

## I. John Milton and his Time

The study is based on John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, widely regarded as the greatest epic poem in English literature. The story recounts Satan's fall from heaven, God's response, and Adam and Eve's fall from innocence in the Garden of Eden on earth. The impact of *Paradise Lost* in cultural and moral imagination of English language is more widespread. *Paradise Lost* brings extraordinary Range of precedents, combining them into a new whole. An epic, *Paradise Lost* self-consciously refers back to the Greek epics of Homer. In the carefully balanced oppositions between Heaven, Hell and Earth one can hear echoes of Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

The inequitable treatment of Eve stands out too much for it not to be part of the point, inviting readers to reflect on whether this is a good relationship, on whether Paradise was Paradise for Eve. After all, Milton is the same author who defended divorce- including divorce for women- a quarter of century earlier, and more than a century before it would be allowed by anything less than an Act of Parliament in England. It could be that Eve's inequitable treatment is part of a fortunate fall: it is good that Eve disobeyed, as her then current order was not good. But it is also important to note that Eve choose experience.

*Paradise Lost*, poem as an allegory for a political history of the seventeenth century. In this reading, Adam initially acts like a divine right monarch, presuming that his relationship with god meant that he could claim Eve as his own. Adam and Eve, then, could come to stand for king and people. Such a possibility gives a different meaning to the Romantic sense that Milton was of Satan's party without knowing it: Satan makes Eve's decision to disobey possible. To this way of thinking, there are parallel between Satan and Cromwell. As a political allegory from Milton the defender of regicide and opponent of the Restoration, the title *Paradise Lost* might refer to the Democratic possibilities of the 1640s.

*Paradise Lost* does what epics do, generally: narrate origins. For this reading, the important development is in the ending of *Paradise Lost*, as Adam and Eve have learned to live together. After 1688, the reputation of *Paradise Lost* rose as Adam and Eve seem to represent England making a choice, as it had just done in the Glorious Revolution.

Milton's life and career coincide with one of the most revolutionary periods of English history. King Charles I, who had ascended to the throne in 1625, believed in the divine right of kings to rule by personal fiat and had effectively dissolved Parliament in 1629. Meanwhile, continental Europe was awash in blood from the religious and political conflicts known collectively as the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) and tensions between Catholics and Protestants were felt keenly across the channel in England. While as the head of the Church of England Charles was nominally Protestant, he was accused of being insufficiently supportive of the Protestant cause and even of having Catholic sympathies himself. All this made him the target of suspicion and outrage among Puritan dissenters who felt that the Anglican Church was insufficiently reformed and was now backsliding into Catholic ritualism.

The English Civil War resulted in the execution of Charles and the installation of a new republican government, or Commonwealth, in 1649. But by 1653 the government, while nominally a parliamentary republic, had named the former general Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector, making it a *de facto* military autocracy. The Protectorate fell apart upon Cromwell's death in 1658 and the succession of his politically incompetent son Richard provided Charles II, the heir apparent to the throne who had been living in exile in the Netherlands, an opportunity to return. The monarchy was restored in 1660. The years of the Restoration, in which Milton mainly composed *Paradise Lost*, however, were hardly an era of peace and reconciliation. The Great Plague of 1665 killed approximately a quarter of

London's population, while the Great Fire of 1666 destroyed much of the original City—cataclysms whose portentousness could not have been lost on Milton.

Although Milton wrote several poems and sonnets in his earlier career, he became known as a revolutionary and passionate political activist, beginning his political career with the pamphlets he wrote on the current politics of his time during the period between 1641 and 1660. And through his political pamphlets he vehemently attacked Stuart absolutism and autocracy, and defended instead antimonarchical rule and republicanism, giving particular attention to the religious and civil liberties of the people. However, following the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, he had to stop his pamphlet career due to the censorship imposed during this period that made it impossible to express his political thoughts freely, and he embarked on a literary project which included his major poetical works, *Paradise Lost* (1667) and *Paradise Regained* (1671) and *Samson Agonistes* (1671).

Although these poems have generally been situated and studied in the epic tradition and classical humanism, they have also been studied historically and politically. Likewise considering his earlier reputation and active political life, one can state that Milton could not detach himself from the political controversies of his time. Hence, the study will be an extensive political reading of the poem in the context of Milton's own time, the political figures of his age, and the political arguments that he put forth earlier in his pamphlets. In other words, through the study of *Paradise Lost*, this dissertation will try to demonstrate to what extent and in what ways Milton embedded his political ideas in this poem.

As Milton wrote in his political pamphlet *Defensio Secunda* (The Second Defence of the English People) in 1654, he attempted to devote this conflict, talents and all active powers. Therefore, in the years between 1649 and 1660 he published a series of polemical pamphlets in which he attacked both absolutism and autocracy unconditionally represented by Charles I and the leaders of the Church of England, while he strongly defended the civil,

religious and political liberties of the people and upheld the principles of republicanism, which emerged in the seventeenth century in Europe. Actually, the question of absolutism and autocratic rule emerged in England during the early Stuart period.

The English Parliament adopted the Magna Carta in their restriction of the monarchical powers and in controlling the Court. Hence, in the seventeenth century England Parliament's reference to the Magna Carta was an attempt to exercise its power and to control the Crown's finances and ministers (Coward 102). James, however, had grown up in the Scottish tradition of monarchy, which was far different from the English tradition in terms of constitutional monarchy. The Scottish Parliament had very limited powers of control over the monarch when compared with the English one. Furthermore, the idea of ruling in Scotland was based on the absolute powers and divine right of kings. Hence, James's belief in the absolute powers of the monarch, which were inherited from his Scottish rule based on absolute monarchy, increased the political instability in England (Trevelyan 70).

