff. than St. Peter emerging from the prison of God's arch-enemy: while this means delivery from evil, the doors of Pandemonium open to entice the fallen angels even deeper into sin. It is in the great hall that the fateful decision is taken. Again 'her ample spaces', as Thyer observes (Todd), recalls a detail in Seneca's description of Hercules' descent into Hell in *Hercules Furens* 673. Theseus in Seneca's play depicts the entrance to Pluto's realm: an immense chasm where the broad path down into Hell begins. From there, 'ample spaces' open out towards which the human race makes its easy way: 'Hinc *ampla* vacuis *spatia* laxantur locis, / In quae omne mersum pereat humanum genus. / Nec ire labor est, ipsa deducit via'. The author also pays much attention to the light conditions of the place: the darkness is not complete where the downward path begins; there is twilight and a kind of dusk like that produced by the sun in eclipse, or of day mingled with night: darkness visible (see p. 43 above). This account is only superficially in contrast to Milton's description of the artificial lighting of Pandemonium. The light supplied

[30] Pointed out by Callander. Various attempts to explain the construction on an English grammatical basis (Beeching, Tillyard, and others) are hardly successful.

by the starry lamps and blazing cressets is no more real than the great hall itself, which rose like an exhalation: the reality is the semi-darkness of hell just sufficient for the fallen angels to observe their plight but excluding them for ever from seeing God again.

'Naphtha' and 'Asphaltus', as Fowler remarks, are italicized by the printers, "either in error or as technical terms". The latter alternative is more probable since both words are unusual and special terms, adding to the impression made by the italicized oriental names in the dismissive comparison and by the un-English construction in 722f. As for the function of the starry lamps and blazing cressets shining as from a sky (possibly alluding to the lighting in mosques), the chief function – as pointed out by a number of critics – within the horizontal contextual system is to provide a contrast to the various passages on the stars of Heaven in 3.60f. and 7.578ff. On the vertical plane, unlike the link with the *Aeneid* 1.726f., the lamps of Pandemonium contrast neatly with Spenser's 'shyning lampes in *Ioues* high house' (*FQ* 1.5.19.2) and with the 'blessed lampes in Ioues eternall hous' (3.4.51.9), descriptions of the genuine nocturnal light of creation; on a deeper level with Dante's 'gloriose stelle . . . lume pregno / Di gran virtù' in *Par.* 22.112. At the same time 'Asphaltus' evokes the substance used by the hellish roadbuilders in 10.298 in order to anchor the 'gatherd beach' firmly (p. 167). By this means they aid the spreading of darkness into the defenceless world forfeit to death before the change brought about by the work of Salvation.

2. House of God

On a horizontal level, the obvious contrast to the description of Pandemonium is of course the picture of the celestial palace gate in 3.501ff. Satan is within sight of the Gate of Heaven:

> . . . farr distant he descries
> Ascending by degrees magnificent
> Up to the wall of Heaven a Structure high,
> At top whereof, but farr more rich appeerd
> The work as of a Kingly Palace Gate
> With Frontispice of Diamond and Gold
> Imbellisht; thick with sparkling orient Gemmes
> The Portal shon, inimitable on Earth
> By Model, or by shading Pencil drawn.

Infracontexts here are provided by a homogeneous set of biblical descriptions, but first of all the points on which the description of the celestial portal differs from or agrees with the passage on Pandemonium attract attention.[1] The structure is no exhalation rising like some insubstantial mirage out of the ground; it ascends 'by degrees magnificent / Up to the wall of Heaven'. Also, of course, the interior of Pandemonium is described, though admittedly not in great detail, whereas we only get a view of the outward features of the House of God. Literally speaking we have to stop at the gate. The interior is not for human eyes or for description by human tongues or hands, though we may get an approximate idea of its splendour by accommodation: the magnificence of the house is suggested synecdochically by infracontextual descriptions of the New Jerusalem, the Heavenly City.[2]

The description of the materials of which the portal of the House of God is constructed also differs from that in the paragraph on Pandemonium. In Pandemonium, stress is laid heavily on gold: the Doric pillars are overlaid 'with Gold'n Architrave'; the roof is fretted gold, and the dismissive comparisons that follow emphasize the barbaric splendour suggested by the metal. On the vertical plane, contact with the section on the Cave of Mammon interprets the gold as used in the *in malo* sense suggesting greed, wealth, lust for power; and the description of other parts of the Cave of Mammon indicate the spuriousness of the wealth and magnificence associated with the metal. In the account of the portal of the celestial Palace there is no similar emphasis, and gold is one out of many materials mentioned in the passage. There is, of course, no golden roof or ceiling. The multiplicity of *in bono* meanings infracontextually suggested by 'Gold' is familiar to a student of patristic commentary (see p. 308). The proximity of 'Diamond' reinforces these meanings, the word traditionally symbolizing eternity and spiritual strength.[3] In the lapidaries, e.g. Marbodius' *Liber Lapidum*, the diamond has the virtue of frightening away evil delusions and bad dreams, repelling strong poison, calling off quarrels, curing the mad and defeating the enemy.[4] In emblematics dealing with the virtues of diamonds, the moral of the texts accompanying the emblems is expressed, for instance, as 'Quem nulla

[1] Seaman makes the point that Pandemonium is associable for a particular reason with the Kingly Celestial palace: after all, the same architect was responsible for both constructions (*The Moral Paradox of 'Paradise Lost'*, p. 71).

[2] As Helen Gardner remarks, Milton avoids using his "chief poetic instrument, the simile" in order to make Heaven vivid to our imagination. "The Book of Revelation is the great obstacle. Its oriental imagery and exotic symbolism prevented him from exercising his own power to suggest" (*A Reading of 'Paradise Lost'*, Oxford, 1965, p. 55).

[3] As in Garner of St. Victor's *Gregorianum* 10.7 (*PL* 193.356). In Greek patrology, ἀδάμας is the strength of Christ or the strength derived from Christ (*PGL*).

[4] *PL* 171.1740.

pericula terrent' (Lebeus-Batillius 1596), 'Virtus inexpugnabilis' and 'Nescit labi virtus' (Rollenhagen 1613), 'Aliquid preciosius auro' (Bruck 1618), 'Nec multo frangitur icto' (Taurellus 1606), 'Nec igni, nec ferro cedit' (Junius 1575).[5] As for the sparkling 'orient Gemmes', Todd refers to a line in the *Trionfo della Morte* of "Milton's favourite, Petrarch"; in this line (7) the deceased Laura appears to the poet just before dawn, herself like Aurora; 'Di gemme orientali incoronata /Mosse vêr me da mille altre corone', approaching from the crowd of blessed souls adorned with similar crowns. In the course of the conversation about beatitude, life, and death she answers the poet's naïve question, 'Dimmi, pur, prego, se sei morta, o uiua!' by 'Viua son' io, e tu sei morto anchora' (21f.). The crowns worn by the blessed are symbols of purity and eternal life.

Naturally there is also a contrast effect achieved by the contact between the 'Frontispice of Diamond and Gold/Imbellisht' and the 'Pyramids and Towrs/From Diamond Quarries hewn, and Rocks of Gold' of Lucifer's Palace (5.758f.) discussed on pp. 226f. The contrast works at different levels. First, there is a "black" effect, 'diamond' with its *in bono* meanings being blasphemously used in a context suggesting revolt against the divine order[6] (whereas 'gold' links up with the *in malo* meanings mentioned on pp. 293ff.). Second, a reader familiar with the end of book 1 is likely to associate the Luciferian quarries with the 'spacious wound' opened in the infernal hill to dig up gold, words invested with specific meaning by the infracontextual pattern. Also, the combination of towers and quarries emphasizes the vertical dimension associated with aggressiveness and *superbia*. All these semantic factors together connect the lines on the diamond quarries and rocks of gold with Pandemonium – through a "loop in time" – and make them sharply antithetic to the lines on the gate of the divine palace.

The wider and more important infracontexts for 3.501ff. all suggest the same area of associations as the narrower ones and thus achieve an intensifying and above all a clarifying effect. In Tobit's thanksgiving in the *Book of Tobit* 13.16f. the praise of God and of the New Jerusalem includes the description which Todd thinks may have been in Milton's mind: 'For Ierusalem shall be built vp with Saphires, and Emerauds, and precious stone: thy walles and towres, and battlements with pure golde. 17 And the streets of Ierusalem shall be paued with Berill, and Carbuncle, and stones of Ophir'. The gems in Milton's lines are as it were discernible in greater detail here, and the entire description is reinforced and supplemented by the magnificent passage on the New Jerusalem in

[5] Henkel and Schöne, *Emblemata*, cols. 85–87.
[6] See Low, "The Image of the Tower in *Paradise Lost*", p. 176.

Rev. 21.11ff. This account is expressly connected with the description in *Tobit* by Primasius[7] in his commentary on the *Apocalypse*. After describing in detail the number of the gates, their location, and their measures, the author of *Rev.* 21.18–21 goes on to an account of the materials: the wall is of jasper, the entire city of pure gold; and various precious stones adorning it are enumerated in detail. It is as if the 'sparkling orient Gemmes' were brought before our very eyes and sorted out, individualized, and identified in the *Revelation* passage. The identification is carried several steps further in the symbolic interpretations of the Church Fathers. Of the Latin Fathers and their successors who provide comments on *Revelation*, fourteen annotate the passages in 21.18–21 (Ambrose, Augustine, Primasius, Cassiodorus, Paterius, Alulfus, Bede, Strabo, Haymo, Anselm of Laudun, Bruno, Rupert, Richard of St. Victor, and Martinus). Most of these supply detailed statements on the symbolic meaning of the gold and the various gems enumerated in the biblical verses; the exceptions are Augustine, Primasius, Cassiodorus, Paterius, and Rupert, whose comments are more summary. Some of the interpretations of course overlap. In some cases there is considerable diversity of opinion as to exactly what holy qualities or holy things are signified by the precious stones and metals. As regards gold, for instance, opinions differ as to the precise meaning of 'purity' held by most commentators to be intended: angels and holy men (Ambrose), the purity of faith (Augustine, Bede), the Advent (Primasius), the purity of Paradise (Paterius, Alulfus, Haymo), the purity of wisdom (Strabo, Anselm Laud., Martinus), the purity of the Church (Bruno, Richard of St. Victor), or of the holy mind (Rupert). A similar variety of opinion affects the interpretation of pearls (the apostles, their successors, Christ, the saints, wisdom and love). The very name Jerusalem, finally, is traditionally rendered by 'visio pacis' in patristic commentary.[8] The implied antithetic meaning of Pandemonium thus adds to and intensifies the contrast which transpires on so many other points in Milton's lines.

In Greek patrology there are comparatively few comments on this part of the *Book of Revelation*. The only two authors who provide detailed interpretations, Andreas and Arethas of Caesarea,[9] differ from the Latin Fathers in naming one apostle for each of the precious stones: jasper-Peter, sapphire-Paul, chalcedony-Andrew, emerald-John, and so on. They also differ in their interpretation of various other details.

We have digressed far from the lines in *PL*, and I cannot blame readers who feel they have lost touch with them altogether. Yet to several

[7] *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 68.926f.).
[8] For instance in Gregory's *Hom. in Ezech.* 1.8 and 1.12 (*PL* 76.857 and 929).
[9] *PG* 106.434ff. and 766ff.

17th-century readers Milton's lines are likely to have operated as an important synecdochic signal. To such readers, patristic commentary provides extremely diversified and complex infracontexts for lines 506 and 507; these infracontexts in their turn fan out beneath the context in *Revelation*, superimposed on the *Tobit* passage. The lines in *PL* are a big branch from which, as it were, the *Tobit* verses spring, in their turn ramifying into the more numerous twigs in *Revelation*, which finally spread out and multiply into the wealth of leaves that unfold in the patristic commentaries. On the vertical plane the meanings first descend, spreading wider, in order in the end to extend suddenly, on the deepest level of meaning. And from the matrix these multiple, deepest meanings in their turn rise to the surface context, enriching it and investing the few surface words, which set the reader's mind probing vertically, with significance which almost threatens to disrupt the narrow frame provided by the surface context. Naturally no one reader's mind alone would be able to contain all these meanings at the same time, but many together would, and even a vague notion of the wealth of allegorical meanings in patristic commentary will at once, and considerably, increase and reinforce the meaning of the surface level.

*

The complex, coded descriptions of celestial abodes, closely bound together by association, thus form the strongest possible contrast to the paragraph on Pandemonium. It is not least in comparison with the Celestial City that the nature of the infernal building and the plight of its inhabitants emerge clearly and unmistakably. As for the infracontextual differences it is characteristic that while the zero part of the description of Pandemonium is filled by other descriptions in a complex code, together forming a panorama of concrete tableaus, the zero part of the simple-code passage on the celestial gate is taken up by symbolic meanings of an abstract character. The significance of the different evil abodes is fairly obvious and could have been written above the doors of some of them; the meaning of the details in the celestial cities is esoteric, accessible only on a deeper level, and disclosed by exegetes. The evil world is a world of space, concrete, changing, full of a variety of forms; the holy world is non-spatial, an abstract, still and static world of pure meanings, all related to one another and to the basic meaning from which they derive. This submerged contrast simplifies and throws into relief one of the basic differences between Heaven and Hell.

3. Chariot of Paternal Deitie

The final and supreme instance of the pattern with maximal infracontextual ramification is the central passage on the Son's throne in his triumphal chariot during the battle in Heaven in book 6.748ff. Immense semantic energy is released by these lines. On the third sacred morn

> forth rushd with whirlwind sound
> The Chariot of Paternal Deitie,
> Flashing thick flames, Wheele within Wheele undrawn,
> It self instinct with Spirit, but convoyd
> By four Cherubic shapes, four Faces each
> Had wondrous, as with Starrs thir bodies all
> And Wings were set with Eyes, with Eyes the Wheels
> Of Beril, and careering Fires between;
> Over thir heads a crystal Firmament,
> Wheron a Saphir Throne, inlaid with pure
> Amber, and colours of the showrie Arch.
> Hee in Celestial Panoplie all armd
> Of radiant *Urim*, work divinely wrought,
> Ascended; at his right hand Victorie
> Sate Eagle-wingd; beside him hung his Bow
> And Quiver with three-bolted Thunder stor'd,
> And from about him fierce Effusion rowld
> Of smoak and bickering flame, and sparkles dire;
> Attended with ten thousand thousand Saints,
> He onward came, farr off his coming shon,
> And twentie thousand (I thir number heard)
> Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen:
> Hee on the wings of Cherube rode sublime
> On the Crystallin Skie, in Saphir Thron'd
> Illustrious farr and wide, but by his own
> First seen: them unexpected joy surpriz'd,
> When the great Ensign of *Messiah* blaz'd
> Aloft by Angels born, his Sign in Heav'n:
> Under whose conduct *Michael* soon reduc'd
> His Armie, circumfus'd on either Wing,
> Under thir Head imbodied all in one.

Undoubtedly, ll.749–59 contain the "principal image of the poem" (Fowler); also, these are the lines in the entire poem where the interpenetration of infracontexts evoked on different levels reaches a maximum of density. A discussion of the passage has to be detailed in order

to demonstrate the extremely high degree of complexity. As in so many other cases it was Hume who first pointed out the basic source of the passage as a whole: the account of the "divine chariot" in *Ezek.* 1.4ff. and some verses in *Ezek.* 10. We shall turn to the details of these texts later, after a more general survey. After Hume, various commentators and critics have done their share. According to McColley,[1] Rupert in *De Victoria Verbi Dei* told the story of the War in Heaven in a way reminiscent of Milton's. The motif of Satan's pride and his seducing a number of angels, pointed out by Rupert, is perhaps not so remarkable, for this is found in many earlier patristic treatments of the motif. What is more interesting is Satan's assertion that he was self-made ('Ego creatura Dei non sum, ego a nullo factus sum, sed ego feci memetipsum' 1.12), the development leading up to the War, and the description of the Son defeating the rebel angels with the fire of the Word. But McColley's statement (repeated by Hughes, Fowler, and Kitty Cohen[2]) that Rupert had "argued at length that Ezekiel's vision was in fact a vision of the triumphant Christ" (p. 37) is in part misleading, for Rupert does this not in *De Victoria Verbi Dei* (*PL* 169.1217ff.), where he describes the War in Heaven, but in a quite different work, *De Trinitate et Operibus Ejus* (*PL* 167), where he interprets *Ezek.* 1 in a way similar to other Fathers (1419ff., see pp. 316ff. below).[3] Fowler calls attention to commentaries on *Ezekiel* in Jerome, Valeriano, and Bongo (the last two, however, being mainly derivative), and, less aptly, to some Platonic passages (*Laws* 899 A and the *Timaeus* 41 E). Also, he feels, the King's 'golden chariot' in *Song of Sol.* 3.9f., a subject of mystical meditation, is a "less obvious source" for Milton's chariot in *PL*. The passage in *Song of Sol.* is rendered in *AV*, 'King Solomon made himselfe a charet of the wood of Lebanon', with the marginal note, 'Or, a bed'. (Incidentally, only the 'bottom' of this object is of gold). The *AV* translators' hesitation to some extent mirrors the differences of opinion in the various biblical renderings of the word. Hebrew *'ăppiryôn* (probably 'hall' or 'house') appears

[1] *'Paradise Lost'. An Account of Its Growth and Major Origins, with a Discussion of Milton's Use of Sources and Literary Patterns*. Chicago, 1940, pp. 35ff.

[2] *The Throne and The Chariot*, p. 125, n. 41.

[3] In a later article ("Milton's Battle in Heaven and Rupert of Saint Heribert", *Speculum* 16, 1941, pp. 230ff.), McColley does discuss *De Trinitate et Operibus Ejus*, which includes comments on a great many OT books besides *Ezekiel*. His arguments are still misleading, however, for he does not distinguish between the contents of *De Victoria* and *De Trinitate*. The point is that the former work is an allegorical account of the War in Heaven without references to the vision in *Ezek.* 1; the latter a lengthy allegorical interpretation of Ezekiel's vision without descriptions of the War in Heaven. There is no basis at all for McColley's hypothesis that "in building his description of the rebellion in Heaven Milton drew directly or indirectly upon Rupert of Saint Heribert" ("Milton's Battle in Heaven", p. 235). Rupert is hardly more important on this score than other commentators on *Ezekiel*.

as Syriac *kurs^{e}ja'*, 'throne',[4] *LXX* φορεῖον, 'litter', and Vulg. 'ferculum' (same sense). In the *Critici Sacri* three exegetes annotate the word. Vatablus renders it by 'lecticam qua vehi solent sponsae', Clarius says 'ferculum vel palatium', and Grotius 'lectica, aut simile quid' (3.257ff.). As for the English versions, Coverdale's and Matthew's Bibles have 'bedsteade', the Bishops' Bible 'palace', and Geneva 'palace' with the marginal note, 'Or, charet'. In short, the uncertainty in the different versions is far too great and the authority for 'chariot' too limited for the *Song of Sol.* passage to be of any value as an infracontext, let alone a "source", albeit a less obvious one, for Milton's description of the chariot of paternal deity.