The first Parliament of England under the reign of James I lasted from 1604 to 1610. In 1610, James dissolved it due to the failure of negotiations over the Great Contract. From 1610 to 1614, he ruled without Parliament (Miller, *The Stuarts* 52). He felt the need to call Parliament in 1614 for budgetary reasons, but this Parliament became known as "the Addled Parliament" since it lasted only eight weeks as a result of the conflict between the king and the House of Commons over Parliament's refusing to grant him 'Benevolence', which is a form of taxation, and a grant of £65,000. Accordingly, James's dispute with Parliament was the result of seeing the Crown as an absolute power over Parliament and considering Parliament as an unnecessary institution.

The first period covers the years 1603 to 1618, which was a time of conflict between the king and Parliament, principally over financial matters but also it concerned James's desire for the union between England and Scotland. However, though considered as troubled

years, the period was regarded as a time of stability in the country because James consulted Parliament in financial and political matters. The next period covers the years from 1618 to 1629, in which the beginning of the Thirty Years War proved the ineffective foreign policy of the monarch and the Duke of Buckingham. Hence, this led to a serious reaction within the House of Commons, criticizing the policies of the monarchy, which widened the gap between Parliament and monarchy. The third period covers the years from 1629 to 1640, known as the personal rule of Charles I since he decided to rule without Parliament because of the ideological conflicts between himself and Parliament. Brice states that “there was little opposition during this time, but when Parliament met again in 1640 the accumulated grievances of the previous eleven years united virtually the entire political union against the king”. Therefore, from the beginning of Stuart period to the outbreak of the civil war, the conflict between Parliament and the monarchy was strongly felt, and led the country into political, social and economic instabilities, culminating in the civil war between the Parliamentarians and Royalists.

The most interestingly examined ideas are his doubts as to the intelligence and sanity of those who would install a monarch as their ruler, as well as the degrading position this puts them in. By using Satan as the protagonist of his ideas he automatically prejudices people against the ideas being explored. This strange flip of characters, with Satan being the hero of the story and God the “awful Monarch,” (James Willson 348) allows for a full exploration and expression of Milton’s views while forcing the reader to think critically of everything being said and done.

In a certain sense, *Paradise Lost* was not an original tale, given that it recapitulates some of the best-known biblical tales, namely the conflict between God and the Devil and the temptation in the Garden of Eden. What has allowed Milton’s epic *Paradise Lost* to endure as long as it has, however, is the fact that his approach was incredibly creative and

controversial? At points, the reader of *Paradise Lost* may find himself or herself sympathizing with the Devil, pitying him, and even rooting for him. God in *Paradise Lost* is not always, or even most of the time, a nice guy. The reader is thus entrapped in a moral dilemma: How Can one like the Devil? How is this moral incongruity resolved? Writing about self feelings that Devil is portrayed in *Paradise lost* could also explore the feelings about God and explain how we resolve the moral dilemma in which Milton involves the reader.

For many, Milton's epic is a poem to admire rather than enjoy. Auladell's adaptation is a more accessible beast, heavily abridged, its pictures focusing on the drama of a tale of devils, treason and temptation. Many comics have visited cosmic realms, but Auladell crafts something definitive, from hell's vast plains and twisted demons to the parapets of heaven. His expressive, black-hatted Satan delivers Milton's juicy soliloquies with style, while the war in heaven is a splendid mix of cannons, single combat, mist and darkness.

Milton's poem has produced mixed reactions in the three centuries since its first publication. Much of the controversy surrounding the poem centers around two main issues: its style, and its content (specifically its religious subject matter and political overtones). Yet, it must be remembered, in the epic form style and content are closely related, and it is thus impossible to separate the two issues entirely.

However, the most intense reaction to the poem in its early days focused on its content. Nicholas von Maltzahn (*The First Reception of Paradise Lost*, 1667) summarizes the politics surrounding three early responses which typify its first reception. The episcopal licenser, Thomas Tomkins, was at first inclined to suppress the poem, finding evidence in it of the anti-royalist sentiments for which Milton was notorious after the publication of his tracts supporting the regicide of Charles I. After the Restoration, such opinions were, naturally, cause for profound concern. Tomkins disapproved of the emphasis on astrological

omens, such as eclipses, which reflected a Puritan tendency to over-emphasize natural events, and which Tomkins feared would fuel dissent in the wake of numerous disasters which the English had suffered in the previous year (such as the Great Fire of London).

Tomkins was also suspicious of Milton's elevation of private illumination or inspiration. However, other preoccupations also engaged Tomkins, and in a time of national crisis, Milton's emphasis on reason, first principles and common notions, and the poem's engaging development of sacred history were seen as contributing to, rather than detracting from the stability and national unity which Tomkins sought to endorse. He therefore licensed the work, in spite of his misgivings.

David Daiches, in his book *A Critical History of English Literature* (Volume IV), expresses Milton's *Paradise Lost* is one of the greatest epic poems in the English language. It tells the story of the Fall of Man, a tale of immense drama and excitement, of rebellion and treachery, of innocence pitted against corruption, in which God and Satan fight a bitter battle for control of mankind's destiny. The struggle rages across three worlds - heaven, hell, and earth - as Satan and his band of rebel angels plot their revenge against God. At the center of the conflict are Adam and Eve, who are motivated by all too human temptations but whose ultimate downfall is unyielding love. Robert M. (The *Figure of the Poet in Renaissance Epic*.76)

Arthur Compton – Rockett comments the poetry of Milton's theory. He argues, "The strong Republican sympathies of his earlier years gave a glow to his pictures of rural life where the real and ideal meet and blend, and where the humdrum is spiritualized (310). Milton idea of humble, common and rural life is guided by his political ideology. *Paradise Lost* is a work epic both in scale and, notoriously, in ambition. For nearly 350 years, it has held generation upon generation of audiences in rapt attention, and its profound influence can

be seen in almost every corner of Western culture (Hill, Christopher, *Milton and the English Revolution* 232).

According to J.G Keely, *Paradise Lost* has become tacitly accepted into the Christian mythos, even if most Christians do not recognize it as a source. It also updated not only the epic, but the heroic form, and its questioning of the devil is a great philosophical exploration, even if it may ultimately prove a failure. Under Constantine, Hell and the Devil were re-conceptualized. The representation of Hell in the Bible is often metaphorical, and does not include 'fire and brimstone'. Hell is defined as 'absence from God' and nothing more. This is supposed to be a painful and unfulfilling experience, but not literal physical torture.

He gives the Devil philosophical and political motivations for rebelling, but has him fail to notice that God cannot be questioned or defeated. However, this requires that one absolutely believe this assertion without ever testing it. Anyone who accepts it unquestioningly is bound to believe that the Devil is foolish to question the natural order.

However, Milton himself states that the Devil had no choice but to doubt, and due to our own rational minds, man cannot help doubting either. In this case, we might fall in with Blake, and suggest that Milton was the Devil's man, not because he wanted to be, but because he carried biblical rhetoric to its rational conclusion.

He portrays him this way to align Satan with the heroic figures of Epic Poetry. This is not because he thinks of the Devil as a hero, but rather so he can show that our heroes should not be rebellious murderers as they were in ancient stories, but humble, pious, simple men.

Jason Koivu urges *Paradise Lost* is fire and passion. He says, "It is the pinnacle and the bottomless pit. It is the struggle for all that is good. It is the struggle within the evil of all evils (230). In the mid-1600s John Milton, aging and gone blind, dictated his most famous work, *Paradise Lost*, an epic poem that harkens back to Homer and Virgil. It not only tells the so very well-known story of Adam and Eve, it also describes the downfall of Satan in

dramatic fashion. The empathy shown for this most famous of fallen angels is, for me, one of the most outstanding sections of this early work of English literature (Svendsen, K. *Scene of Paradise Lost*). Epic is a laughably overused word these days. However, the depiction of Mammon and Beelzebub marshaling their demonic minions for the coming war is the stuff of ancient epics.

Many scholars consider *Paradise Lost* to be one of the greatest poems in the English language. It tells the biblical story of the fall from grace of Adam and Eve in language that is a supreme achievement of rhythm and sound. The 12-book structure, the technique of beginning in medias res (in the middle of the story), the invocation of the muse, and the use of the epic question are all classically inspired. The subject matter, however, is distinctly Christian.

Many other works of art have been inspired by *Paradise Lost*, notably Joseph Haydn's oratorio *The Creation* (1798) and John Keats's long poem *Endymion*. Milton wrote a companion piece, *Paradise Regained*, in 1671, which dramatizes the temptation of Christ.

The theory applied in this work is New Historicism. New Historicism is a literary theory based on the idea that literature should be studied and interpreted within the context of both the history of the author and the history of the critic. Based on the literary criticism of Stephen Greenblatt and influenced by the philosophy of Michel Foucault, New Historicism acknowledges not only that a work of literature is influenced by its author's times and circumstances, but that the critic's response to that work is also influenced by his environment, beliefs, and prejudices. A New Historicist looks at literature in a wider historical context, examining both how the writer's times affected the work and how the work reflects the writer's times, in turn recognizing that current cultural contexts color that critic's conclusions. For example, when studying Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, one always comes to the question of whether the play shows Shakespeare to be anti-Semitic.

The New Historicist also acknowledges that his examination of literature is “tainted” by his own culture and environment. The very fact that we ask whether Shakespeare was anti-Semitic — a question that wouldn't have been considered important a century ago — reveals how our study of Shakespeare is affected by our civilization. New Historicism, then, underscores the impermanence of literary criticism. Current literary criticism is affected by and reveals the beliefs of our times in the same way that literature reflects and is reflected by its own historical contexts. New Historicism acknowledges and embraces the idea that, as times changes, so will our understanding of great literature.

The relation between New historicism and Michel de Certeau , Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault lies in the use similar strategies of discursive practices, a New historicist reading of ‘dominant histories’. In many ways Michel de Certeau is a new historicist. His perception on consumption as production is the major theoretical frame work because a text cannot isolate from its reception. It plays an active part in the production and consumption of a text’s meaning.

For Certeau, the political meaning is always the intention of an author because at some level some ideology is excluded and included. The concept of ‘everyday meaning’ and ‘local’ meaning for Certeau is theoretical outbreak from the dominant strategy. For him the former ideology is the dominant strategy, challenging the dominant historiography and strategy. Thus infact Certeau’s strategies of reading culture, philosophy and history reveal the truth by unmasking the epistemological foreground in the entire genre. Thus the ‘local’ reading of a text always gains prominence during the process of reading against the grain of structural theory of ‘closure’ interpretation. In Certeau’s discourse every reader is consumer. It is they who give emphasis on the unexplored area of ‘silent history’. Certeau, Michel de 1984: *The Practice of Everday Life*. University of California, Berkeley.

There is a conscious dichotomy between the dominant interpretation and the resistant reader or reading which an active 'tactics' is More than giving emphasis on interpreting a text's meaning, Certeau gives importance to the 'tactics' a term he uses in his theoretical frame work.

## II. Political Edge of the *Paradise Lost*

Taken as an address to his “fit” readership, and due to this theological constraint, Milton must consider man singly; God’s justice should in the end be written on the heart and not only on the page, a fact which identifies *Paradise Lost* as a poem— an external medium— concerned with the internal spiritual condition of a limited readership, a circumstance which entails two questions. First, how does Milton go about identifying this particular kind of “fit” reader? Second, how does Milton orient this reader to the true task at the reader’s indoctrination without that reader viewing the conclusion of *Paradise Lost* as the task’s end, in effect leaving the spiritual task set before mankind behind with the dramatic characterizations of Adam and Eve? The drama of Satan’s and mankind’s fall is surely one method of engagement, yet it is one much too broad in scope, as it engages all of educated, English Christian society— a society a large part of which, Milton tells us, has revealed itself to be little more than a “barbarous dissonance” (7.32).