Discussing Renaissance traditions based on biblical exegesis, Røstvig says Ezekiel's four-wheeled chariot was universally regarded as a "symbol of the created world based on groups of four". Milton's contemporaries, Røstvig feels, would have readily recognized the chariot as a "visual enactment of the state of obedience which alone ensures perfect harmony". Røstvig refers in this context to Sanctius, Antonius Fernandius, and John Diodati, three 17th-century exegetes who all interpret the chariot as a type of obedience and harmony.[5] Some authors discussing the chariot stress the importance of Jewish mystical thought. J. Abelson (not, however, concerned with Milton) remarks that the image of Yahweh on his chariot in *Ezekiel* was for the Jewish mystic a "real opening, an unveiling, of the innermost and impenetrable secrets locked up in the inter-relation of the human and the divine", and that the chariot itself is a kind of "mystic way" connecting the soul with its final goal.[6] According to J. H. Adamson, the esoteric traditions in Jewish mysticism as centred around the chariot (*Merkabah*) in Ezekiel's vision may have been known to Milton through the intermediary of the writings of Henry More and Alexander Gill. The chariot thus interpreted is a "representation of the three-fold world of creation wholly obedient to the will of the Son" (p. 697), a great symbol of Unity.[7] This significance is thus similar to that traced by Røstvig along different lines.

The 'Chariot of Paternal Deitie', as Kitty Cohen (p. 123) and others point out, has been anticipated several times in a pattern of references which form a kind of intensifying repetitive figure. Particularly two of these previous mentions of chariots are of interest here, forming an antithetic pair: Satan's chariot in 6.100f. – which corresponds on the horizontal level to 1.311, 2.887, 6.211, 358, and 390 – and the chariot of the

[4] For a survey of the Eastern renderings, see F. E. Weissbach, *Das Hohe Lied Salomo's*, Leipzig, 1858, pp. 176f.
[5] "Images of Perfection" (*Seventeenth-Century Imagery*, pp. 21f.).
[6] *Jewish Mysticism*, London, 1913, p. 34.
[7] "The War in Heaven: Milton's Version of the *Merkabah*" (*JEGP* 57, 1958, pp. 690ff.).

blessed souls at 3.522, which corresponds to the Son's chariot as referred to at 3.394. There is of course a particularly sharp contrast between Satan's and his followers' broken chariots in 1.311 and Christ's victorious chariot (Cohen, pp. 121f.). J. P. Rosenblatt analyses the different chariot passages in *PL* from a structural point of view,[8] stressing the fact that references to the relevant *Exodus* episode are found in the first and last books of *PL* and constitute a unified structure together with the central chariot image in bk. 6. The defeat of evil and the victory of Christ, and the themes of servitude and freedom, are embedded in this structure based entirely on Old Testament views, in bk. 6, on the scriptural text of *Ezekiel* with some of Rashi's commentaries on the *Pentateuch*. Rosenblatt (pp. 31f.) objects to Adamson's idea that the *Merkabah* tradition may have influenced Milton: the chariot according to the *Merkabah* is transcendental, mysterious and non-utilitarian, in contrast to the dynamic scene in *PL*, where the chariot spurts fire and lightning while its divine passenger spreads thunder and plague. We shall return to this problem and to the contrasting anticipatory passage in 6.100ff. after discussing in detail the description of the Son's chariot and the role it plays in contact with the different infracontexts (see p. 333).

Chariots, of course, figure prominently in literary and iconographic 'trionfi' in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and the mere mention of the 'Chariot of Paternal Deitie' evokes a massive tradition of magnificent triumphs of gods, princes, and allegorical figures. According to Valeriano, the word 'currus' even stands for 'divina majestas' and 'imperium'. Of particular interest are naturally iconographic representations of Christ himself riding in the chariot. L'Orange and Schiller discuss various instances in Eastern Christian art of the 'Majestas Domini' motif with Christ in a chariot.[9] It must have been a short step from representations of these triumphal chariots and descriptions of Christ the celestial warrior to a combination of both – Christ the Victor in a chariot. This combination is similar to that of the two Paleo-Semitic motifs recently assumed by O. Keel to have merged in Ezekiel's vision: the coming of Yahweh in a thunderstorm and the majesty of the enthroned divinity.[10] Frye (pp. 156f.) discusses and illustrates several examples of medieval and Renaissance representations of Christ in a chariot defeating his adversaries. One instance, a fourteenth-century illumination of a *Treatise on the Seven Vices*, shows Christ watched by passive angels (as in

[8] "Structural Unity and Temporal Concordance: The War in Heaven in *Paradise Lost*" (*PMLA* 87, 1972, pp. 31ff.).
[9] H. P. L'Orange, *Studies on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship in the Ancient World*, Oslo, 1953, pp. 124ff.; Schiller, *Ikonographie der Christlichen Kunst* 3, Gütersloh, 1971, pp. 234f.
[10] *Jahwe-Visionen und Siegelkunst*, Stuttgart, 1977, p. 190.

PL) and raising his right hand (the Cosmokrator's gesture), while rebel angels tumble headlong into gaping Hell. As Frye points out (p. 157), the artistic tradition exemplified by this and other pictures "would have provided strong visual support for Milton's description of the chariot". As to Ezekiel's vision itself, elaborate attempts were made to visualize his description. Grabar (*Christian Iconography*, p. 35) discusses and illustrates instances in Paleo-Christian iconography showing Ezekiel's vision of God combined with Christ's ascension. In the 17th century, the title-page of Antonius Fernandius' *Commentarii in Visiones Veteri Testamenti* (1617) illustrates *Ezek.* 1.10: Christ is seated on a throne mounted on a star-studded celestial orb fitted with wheels within wheels, drawn by the winged "four living creatures".[11]

In fact, the iconographic background makes Milton's lines as it were visible, operating as a kind of illustration of the lines. The infracontext in *Ezekiel* 1 has an interesting function in providing a kind of vague outline which is filled in and made concrete not only by the iconographic tradition but by other infracontexts based on the *Ezekiel* text, primarily patristic commentary and a passage in *Purg.* 29 (overlooked by Milton commentators) with medieval and Renaissance annotations. It should be remembered that the visionary's description in *Ezekiel* does not really deal with a chariot at all but with something rather indefinite which is construed or interpreted as a chariot. The basic texts do not expressly mention *mærkabā*, ἅρμα, or *currus*. The impression of vagueness is heightened by frequent formulations such as Hebr. *dᵉmût* ("something like"), *kᵉmăr'ē* ("of the appearance of"), *LXX* ὁμοίωμα, ὅρασις, *AV* 'the likenesse of', 'as/like the appearance of', 'as it were', the 'appearance of the likenesse of'.

The lines which introduce the account of the divine victory, 'And the third sacred Morn began to shine / Dawning through Heav'n: forth rushd with whirlwind sound / The Chariot of Paternal Deitie' evoke classical as well as biblical infracontexts. The third sacred morn is the fourth day of the poem's action, though only the third 'morn' (Fowler). Three and four are both holy numbers: as Greenwood remarked, Christ's victory on the day beginning with the third morn suggests the circumstances of the Messiah's death and resurrection, and the ideas of Christ's sufferings and his heroism merge in the episode (Todd). 'The ... sacred Morn began to shine' also, as Bowle pointed out, suggests *Il.* 11.84 Ὄφρα μὲν ἠὼς ἦν καὶ ἀέξετο ἱερὸν ἦμαρ ("as long as it was morning and the sacred day

[11] The title-page is used as the frontispiece to *Seventeenth-Century Imagery*. As the legend explaining the frontispiece has it: Christ imposes "harmony (or unity) through the quaternions of the created universe and the four gospels" – an apt illustration of Røstvig's conclusions in "Images of Perfection".

was getting on to noon''), a line which introduces the description of the carnage when Agamemnon wreaks havoc among the enemies. 'Forth rushd with whirlwind sound / The Chariot of Paternal Deitie' was related to the beginning of Ezekiel's vision in 1.4 (Newton), 'And I looked, and behold, a whirlewinde came out of the North, a great cloude, and a fire infoulding it selfe, and a brightnesse was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire'. There would thus be a submerged identity contrast between the beginning of the passage, on the Lord's approach, and the 'limits of the North' at 5.755 where Satan has erected his royal seat on the summit of a mountain. A full contrast emerges between the well-known main infracontext suggested by this passage, *Is.* 14.13 'I wil ascend into heauen, I wil exalt my throne aboue the starres of God: I wil sit also vpon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the North', and the infracontextual 'a whirlewinde came out of the North' in the *Ezekiel* passage. Theodoretus in his commentary dwells in detail on the various kinds of visitation symbolized by the violent whirlwind from the north.[12] Underneath 'forth rushd with whirlwind sound' in *PL* 6.749 there thus emerges an antithetic pattern, an opposition between the presumptuous rebel and the angered God, between overweening pride and divine manifestation. The contrast develops to the full as we approach the description proper of the chariot.

To the infracontext in *Ezekiel* on this point should be added, as suggested by Newton, *Is.* 66.15 on God's severe measures taken against the wicked: 'For behold, the Lord wil come with fire, and with his charets like a whirlewinde, to render his anger with furie, and his rebuke with flames of fire'. This is a passage which does not add any submerged elements to the words in *PL* but which rather expands Milton's lines such as they are, interprets their meaning and points forward to Christ's attack on the apostate angels – to the 'Flashing thick flames' 751, to his quiver with 'three-bolted Thunder' 764, to the 'smoak and bickering flame, and sparkles dire' 766, and to the terrible anger which he visits on his enemies in the account of the attack in 831ff.

*

But it is time to look more closely at the details in the basic infracontext, *Ezek.* ch. 1 and, to a lesser extent, ch. 10. The parts of the description in *Ezekiel* which are in direct contact with Milton's lines are as follows:[13]

[12] *In Ezech.* (*PG* 81.824).

[13] Sims (*The Bible in Milton's Epics*, p. 32) and Kitty Cohen (*The Throne and the Chariot*, pp. 125f.) provide summary accounts of Milton's use of *Ezekiel*. Blessington's idea (p. 38) that the Son "carries on the image of Athene" in *Il.* 5.733ff. seems less relevant in the context.

1.5 'Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of foure liuing creatures, and this was their appearance: they had the likenesse of a man. 6 And euery one had foure faces, and euery one had four wings ... 16 The appearance of the wheeles, and their worke was like vnto the colour of a Berill: and they foure had one likenesse, and their appearance and their worke was as it were a wheele in the middle of a wheele ... 18 ... Their rings were full of eyes round about them foure ... 20 Whithersoeuer the spirit was to goe, they went ... 13 The liuing creatures, their appearance was like burning coles of fire ... it went vp and downe among the liuing creatures, and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went foorth lightning ... 22 And the likenesse of the firmament vpon the heads of the liuing creature was as the colour of the terrible chrystall ... 26 And aboue the firmament that was ouer their heads, was the likenesse of a Throne, as the appearance of a Saphyre stone ... 27 And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it ... 28 As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloude in the day of raine ...; 10.12 And their whole body, and their backes, and their handes, and their wings, and the wheeles, were ful of eyes round about, even the wheeles that they foure had'. In addition, when in the course of the attack 'the Orbes / Of his fierce Chariot rowld, as with the sound / Of torrent Floods, or of a numerous Host' (828ff.) we are reminded of *Ezek.* 1.24 'And when they [the creatures] went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almightie, the voice of speech, as the noise of an hoste'. Again, 'Hee on his impious Foes right onward drove' (831) suggests the straightforward movement of the Cherubim: *Ezek.* 1.12 'And they went euery one straight forward: whither the spirit was to goe, they went: and they turned not when they went'. To these passages should be added some verses in *Revelation* (pp. 320ff. below).

In between these fragments of the description in *Ezekiel* there are details which, synecdochically, add to the meaning derived from the directly relevant infracontexts. The living creatures seemed to have 'straight feet', sparkling like burnished brass (1.7); they had hands under their wings (8); the faces of the creatures were that of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle (10); two wings of each were joined one to another, two covered their bodies (11); one wheel of the creatures rested on the earth (15); the rims of the wheels were dreadfully high (18); the wheels followed the living creatures everywhere (21f.). Other details are repeated in ch. 10 as given above.

Patristic interpretations, copied and elaborated by later commentators, give an idea of the wealth of spiritual truths suggested to the Fathers by these biblical verses. *Ezek.* 1.4 'a great cloude, and a fire infoulding it selfe' recurring in Milton's 'Flashing thick flames' (751) signify the punishment meted out to sinful Judah and / or the Day of Judgement; the

fire is also God and the Holy Spirit consuming the sinful lusts of man.[14] *Ezek.* 16 ... 'Their worke was as it were a wheele in the middle of a wheele ... Whithersoeuer the spirit was to goe, they went', recurring in 'Wheele within Wheele undrawn, / It self instinct with Spirit', represents the unity of the two Testaments, the New allegorically contained in the Old, or the spiritual meaning contained in the literal.[15] According to the same exegetes, the wheels always following and complying with the Spirit, 'instinct' with it, stand for the perpetual presence of the Holy Spirit in the gospels.

It is when we come to the significance of the subsequent lines,

> but convoyd
> By four Cherubic shapes, four Faces each
> Had wondrous, as with Starrs thir bodies all
> And Wings were set with Eyes, with Eyes the Wheels
> Of Beril, and careering Fires between,

that other voices besides patristic ones – to which we shall return in a moment – begin to make themselves heard: those of Dante – and of his commentators. In *Ezekiel* the counterparts of the four Cherubic shapes, the four living creatures, appear at an early stage in the account of the vision as *ḥăyyôt,* 'living beings', *LXX* ζῷα, and assume the shape of cherubs only in 10.9 'And when I looked, behold the foure wheeles by the Cherubims, one wheele by one Cherub, and an other wheele by an other Cherub'. In the *Purgatorio* 29.82ff., in the description of the Divine Pageant, four creatures follow immediately after the twenty-four Elders:

> Ognuno era pennuto di sei ali,
> Le penne piene d'occhi, e gli occhi d'Argo;
> Se fosser uiui sarebber cotali. (94ff.)

In the next lines Dante says he cannot describe the further details properly, but refers the reader to *Ezekiel*: 'Ma leggi Ezechiel; che li dipigne, / Come li vide dala fredda parte, / Venir con vento, con nube, e con igne'. He then goes on to describe the triumphal chariot on two wheels, drawn by a griffon (106ff.). The Vulgate *Ezekiel* describes the details as follows: 1.10 'Similitudo autem vultus eorum, facies hominis: et facies leonis a dextris ipsorum quatuor: facies autem bouis, a sinistris

[14] Jerome, *Comm. in Ezech.* (*PL* 25.19ff.); Gregory, *Hom. in Ezech.* (*PL* 76.800f.); Rabanus Maurus, *Comm. in Ezech.* (*PL* 110.500 ff.); Rupert, *De Trin. et Oper. Ejus* (*PL* 167.1419ff.); Origen, *In Ezech.* (*PG* 13.669ff.).

[15] Jerome, Gregory, Rabanus Maurus, Rupert.

ipsorum: et facies aquilae desuper ipsorum quatuor. 11 ... et pennae eorum extentae desuper: duae pennae singulorum jungebantur, et duae tegebant corpora eorum ... 16 et aspectus rotarum, et opus earum, quasi visio maris ... 18 Statura quoque erat rotis, et altitudo, et horribilis aspectus: et totum corpus oculis plenum in circuitu ipsarum quatuor'. Thus the Old Testament visionary, to whom Dante refers directly and Milton as it were indirectly, expressly marks the four faces as belonging to different creatures, and provides not only the wheels with eyes, but later the Cherubim as well: 10.12 'Et omne corpus earum, et colla, et manus, et pennae, et circuli plena erant oculis, in circuitu quatuor rotarum'. This suggests a detail in the vision of *Rev.* 4.6, where 'In medio sedis et in circuitu sedis quatuor animalia plena oculis ante et retro'. To the detail of the eyes Milton adds the simile 'as with Starrs', while Dante compares the eyes with the eyes of Argus as described in *Met.* 1.625ff. Milton's lines, however, link up on a submerged level with Dante's on the point where the stars are mentioned, for Ovid associates the eyes of Argus with stars. At 664 Argus is "star-eyed", 'stellatus'; at 722f., after Mercury has killed him, Juno fills the tail of her bird, the peacock, with his eyes, star-like gems: 'gemmis caudam stellantibus inplet'.

So the infracontextual network becomes complex at the very point where the four cherubic shapes enter the narrative in *PL.* There are the details in *Ezek.* 1 and 10, explained and interpreted by patristic annotators (see below); there is Dante's account of the Divine Pageant, in its turn interpreted by commentators of *The Divine Comedy* (see below); there is the verse in *Rev.* 4.6 on 'the foure beastes full of eyes', and there is the Ovidian description of Argus with its Renaissance commentaries (on which again see below, p. 321), to which we are led by Milton's comparison of the Cherubim's eyes with stars. The observation that Milton by adding stars underlines "the cosmic aspect" (Fowler) is not so apt: stars is a simile pointing directly to the Argus episode, where the word plays a similar part rhetorically.

The 'four Cherubic shapes' with four faces each point towards a massive core of patristic interpretations of *Ezek.* 1.5f. 'Ex medio eius similitudo quatuor animalium ... similitudo hominis in eis. Et quatuor facies vni' ('the likeness of foure liuing creatures ... And euery one had foure faces'). There is a cosmic sense in that the four in 1.5 were taken to signify the four seasons, the four cardinal points, the four elements, the four cardinal virtues,[16] etc. – manifestations of the divine order, harmony, and regularity of the universe;[17] the number four, as a commenta-

[16] Thus e.g. Jerome, Gregory, Rabanus Maurus, Origen.

[17] See Fowler, note, and Røstvig, "Images of Perfection", p. 22. Keel (*Jahwe-Visionen*, p. 248) refers to various authorities on the number four as symbolic of the all-encompassing and the universal – the number of the world.

tor on *The Divine Comedy* has it, is "the signature of the divine revelation" (Scartazzini 2, p. 638). The tradition is also highly elaborate in some of the Apocrypha, particularly the Ethiopian text known as *The Book of the Mysteries of Heaven and Earth,*[18] partly based on the *Book of Enoch* and *Ezekiel.* The number four is allegorized in a long list comprising, among other things, the four Patriarchs, the four rivers of the Gospel, the four arms of the cross, the four corners of the altar, the four angels of the Church, the four stones on Aaron's garment, the four camps of Israel during the migration, the four wounds on the Saviour's hands and feet, etc. etc. (pp. 61f.). Discussing v. 10, 'As for the likenesse of their faces, they foure had the face of a man, and the face of a lyon on the right side, and they foure had the face of an oxe on the left side: they foure also had the face of an eagle' – a passage suggested by Milton's 'four Faces each / Had wondrous' 753f. – G. A. Cooke provides a survey of exegetical opinion. It appears that to rabbinical commentators the idea of exaltation is the main point: "Man is exalted among creatures; the eagle is exalted among birds; the ox is exalted among domestic animals; the lion is exalted among wild beasts".[19] Patristic commentators interpret the four faces as symbols of the Evangelists, but differ on the matter of identification. Irenaeus thinks the man stands for Matthew, the lion for John, the ox for Luke, the eagle for Mark.[20] Athanasius agrees on the identification of man with Matthew, but thinks the lion is Luke, the ox Mark, the eagle John. The most widespread set of identifications is man – Matthew, lion – Mark, ox – Luke, and eagle – John, found for instance in Jerome, Ambrose, Gregory, and Adam of St. Victor.[21] This is the identifications generally found in iconography, probably due to Gregory's authority.[22] The same identifications of the 'quattro animali' with the Evangelists were made by the medieval and Renaissance commentators on Dante's *Purgatorio*, from Jacopo della Lana in the early 1300s to Vellutello and Daniello in the 1500s (Scartazzini). However, to some exegetes the four faces signify not only the Evangelists but have other alternative meanings: Jesus born of Mary, the passion and the descent, the Resurrection, the Judgement.[23] There are also other alternative sets of interpretation.

Infracontextual simple-code complexity increases still more as we come to the words 'as with Starrs thir bodies all / And Wings were set

[18] *Le Livre des Mystères du Ciel et de la Terre* (*PO* 1, pp. 1ff.).
[19] G. A. Cooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel.* Edinburgh, 1936, p. 14.
[20] *Adv. Haer.* 3.118 (*PG* 7.885).
[21] Cooke, p. 14.
[22] See Schiller, *Ikonographie* 3, p. 186.
[23] For instance in Rupert, *De Trin.* (*PL* 167.1423f.).

with Eyes, with Eyes the Wheels / Of Beril'. The two wings in *Ezekiel* which are joined and stretched upwards are interpreted as the endeavour to reach the spiritual truths; two cover the body and are taken to signify shame and fear trying to cover up human weaknesses, or else insufficient human knowledge. The eyes suggest a variety of things to commentators. They may mean that the Gospels contain nothing that does not face in every direction and cannot be seen everywhere, illuminating the world; or that the virtuous and the holy, having nothing to hide, can be inspected from everywhere, or that the holy, paragons of virtue for others, pay heed to inner and outer life; or – what would seem to be the most natural interpretation – that God is present everywhere.[24]

Commentaries represent yet a further stage of variation and complexity as we come to current opinions about *Rev.* 4.6 and 8 where the four beasts round the throne (lion, ox, man, eagle) are described: 6 'Et in medio sedis et in circuitu sedis quatuor animalia plena oculis ante et retro ... 8 habebant alas senas in circuitu, et intus plena sunt oculis'. The six wings are variously interpreted (the six works of charity, the six days of Creation, etc.), while the eyes admit of an even larger number of allegorizations since both 'in circuitu' and 'intus' in v. 8 (κυκλόθεν καὶ ἔσωθεν) are taken to qualify 'plena' – probably on the authority of *Ezek.* 1.18.[25] The eyes stand e.g. for attention to the gifts of God, vigilance and care not to be surprised by the devil; protection against impure thoughts; God's commandments looking back and forth, being valid for the past and the future alike; the Gospels open to all, affording knowledge about the past and the future; recollection of sins past and determination not to give way to them in the future; divine behests valid for outer and inner life; vigilance against enemies both within and without;[26] active and contemplative life; perception of hidden truths in the Old Testament and of revealed truths in the New; the holy doctors teaching everybody and explaining all the great riddles.[27] There are yet other explications; one of the simplest and least sophisticated being Jerome's in the *Prologus galeatus*: 'Stantibus coram quatuor animalibus oculatis ante et retro, id est in praeteritum et in futurum respicientibus'. Commentators on Dante's 'Le penne piene d'occhi' in *Purg.* 29.95 suggest explanations

[24] Theodoretus, *In Ezech.* (*PG* 81.829).

[25] See Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John*, p. 72.

[26] In post-patristic exegesis, this seems to be the commonest interpretation (see Swete *ibid.*).

[27] Thus Ambrose, *In Apocal. Expos.* (*PL* 17.803f.), Augustine, *Expos. in Apocal. Joan.* (*PL* 35.2422), Primasius, *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 68.818), Bede, *Explan. Apocal.* (*PL* 93.144), Strabo, *Glossa Ord. Apocal. Joan.* (*PL* 114.719), Haymo, *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 117.1011), Anselm Laud., *Enarr. in Apocal.* (*PL* 162.1519), Bruno Ast., *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 165.628), Rupert, *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 169.919), Rich. of St. Victor, *In Apocal.* (*PL* 196.752), Martinus, *Expos. Apocal.* (*PL* 209.328).

obviously derived from the Fathers. Medieval annotators such as Jacopo della Lana, "l'Anonimo Fiorentino", and Pietro Alighieri remark that just as vision can distinguish every detail, so does evangelical doctrine explain every particular spiritual problem. A similar interpretation is supplied by Benvenuto Rambaldi da Imola (14th century). The first three commentators also take 'plena oculis ante et retro' to mean the intellect understanding the past and the future. Francesco da Buti, also 14th century, says the eyes signify the acute vision of the Evangelists revealing the divinity of the Word veiled by the human nature of the Son; while Vellutello feels they stand for the illumination effected through the Holy Ghost.[28] In this abundant wealth of annotations the eyes thus stand now for active vision, now for things seen, now for understanding, now for explication, now for divine illumination.

Nor is this all. As said above, the meaning of stars is infracontextually defined by the Ovidian commentaries signalled by Dante's 'e gli occhi d'Argo; / Se fosser uiui sarebber cotali'. Sandys quotes Pontano to the effect that Argus is the sky and his eyes the stars, and that Ovid's lines 'Inde suis uicibus capiebant bina quietem, / Cetera seruabant, atque in statione manebant' refer to the stars that watch at night over one hemisphere, while the others are asleep; when Mercury, the Sun, rises, the stars are defeated and die.[29] A similar interpretation is provided by the French version of Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica*,[30] and Comes repeats the interpretation without expressly identifying Mercury with the sun (p. 895). In the earlier edition of the *Hieroglyphica* it is stressed that Argus is the universe and his eyes the stars which behold everything below.[31] The interpretation as provided by Pontano-Sandys, Valeriano, and Comes was also known to Abraham Fraunce, who, like Sandys, refers to Pontano.[32] However, it is a good deal older than that, for Pontano in his Ovid edition (p. 70) points out that the interpretation goes back to Macrobius' *Saturae* (1.19.12): 'Argus est, inquit, caelum stellarum luce distinctum ... Is ergo ambitus caeli stellarum luminibus ornatus tunc aestimatur enectus a Mercurio, cum sol diurno tempore obscurando sidera ueluti enecat ui luminis sui conspectum eorum auferendo mortalibus'. Sandys' and others' comments are thus based on an old tradition, which lays strong stress on the order and cyclic regularity of the cosmic scene, a kind of compressed celestial version of day-night and the winter-

[28] See Scartazzini's summary, 2, p. 640.
[29] Sandys (p. 37) says the Pontano quotation is from the *De Meteoris*. The correct reference, however, is to the same author's *Urania, siue de Stellis, lib.* I ('De Mercurio, et Argo').
[30] Ed. Lyon, 1615, p. 35.
[31] Ed. Venice, 1604, p. 627. The same interpretation seems provided by Arnulph of Orléans (see Don Cameron Allen, *Mysteriously Meant*, p. 164, n. 4).
[32] *The Third Part of the Countesse of Pembrokes Yuychurch*, London, 1592, p. 14.

summer seasons. The cosmic nature of the description is emphasized by the Hebrew and *LXX* basis for 1.16 'Berill', *tăršîš*, θαρσείς: some Fathers who comment on the word take it to mean the deep blue colour of the sky and thus to signify eternity, or else the colour of the sea, that is baptism, on which the wood of the cross or the vessel of the Church moves on its voyage. In 'careering Fires between' there is a reflection of *Ezek.* 1.13 'It [the fire] went vp and downe among the liuing creatures, and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went foorth lightning'; the word 'careering' ("swiftly darting") heightening the *AV*'s 'went vp and downe', and rendering Vulg. 'discurrens' and *LXX* συστρεφομένων. Patristic opinion (represented by the authors referred to above) is divided on the question of the fire's significance. It means knowledge of God, or the love of holy life, or spiritual fervour, or the Holy Ghost, or the serenity of love, or the terrifying fear of God, or the splendour of the holy mind, or future disaster; thus suggesting spiritual truths as well as destruction.

The firmament (Hebr. *raqî*ᵃ' *LXX* στερέωμα) over the heads of living creatures (*Ezek.* 1.22), which is 'the colour of the terrible chrystall', is glossed by the Fathers as eternal purity and clarity, heavenly powers, the reign of immortality, durability, and unchangeability as suggested by the beauty of the serene sky. The 'Saphir Throne, inlaid with pure / Amber, and colours of the showrie Arch' condenses *Ezek.* 1.26 the 'likenesse of a Throne, as the appearance of a Saphyre stone ... 27 And I saw as the colour of amber ... 28 As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloude in the day of raine (so was the appearance of the brightnesse round about'.) For 'I saw as the colour of amber' the Vulgate provides 'vidi quasi speciem electri', *LXX* καὶ ἴδον ὡς ὄψιν ἠλέκτρου, the sense being both the colour of amber and the metal, a compound of gold and silver. (Amber (*ḥashmal*) is also the rendering of the Bishops' and the Geneva Bibles, while Coverdale's and Matthew's Bibles provide 'a cleare light'.) To patristic commentators (as referred to above) sapphire stands for the mystery of the sacraments, Heaven, the beauty of Heaven, the virtues of celestial creatures, the invisible divine nature, or the two natures of man. 'Amber' is explained at some length by Rabanus Maurus: just as electrum is an alloy of two precious metals, so divinity and humanity are united in the Redeemer: his divine nature is made tolerable to our eyes by human form, which in its turn is illuminated by divinity. To Theodoretus the mixture of the two metals means the Son's human nature, made up of soul and body, while Origen interprets ἠλέκτρον as meaning spiritual perfection, and Petrus Cantor the peace which unites man with God in love.[33] The 'showrie Arch' – the 'appearance of the bow', – where fire

[33] Rabanus Maurus, *De Universo* (*PL* 111.478), Theodoretus, *In Ezech.* (*PG* 81.836), Origen, *Hom. in Jer.* (*PG* 13.373f.); Petrus Cantor, *Verbum Abbrev.* (*PL* 205.494).

and water produce the colours, is the Holy Ghost and baptism, or the sign of the New Covenant, or divine gifts.[34] The rainbow recurs in *Rev.* 4.3, where it surrounds the throne: *AV* 'And there was a rainebow round about the Throne, in sight like vnto an Emeralde'. The rainbow is a point where iconography provides an infracontext of a specific kind, for, in art, as Frye has shown, it was converted into the throne itself, and Christ on a rainbow throne is the Pantokrator or the Judge at the Last Judgement. The iconographic pose suggested by Milton's line thus signifies Christ's supremacy, not only in the War in Heaven, but in his capacity of All-Ruler "throughout history and as the ultimate consummation at the end of time" (Frye, p. 158).

It is in conformity with these various ideas that the poet goes on to describe the suit of armour worn by the divine warrior himself. The elevated and solemn character of the paragraph on Christ-the-Warrior is not unexpectedly emphasized by syntactic means: a period runs uninterrupted from l.760 down to l.779. 'Celestial Panoplie', as commentators observe, evokes *Ephes.* 6.11 'Ενδύσασθε τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ θεοῦ πρὸς τὸ δύνασθαι ὑμᾶς στῆναι πρὸς τὰς μεθοδείας τοῦ διαβόλου; Vulg. 'Induite vos armaturam Dei, vt possitis stare aduersus insidias diaboli'; *AV* 'Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the deuill'. Milton's 'Panoplie' is a suit of armour covering the whole body of the warrior; Christ is literally armed from head to foot. The stress on *AV* 'wiles' is infracontextually indicative in view of the nature of Satan's present and future activities – if we can speak in terms of time here –, and several Church Fathers, particularly in Greek patrology, pay attention to the wording of the biblical text. Chrysostom[35] and Theophylactus[36] make a point of observing that St. Paul does not speak of open war or battles here but of guile and cunning, and Chrysostom carefully defines the meaning of μεθοδείας; John of Damascus[37] and Oecumenius[38] similarly stress the insidious and crafty nature of evil. Among the Latin Fathers and later exegetes who comment at some length on the passage (Victorinus, Jerome, Luculentus, Haymo), Haymo is the only one to discuss the nature of the devil's enmity. Like Chrysostom, he defines various types of 'insidiae' and explains that 'justitia', 'veritas', 'patientia', 'charitas', 'castitas', and 'mansuetudo' provide the best protection against them.[39] Patristic and later commentators thus afford important infracontextual glosses on the surface text.

[34] Gregory, Rabanus Maurus, Rupert, Theodoretus.
[35] *In Epist. ad Ephes. Hom.* XXII (*PG* 62.158).
[36] *Expos. in Epist. ad Ephes.* (*PG* 124.1128).
[37] *In Epist. ad Ephes.* (*PG* 95.853).
[38] *Comm. in Epist. ad Ephes.* (*PG* 118.1250).
[39] *Hom. in Epp. Pauli* (*PL* 118.808).

In Vulg. *Exod.* 28.30 *Urim*, of which the Son's suit of armour in *PL* is made, is rendered by 'Doctrina' and in *LXX Exod.* 28.26 by δήλωσις ("manifestation"). In Exodus *Urim* and *Thummim* are symbols in Aaron's "breastplate of judgement". Hugh of St. Victor,[40] repeating the Vulgate rendering, explains that *Urim*, like *Thummim*, was used as lots for obtaining an oracle. What *Urim* may have meant to Milton's contemporaries is a problem discussed in detail by G. Qvarnström.[41] A biblical scholar, John Spencer, he points out, says the word stands for "fiery light", angels consisting of a fiery substance. This interpretation may be based on Masoretic commentary connecting *Urim* with אוֹר, *'ôr*, "light".[42] Joachim Tancke, annotating the alchemist Trevisanus' treatises, remarks on a passage about the Philosopher's stone, 'Diss ist die rechte wahre Sonne selbst ... Diss ist das rechte Urim, und feurige Carbunkel' (Qvarnström, p. 86). As Fowler observes, Aaron according to tradition was the "type of the true priest, who had 'put on' Christ", and his vestments had been interpreted by Henry More (in 1662) as a symbol of the universe (note on 3.596ff.). Qvarnström points out that the brilliance of the Sun as described in bk. 3 is associated with that of the jewels in Aaron's breastplate, and that 'radiant' in *PL* is always used in connection with God, Christ, the angels, or the Sun. Christ is armed with the fiery substance of the Sun at the moment of elevation when he ascends the throne and thus obeys God's behest: "The Messiah represents the divine Sun on the Throne of omnipotence".[43]

Following immediately after the lines on the Divine Chariot, amplified and reinforced by multiple infracontextual meanings, the lines on Christ's panoply of radiant Urim take on a particular significance, summarizing and compressing as they do the ideas of cosmic order and divine truth in all its various manifestations. The theme as developed in these passages in its turn colours the subsequent lines on Victory sitting 'Eagle-wingd' on the Son's right hand; we know on what qualities and what virtues the Son's victory is founded. The 'Bow / And Quiver with three-bolted Thunder stor'd', commentators remark, suggest various literary and iconographic clichés – for instance the bird of Jupiter, meaning imperial majesty, sometimes sitting at the feet of winged victory. It is also easy to associate the three-bolted Thunder and eagle-winged Victory with an emblem by Juan de Boria (1581) representing an eagle with a sheaf of three big double bolts and the motto DIVINAE VINDICTAE; the prose device which accompanies the emblem explains that a true

[40] *Adnot. Elucidat. in Pentat.* (*PL* 175.72).
[41] *The Enchanted Palace*, Stockholm, 1967, pp. 60ff.
[42] A. H. McNeile, *The Book of Exodus*, London, 1931, p. 183.
[43] Qvarnström, p. 64. See also Linda Weinhouse, "The Urim and Thummim in *Paradise Lost*" (*MQ* 11, 1977, pp. 9ff.).

prince is an instrument of divine vengeance.[44] Another important infra-context, however, is one affording a contrast to the Son's bow and quiver. 'Arcus fortium superatus est, et infirmi accincti sunt robore' in *1 Sam.* 2.4 is commented on by Gregory recalling *Is.* 14.13f.: 'Arcus itaque fortium superbia est spirituum malignorum ... Quem profecto arcum dum intentio impia tetendit, jacere malitiae jacula supra se in conditorem studuit. "Ponam", inquit princeps eorum, "sedem meam ad Aquilonem, similis ero Altissimo" ... Sed superatus est arcus fortium, quia Deus apostatarum spirituum superbiae restitit, de caelo praecipitavit, conditionali gloria virtutis exuit, ut in lapsis angelis homo disceret quid timeret'.[45] The Son's bow puts to flight the rebellious angels, thereby breaking the bow of the mighty who try to rebel against God; Gregory's comment on the defeated bowman foreshadows the outcome of the battle and the didactic aspect of the apostate angels' defeat.