The proem to Book Seven, in which Milton hopes (aloud to us) to find his “fit audience (The York Tercentenary Lectures. Ed. C. A. Patrides, Toronto) though few,” suggests an answer to the problem of reader identification; it is in the biographical though few,” suggests an answer to the problem of reader identification; it is in the biographical interpolation (one of many) that Milton references his contemporary circumstance: “I Sing with mortal voice, unchanged / To hoarse or mute, though fall’n on evil days in darkness, and with dangers compass round” (7.24-27).

At the time when he published the first edition of *Paradise Lost* in 1667, Milton was both a known radical and regicide, facing the political, religious, and personal consequences of the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, a circumstance he found to be indicative of both a moral and political failure on the part of the English citizenry. Milton, as the passage indicates, through blind and in considerable danger, stubbornly sticks to the cause, as he says,

with voice, unchanged. If the one constant amid this religious and political turmoil is Milton's unchanged voice, committed to the cause of the revolution, then it follows that Milton would have envisioned a reader still committed, competent in a language that he and Milton both speak: that of the short-lived English republic of which they were both a part. Milton engages that reader—a lapsed republican although one not yet lost in the barbarous dissonance by using this shared republican language in his poem. By having his characters speak like republicans, Milton thematizes the fit reader's path to understanding in *Paradise Lost* through a double sense, the theological being married to the political. It will thus be in how the theological essence of the poem functions as an allegory of the fit reader's present condition that his reader's politics comes into play; Milton chooses his reader by making that reader's contemporary condition a part of the eternal theological argument of *Paradise Lost*.

Certeau's conception is on the similar lines. A question that gives importance to their strategical and 'tactical' interpretation of history, a way of reading or re-reading a text which is far from the phenomenological approach. Foucault adopted Jeremy Bentham's model of panoptic on structure – a construction of a prison for observing the prisoners without himself being seen. More than one critic has applied a new historical lenses to *Paradise Lost*. For example, in Milton's epic: *Paradise Lost*, Certeau interpreted paradise lost as a commentary on colonialism, in full swing at that time, arguing that England represented *Paradise Lost* and the new colonies in America and both "hell- America" and "Eden-America" with Satan as a conquistador aiming to expand into "Eden-America." Certeau did this through a careful examination of the language in many documents produced about colonialism at that time. Foucault's theory of power discourse always gives upper hand to the dominant mainly because of his genealogical conception of knowledge. In the application of the theory we can discern different strategies that created knowledge. This is radically different from the

hierarchical power structure in Marxist ideology. Instead it is a web of power, always interconnected.

The practical advantage of this approach is that republicanism acts as a point of common reference, a common and thus more expediently understood language. Yet to look at republicanism only in this reductive, instrumentalist fashion, as a mere step on the ladder to theological understanding would not only be to miss Milton's commitment to both his and his fit reader's deep ideological commitment to the cause, but to miss as well the poem's main interpretive apparatus. As seen in the excerpt from the proem, Milton is as much a republican at the time of writing *Paradise Lost* as he has ever been; yet this stance carries with it a co-occurring interpretive commitment.

Sharon Achinstein makes an important claim that illuminates how politics and theological understanding are indissolubly linked for Milton; in the period of the Interregnum, the "fit reader was to become a partisan reader" who identified with an author "through shared, recognizable political opinions," as well as through the "shared hermeneutic customs" a shared politics implies (179). Shared opinions, then, open the door for shared interpretive habits. Yet, at this initial stage of Milton's argument, the linkage of the political opinions of the fit reader to the interpretive acts implicit within another common, theological frame of reference risks subsuming the former under the latter, as *Paradise Lost* makes no other explicit allusion to the status of republicanism in Stuart England.

At the time of the poem's completion, there were no exhortative external circumstances for Milton to hide his republican sentiment: he was an unapologetic regicide and publicly served the Protectorate, and the literature of the Interregnum period suggests no pious reluctance on the part of authors to make overt political points using theological figuration. This is not to say that Milton thought himself no more pious than the rest—the opposite. As much as the dangerous political climate of the Restoration, Milton's

antinomianism (which will be explored in greater depth below), his refusal to impose in the form of direct narrative upon his reader's freedom to choose his own salvation, prevents him from speaking openly about what the fit reader must do. In Milton's experiential Calvinist universe, one verifies election only by internal evidence that should be self-evident. This type of verification, ideally, should not require *Paradise Lost* for guidance (although this will be shown below to be only an ideal). In order to address contemporary political circumstance through theological language, Armand Himy argues that Milton uses both a "language of accommodation," the theological precept that, while God is unknowable, his communication to man can be understood, and a language of "indirection," taking advantage of multiple meanings of the obscure, worldly sphere. These aspects allow Milton to create a link between heaven and earth by which government can be critiqued, while at the same time establish a space where this critique can be achieved through multiple levels of meaning.

Accommodation and indirection show, using Himy's example, that Satan's critique of God's monarchy is patently false, while at the same time still exploring monarchy's implication in the earthly realm (120).

For Milton, these two critiques are one and the same, in that God's authority "is not a simple political concept," but rather the "prerequisite on which Christian ontology is founded"—an ontology, furthermore, in which "the virtue of the subjects remains the fundamental issue" (121). For Milton, this freedom is best realized in a Christian commonwealth because Christian liberty ultimately ends in the "abrogation of outward law" for that manifested within, available to all who are fit and able to access it (134). While absolutist about what Christian truth is Milton is categorically "non-monarchical" about the path the individual Christian must take to apprehend it. What this ideological commitment amounts to, then, is that Milton as an authority even if only a textual one cannot make evident

the path without precluding the ideological commitment to both his theology and politics, and thus to his fit reader, from the very start.