In the 'fierce Effusion ... Of smoak and bickering flame, and sparkles dire' rolling about the Son recur, described in greater detail, the 'Flashing thick flames' of l.751 with their infracontextual meaning of divine punishment and the consuming fire of God and of the Holy Ghost. This sense is intensified by association with Rupert's account in *De Victoria Verbi Dei* of the arms with which the Son defeats the rebels in Heaven. Christ does not use physical weapons but the Word, which is consuming fire when used against the enemies of God: 'Ignis quippe est Dei Verbum, id est sic intolerabile impiis, spiritibus malignis, ut est infirmis corporibus ignis visibilis'. Referring to *Ps.* 67.3 'Sicut fluit cera a facie ignis, sic pereant peccatores a facie Dei', Rupert continues, 'Igitur non qualibuscunque armis diabolum, et angelos ejus debellaverunt sancti angeli, sed igne ardente: in ipsis namque est Verbum Dei. Etenim ignis iste intolerabilis quidem est impiis et odientibus se, sed blandus et suavis est piis et diligentibus se'.[46] Rupert reverts to the same idea of the Word as the fiery arms of God in his commentary on *John* 1.1.[47] The thought that the Logos is a destructive agent of God could have been suggested to Rupert by several passages in the Old and by at least one in the New Testament. In *Wisd.* 18.15 the all-powerful (παντοδύναμός) Logos leaps from heaven like a fierce warrior armed with the commandments like a sharp sword, spreading death everywhere. Also in *Hos.* 6.5 and *Jeremiah* 23.29 the Word is a destructive force. In *Rev.* 19.13 the Leader of the divine armies with many crowns on his head, flaming eyes, dressed in a blood-soaked mantle, and with a sharp sword coming out of his mouth,

[44] Henkel and Schöne, *Emblemata*, col. 758.
[45] *In Prim. Reg. Expos.* (*PL* 79.81f.).
[46] *De Victoria Verbi Dei* (*PL* 169.1230).
[47] *PL* 169.207. Kitty Cohen (*The Throne and the Chariot*, p. 125) stresses the importance of St. John for Milton's identification of the divine image of the chariot with Christ.

is called ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ. But the Logos also has the opposite function, being of course an agent of Creation. In *Ps.* 107.20 it is a healer; in *Gen.* 1 God creates by the Word – a function stressed several times by Philo[48] and eloquently explained by Augustine expounding *John* 1.1: 'Attende fabricam istam mundi; vide quae sint facta per Verbum, et tunc cognosces quale sit Verbum ... Ex fabrica ergo ista animadvertite quale Verbum est per quod facta est, et non sola facta est... Per illud Verbum et Angeli facti sunt; per illud Verbum et Archangeli facti sunt; Potestates, Sedes, Dominationes, Principatus; per illud Verbum facta sunt omnia; hinc cogitate quale Verbum est'.[49] Other patristic commentators on *John* 1.1 explain that the Logos is the realisation of God, the means by which he is known to mortals (Bede, Alcuin, Bruno Ast., Origen, Cyrillus, Theophylactus). This is Hebr. *me'mra'*, the verbal manifestation of Yahweh.[50] Christ – Logos is Divine Reason, healing and creating and consequently at the same time annihilating everything that threatens to prevent healing and disrupt creation. Sweet to the blessed, the Logos is an unendurably destructive element to evil spirits. The Logos in this double function equated with fire suggests Gregory's comment on the miracle of the Three Youths in the fiery furnace, in which he observes that fire may solace the elect and punish the damned: 'Sicut ergo electis ignis ardere novit ad solatium, et tamen ardere ad supplicium nescit; ita e diverso gehennae flamma reprobis et nequaquam lucet ad consolationis gratiam, et tamen lucet ad poenam'.[51] In fact the fire ravaging the ranks of the rebel angels, recurring in 848ff. where every eye with which the fourfold visages and the wheels are set about 'Glar'd lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire ... that witherd all thir strength', prefigures the fire of Hell for ever consuming those condemned to everlasting pain. 'Effusion' (765), a word not elsewhere used in Milton's poems, is often used with 'blood' in descriptions of slaughter (*OED*); 'bickering', as Hume, Newton, Todd, and Keightley observed, really means "fighting". After the suggestions of grace and divine love and truth in the preceding passage, the menacing lines evoking the theme of the destructive fire of the Word stand out in sharp contrast.

The contrast is heightened by the lines on the ten thousand thousand saints (reproducing Vulgate 'sancti' for ἄγγελοι) attending on the Son, suggesting order and virtue and recalling other surface contexts on angels' applause and homage. Above all, the line 'Attended with ten

[48] See *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John* by J. H. Bernard and A. H. McNeile, 1, Edinburgh, 1928, p. cxl.
[49] *In Joan. Evang. Tract.* (*PL* 35.1384).
[50] See *The Book of Wisdom*, ed. J. Reider, New York, 1957, p. 210 (*Jewish Apocryphal Literature* 5).
[51] *Moralia* 9.66 (*PL* 75.915f.).

thousand thousand Saints' signals *Enoch* 14.22, *Dan.* 7.10 and, as Keightley and Verity pointed out, *Rev.* 5.11. The passages in *Enoch* and *Daniel* are very much alike. The visionary in *Enoch* sees the Lord surrounded by a flaming fire, none of those around him can go near, "and ten thousand times ten thousand were before him". The prophet in *Daniel* sees the Ancient of Days with throne and wheels of fire, 'thousand thousands ministred vnto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him' (χίλιαι χιλιάδες ἐλειτούργουν αὐτῷ, καὶ μύριαι μυριάδες παρειστήκεισαν αὐτῷ);'the iudgement was set, and the bookes were opened'. In *Rev.* 5.11 the visionary sees and hears angels, the beasts, and the Elders around the throne, 'and the number of them was ten thousand times tenne thousand, and thousands of thousands', praising the Lord. Nor is this all, for behind the English numerals we discern χιλιάς and μυριάς so often used for "countless numbers". The infracontexts, telescoped into one another and then intensifying the line in *PL*, easily exceed the bounds of comprehensibility, as indeed decorum demands of an attempt to describe the divine. There is no line in Milton's poem where the concept of the infinite is so intensely suggested by infracontextual means. Again, divine infinity is in contrast to the kind of infinity suggested by the autumnal-leaves simile in book 1, where the individual and the discrete is to the fore, though numberless, while divine infinity obliterates and absorbs the particular.

In 'On the Crystallin Skie, in Saphir Thron'd', Milton repeats the theme of 757f., in so doing calling up once more a dense infracontextual cluster of meanings; celestial beauty, eternity, the holy mystery of the sacraments, immortality, and so on. Line 771, 'Hee on the wings of Cherube rode sublime', recalling *Ps.* 18.10 'And he rode vpon a Cherub, and did flie: yea he did flie vpon the wings of the wind', fits in closely with this semantic cluster, for by several patristic commentators 'cherubim' is glossed 'plenitudo scientiae', interpreted as "love": Christ surpasses all angelic orders in boundless love;[52] nobody can reach him except through love. Jerome refers in this context to *John* 15.13 'Maiorem charitatem nemo habet, quam vt animam suam ponat quis pro amicis suis'. Alternative interpretations of the 'plenitudo scientiae' are the holy mystery, impenetrable except to God,[53] and the perspicacity of the holy apostles, instructed by God.[54] All this is literally signalled by the 'great Ensign of *Messiah*' which 'blaz'd / Aloft by Angels born, his Sign

[52] Rufinus, *In Psalm. LXXV Comm.* (*PL* 21.704), Jerome, *Breviarium in Psalm.* (*PL* 26.865), Augustine, *Enarr. in Psalm.* (*Psalm* 36.149), Bede, *In Psalm. Librum Exeg.* (*PL* 93.569), Strabo, *Glossa Ord.* (*PL* 113.868). See also *RAC* 5.176.

[53] Haymo, *Explan. in Psalm.* (*PL* 116.247), Petrus Lombardus, *Comm. in Psalm.* (*PL* 191.190).

[54] Bruno Ast., *Expos. in Psalm.* (*PL* 164.748f.).

in Heav'n', evoking *Matt.* 24.29ff. in the description of the signs of Christ's second coming (Gillies, Todd): 'Immediatly after the tribulation of those dayes, shall the Sunne be darkned, and the Moone shall not giue her light, and the starres shall fall from heauen, and the powers of the heauens shall be shaken. 30 And then shall appeare the signe of the Sonne of man in heauen: and then shall all the Tribes of the earth mourne, and they shall see the Sonne of man coming in the clouds of heauen, with power and great glory'.

It is at this point, the point of maximum amount of surface- and infracontextual meanings and of interpenetration of the Grace-and-Love theme and the apocalyptic theme, that the contrast effect emerging from contact with 'Satan in Chariot' (6.99ff.) is at its strongest. Among his followers

> High in the midst exalted as a God
> Th' Apostat in his Sun-bright Chariot sate
> Idol of Majestie Divine, enclos'd
> With Flaming Cherubim, and gold'n Shields;
> Then lighted from his gorgeous Throne, for now
> 'Twixt Host and Host but narrow space was left –

and the scene is set for the encounter between Satan and Abdiel. There is of course a general similarity to the description of Satan on his throne at the beginning of book 2, and 'Idol', as Hughes notes, suggests that he is idolized instead of the divine majesty who mounts the celestial chariot in the great central passage. Here, just as in 5.709, he "allures" his followers, a false star that guides its flock astray. The 'Flaming Cherubim', Fowler points out, correspond to the four cherubic shapes actually forming part of the Son's chariot, but also to the Cherubim on whose wings he rides sublime. Since these, via *Ps.* 18, suggest the infracontextual interpretation "divine love" and "supreme insight", it follows that the flaming Cherubim enclosing Satan's chariot stand for hatred and obfuscated reason. Traditionally, as said before,[55] it is the Seraphim who are represented as red, 'flaming' and burning with love; the Cherubim enclosing Satan's chariot are aflame with fury, not love.[56] The contrast between the Chariot of Paternal Deity and Satan's sun-bright chariot also harks back to earlier contrasts between Satan the oriental tyrant and Christ or God: such words as 'exalted', 'Apostat', 'Idol', 'gorgeous' are indicative. This contrast involves not only such obvious details as

[55] See p. 85 above, n. 2.

[56] Their traditional colour in iconography is blue (Kirschbaum, "L'Angelo rosso e l'angelo turchino", pp. 234ff.; *RAC* 5.176).

Satan's throne in bk. 2 and Pharaoh's broken chariots in bk. 1, with other examples of the rebels' chariots; there is also a contrast with oversumptuous Pandemonium, Satan assuming different shapes, and Satan associated with sun and moon. The contrast with these various aspects of the tyrannical and the demonic operates in part through an infracontext to which L'Orange calls attention in his discussion of the ceremonial throne and chariot of the Great Kings of the East: Petrus Chrysologus' diatribe on the Sassanian kings.[57] These hated tyrants are enthroned with their feet on a celestial orb as if treading on Heaven, falsely taking God's place; crowning their heads with rays like the Sun, or putting on lunar horns, assuming the shape of the female Moon or other astral forms.[58] Naturally this description also suggests the 'similis ero Altissimo' passage taken to deal with Lucifer in *Is.* 14.12. Lucifer usurps a symbol of Christ, the Sun; and the 'Sun-bright Chariot' also evokes Ovid's lines on the sungod's chariot in *Met.* 2.107f. – 'Aureus axis erat, temo aureus, aurea summae / Curvatura rotae, radiorum argenteus ordo' – i.e. the chariot regarded as a tool in the hands of arrogance. Just as Satan is not the legitimate driver of the sun-bright chariot, so he is comparable to him who had no business driving the sun-god's team: Phaëthon. 'Αποστατέω, incidentally, means "depart from", "fall away from". The allegorical meaning of the Phaëthon figure is obvious to the commentators. Through the example of Phaëthon, says the author of the *Ovide Moralisé*, we should learn to avoid arrogance and pride, and, as pointed out previously, he has no hesitation in revealing Phaëthon's real identity: 'A grant honte et a grant meschief / Trebuscha Lucifer jadis, / Per son orgueil, de Paradis' (2.706ff.). Bersuire, allegorizing the *Metamorphoses*, sees Phaëthon as bold and inflamed by passionate desire.[59] Emblem-books unanimously take Phaëthon to stand for presumption.[60] To Comes, Phaëthon signifies those who in their arrogance think they can get away with anything, their pride resulting in disaster (p. 549); and Sandys reads the fable as dealing with a 'a rash and ambitious Prince, inflamed with desire of glory and dominion: who in that too powerfull, attempts what so euer is aboue his power; and giues no limits to his ruining ambition' (p. 66). While the symbolism of the divine chariot and its driver seems almost inexhaustible and at the same time paradoxically centred on the same simple fundamental idea, refracted as it were through innumerable

[57] L'Orange, *Cosmic Kingship*, pp. 38ff.
[58] *Sermo* 120 (*PL* 52.527).
[59] See Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods*, p. 93, and Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology*, pp. 219f. and n. 159.
[60] Henkel and Schöne, *Emblemata*, cols. 1614–16. See also Cohen, *The Throne and the Chariot*, pp. 123ff.

media, the meaning of the false sun-team is, by contrast, simple and unequivocal. The contrast is a double one.

The final view of the victorious chariot is provided in 824ff., after Christ's speech to his army. He alone will deal with the enemy:

> So spake the Sone, and into terrour chang'd
> His count'nance too severe to be beheld,
> And full of wrauth bent on his Enemies.
> At once the Four spred out thir Starrie wings
> With dreadful shade contiguous, and the Orbes
> Of his fierce Chariot rowld, as with the sound
> Of torrent Floods, or of a numerous Host.
> Hee on his impious Foes right onward drove,
> Gloomie as Night; under his burning Wheeles
> The stedfast Empyrean shook throughout,
> All but the Throne it self of God.

The enemy soon breaks and flees under the thunder, the arrows, and the fire. Reminiscences of *Ezekiel* are at work here too; some have been operating before, others not. The four spreading out their wings again stress the idea of contemplation, of contact with God; and 'Starrie wings' recalls *Ezek.* 10.12 on eyes covering the body, backs, hands, wings, and wheels of the Cherubim. Annotating the verse, Jerome refers to his comments on *Ezek.* 1, while Rabanus Maurus feels the wings in 10.12 symbolize vigilance necessary to ward off evil, and Theodoretus, that they signify the omnipresence of God. 'Contiguous' repeats *Ezek.* 1.9 'Their wings were ioyned one to another', while 'dreadful' evokes the 'rings' of the wheels, 'so high, that they were dreadful' (18). To Gregory, Vulg. 'horribilis' here means the terror of hell, which torments the wicked, and Rupert remarks that to us in our sinfulness and transience the angelic powers are terrible. The comparison of the thunder of the rolling chariot to the 'sound / Of torrent Floods', not used in the earlier description of the chariot, repeats *Ezek.* 1.24 on the noise of great waters heard wherever the four 'liuing creatures' went, symbolizing the yearning for Heaven in the souls of the holy (Gregory), or – more understandably – 'laus Creatoris' rising from a great multitude (Rabanus Maurus). The latter is the express meaning of the simile as used in *Rev.* 19.6 'the voice of many waters'; a meaning further emphasized and elaborated in patristic and later commentary.[61] According to Rupert, 'Hic est auditus

[61] Primasius, *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 68.908f.), Bede, *Explan. Apocal.* (*PL* 93.187f.), Haymo, *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 117.1168), Bruno Ast., *Expos. in Apocal.* (*PL* 165.708), Richard of St. Victor, *In Apocal. libri 7* (*PL* 196.846f.).

consolationis, hoc est carmen in supradicto libro scriptum, carmen exsultationis, carmen vestrum, o peregrini cives coelestis patriae, qui in hoc mundo peregrinamini et lamentamini'.[62]

The Son driving his chariot straight towards his impious foes signals *Ezek.* 1.12 'And they went euery one straight forward: whither the spirit was to goe, they went: and they turned not when they went'. In Milton's account the straightforward course of the divine chariot stands for the implacable determination of his attack, its great force and impact. At the same time there is again an echo of patristic interpretations: the Holy Spirit's steady advance in the world (Gregory); those who have elevated themselves above the world and will never return to it (Paterius).

In 832ff. 'Gloomie as Night; under his burning Wheeles / The stedfast Empyrean shook throughout, / All but the Throne it self of God' other voices than biblical and patristic make themselves heard. Newton observed that 'Gloomie as Night' is from *Il.* 12.463, νυκτὶ θοῇ ἀτάλαντος ὑπώπια ("in countenance like swift night"), describing Hector's appearance as he leads the Trojans in a powerful attack on the Greek ships, πυρὶ δ'ὄσσε δεδήει, "and his two eyes blazed with fire" (466). A similar expression, Newton remarks, occurs in *Od.* 11.606, ὁ δ'ἐρεμνῇ νυκτὶ ἐοικώς, ("and he like dark night") used about Heracles – a medieval and Renaissance type of Christ – as seen in the Underworld by Odysseus. With his bow and arrow he seems ready to shoot, δεινὸν παπταίνων, "glowering terribly about him", just as Christ's countenance is 'too severe to be beheld'. There is a powerful contrast here with Satan's deceitful 'countenance' in a different sense at 5.708. The heightening derived from the infracontexts is sustained and becomes even more effective with the lines 'under his burning Wheeles / The stedfast Empyrean shook throughout, / All but the Throne it self of God' (832ff.). There is a contrast, not only with Satan's bragging that the 'innumerable force' of rebellious angels shook God's throne (1.101, 105, Verity), but also with a whole succession of Infernal Council texts in which evil powers threaten Heaven and the very foundations of the universe (see examples on p. 173, to which may be added the vigorous description in the *Theogony* 841f. (Todd) of earth and heaven resounding and trembling as Typhoeus launches his attack on Zeus and the gods). As for non-contrasting infracontexts, Fowler refers to *Is.* 13.12f., Hume and Todd to *Dan.* 7.9, *Job* 26.11, and Dunster to Pindar's *Nemaean Ode* 6.6. In *Is.* 13.13 God is threatening Babylon: 'Therefore I will shake the heauens, and the earth shall remoue out of her place in the wrath of the Lord of hostes, and in the day of his fierce anger'. Among early commentators, Haymo and Hervaeus expressly compare the cosmic upheaval described

[62] *Comm. in Apocal.* (*PL* 169.1158).

by the prophet with the Day of Judgement.[63] In *Dan.* 7.9, after beholding the four beasts, the visionary sees the Ancient of Days take his place on a throne, 'whose garment was white as snow, and the haire of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fierie flame, and his wheeles as burning fire'. He is ministered to by innumerable multitudes, books are opened, and judgement passed (see p. 327). Jerome is very explicit on the meaning of the scene. Comparing the verse with *Rev.* 4 and *Matt.* 17, he says the figure on the throne is dressed for Judgement Day; his throne is of fire so that sinners may tremble, but the just will be saved, as if by fire. Jerome also makes the connection, which Rupert does not, between God in his chariot in *Ezek.* 1 and the Day of Doom, and refers to *Deut.* 4.24, 'Quia Dominus Deus tuus ignis consumens est'. Rupert provides a double interpretation: the throne and the wheels of fire signify God's anger and coming revenge, but also his clemency and lenience: he has come not as avenger but as Redeemer. His flaming throne and wheels are the Church and the Gospels.[64] Paterius supplies a different interpretation: the fiery wheels are holy preachers, burning with zeal and travelling rapidly everywhere in order to set others on fire.[65] In *Job* 26.11, Job is describing the power of God: 'The pillars of heauen tremble, and are astonished at his reproofe', words which induce Jerome's comment that God's reproof predicts the terrible Judgement to come; while Bruno and Rupert believe the pillars of heaven refer to angels, apostles, and preachers trembling before God.[66] The words in *PL*, 'All but the Throne it self of God' receive a kind of accompaniment from Pindar's *Nemaean Ode* 6.6, on the victorious Alcimidas of Aegina, in which the poet, by way of introduction, describes the differences between men and gods, though sharing a common origin. Human beings are nothing, ''while strong heaven endures, a dwelling-place stable for ever''. Milton's lines on the trembling universe are thus enriched by infracontextual meanings now contrasting God's real power with the brutal force of rebel angels, now stressing revenge and Judgement, now emphasizing mildness, clemency, and the power of the Church and the Gospels, and now depicting the seat of God as an unshakeable, endurable world elevated far above change and transitoriness.

*

Rupert's lines on the part played by the divine Word during the War in Heaven – a devastating fire to evil spirits and a sweet balm to the elect –

[63] Haymo, *Comm. in Is.* (*PL* 116.787); Hervaeus, *Comm. in Is. libri octo* (*PL* 181.155).
[64] Jerome, *Comm. in Dan.* (*PL* 25.532); Rupert, *De Trin. et Oper. Ejus* (*PL* 167.1515).
[65] *De Test. in Dan. Proph.* (*PL* 79.998).
[66] Jerome, *Comm. in librum Job* (*PL* 26.690); Bruno Ast., *Expos. in Job* (*PL* 164.636); Rupert, *Comm. in Job* (*PL* 168.1072).

takes on a curious significance as we think of the great choir of exegetic voices explaining in detail, in a simple code, the meaning of the Chariot of Paternal Deity: this is indeed the Word as a living force. The essential significance afforded by these infracontexts concerns the paradoxical character of the Chariot and the Son's attributes. At the same time as the Chariot as a whole is a symbol of unity, divine harmony, and obedience, and thus also, in the mystical sense, of the union of man with God, it is an irresistible agent annihilating evil. In this there is no contradiction, for the establishment of harmony and unity implies the negation of discord and disorder. Similarly, as regards the various details of the description it is noteworthy that the mass of exegetical interpretation, though sometimes referring to revenge and the last Judgement, lays stress on such concepts connected with the divine essence as love, grace, truth, charity, permanence, eternity; or on the search for God or the union with God as achieved through vigilance, illumination, revelation through the Evangelists, different aspects of holiness, spiritual fervour, and so on and so forth. 'Who then devised the torment? Love' – it is as if on closer inspection the frightening war machine, used for a devastating attack, changes to a dazzling chariot in a celestial *trionfo d'amore*, on whose very appearance the powers of evil give way and disappear.

CHAPTER VIII

Concluding Remarks

The answers to the two questions asked at the beginning of the introduction have, perhaps, at least in part, been answered in the preceding chapters, where we have gone from signs to meanings, from Hell to Heaven. In this summing-up we shall do the opposite. The survey will be based on the structure of the fundamental contrasts. Although, as Weimann remarks, the literary sign is much more complex than the ordinary linguistic sign,[1] I shall here attempt a radical simplification in decoding the system of signs that emerged in the course of the discussion in the different chapters. Such a semantic reduction may possibly be justified against the background of these detailed discussions, though of course the oversimplification inherent in brevity is inevitable.

The figure of God in the vertical context systems detaches itself from an assembly of supreme deities. Against the foil of this divine galaxy some special features appear by comparison. The mild but just and firm ruler, checking the rebellion and carefully watching developments in the Underworld and in Eden, stands out in relief against the remote cloud-gatherer in Homer, the smiling benefactor in Virgil, the heavy father of the Old Testament, and the supreme divinity of the Renaissance epics. Yet at times details in the descriptions of all these figures recur in *PL*, reminding us simultaneously of the differences. Milton's God intensifies and completes the Renaissance descriptions in Sannazaro-Tasso-Camoëns and Marino, the all-seeing thoughtful deity and the invisible fountain of light made visible in the Son. The description of God's throne fits in with this picture of its occupant: the merging of holy mount and prince's seat underlines the meaning suggested by the various signs for God. The contrasting links that run from God on his throne to Satan on his tend to throw into relief, with the aid of infracontexts, infernal meanings such as falseness, pride, tyranny, persecution of Christ, and

[1] *Structure and Society in Literary History*, pp. 182f.

evil monstrosity. Links with the account of Satan sneaking up to his throne on returning to Pandemonium in book 10 emphasize the themes of fraud, past glory, and arrogance, while the "mount – mount" motif, in sharp contrast to that suggested by the throne of God, evokes the *Gigantomachia* and thus the theme of rebellion.

Infracontexts similarly aid in stressing the meanings brought into relief by the horizontal contrast between the House of God and Pandemonium. Heaven is invisible, like God: we are not allowed in, and what the interior is like we can only guess by association from the portal's precious stones signalling the New Jerusalem, a case of accommodation very incompletely representing Heaven. While the object of the description is thus hidden from us by many veils and esoteric meanings are suggested, in a simple code, by patristic exegesis, the reality of Pandemonium as disclosed by the barbaric interior is only too obvious, and its evil meanings are very palpably, though indirectly, evoked by infracontexts: delusion, temptation, violence, despotism, weird sterility, disorder, tyranny and so on – the infernal hall proves to be a storehouse of all manifestations of evil, at the same time as infracontexts indicate the transitory nature of the place.

The bright stairs and pathways connecting Heaven with earth and different parts of Heaven with each other have a negative counterpart in the dark causeways connecting earth with Hell. Taken together, these roads make up a complex and paradoxical pattern of meanings. While the 'stairs mysteriously meant' indicate the mystic ascent through the pure life as well as Christ himself, the infernal bridge suggests the invasion of the world by evil, yet at the same time infracontexts insist on the opposite direction, as if the path from Hell doubled inexorably back on itself. This is supported by the infracontextually conveyed "death-of-Death" theme. Round the holy stairs themselves there is a dense cluster of partly antithetic meanings: irretrievable damnation (Satan denied access to ladder) and Salvation (doors of Heaven opened, the blessed conducted towards Paradise by an angel, in his turn contrasted with gloomy Charon ferrying the damned across Acheron); baptism and various aspects of holiness (symbolic meaning of glassy sea, amber, pearl and jasper); grace flowing down to earth (angels as God's messengers). The meanings of the Milky Way (Christ triumphant, the beatific vision and blessed existence) are supplemented by the paradoxical *in bono* meanings of the Dogs of Hell on their way to spreading destruction (evil ministers of vengeance subdued, Death and evil hurled down in defeat).

A group held together by the theme of astronomy/astrology is ordered like a semicircle around a centre made up of the angels-stars motif. The chief meanings of this sign – eternity, blissful existence, and the essence of fertility – stand out against the themes of impious rebellion (Orion), the

threat to the earth, but also the defeat of evil (Ophiucus), the threat to the entire universe (stars blasted by Sin and Death), the delusive power of evil (the moon part of the fairy elves simile in book 1), and transitoriness (morning stars associated with dew-drops made to disappear by the sun). Myriads of stars in the firmament with their dazzling luminosity are also pitted against more lurid celestial phenomena and bad omens such as meteors and fiery comets. Eternal unchanging bliss, in short, stands out against movement, transitoriness, perturbation, properties of a world of change and destruction whose diabolic driving force faces defeat. A less sharp contrast is that between the angelic squadron and Satan, terrifying and of monstrous size: the fiery moon, a bad omen, bodes ill for the angels' adversary, a theme also evoked by the comet which a Virgilian infracontext associates with Satan's helmet. But the Ceres-field simile and the Plowman suggest that the angels may not be reliable adversaries of Satan: we are here far from the unchanging 'lumina' which inhabit the firmament close to Heaven. To the meanings conveyed by these astronomical systems also belong the fraud and false pretence as suggested by Satan-the-morning-star, contrasted on the infracontextual level with the hope of Salvation held out to the world by Christ as morning star.

Sanctity and the principle of divine fertility are in striking opposition to other manifestations of the infernal world, in so doing merging with other angel-signs. Thus there is an obvious antithesis involved in the relation angelic stars – autumnal leaves. Merging with the meanings "beatific vision", "supreme bliss", and "divine order and harmony" (angelic choir praising God), the angelic stars are also in contrast to other aspects of everlasting damnation (various manifestations of eternal punishment and the fallen angels' depression, gloom, inability to see God, and transformations), following their unforgivable sin, arch-heresy and loyalty to Satan (military demonstration in Hell, Pharaoh's army, locusts). Some of these descriptions, for instance the fallen angels' military demonstration, at the same time conceal meanings which as it were undermine the threat posed by the devils, and the meaning "Salvation-through-baptism" emerges in the episode of Pharaoh perishing in the Red Sea, an important sign. The meaning "truth" as revealed by the theme of the angelic choir is in opposition to the meaning "delusion" as conveyed by the bee-and-fairy-elves simile, and eternity again contrasts with instability, change and punishment (devils transformed into serpents). In the same way the meaning "immortality and purity" (angels casting crowns of amarant) stands out against death and evil threatening the world (devils paying homage to Satan) and against the rebellion as suggested by Satan's army in the North, also infracontextually contrasted with the Nativity.

Raphael, the messenger of God, is the centre of a cluster of meanings

which similarly lend heavy emphasis to opposite themes. Blissful harmony and divine omnipotence are indicated by the effortlessness of his departure from Heaven and of his flight – a sign also made up of accounts in Homer, Virgil, and Tasso –; damnation and exile from Heaven by the difficulties and complications of the infernal Argonaut's passage through Chaos. The complex meanings packed into the Phoenix symbol and evoked by the guardian angel motif provide the opposite of everything Satan stands for. The theme of the infernal Argonaut itself paradoxically suggests various fundamental contrasts: Salvation (Christ as vessel), divine will and order (passage of Argo), victory of good over evil (passage into light across boundaries of Chaos), and safe prudence (ship making for port). Again of course the themes of divine aid and hope of Salvation as invested in the figure of Raphael – a 'glorious shape' but apparently undisguised – are antithetic to the themes of rebellion, temptation, delusion, and corruption as suggested by Satan as cherub, wolf-cormorant, and serpent. At the same time we are reminded of the degree of dangerousness inherent in the figure of Satan by his steadfastness in evil as brought into relief by his stoic maxims.

The theme of the Chariot of the Paternal Deity, finally, is comparable to that of Pandemonium from the point of view of the complexity of the signs, though the types of code are different. On the level of meaning, the significance of the charioteer is that of the true and genuine hero, whose war is in a sense an act of love. This theme of the true hero is brought into opposition, intensified by infracontexts, to the theme of the false hero: Satan with his conflicting emotions, remembering his glorious past, actuated by hate and envy, and divided against himself – a splendid exterior hiding traits of a very different kind.

It is remarkable how many of the signs suggesting evil conceal infracontextually induced *in bono* meanings tending to negate the significance of the surface contexts. And this kind of complexity is characteristic not only of the "infernal" category of signs. Paradoxical tension, ironic or not, is perhaps the most interesting feature of a set of important signs in *PL*: just as divine severity conceals mildness, so diabolic corruption conceals Salvation. Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety.

Selected Bibliography

Texts

Aeschylus, *Tragedies,* edited by F. A. Paley. London, 1879.
Alcuin. *Opera Omnia. PL* 100–101.
Ambrosius. *Opera Omnia. PL* 14–17.
Andreas Caesariensis. *PG* 106 (199–485).
Andreini, Giambattista. *L'Adamo,* a cura di Ettore Allodoli. Lanciano, 1913.
Anselmus Cantuariensis. *Opera Omnia. PL* 158–159.
Anselmus Laudunensis. *PL* 162 (1170–1592).
Anthologia Graeca I–IV, ed. Hermann Beckby. München, 1957–58.
The Apocalypse of St John. The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes and Indices by Henry B. Swete. 3rd edition. London, 1911.
The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English ... 1–2, edited by R. H. Charles. Oxford, 1913.
The Apocryphal New Testament ... newly translated by M. R. James. Oxford, 1924.
Apollonius Rhodius. *The Argonautica,* edited with Introduction and Commentary by George W. Mooney. Dublin, 1912.
– *Argonavticorvm* libri IV, ab Jeremia Hoelzlino in Latinum conversi. Lugduni Bat., 1641.
Aratus. *Phaenomena.* Wittenbergae, 1521.
– *Phaenomena.* Recensuit et ... instruxit Ernestus Maass. Berolini, 1893.
Arethas Caesariensis. *PG* 106 (485–806).
Ariosto, Lodouico. *Orlando Fvrioso.* Nuouamente ristampato, e ricorretto. In Venetia, 1619.
Augustinus. *Opera Omnia. PL* 32–46.
Avitus. *Opera quae supersunt,* rec. R. Peiper. *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctores antiquissimi* 6:2. Berolini, 1883.
Bacchylides. *The Poems,* edited by F. G. Kenyon. London, 1897.
Basilius. *Opera Omnia quae extant. PG* 29–32.
Beda. *Opera Omnia. PL* 90–95.
S. Bernardus. *Opera Omnia. PL* 182–185.
The Bible and Holy Scriptures. Geneva, 1560.
The Byble, contaynyng the Olde and Newe Testamente with Apocrypha (Matthew's Bible). London, 1551.
The English Bible 1611, 1–5, edited by W. A. Wright. Cambridge, 1909.
The Holy Bible, conteyning the olde and newe Testament (Bishops' version). London, 1575.
Biblia, the Byble that is the holy Scrypture of the Olde and New Testament, faythfully translated by Myles Coverdale. 1535. Repr. London, 1847.
Biblia Sacra. Antverpiae, 1584.

Boccaccio, Giovanni. *Genealogie Deorum Gentilium libri* 1–2, a cura di V. Romana. *Scrittori d'Italia* 200–201. Bari, 1951.
Boethius. *Opera Omnia. PL* 63–64.
The Book of Enoch, translated from Professor Dillmann's Ethiopic Text ... edited by R. H. Charles. Oxford, 1893.
The Book of Wisdom, ed. J. Reider. (*Jewish Apocryphal Literature* 5.). New York, 1957.
Bruno Astensis. *Opera Omnia. PL* 164–165.
De Camõens, Luis. *The Lusiads in Sir Richard Fanshawe's Translation* [1655]; edited and with an Introduction by Geoffrey Bullough. London, 1963.
– *Obras* 1–4. Lisbon, 1782–83.
Cartari, Vicenzo. *Imagini delli Dei de gli Antichi.* Nachdruck der Ausgabe Venedig, 1647. Graz, 1963.
Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi. Hesiodi Carmina rec. C. Goettlingius. Lipsiae, 1878, 357–370.
Cicero. *Opera Omnia* ... edd. D. Lambinus et D. Gothofredus. Genevae, 1646.
Claudianus. *Opera* cum annotationibus St. Claverii. Parisiis, 1602.
Comes, Natalis. *Mythologiae.* Geneva, 1641.
Crashaw, Richard. *The Poems English Latin and Greek,* edited by L. C. Martin. Oxford, 2nd edition 1957, repr. 1966.
Critici Sacri: sive annotata doctissimorum uirorum in vetus ac novum testamentum 1–8. Amstelodami, 1698.
S. Cyrillus Alexandrinus. *Opera quae reperiri potuerunt Omnia. PG* 68–77.
Dante, con l'Espositioni di Christoforo Landino e d'Alessandro Vellutello ... Riformato, riueduto, e ridotto alla sua vera Lettura, per Francesco Sansovino Fiorentino. In Venetia, 1596.
– *La Divina Commedia* 1–4. Riveduta nel testo e commentata da G. A. Scartazzini. Leipzig, 1875–1900.
Dracontius. *De Laudibus Dei.* Libri tres. Recensuit Franciscus Corsaro. Catania, 1962.
Epigrammatum Anthologia Palatina 1–2 ... Instruxit F. Dübner. Parisiis, 1888. 3 ... Instruxit E. Cougny. Parisiis, 1890.
Euripides 1–3, edited by F. A. Paley. London, 1857–60.
– *Tragoediae.* Heidelbergae, 1597.
Evangelia Apocrypha ... collegit atque recensuit C. de Tischendorf. (*Evangelium Nicodemi* pp. 389ff.). Lipsiae, 1876.
Fletcher, Giles and Phineas. *Poetical Works* 1–2, ed. F. S. Boas. *Cambridge English Classics.* Cambridge, 1908–09.
Fracastorius, Hieronimus. *Opera Omnia.* Venetiis, 1574.
Fraunce, Abraham. *The Third Part of the Countesse of Pembrokes Yuychurch.* London, 1592 (Orgel Reprints, 1976).
Gregorius Magnus. *Opera Omnia. PL* 75–79.
Gregorius Nazianzenus. *Omnia quae extant Opera. PG* 35–38.
Grotius, Hugo. *Adamus Exsul.* Londini 1752 juxta Exemplar impressum Hagae Comitum, 1601.
Gyraldus, Lilius Gregorius. *Opera Omnia.* Lugduni Bat., 1696.
Haymo. *Opera Omnia. PL* 117–118.
Hesiodus. *Quae extant* cum Notis ... Cornelii Schrevelii. Lugduni Bat., 1653.
Hieronimus. *Opera Omnia. PL* 22–30.
Hilarius. *Opera Omnia. PL* 9–10.
Homer. *The Iliad.* 1 (Books I–XII). Edited by W. Leaf and M. A. Bayfield. London, 1895. 2 (Books XIII–XXIV). London, 1898.
– *Ilias,* ed. K. F. Ameis. 1 (I–XII). Leipzig, 1884. 2 (XIII–XXIV). Leipzig, 1885.