As mentioned in Christian agency, the political functions as a crucial “guide” for the fit reader’s interpretation of his contemporary theological circumstance. Milton gets around the problem of having the rather amorphous Christian ethic to “be godly” reference a contemporary political circumstance by making the fit reader identify with the principal characters of *Paradise Lost*. God, Satan, Adam, and Eve, in effect, all speak the same political language as the fit reader. However, this political language exists in two different realms, which, I will argue in the next section, arise from a magnificent feat of chronological ambiguity regarding the local (political) and eternal (theological) sides of Milton’s argument. Both the local/political and eternal/theological are kept just separate enough to influence the path— constructed out of the fit reader’s politics— to ultimate Christian meaning, yet not affect the ultimate Christian interpretation of the poem; for Milton, the political must always be subsumed under the theological.

David Norbrook supplies an account consonant with this (somewhat maddening) ideological need of Milton to keep things separate yet integrally related; he argues that to properly understand republican literature— that is, poetic narratives not overtly republican although touching on tacit republican themes— one must turn to speech-act theory: “we need to analyze not only cognitive content, considered as timeless truths, but the kinds of ‘illocutionary act’ the author was performing in publishing it”. The main “actions” of such speech-acts are allusion and reference. Allusion and reference, in his conception, are processes integral to the problematics of interpretation, as Norbrook explains:

Allusion is a difficult and slippery topic. One critic proposes an upward gradation from appropriation, where a poet may take over a phrase without expecting this to be recognized, through reference, where varying degrees of

similarity will be recognized, to allusion, which involves a “miniature hermeneutic dialogue” where difference as well as similarity may be foregrounded.

Reference separates itself from allusion in that it is only the first step in recognizing the similarity upon which allusion will build. This account of reference, of finding a similarity between how a politically charged illocution works both in and outside the poem, is then integral to the dialogue of allusion. Theologically derived characters such as those found in *Paradise Lost* perform a political dialogue with the reader by uttering phrases that both sound familiarly republican, leading the fit reader to recognize an allusion to himself and thus goad him into some kind of action as a result of this identification.

According to Norbrook, a particularly good example of this kind of reference that leads to allusion is thematized in Satan’s rebellion, instigated by God’s elevation of his Son. Norbrook contends that the speech-act of God, arbitrarily promoting his Son, places Satan in a position whereby he can react with his own speech-act that, in its republican reference, is curiously consonant with Milton’s own ideals of just rebellion (445). Satan, as a “reader” (or, in this case, misreader) of God, rebels against what he sees as an arbitrary, “private speech-act,” and constantly aligns himself with the republican ideal of free public discourse (445). However, Satan uses such speech-acts, as the poem proceeds (in chronological, not narrative time— we see, in a theologically proper fashion, Satan fallen before we see how he falls), to “magnify his personal power” (446).

What must be noted at this point is that, within the cosmology of *Paradise Lost* and especially with Satan, republicanism often becomes self-destructive, and it will be seen that it is this self destructiveness— instigated, though crucially not fulfilled by Satan— which lies at the heart of the poem’s wider critique of Christian political agency. It is in this way that speech-acts, as acts of reference to republican ideology, function in the hermeneutic of

allusion. Republican speech-acts create an analogue in the space of the poem representing the state of republicanism in post-Restoration England. In *Paradise Lost*, Satan falls through his use of republican rhetoric, which implies two things: that the fit reader is complicit in the fall of his own ideology, and furthermore that the theological import of *Paradise Lost's* argument as it relates to Satan's fall shows that salvation is somehow tied to a contest over the use of republican speech. According to Milton, how one interprets political rhetoric, which can be used for either good or ill by the speaker or interpreter of such rhetoric, is crucially bound up with how the one understands the Christian cosmos in which one exists.

Thus de Certeau's theory of interpreting a text is also away from the Reader response school that more or less structures the semantic or meaning. The various theoretical framework of Pierre Machery, Louis Althusser, Fredric Jameson and Michel Foucault de, Created a space for the ideological foreground. Whereas when we analyze Certeau's 'tactics', even the monolithic ideology is dismantled because for him reading is a 'play' of consumerism.

By comparing the language used in documents pretending to the new world to the language in *Paradise lost*, de Certeau showed that just as England was "purging" itself of undesirable ("devils") by sending them to the New World so Milton had God purging heaven of its devils by sending them to hell. De Certeau also linked Adam and Eve to naked Indians in Eden's-America, with Satan depicted as the colonist from hell-America bent on seducing and tricking the natives. The larger point here is that Milton's epic was influenced by the writing and thinking about colonialism that was going on at the time in England and that this provided a particular conceptual and discursive framework for Milton to imagine what paradise, Adam and Eve, and Satan were like.

There are several double meanings at work here to illuminate his unambiguous, "not guilty" nakedness. The first is "concealed," which alludes later to the postlapsarian state, but

also carries a much larger import in its absence here: that his “mysterious parts” were not concealed means that they are not mysterious at all at this point in time. Milton, as a fallen author, is the one supplying the figural turns in this case, using irony to justify that which needs no justification. The very need to justify nakedness, Milton implies, is evidence enough for man’s fallen state, which should ideally alert his fit reader, interpreting the politics of the poem, that the need to justify his politics is, similarly, evidence of fallen reason.

The first rhetorical move in this vein actually occurs in Milton’s description of the serpent as it first stands apart from Satan. He speaks of the serpent in allusive, biblical language as having both “wit and native subtlety”. “Subtlety,” in this sense, carries with it the negative connotation of craftiness that is present in Genesis. Further on, however, Milton subverts this tone by claiming that the serpent, before Satan, was “not yet in horrid Shade or dismal Den, / Nor nocent yet” (9.185-86). Subtlety now can simply mean a discerning mental faculty as compared to the other animals of the garden. The serpent’s postlapsarian symbolization is a device in which both signifier and signified are coextensive in its interpretation; once the serpent loses its conventional definition due to Satan’s appropriation of it, the result is a fundamental division between what the serpent seems to mean a harmless denizen of Eden and what it really means ungodliness.