– *Odyssee,* ed. K. F. Ameis. 1 (I–XII). Leipzig, 1890. 2 (XIII–XXIV). Leipzig, 1884.
– *Ilias et Odyssea, et in easdem scholia,* sive interpretatio Didymi, cum Latina versione accuratissima. Accurante Corn. Schrevelio. Amstelodami, 1656.
Horatius. *Poemata Omnia.* Amstelodami, 1616.
Hughes de St. Cher. *Repertorium apostillarum utriusque testamenti* domini Hugonis Cardinalis. 1–6. Basileae, 1504.
Irenaeus. *Adversus Haereses. PG* 7.
– *Proof of the Apostolic Teaching.* Translated and annotated by Joseph P. Smith. *Ancient Christian Writers* 16. Westminster and London, 1952.
Isidorus. *Opera Omnia. PL* 81–84.
S. Joannes Chrysostomus. *Opera Omnia quae extant. PG* 47–64.
Joannes Damascenus. *Opera Omnia quae extant. PG* 94–96.
Le Livre des Mystères du Ciel et de la Terre. PO 1, 1907, 1–97.
Lucanus. *Pharsalia* ... ex emendatione H. Grotii, cum ejusdem notis. Amsterodami, 1651.
Lucretius. *De rerum natura libri sex,* edited ... by Cyril Bailey. 1–3. Oxford, 1947.
– *De rerum natura libri VI.* A Dion. Lambino Monstroliensi ... emendati ac utilibus commentariis illustrati. Francofurti, 1583.
Macrobius. *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio.* Translated with an Introduction and Notes by William H. Stahl. New York, 1952.
Manilius. *Astronomicon libri qvinqve.* Ed. Iosephus Scaliger. Lutetiae, 1579.
Mantuanus, Baptista. *Opera Omnia.* Bononiae, 1502.
Marbodius. *Opera Omnia. PL* 171.
Marino, Giambattista. *L'Adone.* Poema ... con gli Argomenti del Conte Fortuniano Sanvitale et l'Allegorie Di Don Lorenzo Scoto. In Parigi, 1623.
– *Della Gervsalemme Distrvtta. Canto Settimo.* Macerata, 1637 (pp. 152ff.).
– *Dicerie Sacre e La Strage de gl'Innocenti,* a cura di Giovanni Pozzi. *Nuova Raccolta di classici Italiani annotati* 5. Torino, 1960.
– *La Strage de gli Innocenti.* Venetia, 1633.
Marino and Crashaw, *'Sospetto d'Herode'. A Commentary* by Claes Schaar. *Lund Studies in English* 39. Lund, 1971.
Mellius de Sousa, Joannes. *De Miseria hominis deque reparatione humana carmen.* (Lisbonae, 1615). *Corpus Illustrium Poetarum Lusitanorum qui Latine scripserunt.* Lisbonae, 1745.
Milton, John. *Complete Poems and Major Prose,* edited by Merrit Y. Hughes. New York, 1957 (Hughes 2).
– *Paradise Lost.* A New Edition, by Richard Bentley. London, 1732.
– *Paradise Lost,* edited by Merritt Y. Hughes. New York, 1935 (Hughes 1).
– *Paradise Lost. A Poem in Twelve Books.* To which is added Explanatory Notes upon Each Book by P.[atrick] H.[ume], and a Table to the Poem, never before printed. London, 1695 (*Annotations on Milton's Paradise Lost* ... By P. H. Φιλοποιήτης).
– *Paradise Lost. A Poem in Twelve Books.* The Second Edition, with Notes of Various Authors, by Thomas Newton. 1–2. London, 1750.
– *Paradise Lost,* edited by A. W. Verity. Cambridge, 1910.
– *Paradise Lost, Book I,* edited by H. C. Beeching. Oxford, repr. 1938.
– *Paradise Lost, Book II,* edited by E. K. Chambers. Oxford, repr. 1938.
– *Paradise Lost. Books I and II,* edited with Introduction and Commentary by B. Rajan. London, 1964.
– *Paradise Lost, Books I and II,* edited by A. W. Verity. 3rd edition, repr. 1952.
– *The Poems,* edited by John Carey and Alastair Fowler. London and Harlow, 1968.
– *The Poems* with Notes, by Thomas Keightley. 1–2. London, 1859.
– *Poetical Works,* edited by Douglas Bush. London, 1966.

– *Poetical Works* 1–2, edited by Helen Darbishire. Oxford, 1952, 1955, repr. 1962.
– *The Poetical Works,* edited ... by David Masson. 1–3, repr. London, 1903–1910. (*Paradise Lost:* text in vol. 2, notes in vol. 3, pp. 329ff.)
– *The Poetical Works* with Notes of Various Authors ... by Henry John Todd. Fourth Edition. 1–4. London, 1842. (*Paradise Lost* in vols. 1–2.)
Mythographi Latini. (C. Jul. Hyginus. Fab. Planciades Fulgentius. Lactantius Placidus. Albricus Philosophus.) Thomas Munckerus omnes ex libris MSS ... instruxit. Amstelodami, 1681.
Nicander. *The Poems and Poetical Fragments,* edited with a Translation and Notes by A. S. F. Gow and A. F. Scholfield. Cambridge, 1953.
– *Theriaca,* interprete Io. Gorraei Parisiensi. Parisiis, 1557.
Novum Testamentum Graece, curavit D. E. Berhard Nestle, nov. cur. elaboravit D. Erwin Nestle. Stuttgart, 1936.
Origenes. *Opera Omnia. PG* 11–17.
Ovid's Metamorphoses Englished, Mythologiz'd, And Represented in Figures. By George Sandys. Oxford, 1632.
Ovidius. *Ex Metamorphoseon Libris XV.* Electorum libri totidem, Ad eosdem noui Commentarij, cum Sectionibus et Argumentis: Studio et opera Iacobi Pontani. Antverpiae, 1618 (Orgel Reprints, 1976).
– *Metamorphoseos libri quindecim,* cum commentariis Raphaelis Regii. Basileae, 1543.
Pallavicino, Sforza. *Trattato dello Stile e del Dialogo.* Roma, 1662.
Petrus Lombardus. *Opera Omnia. PL* 191–192.
Philo Iudaeus. *Opera Omnia* 1–8. Lipsiae, 1828–30.
Plato.*Opera quae feruntur Omnia* 1–3. Ed. M. Schantz, Lipsiae, 1875–85.
Prudentius.*Quae extant.* Ed. Nicolaus Heinsius. Amsterlodami, 1667.
Rabanus Maurus. *Opera Omnia. PL* 107–112.
Ramsay, Andrew. *Poemata Sacra.* Edinburgh, 1633.
Richardus a Sancto Victore. *Opera Omnia. PL* 196.
Rolim de Moura, Francisco C. *Os Novissimos do homem. Poema em Quatro Cantos.* Lisboa, 1623.
Ross, Alexander. *Mystagogus Poeticus, or, the Muses Interpreter.* London, 1648 (Orgel Reprints, 1976).
Rupertus. *Opera Omnia. PL* 167–170.
Sannazarius, Iacobus. *Opera Omnia.* Lugduni, 1536.
Scudéry. *Alaric, ou Rome Vaincuë.* Paris 1655.
Seneca. *Tragoediae,* cum Iosephi Scaligeri ... et Danielis Heinsii Animadversionibus et Notis. Lugduni Bat., 1611.
Sophocles. *Ajax,* edited by F. H. M. Blaydes. London, 1875.
– *Tragoediae VII.* Heidelbergae, 1597.
Spenser, Edmund. *The Faerie Qveene,* edited by A.C. Hamilton. London and New York, 1977.
– *The Works* 1–9. A Variorum Edition, edited by E. Greenlaw, Ch. G. Osgood, and F. M. Padelford. Baltimore, 1932–1949.
Statius. *Opera Omnia.* Recensuit I. C. Gevartius. Lugduni Bat., 1616.
Strabo. *Opera Omnia. PL* 113–114.
Tasso, Torquato. *Gerusalemme Liberata.* Note di Giuseppe Morpurgo. Milano, 1945.
– *Godfrey of Bulloigne or the Recouerie of Ierusalem* done into English Heroicall Verse by Edward Fairfax. London, 1600.
– *Il Goffredo, ouero Gierusalemme Liberata. Poema Heroico.* In Venetia, 1625.
– *Prose,* a cura di Ettore Mazzali. *La Letteratura Italiana, Storia e Testi* 22. Milano-Napoli, 1959.

Tertullianus. *Opera Omnia. PL* 1–3.
Tesauro, Emanuele. *Il Cannocchiale Aristotelico.* In Torino, 1670. Herausgegeben und eingeleitet von August Buck. Berlin und Zürich, 1968.
Theodoretus. *Opera Omnia. PG* 80–84.
Theophylactus. *Opera quae reperiri potuerunt omnia. PG* 123–126.
Thomas ab Aquino. *Opera Omnia* 1–25. New York, 1948–50.
– *Summa Theologica* 1–36 (Die Deutsche Thomas-Ausgabe). Salzburg, 1933–61.
Valerianus, Ioannes. *Hieroglyphica.* Venetiis, 1604. – *Les Hieroglyphes* ... Oeuure ... donnez aux françois par I. de Montlyart. Lyon, 1615.
Valmarana, Odorico. *Daemonomachiae, sive De Bello Intelligentiarum super Divini Verbi Incarnatione.* Viennae, 1627.
Valvasone, Erasmo. *L'Angeleida.* Venezia, 1590.
Vetus Testamentum Graecum. Juxta Exemplar Vaticanum Romae editum. Amstelodami, 1683.
Vida, Marcus Hieronimus. *Christiados libri sex.* Lugduni, 1536.
Virgilius. *Opera.* Mauri Seruii Honorati Grammatici in eadem commentarii ... Castigationes et Varietates Virgilianae Lectionis, per Ioannem Pierium Valerianum. Parisiis, 1532.
– *Opera* nunc recens accuratissime Castigata. Cum XI. acerrimi ivdicii virorum commentariis. Venetiis, 1544. (Orgel Reprints, 1976.)

Monographs and Critical Studies

Abelson, J. *Jewish Mysticism.* London, 1913.
Adams, Robert M. *Ikon: John Milton and the Modern Critics.* Ithaca, N. Y., 1955.
Adamson. J. M. "The War in Heaven: Milton's Version of the *Merkabah.*" *JEGP* 57, 1958, 690–703.
Allen, Don Cameron. "Dean Donne Sets His Text." *ELH* 10, 1943, 208–229.
– "Milton's Busiris." *MLN* 65, 1950, 115–116.
– *Mysteriously Meant. The Rediscovery of Pagan Symbolism and Allegorical Interpretation in the Renaissance.* Baltimore and London, 1970.
Aryanpur, Manoocher. *"Paradise Lost* and *The Odyssey." Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 9, 1967, 152–166.
Baldwin, E. C. "Some Extra-Biblical Semitic Influences upon Milton's Story of the Fall of Man." *JEGP* 28, 1929, 366–401.
Ben-Porat, Ziva. "The Poetics of Literary Allusion."*PTL* 1, 1976, 105–128.
Bergsten, Staffan. "Illusive Allusions. Some Reflections on the Critical Approach to the Poetry of T. S. Eliot." *Orbis Litterarum* 14, 1959, 9–18.
Berthold, Dennis. "The Concept of Merit in *Paradise Lost.*" *SEL* 15, 1975, 153–167.
Blessington, Francis C. *'Paradise Lost' and the Classical Epic.* Boston and London, 1979.
Bottrall, Margaret. "The Baroque Element in Milton." *English Miscellany: A Symposium of History, Literature, and the Arts,* ed. Mario Praz *et al.* 1, 1950.
Broadbent, J. B. "Milton's Hell." *ELH* 21, 1954, 161–192.
– *Some Graver Subject. An Essay on 'Paradise Lost'.* London, 1960.
Brodwin, Leonora L. "The Dissolution of Satan in *Paradise Lost.* A Study of Milton's Heretical Eschatalogy." *MS* 8, 1975, 165–207.
– "Milton and the Renaissance Circe." *MS* 6, 1974, 21–83.

Brower, R. A. *Alexander Pope. The Poetry of Allusion.* New York-Oxford, 1959.
Bush, Douglas. "Ironic and Ambiguous Allusion in *Paradise Lost.*" *JEGP* 60, 1961, 631–640.
– *'Paradise Lost' in Our Time. Some Comments.* New York, 1948.
Camé, Jean-François. *Les Structures Fondamentales de l'Univers Imaginaire Miltonien.* 1–2. Lille, 1975.
Carroll, John S. *Exiles of Eternity. An Exposition of Dante's Inferno.* London and New York, 1903.
– *In Patria. An Exposition of Dante's Paradiso.* London, 1911.
Castelli, Enrico. *Il Demoniaco nell'Arte.* Milano-Firenze, 1952.
Cirillo, Albert R. "Noon-Midnight and the Temporal Structure of *Paradise Lost.*" *ELH* 29, 1962, 372–395.
Cohen, Kitty. *The Throne and the Chariot. Studies in Milton's Hebraism.* (*Studies in English Literature* XCVII. The Hague-Paris, 1975.)
Cope, Jackson I. *The Metaphoric Structure of 'Paradise Lost'.* Baltimore, 1962.
Corcoran, Sister M. I. *Milton's Paradise with Reference to the Hexameral Background.* Washington D. C., 1945.
Cullen, Patrick. *Infernal Triad: The Flesh, the World, and the Devil in Spenser and Milton.* Princeton, 1974.
Curry, Walter Clyde. *Milton's Ontology, Cosmogony and Physics.* Kentucky, 1957.
Daniells, Roy. *Milton, Mannerism and Baroque.* Toronto, 1963.
Daniélou, Jean. *Bible et liturgie.* Paris, 1958.
– "La Charrue Symbole de la Croix (Irénée, *Adv. haer., IV, 34, 4*)." *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 42, 1954, 193–203.
– *Sacramentum futuri. Études sur les Origines de la typologie biblique.* Paris, 1950.
Davy, Marie-Madeleine. *Initiation à la Symbolique Romane (XII^e siècle).* Paris, 1977.
Di Cesare, Mario A. "*Paradise Lost* and Epic Tradition." *MS* 1, 1969, 31–50.
– *Vida's 'Christiad' and Vergilian Epic.* New York and London, 1964.
Duncan, J. E. *Milton's Earthly Paradise. A Historical Study of Eden.* Minneapolis, 1972.
Eco, Umberto. *Opera Aperta. Forma e indeterminazione nelle poetiche contemporanee.*Milano, 1962.
– *La Struttura Assente.* Milano, 1968.
Emblemata. Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts. Herausgegeben von Arthur Henkel und Albrecht Schöne. Stuttgart, 1967.
Empson, William. *Milton's God.* London, 1961.
– *Some Versions of Pastoral.* London, 1935.
Enkvist, Nils Erik. "Die Funktion literarischer Kontexte für die linguistische Stilistik." *Stilistik* 6, 1976, 78–85.
Evans, J. M. *'Paradise Lost' and the Genesis Tradition.* Oxford, 1968.
Ferry, Anne D. *Milton and the Miltonic Dryden.* Cambridge, Mass., 1968.
– *Milton's Epic Voice. The Narrator in 'Paradise Lost'.* Cambridge, Mass., 1963.
Fisch, Harold. "Hebraic Style and Motifs in *'Paradise Lost'.*" (*Language and Style in Milton. A Symposium in Honor of the Tercentenary of 'Paradise Lost'.* Edited by R. D. Emma and John T. Shawcross. New York, 1967, 30–64.)
Fish, Stanley E. "Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics."*NLH* 2, 1970, 123–162.
– *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in 'Paradise Lost'.* London and New York, 1967.
Fowler, Roger. *Style and Structure in Literature: Essays in the New Stylistics.* Ithaca, 1975.
Freeman, James A. "The Roof Was Fretted Gold."*CL* 27, 1975, 254–266.
Frye, Roland M. *Milton's Imagery and the Visual Arts. Iconographic Tradition in the Epic Poems.* Princeton, 1978.

Gardner, Helen. *A Reading of 'Paradise Lost'*. Oxford, 1965.
Gmelin, H. *Die Göttliche Komödie. Kommentar* 1–3. Stuttgart, 1954–57.
Goebel, Gerhard. *Poeta Faber. Erdichtete Architektur in der italienischen, spanischen und französischen Literatur der Renaissance und des Barock*. Heidelberg, 1971.
Gorecki, John. "Milton's Similitudes for Satan and the Traditional Implications of Their Imagery." *MQ* 10, 1976, 101–108.
Gossman, Ann. "The Use of the Tree of Life in *Paradise Lost*." *JEGP* 65, 1966, 680–687.
Grabar, André. *Christian Iconography: A Study of Its Origins. Bollingen Series XXXV*. 10. Princeton, 1968.
Greene, Th. *The Descent from Heaven. A Study in Epic Continuity*. New Haven and London, 1963.
Grose, Christopher. *Milton's Epic Process. 'Paradise Lost' and Its Miltonic Background*. New Haven and London, 1973.
Harding, Davis P. *The Club of Hercules. Studies in the Classical Background of 'Paradise Lost'*. (*Illinois Studies in Language and Literature* 50. Urbana, 1962.)
– "Milton's Bee-Simile." *JEGP* 60, 1961, 664–669.
Hartman, G. "Milton's Counterplot." *ELH* 25, 1958, 1–12.
Heninger, S. K. Jr. *A Handbook of Renaissance Meteorology*. Durham, 1960.
– *Touches of Sweet Harmony. Pythagorean Cosmology and Renaissance Poetics*. San Marino, 1974.
Hieatt, A. Kent. *Chaucer, Spenser, Milton: Mythopoeic Continuities and Transformations*. Montreal and London, 1975.
Hirsch, E. D. Jr. *Validity in Interpretation*. New Haven and London, 1967.
Hollington, M. "Milton and the Baroque." *ES* 60, 1979, 138–147.
Holoka, James P. " 'Thick as Autumnal Leaves' – The Structure and Generic Potentials of an Epic Simile." *MQ* 10, 1976, 78–83.
Hoy, James F. "A Meteorological Image in *Paradise Lost*." *MQ* 9, 1975, 17–18.
Hughes, Merritt Y. " 'Merit' in *Paradise Lost*." *HLQ* 31, 1967, 3–18.
– "Spenser's Acrasia and the Circe of the Renaissance." *JHI* 4, 1943, 381–399.
– *Ten Perspectives on Milton*. New Haven and London, 1965.
Hulme, Hilda M. "On the Language of *Paradise Lost*: Its Elizabethan and Early Seventeenth-Century Background." (*Language and Style in Milton. A Symposium in Honor of the Tercentenary of 'Paradise Lost'*. Edited by R. D. Emma and John T. Shawcross. New York, 1967, 65–101.)
Hunter, William B. Jr. "Satan as Comet: *Paradise Lost II, 708–711*". *ELN* 5, 1967, 17–21.
Jacobus, Lee A. *Sudden Apprehension. Aspects of Knowledge in 'Paradise Lost'*. The Hague-Paris, 1976.
Keel, Othmar. *Jahwe-Visionen und Siegelkunst. Eine neue Deutung der Majestätsschilderungen in Jes 6, Ez 1 und 10 und Sach 4. (Stuttgarter Bibelstudien* 84/85. Stuttgart, 1977.)
Kermode, Frank. "The Cave of Mammon." *Stratford-upon-Avon Studies* 2 *(Elizabethan Poetry)*. London, 1960, 151–173.
Kirkconnell, Watson. *The Celestial Cycle. The Theme of 'Paradise Lost' in World Literature with Translations of the Major Analogues*. Toronto, 1952, repr. New York, 1967.
Kirschbaum, E. "L'Angelo rosso e l'angelo turchino." *Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana* 17, 1940, 209–248.
Koehler, G. Stanley. "Milton's Use of Color and Light." *MS* 3, 1971, 55–81.
Kranidas, Th. "Satan's First Disguise." *ELN* 2, 1964, 13–15.
Labriola, Albert C. "The Aesthetics of Self-Diminution: Christian Iconography and *Paradise Lost*". *MS* 7, 267–311.
– "The Titans and the Giants: *Paradise Lost* and the Tradition of the Renaissance Ovid". *MQ* 12, 1978, 9–16.

Lange, Klaus-Peter. *Theoretiker des literarischen Manierismus*. München, 1968.
Lewis, C. S. *A Preface to 'Paradise Lost'*. Oxford, 1942.
Lockwood, Laura E. *Lexicon to the English Poetical Works of John Milton*. New York, 1907.
L'Orange, H. P. *Studies on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship in the Ancient World*. (*Institutt for Sammenlignende Kulturforskning A 23*. Oslo, 1953.)
Low, Anthony. "The Astronomy of *Paradise Lost*". *ELN* 8, 1971, 263–267.
– "The Image of the Tower in *Paradise Lost*." *SEL* 10, 1970, 171–181.
MacCaffrey, Isabel G. *'Paradise Lost' as "Myth"*. Cambridge, Mass., 1959.
MacCallum, H. R. "Milton and Sacred History: Books XI and XII of *Paradise Lost*." (*Essays in English Literature from the Renaissance to the Victorian Age presented to A. S. P. Woodhouse*. Toronto, 1964, 149–168.)
McColley, Grant. "Milton's Battle in Heaven and Rupert of Saint Heribert." *Speculum* 16, 1941, 230–35.
– *'Paradise Lost.' An Account of Its Growth and Major Origins, with a Discussion of Milton's Use of Sources and Literary Patterns*. Chicago, 1940.
Mazzeo, Joseph A. *Renaissance and Seventeenth-Century Studies*. New York, 1964.
Mettinger, Tryggve. "Härskarornas Gud." *Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok* 44, 1979, 7–21.
Milton 1732–1801. The Critical Heritage, ed. John Shawcross. London and Boston, 1972.
Norden, Eduard. *P. Vergilius Maro, Aeneis Buch VI*, 4th ed., Stuttgart, 1957.
Oras, Ants. *Milton's Editors and Commentators from Patrick Hume to Henry John Todd (1695–1801). A Study in Critical Views and Methods* 1–2. (*Acta et Commentationes Universitatis Tartuensis XX–XXI*. Tartu, 1930–31.)
Panofsky, Erwin. *Studies in Iconology. Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance*. Oxford, 1939, repr. New York, 1962.
Patch, Howard. *The Other World*. Cambridge, Mass., 1950.
Patrides, C. A. *Milton and the Christian Tradition*. Oxford, 1966.
– "*Paradise Lost* and the Language of Theology." (*Language and Style in Milton. A Symposium in Honor of the Tercentenary of 'Paradise Lost'*. Edited by R. D. Emma and John T. Shawcross. New York, 1967, 102–119.)
– "Renaissance Interpretations of Jacob's Ladder." *Theologische Zeitschrift* 18, 1962, 411–418.
Praz, Mario. *The Flaming Heart*. Gloucester, Mass., 1966.
– *The Romantic Agony*. London, 1933, 2nd edition, 1970.
– *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery*. 2nd edition. *Sussidi Eruditi* 16. Roma, 1964.
Perri, Carmela *et al.* "Allusion Studies: An International Annotated Bibliography, 1921–1977." *Style* 13, 1979, 178–225.
Perri, Carmela. "On Alluding." *Poetics* 7, 1978, 289–307.
Preminger-Warnke-Hardison. *Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*. Princeton, 1965.
Prince, F. T. "The Influence of Tasso and Della Casa on Milton's Diction." *RES* 25, 1949, 222–236.
Qvarnström, Gunnar. *The Enchanted Palace*. Stockholm, 1967.
Rajan, B. *'Paradise Lost' and the Seventeenth Century Reader*. London, 1947.
Richardson, J. Father and Son. *Explanatory Notes and Remarks on Milton's 'Paradise Lost'. With the Life of the Author, and a Discourse on the Poem*. By J. R. Sen. London, 1734.
Ricks, Christopher. *Milton's Grand Style*. Oxford, 1963.
Riggs, W. G. *The Christian Poet in 'Paradise Lost'*. Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 1972.
Robins, Harry F. *If This Be Heresy. A Study of Milton and Origen*. (*Illinois Studies in Language and Literature* 51. Urbana, 1963.)

Rosenblatt, Jason P. "Structural Unity and Temporal Concordance: The War in Heaven in *Paradise Lost*." *PMLA* 87, 1972, 31–41.
Roston, Murray. *Milton and the Baroque*. London and Basingstoke, 1980.
Rowland, Beryl. *Animals with Human Faces. A Guide to Animal Symbolism*. Knoxville, 1973.
Rudwin, M. *The Devil in Legend and Literature*. Chicago and London, 1931.
Ryken, Leland. *The Apocalyptic Vision in 'Paradise Lost'*. Ithaca and London, 1970.
Røstvig, Maren-Sofie. "Images of Perfection." (*Seventeenth-Century Imagery. Essays on Uses of Figurative Language from Donne to Farquahar*, edited by Earl Miner. Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 1971, 1–24.)
Sams, Henry W. "Anti-Stoicism in Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England." *SP* 41, 1944, 65–78.
Samuel, Irene. *Dante and Milton. The 'Commedia' and 'Paradise Lost'*. Ithaca, N. Y., 1966.
Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?* Paris, 1948.
Schaar, Claes. "Linear Sequence, Spatial Structure, Complex Sign, and Vertical Context System." *Poetics* 7, 1978. 377–388.
– "Vertical Context Systems." *Style and Text. Studies presented to Nils Erik Enkvist*. Stockholm, 1975, 146–157.
Schiller, Gertrud. *Ikonographie der christlichen Kunst*. 1–4. Gütersloh, 1966–1976.
Schofield, William, H. "Symbolism, Allegory, and Autobiography in *The Pearl*." *PMLA* 24, 1909, 585–675.
Seaman, John E. *The Moral Paradox of 'Paradise Lost'*. The Hague-Paris, 1971.
Semiotics and Structuralism. Readings from the Soviet Union. Edited with an Introduction by Henryk Baran. White Plains, N. Y., 1976.
Seznec, Jean. *The Survival of the Pagan Gods. The Mythological Tradition and Its Place in Renaissance Humanism and Art*. London, 1940, repr. New York, 1961.
Sims, James H. *The Bible in Milton's Epics*. Gainesville, 1962.
– "Christened Classicism in *Paradise Lost* And *The Lusiads*." *CL* 24. 1972, 338–356.
Spevack-Husmann, Helga. *The Mighty Pan. Miltons Mythologische Vergleiche*. Münster, 1963.
Starnes, Dewitt T. and Talbert, Ernest W. *Classical Myth and Legend in Renaissance Dictionaries*. Chapel Hill, 1955.
Steadman, John M. "The Bee-Simile in Homer and Milton." *NQ* 201, 1956, 101–102.
– "Busiris, the Exodus, and Renaissance Chronography." *RBPH* 39, 1961, 794–803.
– "The Devil and Pharaoh's Chivalry." *MLN* 75, 1960, 197–201.
– "The Epic as Pseudomorph: Methodology in Milton Studies." *MS* 7, 1975, 3–27.
– "'From the Safe Shore', Milton and Tremellius." *Neophilologus* 44, 1960, 218–219.
– "'Memphian Chivalry': Milton's Busiris, Etymology and Chronography." *UR* 1971, 215–231.
– "Milton and Patristic Tradition: the Quality of Hell-Fire." *Anglia* 76, 1958, 116–128.
– *Milton and the Renaissance Hero*. Oxford, 1967.
– *Milton's Epic Characters, Image and Idol*. Chapel Hill, 1968.
– "Satan's Metamorphoses and the Heroic Convention of the Ignoble Disguise." *MLR* 52, 1951, 81–85.
Stephanus, Henricus. *Thesaurus Graecae Linguae*. 1–4. [Geneva], 1572.
Svendsen, Kester. *Milton and Science*. Cambridge, Mass., 1956.
Svensson, Lars-Håkan. *Silent Art. Rhetorical and Thematic Patterns in Samuel Daniel's 'Delia'*. (*Lund Studies in English* 57. Lund, 1980.)
Swardson, H. R. *Poetry and the Fountain of Light*. Columbia, Miss., 1962.
Thompson, J. A. K. *Classical Influences in English Poetry*. New York, 1963.

Thormählen, Marianne. *'The Waste Land'. A Fragmentary Wholeness.* (*Lund Studies in English* 52. Lund, 1978.)
Thornton, Weldon. *Allusions in Ulysses. An Annotated List.* Chapel Hill, 1968.
Tillyard, E. M. W. *The Elizabethan World Picture.* London, 1960.
Tuve, Rosemond. *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery. Renaissance Poetic and Twentieth-Century Critics.* Chicago, 1947.
– *A Reading of George Herbert.* Chicago, 1952.
Vinge, Louise. "Om Allusioner." *Tidskrift för Litteraturvetenskap* 2, 1973, 138–154.
Weimann, Robert. *Structure and Society in Literary History. Studies in the History and Theory of Historical Criticism.* London, 1977.
Whaler, James. "Animal Simile in *Paradise Lost.*" *PMLA* 47, 1932, 534–553.
Whiting, George W. *Milton and This Pendant World.* Austin, 1958.
Williams, Arnold. *The Common Expositor. An Account of the Commentaries on Genesis 1527–1633.* Chapel Hill, 1948.
– "The Motivation of Satan's Rebellion in *Paradise Lost.*" *SP* 42, 1945, 253–268.
Wimsatt, W. K. *The Verbal Icon. Studies in the Meaning of Poetry.* Lexington, 1954, repr. New York, 1960.
Wooten, John. "Satan, Satire, and Burlesque Fables in *Paradise Lost.*" *MQ* 12, 1978, 51–58.
Wright, B. A. *Milton's 'Paradise Lost'.* London, 1962, repr. 1968.

Selected Index of Names

Aeschylus 26, 37, 169, 178, 199, 228, 230, 232, 238, 239
Alciati 70, 159, 249
Alcuin 70, 119, 132, 154, 159, 160, 326
Ambrose 61, 64, 70, 119, 121, 150, 191, 192, 215, 227, 257, 265, 268,308, 319, 320
Andreini 85, 115, 116, 117, 173, 187, 188, 195, 199, 204, 207, 234
Anselm of Canterbury 41, 160, 261, 269
Anselm of Laon 66, 70, 119, 154, 308, 320
Apollonius Rhodius 18, 54, 57, 80, 117, 158, 178, 179, 224, 241, 244, 245, 246, 249, 250, 251, 256, 280, 282, 283, 284, 285
Aquinas 42, 43, 68, 121, 150, 191, 192, 272
Aratus 85, 125, 209, 211
Arethas of Caesarea 70, 119, 308
Ariosto 54, 55, 213, 240, 295, 296, 299
Augustine 41, 48, 49, 61, 64, 66, 68, 79, 113, 121, 132, 154, 159, 179, 185, 217, 227, 264, 265, 267, 268, 274, 277, 287, 298, 320, 326, 327
Avitus 263, 269, 276, 284

Basil 43, 64, 65, 121
Beaumont 43, 98, 132, 199
Bede 64, 66, 68, 70, 132, 133, 154, 182, 186, 215, 217, 227, 267, 308, 320, 326, 327, 330
Boccaccio 32, 292, 296, 301
Boethius 192
Bruno Astensis 60, 64, 66, 70, 150, 154, 268, 308, 320, 326, 327, 330, 332

Callimachus 61, 103, 134
Camoëns 32, 138, 140, 144, 146, 212, 236, 258, 334
Cartari 32, 158, 203
Chrysostom 64, 65, 66, 108, 123, 176, 186, 267, 323
Cicero 67, 128, 164, 179, 229, 289
Claudian 97, 134, 173, 209, 294
Clement of Alexandria 41, 88, 113, 123, 133
Comes 32, 61, 159, 165, 292, 321, 329
Commentators on *Divine Comedy* 30, 151, 186, 188, 239, 272, 319, 320, 321
Crashaw 34, 42, 44, 45, 74, 90, 94, 101, 103, 106, 115, 116, 117, 123, 136, 160, 162, 172, 173, 176, 180, 185, 187, 188, 191, 192, 194, 202, 203, 204, 205, 208, 210, 213, 215, 220, 228, 240, 257
Cyprian 64, 104, 269
Cyrillus 42, 65, 264, 326

Dante 18, 30, 31, 36, 41, 44, 45, 47, 51, 54, 55, 57, 71, 78, 87, 110, 111, 117, 119, 121, 127, 130, 131, 142, 150, 151, 152, 153, 155, 156, 160, 180, 181, 186, 188, 192, 195, 197, 199, 200, 239, 240, 241, 243, 250, 251, 261, 272, 278, 297, 298, 303, 305, 314, 317, 318, 319, 320

Eliot, T.S. 12, 13, 14, 18, 44
Euripides 44, 60, 106, 191, 219, 241, 258

Fletcher G. and Ph. 69, 70, 82, 115, 163, 173, 176, 194, 218, 228, 240, 294, 295, 296, 303
Fracastoro 34, 270

Gregory 40, 41, 43, 60, 113, 121, 150, 159, 165, 179, 236, 257, 317, 318, 319, 323, 325, 331
Gregory of Nazianzus 65, 66, 113, 261
Grotius 70, 156, 164, 204, 234, 274, 275, 276, 280, 281, 283, 284, 312
Gyraldus 32, 292

Haymo 57, 60, 68, 132, 154, 214, 215, 217, 227, 268, 308, 320, 323, 327, 330, 331, 332

Hesiod 39, 93, 98, 132, 165, 240, 241, 254, 255, 331
Heywood 40, 42
Hilarius 64, 65, 66, 68, 236, 268
Homer 19, 24, 34, 36, 37, 40, 44, 45, 54, 58, 76, 77, 78, 80, 85, 92, 93, 95, 99, 100, 117, 124, 138, 140, 142, 143, 145, 147, 150, 162, 163, 171, 179, 181, 200, 206, 223, 226, 228, 229, 234, 245, 250, 254, 255, 258, 263, 276, 286, 299, 314, 331, 337
Horace 18, 49, 61, 67, 81, 97, 213, 226, 230, 232, 249, 290, 293
Hugh of St. Cher 60, 70, 72, 217, 267
Hyginus 61, 211, 279

Irenaeus 87, 114, 269
Isidore of Sevile 61, 64, 70, 242

Jerome 63, 85, 170, 214, 264, 311, 317, 318, 319, 320, 323, 327, 330, 332
John of Damascus 49, 268, 323

Lucan 47, 75, 110, 111, 166, 172, 241, 292, 293
Lucretius 67, 68, 238, 293

Macrobius 161, 162, 163, 171, 203, 321
Manilius 115, 116, 117, 118, 173, 211
Mantuan 34, 90, 204, 208, 270
Marbodius 220, 274, 306
Marino 34, 35, 74, 83, 90, 94, 101, 106, 116, 123, 128, 136, 139, 141, 143, 145, 146, 160, 162, 166, 172, 173, 174, 194, 195, 197, 199, 203, 204, 205, 211, 219, 220, 221, 224, 230, 234, 238, 240, 247, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 274, 277, 295, 296, 297, 299, 301, 334
Marlowe 24, 54, 56, 186, 224, 229

Nicander 280, 281, 282, 283, 284

Origen 28, 123, 268, 317, 318, 322, 326
Ovid 14, 48, 111, 161, 162, 163, 165, 171, 172, 174, 193, 261, 276, 278, 279, 280, 286, 291, 294, 299, 300, 301, 318, 321, 329

Philo Iudaeus 61, 114, 129, 267, 326
Plato 37, 51, 118, 119, 125, 129, 186, 218, 311
Plutarch 26, 44, 92, 101, 174, 228
Primasius 132, 154, 217, 227, 308, 320, 330
Prudentius 175, 176, 208, 247, 248, 269

Rabanus Maurus 57, 60, 61, 64, 65, 69, 70, 104, 160, 175, 176, 190, 236, 241, 242, 243, 257, 297, 317, 318, 322, 323, 330
Ramsay 77, 78, 90, 280, 283
Richard of St. Victor 70, 132, 152, 153, 154, 217, 308, 320, 330
Ross 32, 140, 203, 246, 251, 290
Rupert 57, 60, 64, 70, 104, 119, 154, 159, 267, 308, 311, 317, 319, 320, 323, 325, 330, 332

Sandys 48, 321, 329
Sannazaro 34, 35, 38, 101, 110, 144, 146, 198, 257, 261, 334
Seneca 44, 61, 164, 173, 197, 211, 229, 230, 234, 246, 247, 304
Shakespeare 50, 75, 114, 200, 202, 219, 223, 224, 282
Sophocles 44, 67, 137, 178
Spenser 32, 37, 39, 44, 47, 62, 73, 100, 103, 115, 116, 117, 123, 137, 138, 155, 196, 197, 213, 217, 218, 219, 220, 224, 226, 240, 241, 259, 274, 275, 286, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 305, 306
Statius 44, 46, 279, 290, 291, 293, 295, 296
Strabo 43, 119, 320, 327

Tasso 24, 31, 34, 45, 54, 55, 56, 58, 59, 62, 84, 87, 91, 94, 95, 101, 117, 119, 128, 144, 146, 173, 188, 195, 197, 199, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 210, 212, 218, 220, 223, 224, 234, 250, 251, 254, 255, 258, 259, 260, 275, 276, 277, 295, 296, 298, 299, 334, 337
Tertullian 64, 68, 261, 269
Theodoretus 264, 315, 320, 322, 323, 330

Valeriano 32, 133, 256, 311, 321
Valmarana 90, 194, 204
Valvasone 90, 110, 138, 187, 188, 195, 199, 203, 204, 207, 213, 220, 221, 231, 238, 294
Vida 14, 34, 77, 93, 94, 109, 169, 173, 193, 196, 199, 207, 220, 221, 258, 259, 295
Virgil 14, 18, 27, 40, 41, 42, 44, 48, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 86, 87, 92, 94, 96, 97, 101, 110, 115, 116, 117, 127, 134, 138, 140, 147, 155, 156, 167, 169, 174, 181, 192, 193, 196, 200, 206, 207, 209, 211, 215, 223, 226, 235, 239, 241, 254, 255, 258, 259, 276, 280, 281, 283, 284, 285, 293, 294, 301, 302, 303, 305, 336, 337