As Fish would attest, a figural turn such as this is most likely a kind of temptation and correction by Milton, alerting us to the fact that prelapsarian Eden does not yet harbor the multiple meanings of the postlapsarian world. The distinction between signifier and signified occurs through a crucial temporal difference between this scene and the reader’s contemporary, fallen knowledge of how Christian history must unfold: history has not yet begun in Eden, and there are no such absolute, signified meanings upon which to rely. What this ambiguous chronology implies, then, almost counter to how we at first view the lack of ambiguity in Eden, is a place that is best described as having yet to carry full meaning. It is in

taking advantage of the unbeknownst degeneration into metaphor that Satan as orator beguiles Eve, and thus instigates the Fall of Man. He, in effect, makes his form of the talking snake a specious metaphor for the meaning of the Tree of Knowledge, a metaphor for elevation of status that plays into the desire he, in a previous episode, 13 unconsciously planted within Eve: “look on mee,” he says, “Mee who have touch’d and tasted, yet both live, and life more perfect have attain’d” (9.687-89).

This characterization by Milton marks all of the negative facets of Satan as a deceptive orator: in his degeneration from Angel into serpent, he degenerates the interpretation of a symbolic given into the interpretation of a metaphorical conundrum where one thing can be another or mean something else, thus perverting the act of communication. When Eve, convinced by Satan’s argument, closes her own final soliloquy before eating by asking “what hinders then / to reach, and feed at once both Body and Mind?” Gohot, F. E. (*Special Introduction to the Study of the Old Testament*). She is ironically alluding to the two aspects of Satan that she failed to perceive as divergent in the correct way: his mind, as it truly is, is a vastly different thing from both the body and mind she perceives it to be (9.778-79). The metaphorical relationship between the serpentine appearance and Satan’s mind allows him enough leeway to gain Eve’s trust in her perception of him.

De Certeau’s tool of historical research is the concept called ‘silent history’ which is opposite to the dominant strategies of historiography. Hence ‘opposition practice’ is counter discursive and counter-strategy rather than creating a monolithic power structure like that of Foucauldian strategy. Thus the hidden is voiced against the dominant voice, resulting in the formation of an argument that the ‘other’ reading is also possible.

Certeau Interprets Milton’s Satan as reflecting questions raised in the seventeenth century (the period of the English Civil War) about Monarchical power. While Milton was undeniably an orthodox Christian who meant us to understand Satan as evil and God as good,

he argues that some of the contemporary “revolutionary” questioning of Monarchical power seeped inevitably into Milton’s text and led to perception of God as a tyrant and Satan as having justifications for rebelling.

De Certeau’s theory of oppositional practices is also the counter knowledge, a way of dissimilar and contradicting the nature of the dominant ideology. It never tries to locate within that particular power structure. It gives power to individual reading, a subjective analysis that result in the multiple readings of various consumers.

In the context of Eden, before now having not encountered ambiguity, the serpent becomes the perfect vehicle for an argument against the monarchy of God: the serpent’s edenically self-evident appearance to Eve, by Satan’s rhetorical machinations, in effect wrests self-evidence from God’s decree and relocates it, dangerously, in the ambiguous, worldly discourse of Eden. The “fear of Death” that at once “removes the fear” is an act of reasoning entirely internal to Eden, a place that is now distanced from God in an implicit plea for free inquiry. Of course, this temptation is based entirely upon a tautology: free inquiry is the very condition of Eve’s being tempted and is therefore not something she lacks; Satan makes a redundancy seem a revelation.

This is the point where Milton’s antinomian Calvinism shows itself: the evidence of one’s salvation is internal, but if one is to be free, one must be free to fall, which in Eve’s case consists of a freedom to ignore what is written on the heart in favor of what is spoken aloud in the public sphere of republican illocution. What comprises Satan’s republican temptation is a device that distances Eve from the Calvinist intuition of the good that, when married to the faculty of reason that marks such intuition as virtuous, should be self-evident.

Through reading *Paradise Lost*, the fit reader’s identification with its republican characters removes him step by step from the proximity to the Paradise once known and to which he spiritually aspires. Theology, however, is far from being incommensurate with

politics: it must be kept in mind that Milton stays true to the cause. But for a Christian commonwealth to function, the cause must be one that takes into account the larger, godly sphere in which the republic must exist, as Hill explains:

The true fight is fought first in the hearts of men. When that is won, no external enemies will remain to overcome. War therefore, so far from being glorious, defeats its own ends because it produces the wrong virtues. True glory comes from the renunciation of glory. *Paradise Lost* was not the glorification of the chosen nation that Milton had at one time envisaged, but it was still ‘doctrinal and exemplary to a nation’. By helping to discover where God’s cause had been misinterpreted, it might lead to a recovery of hope and the prospect of more effective action in the future. (364)

Each speech-act that references the republic is thus one that is always and already fallen, simply because it ignores the “true fight.” If the hearts of men are not properly oriented to the task, then the fight, whether just revolution or the fight for one’s soul (which, again, for Milton are selfsame), will inevitably eventuate exactly the wrong virtues that Satan best represents. If the fit reader does not understand this situation by the time of the Fall in *Paradise Lost*, he is essentially back where he began: enthralled by the republican Satan of the earlier books, having made no progress beyond his dim political aspirations.

Republicanism, then, as a theological guide, is not meant to abrogate or negate itself, but rather to show its efficacy only when considered within the scope of the world to come; Milton means for republicanism in *Paradise Lost* to highlight the importance of the proper relationship between the two worlds in light of which republicanism must be considered — the City of Man and the City of God. The rhetoric of republicanism, in light of how it persuades the fit reader to see himself as complicit in the fall of both man and nation, will show the path out of its own failure through the theological principles with which, for Milton,

a properly conceived politics— in which the City of Man is always judged by its standing in relation to the City of God— always lies attendant.