Selected Index of Topics and Words

adamantine chain 37, 181
alarm, "urge on", 205; 81
allusion 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 25, 194, 236, 258, 278
amarant 132, 133, 134, 336
amber, "Christ's double nature", 32, 49, 133, 134, 315, 322, 335
ambrosia 137, 138, 139, 140
Argo 19, 244, 245, 246, 251, 252, 256, 337
Argus 318, 321
asphalt, infernal substance, 165, 166, 167, 299, 305
auxesis 19, 50, 62, 74, 104, 127, 131, 140, 182, 196, 210, 218, 219, 254, 255, 270, 282, 289, 295, 304

baptism 27, 64, 65, 66, 154, 159, 160, 322, 323, 335, 336
baroque effects 25, 128, 176, 183, 292, 293
bicker, "fight", 325, 326
"black" effects 26, 101, 104, 105, 196, 197, 198, 218, 220, 222, 223, 262, 274, 307
blindness motif 44, 61, 121, 124, 126
Busiris 53, 63

carbuncle – ἄνθραξ 273, 274, 275, 277, 285, 324
careful, "anxious", 84, 86, 87
cataract, "waterfall", 50
Cave of Mammon 292, 293, 294, 295, 297, 306
Chaos 46, 94, 142, 156, 159, 160, 164, 166, 168, 169, 171, 177, 181, 182, 183, 197, 237, 238, 240, 241, 242, 244, 246, 247, 248, 250, 251, 252, 253, 255, 337
chariots 64, 156, 311, 312, 313, 328, 329
Charon 45, 54, 156, 335
Cherubim, colour of, 328
Circe 245, 286, 287, 296
cloud simile 99, 100, 101, 121, 122, 123, 202, 212
code, complex 18, 19, 26, 27, 54, 66, 81, 89, 111, 146, 153, 169, 177, 183, 188, 194, 197, 224, 232, 240, 270, 271, 276, 285, 309
code, simple 18, 19, 27, 66, 71, 85, 103, 124, 133, 153, 177, 183, 188, 257, 265, 270, 271, 285, 309, 319, 333, 335
combustion, "fire of eternal punishment", 34, 36, 40
conscience, "inward knowledge", 187
countenance, "pretence", 214, 225; 121, 122, 216, 331
crest 273, 275, 276, 285, 286
Cupido caelestis 158, 159

darkness scattered, "Nativity", 106, 162, 176, 208, 246, 247, 248
darkness visible 42, 43, 44, 52, 117, 121, 295, 300, 304
delusion 18, 79, 80, 81, 82, 279, 280, 286, 289, 291, 292, 293, 296, 298, 305, 335
demons' scorn 179, 180
dew, good and bad, 102, 103, 104, 155, 336
diamond, "eternity and spiritual strength", 277, 306, 307
Dido 80, 196, 301
dilated – disteso 87, 183, 205, 206
disguise, ignoble 183, 258; reassuring 183, 258, 259,262, 263, 270, 278
dismissive comparison 77, 110, 218, 245, 279, 302, 303
doubt, "fear", 87, 184, 185, 233

eagles 257, 258, 324
eccentric 127, 128

eclipse 84, 85, 173, 174, 201, 202, 203
editions of *PL* 28, 29, 30, 31
emblematics 32, 48, 70, 85, 97, 100, 133, 134, 150, 158, 159, 249, 256, 257, 306, 307, 324, 329
enchanted castles 223, 289, 290, 295, 296, 301
enchanted gardens 295, 296, 303
engine, "plot", 185
exhalation 288, 289
explode, "hiss off the stage", 108
eyes of divine chariot 320, 321, 326
eyes of night 176, 257

facies caeli 71, 100, 101, 173, 174, 175
fair-foul antithesis 187, 195, 278
"first-last-midst" formula 124, 125
four elements 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52
four faces 316, 317, 318, 319
fragrance motif 137, 138, 139, 140
frozen loins 72
fulgent 222, 224, 225
furies 90, 173, 178, 179, 228

giants 48, 60, 61, 62, 79, 226
Gigantomachia 35, 173, 226, 291, 335
glowing eyes 45, 156, 170, 204, 207, 210, 220, 274, 275, 276, 277, 282, 284
gold, good and bad, 135, 151, 152, 163, 168, 171, 217, 219, 260, 261, 275, 276, 277, 278, 288, 291, 292, 293, 296, 297, 301, 304, 306, 307, 308, 322
good buildings 299, 300
Gorgon 111, 165, 166, 167, 172, 238, 273
gryphon, "Satan", 241, 242

Harrowing of Hell 26, 28, 40, 96, 181, 197, 198, 199, 208, 248,
Hercules 56, 63, 80, 211, 304, 331
heresy 70, 71, 74, 229, 336
Herod 83, 101, 170, 172, 185, 188, 204, 219, 220, 221, 224, 301
heroism, false and genuine 63, 199, 200, 207, 233, 242, 337
hideous 36, 39, 40, 53, 197
house, "hell", 196, 197

iconography 20, 21, 30, 32, 38, 57, 70, 77, 78, 91, 92, 105, 120, 135, 146, 147, 150, 158, 159, 165, 178, 182, 203, 213, 221, 238, 250, 261, 262, 313, 314, 319, 324
incumbent 46
infernal artillery 40, 213
infernal sterility 69, 71, 72, 74, 115
infernal upheaval 181, 182
invocations 34, 35

Jacob's ladder 149, 150, 151, 153
jasper, "holiness", 133, 134, 153, 154, 155, 156, 274, 277, 308, 335
joy of God during Creation 129

lapidaries 220, 274, 306
Leviathan 45, 46, 63, 277
list of monsters 109, 110, 294, 295
locusts 69, 70, 73, 74, 75, 78, 81, 101, 103, 113, 115, 126, 178, 336
Logos 66, 325, 326, 332

magic 79, 80, 81, 129, 163, 288, 289, 300
marle 38, 39
matrix 26, 27, 34, 38, 54, 63, 78, 92, 93, 124, 125, 155, 165, 187, 203, 207, 220, 228, 258, 259, 297, 309
maxims 26, 57, 67, 100, 167, 168, 191, 228, 230, 232, 269,337
Mercury 140, 156, 228, 234, 239, 254, 318, 321
merit 221, 222
merkabāh 312, 313, 314
ministering spirits 26, 41, 42, 160, 261
mobility of meaning 27, 99, 146, 194, 227, 238
moon 18, 80, 81, 84, 85, 113, 115, 125, 128, 329, 336
murmur, "lament", 88, 208
music, celestial 113, 118, 119, 120, 126, 127, 130, 131, 134, 135, 147
music, infernal 89, 90, 91, 93, 94, 95, 130, 135, 147,289, 290, 291
'my self am Hell' 186, 229, 230, 271
μυστήριον 151

name-lists 236, 278, 285
neutral angels 87, 88
neutral devils 88
New Jerusalem 306, 307, 308, 335
Nimrod 60, 81
noon 37, 188, 189, 190

Orient 91, 93, 107, 300, 303
oriental tyrant 218, 219, 233, 328, 329

panoply 323, 324

pearl, complex symbolism of, 153, 155, 156, 308, 320, 322, 335
Phaëthon 174, 211, 219, 329
Pharaoh's army 18, 24, 27, 53, 59, 63, 64, 69, 92, 105, 329, 336
Phoenix 256, 257, 258, 259, 265, 268, 337
Pluto/Plutus 173, 219, 277, 292, 293
prodigious 165, 166, 168
Proserpine 219, 270, 297, 298, 302, 303
pyramid 226, 227, 243, 277, 278
Pythagorean doctrine 118, 119, 129, 135, 185

riches in hell and on earth 137, 139, 231, 232, 294
road to Hades 159, 160, 161, 164, 165, 167, 171, 245, 246, 247, 248, 304
ruby, "martyrs' blood", 220
ruin, "downfall", 38, 39

sail-like wings 156, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241
sanctity 114, 115, 261
sapphire, complex symbolism of, 316, 322
Satan's sadness 84, 183, 191, 203, 204
Saturn and Satan 203, 204
Seraphim, colour of, 85
ship image and symbol 235, 236, 237, 244, 245, 246, 249, 250, 271, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 322, 337
sign 18, 19, 20, 24, 84, 334, 336, 337
signal 18, 21, 22, 102, 138, 164, 169, 181, 224, 231, 249, 309, 321, 327, 331, 335
sin's torments 185, 186, 191, 204, 205
σκολιός 281, 282, 283, 284, 286
smile of God 140, 141, 142, 180, 291
sun 81, 99, 100, 101, 113, 116, 117, 125, 126, 127, 128, 161, 162, 173, 174, 176, 187, 188, 189, 190, 201, 299, 300, 321, 324, 329
syntax 34, 35, 55, 57, 58, 97, 102, 131, 135, 141, 238, 242, 243, 267, 268, 271, 273, 278, 286, 304, 323

tower 188, 189, 190, 200, 201, 226, 277
tract oblique 280, 281, 283, 285
tree of knowledge 266, 268, 269
tree of life 263, 264, 265, 266, 268, 269
trionfi 313, 314, 333

ubi sunt formula 193, 194, 195, 225
Urim 324

Vallombrosa 53, 58, 59, 126
visibility – invisibility 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 141, 144
volcano 47, 48

weird gardens 297, 298
weird houses 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297

Xerxes 168, 169, 170, 171

Abbreviations

ACW	Ancient Christian Writers
ASNS	Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen
CL	Comparative Literature
EETS	Early English Text Society
EIC	Essays in Criticism
ELH	Journal of English Literary History
ELN	English Language Notes
ES	English Studies
FQ	*The Faerie Queene*
GD	Giornale Dantescho
GL	*Gierusalemme Liberata*
HLQ	Huntington Library Quarterly
IC	Infernal Council
JEGP	Journal of English and Germanic Philology
JHI	Journal of the History of Ideas
MLN	Modern Language Notes
MLR	Modern Language Review
MP	Modern Philology
MQ	Milton Quarterly
MS	Milton Studies
NLH	New Literary History
NQ	Notes and Queries
OF	*Orlando Furioso*
OI	*Orlando Innamorato*
PG	*Patrologia Graeca*
PGL	Patristic Greek Lexicon
PL	*Patrologia Latina*
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America
PO	*Patrologia Orientalis*
PQ	Philological Quarterly
PTL	A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature
RAC	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum
RBPH	Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire
RES	Review of English Studies
SD	Studi Danteschi
SEL	Studies in English Literary History 1500–1900
SP	Studies in Philology

SR	Studies in the Renaissance
ThLL	*Thesaurus Lingvae Latinae*
UR	University Review, Kansas City
UTQ	University of Toronto Quarterly

(It is to be hoped that *PL,* standing now for Migne's Patrology as above, now for *Paradise Lost,* does not cause confusion.)

LUND STUDIES IN ENGLISH

Founded by *Professor Eilert Ekwall*

1. Bertil Weman, Old English Semantic Analysis and Theory with Special Reference to Verbs Denoting Locomotion. 1933. 187 pp.

2. Hilding Bäck, The Synonyms for "Child", "Boy", "Girl" in Old English. An Etymological-Semasiological Investigation. 1934. XVI + 273 pp.

3. Gustaf Fransson, Middle English Surnames of Occupation. With an Excursus on Toponymical Surnames. 1935. 217 pp.

4. G. Hofstrand, The Seege of Troye. A Study in the Intertextual Relations of the Middle English Romance the "Seege or Batayle of Troye". 1936. XV + 205 pp.

5. Urban Ohlander, Studies on Coordinate Expressions in Middle English. 1936. 213 pp.

6. Viktor Engblom, On the Origin and Early Development of the Auxiliary Do. 1938. 169 pp.

7. Ivar Dahl, Substantival Inflexion in Early Old English. Vocalic Stems. 1938. XVI + 206 pp.

8. Hilmer Ström, Old English Personal Names in Bede's History. An Etymological Investigation. 1939. XLIII + 180 pp.

9. Uno Philipson, Political Slang 1750–1850. 1941. XVI + 314 pp.

10. Arthur H. King, The Language of Satirized Characters in Poëtaster. A Socio-Stylistic Analysis 1579–1602. 1941. XXXIV + 258 pp.

11. Mattias T. Löfvenberg, Studies on Middle English Local Surnames. 1942. XLV + 225 pp.

12. Johannes Hedberg, The Syncope of the Old English Present Endings. A Dialect Criterion. 1945. 310 pp.

13. Alarik Rynell, The Rivalry of Scandinavian and Native Synonyms in Middle English, especially *taken* and *nimen*. With an Excursus on *nema* and *taka* in Old Scandinavian. 1948. 431 pp.

14. Henning Hallqvist, Studies in Old English Fractured *ea*. 1948. 167 pp.

15. Gösta Forsström, The Verb 'to be' in Middle English. A Survey of the Forms. 1948. 236 pp.

16. Bertil Widén, Studies on the Dorset Dialect. 1949. 179 pp.

17. Claes Schaar, Critical Studies in the Cynewulf Group. 1949. 337 pp.

18. Bertil Sundby, The Dialect and Provenance of the Middle English Poem *The Owl and the Nightingale*. A Linguistic Study. 1950. 218 pp.

19. Bertil Thuresson, Middle English Occupational Terms. 1950. 285 pp.

20. Karl-Gunnar Lindkvist, Studies on the Local Sense of the Prepositions *In, At, On,* and *To* in Modern English. 1950. 429 pp.

21. Sven Rubin, The Phonology of the Middle English Dialect of Sussex, 1951. 235 pp.

22. Bertil Sundby, Christopher Cooper's English Teacher (1687). 1953. CXVI + 10* + 123 pp.

23. Björn Wallner, An Exposition of Qui Habitat and Bonum Est in English. 1954. LXXI + 122 pp.

24. Rudolf Magnusson, Studies in the Theory of the Parts of Speech. 1954. VIII + 120 pp.

25. Claes Schaar, Some Types of Narrative in Chaucer's Poetry. 1954. 293 pp.

26. Börje Holmberg, James Douglas on English Pronunciation c. 1740. 1956. 354 pp.

27. Eilert Ekwall, Etymological Notes on English Place-Names. 1959. 108 pp.

28. Claes Schaar, An Elizabethan Sonnet Problem. Shakespeare's Sonnets, Daniel's Delia, and their Literary Background. 1960. 190 pp.

29. Elis Fridner, An English Fourteenth Century Apocalypse Version with a Prose Commentary. Edited from MS Harley 874 and ten other MSS. 1961. LVIII + 290 pp.

30. The Published Writings of Eilert Ekwall. A bibliography compiled by Olof von Feilitzen. 1961. 52 pp.

31. Ulf Jacobsson, Phonological Dialect Constituents in the Vocabulary of Standard English. 1962. 335 pp.

32. Claes Schaar, Elizabethan Sonnet Themes and the Dating of Shakespeare's 'Sonnets'. 1962. 200 pp.

33. Eilert Ekwall, Selected Papers. 1963. 172 pp.

34. Arne Zettersten, Studies in the Dialect and Vocabulary of the Ancrene Riwle. 1965. 331 pp.

35. Gillis Kristensson, A Survey of Middle English Dialects 1290–1350. The Six Northern Counties and Lincolnshire. 1967. XXII + 299 pp.

LUND STUDIES IN ENGLISH

(continued from overleaf)

36. Olof Arngart, The Middle English Genesis and Exodus. Re-edited from MS. C.C.C.C. 444 with introduction, notes and glossary. 1968. 277 pp.

37. Arne Zettersten, The English of Tristan da Cunha. 1969. 180 pp.

38. Ellen Alwall, The Religious Trend in Secular Scottish School-Books 1858–1861 and 1873–1882. With a survey of the debate on education in Scotland in the middle and late 19th century. 1970. 177 pp.

39. Claes Schaar, Marino and Crashaw. *Sospetto d'Herode.* A Commentary. 1971. 300 pp.

40. Sven Bäckman, This Singular Tale. A Study of *The Vicar of Wakefield* and Its Literary Background. 1971. 281 pp.

41. Christer Påhlsson, The Northumbrian Burr. A Sociolinguistic Study. 1972. 309 pp.

42. Karl-Gustav Ek, The Development of OE *ȳ* and *ēo* in South-Eastern Middle English. 1972. 133 pp.

43. Bo Seltén, The Anglo-Saxon Heritage in Middle English Personal Names. East Anglia 1100–1399. 1972. 187 pp.

44. Kerstin Assarsson-Rizzi, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay. A Structural and Thematic Analysis of Robert Greene's Play. 1972. 164 pp.

45. Arne Zettersten, A Critical Facsimile Edition of Thomas Batchelor. 1974. 260 pp.

46. Erik Ingvar Thurin. The Universal Autobiography of Ralph Waldo Emerson. 1974. XII + 288 pp.

47. Harriet Björk, The Language of Truth. Charlotte Brontë, the Woman Question, and the Novel. 1974. 152 pp.

48. Anders Dallby, The Anatomy of Evil. A Study of John Webster's *The White Devil.* 1974. 236 pp.

49. Gillis Kristensson, John Mirk's *Instructions for Parish Priests,* edited from MS Cotton Claudius A II and six other Manuscripts, with Introduction, Notes and Glossary. 1974. 287 pp.

50. Stig Johansson, Papers in Contrastive Linguistics and Language Testing. 1975. 179 pp.

51. Bengt Ellenberger, The Latin Element in the Vocabulary of the Earlier Makars: Henryson and Dunbar. 1977. 163 pp.

52. Marianne Thormählen, *The Waste Land.* A Fragmentary Wholeness. 1978. 248 pp.

53. Lars Hermerén, On Modality in English. A Study of the Semantics of the Modals. 1978. 195 pp.

54. Sven Bäckman, Tradition Transformed. Studies in the Poetry of Wilfred Owen. 1979. 206 pp.

55. Jan Jönsjö, Studies on Middle English Nicknames. I. Compounds. 1979. 227 pp.

56. A Corpus of English Conversation, edited by Jan Svartvik and Randolph Quirk. 1979. 893 pp.

57. Lars-Håkan Svensson, Silent Art. Rhetorical and Thematic Patterns in Samuel Daniel's *Delia.* 1980. 392 pp.

58. Ingrid Mårdh, Headlinese. On the Grammar of English Front Page Headlines. 1980. 200 pp.

59. Stig Johansson, Plural Attributive Nouns in Present-Day English. 1980. X + 136 pp.

60. Claes Schaar, The Full Voic'd Quire Below. Vertical Context Systems in *Paradise Lost.* 1982. 354 pp.

Liber

ISBN 91-40-04811-X