Strategies of a consumer are also the process of resistance to the dominant, always conscious and active, resulting in the formation of the pluralities of histories. As a ‘consumer’ we can differentiate the ideology and strategy of Michel Foucault and Michel de Certeau on many grounds. Claire Colebrook in his book *New Literary Histories: New Historicism and Contemporary Criticism* (1997) distinguish this: The traditional sociological method of describing societies which uses statistics and generalizations from statistics has a similar strategic effect. It takes the contingent multiplicity of everyday life and transcribes it according to an overarching logic. de Certeau’s theory therefore assumes that a culture is formed according to strategic boundaries, but there is also an essentially unbounded or plural life which the boundary limits. It is only because of Certeau’s commitment to the pre-strategic chaos of everyday life, that forms of order are seen as ‘missing’ the full of existence. As such, the act of strategy is a form of power.

According to Milton, while God is the source of free will and of the moral law that must be observed, he himself is an integer; he may exist in all created substance, yet creatures arising from that substance must by rule not be forced to understand him, or by the same logic be forced to understand themselves. More importantly, does this possibility of blameworthiness call into question his role as a teacher to the fit reader? Yes and no. Yes, in that expressing God is indicative of the spiritual dearth of the postlapsarian subject, Milton included. No, in the sense that all such subjects are equally blameworthy before the fact, Milton again included. He is not hypocritical because he is human, and he is not blameworthy because he recognizes he is always and already blameworthy— at least insofar as he does not transgress the spiritual boundaries the proem implies.

The answer lies partly in the fact that the failure of republicanism is an earthly, provisional analogue to the Fall, a contemporary *felix culpa* of which the fit reader is a part—and rhetoric is an inescapable operator in republican discourse. Victoria Kahn notes that in the early modern period the political contract—a central aspect of republican political theory—existed in a state of transition, wherein “God was still the creator of the world, but man was the proximate creator of value by virtue of his voluntary social and political arrangements” (129). Yet “voluntary” here, a concept also essential to Milton’s theodicy, “emphasizes the creative role of speech-acts and the constitutive power of language in shaping new rights and obligations” (129). As we have seen in Book Nine, Eve succumbs to a type of “contract” with Satan. It makes sense that Milton would engage his fit reader through a similar method: the sustaining of a kind of tacit interpretive agreement through the flawed, rhetorically-capable characters who work towards their fall, who utter the speech-acts necessary for that reader’s factional alignment.

Milton’s grand design, then, has been to show the fit reader, rather than force or persuade him to see, the way from external, worldly, political experience to the internal and spiritual Inner Light by means of a worldly, postlapsarian language that that reader can understand. Like Milton’s anxious representation of God as a speaking character, his fit reader must be parsed in just the same “physical” sense, in that Milton imagines him as occupying a sphere of speech and action; the Inner Light, like its heavenly source, as Luxon would point out, cannot “exist” in the world, even if thematized in a poem, without succumbing to the kind of debased allegorical representation now deemed necessary. <sup>22</sup> It is worth returning to Hill’s statements mentioned in the previous section, that for Milton “true glory comes from the renunciation of glory,” and that “*Paradise Lost*” was not the glorification of the chosen nation that Milton had at one time envisaged, but it was still ‘doctrinal and exemplary to a nation. The renunciation of glory is, in the sense outlined

above, the renunciation of republicanism as a goal in itself, while what is “doctrinal and exemplary” to a nation is the way to truth, allegorized for his fit reader as the “political” (because public) process of renouncing a debased politics. According to Hill, *Paradise Lost* revises Milton’s position as a radical revolutionary in a way that allows him to still stay true to the cause.

The ‘tactics’ of Certeau contradicts the dominant. His concept of heterology or science of other is also the marginalized ideology that incorporated with the dominant knowledge. For instance, in John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, the ‘other’ could be the stereotype of Orient. Milton could be an ‘Orientalist’, in the Saidian concept. The popular myth of Western was that Eastern countries were rich in silver, gold and precious stones. When Milton compared the description *paradise lost* with the royal palaces of the Oriental countries he described the heaven. The ‘other’ is the stereotype that never interpreted in those days of Milton. We should also remember that the period when Milton wrote the text was also the period of colonial expansion. Similarly, the travel literature could be the ‘other’ because certain genres dominated over the other.

*Paradise Lost* is not so much a document of republican aspirations and failures as it is a guide for Christian interpretation that uses the failure of republicanism, for Milton a sin on the part of the nation, as the most the most practical route toward the reader’s theological understanding of his depraved status.

The other comes to centre only when we-read a text or culture from a multiple perspective. This is one of the ‘tactics’ of Certeau, where the dominant comes to margin and the ‘other’ comes to the centre. Certeau’s concept of ‘heterology’ is one of the ‘tactics’ of New historicist reading, a post structural theoretical framework in deconstructing the dominant. Unlike in Certeau’s the ‘other’ is out Foucauldian power discourse. Instead we could hear the dominant voice not the other. The contribution of Michel de Certeau to the

New historicism gives insight into a depth possibility in interpreting history, literary texts and culture.

*Paradise Lost*, then, thematizes the epistemological limitations regarding the attainment of grace, and Milton's partial working out of a temporary solution on the mortal plane. Yet Milton's method for thematizing this epistemological circumstance, because of his antinomianism, cannot be one of seeming restraint. Rather, it is a method that uses republican

*Paradise Lost*, then, thematizes the epistemological limitations regarding the attainment of grace, and Milton's partial working out of a temporary solution on the mortal plane.

In this sense, *Paradise Lost* is the perfect document of a Puritan realignment using politics, while falling into the idolatrous trap it uses within its theological frame. As Fish notes, "although it remains true that *Paradise Lost* is preoccupied with valuing itself, it is at the same time de-valuing itself, for it is no less a temporal and corporeal medium than the mediums from which it would wean us". Allegory sustains the rhetorical space to carry out this action because of its ability, through the "identification of personae" whose role is to mask overt intention, to sustain Milton's means without foreclosing on the possibility of its end—having us relinquish external guides for that of the spirit. Milton must sustain the political order to relegate the uncertain, postlapsarian cosmos it personifies (including the fit reader who inhabits it) to a position of incapacity. Milton makes of political allegory a readerly *felix culpa* that leaves the fit reader searching himself for a path more capable and more certain within.

How the fit reader is to attain grace is implicit in the form of *Paradise Lost's* argument, while the possibility of attaining it—what should be self-evident—is always made explicit by the poem's various flawed characters that try in vain (consciously on the part of Satan or unconsciously on the part of Adam and Eve) to militate against it. What Milton intends to tell how to attain grace he shows, while what he intends to show he tells.

Commentary on the poem is not limited to verbal criticism. Painters and engravers have produced ample criticism on the poem through their art. Having haunted the imagination of artists of different times and places, the myth of *Paradise Lost* has assumed different appearances in the works of different artists. When illustrated, the poem has come up with different versions of itself when read in different social and political milieu in which the painters have lived. Accordingly, particular aspects of the poem are highlighted to emphasize the milieu-bound requirements. The protagonists and antagonists change places, the human figures are subjugated to the paradisaal setting in one version and domineering in another; e.g. Eve has a Proud erect posture in one scene and tragically broken in another. The artist sometimes emphasizes the power of Satan, sometimes that of the deities and sometimes that of Adam and Eve. All these different versions are made under the influence of the discursive practices of the time during which the artist/interpreter has lived.

The main significance of this research lies in its interdisciplinary, a major trend in comparative literary studies. It is a New Historicist Reading of *Paradise Lost* in the sense that it uses painting to demonstrate the different readings of *Paradise Lost* and the haunting effect of the poem on the artists of the generations to come.

To reach the point Michel de Certeau is trying to convey, perhaps one can look at the parts Certeau has chosen to include and those he has excluded from his illustrations. Certeau's use of architectural perspective and the mechanical sublime in Pandemonium expresses a nineteenth century style that could meet the requirements of Certeau's time. This particular scene depicts the early 19th century setting with its emphasis on technology as the center of civic life. The strong emphasis on the binary of civilization and wild nature does not appear in the works of other illustrators of *Paradise Lost*, who have visualized it in different ages. By taking a close look at Certeau's selection of the scenes of the poem, one would notice Certeau's abandonment of God the Father and the Son. Certeau depicts only the reign

of Satan, not that of God. In *Satan Exalted*, Satan, high above all, in his central position is greatly confident of his power. He is the representation of the unshakeable secular wealth and power the possession of which was recommended in the utilitarian discourse. Satan's throne is situated at the top of a spherical space, similar to planet Earth. Proud of his scientifically built palace, he has dominated and colonized the whole Earth right in the middle of his Empire. Certeau, in his illustration of the enthronement of Satan puts emphasis on the intricate design of architecture as the symbol of Western civilization and Western pride. The subjugated position of the Earth in this painting shows the rightful power of Western civilization to tame the uncivilized natural world.

In Certeau's *Paradise Lost*, the relation of the viewer to the subject—even when a deity is there like the scene where Raphael is warning Adam and Eve—is that of an omniscient viewer, namely Adam, Eve, and the deity are easily spied upon by the viewer. The only scene where this omniscient viewpoint is challenged is the enthronement of Satan where the viewer cannot help but be alarmed by Satan's absolute power over the others.

### III. Hierarchy and Order of Heaven

In portraying the “Fall of Man” and the war in Heaven, Milton spends much of *Paradise Lost* describing the universal hierarchy and order that these events upset. In his 17th century view of the cosmos, Heaven exists above, Earth below, and Hell and Chaos below that. Within this geographically ordered cosmos, the most important hierarchy of Heaven is that of God as supreme monarch, the creator and ruler of the universe, and his “only begotten” Son as equal in rank, a separate person but of the same essence as God. Below these are the Archangels and Angels, arranged in different categories depending on their proximity to God’s light – these include Thrones, Powers, Dominions, and Cherubim, among others. When God creates Earth, he sets Adam and Eve in rank above the animals, and he sets Adam above Eve in terms of authority and wisdom. The devils of Hell are the lowest ranked of all, as they have been totally cast away from God.

For Milton, the right path is both the most godly and the most politically effective, in that only when England is seen for what it is a figuration of the City of God— can proper government by its Christian inhabitants be effected and its role as Milton’s chosen nation be fulfilled. For Milton’s fit readership, salvation is achieved by having republican politics act as a type of spiritual path that, once recognized, will make that politics all the more effective in the sense that earthly politics, the City of Man, will always be seen in light of the City of God. For Milton, the method is the crux of his higher argument. Milton’s antinomian epistemology and monist ontology is his own method is one that addresses the same problematic space where these points of doctrine make themselves manifest: the mind of his reader, and the public space in which that reader exists.

Milton intends for him to experience and requiring the contemporary normative space That engenders a correct interpretation of this experience, pointedly illustrates the necessity of alignment. To read Milton, one must already to a large degree “inhabit” this space, a point

that here applies both to reader and theorist alike. One approach, points of doctrine makes themselves manifest: the mind of his reader, and the public space in which that reader exists. Insofar as Milton's "construction" of his audience delimits the modern reader's interpretive options, as a theorist of reading, is similarly beholden to the interpretive principles that arise out of the original experience of this intended audience. In recognizing the limitations of his role as theorist, Milton intimates, the centrality of his or her position in *Paradise Lost*.

In his personal life, Milton was a proponent of individual freedom and the overthrow of monarchies, and he actively defended the regicide of King Charles I. One of the great ironies of *Paradise Lost* is that the radical Milton would make his masterpiece a poem that defends the ultimate system of monarchy and order. A probable explanation for this (from C.S. Lewis) is that Milton felt God was the rightful ruler of all, while monarchs were not. Thus he felt no qualms about defending God's sovereignty while simultaneously attacking Charles I and II. Despite Milton's personal beliefs and biography, the overarching moral lesson of *Paradise Lost* is that the hierarchy of Heaven and Earth must be respected and upheld, and that the evil in the world is the result of an upset of the divine order.

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