

Spring 1971

Reason, time, and redemption in Joseph Heller's Catch-22

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THE CONTRIBUTIONS AND
EFFECTS OF THE DRAMA ON
PARADISE LOST

BY

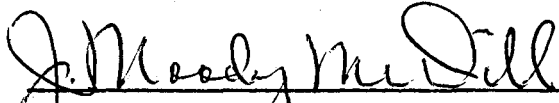
ROBERT ELLIOTT BAYLISS

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND
IN CANDIDACY
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH

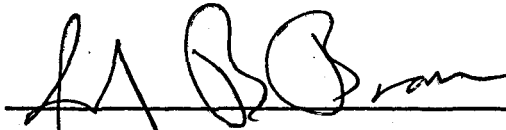
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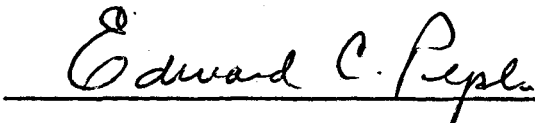
APPROVAL SHEET



Director of Thesis



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INTRODUCTION

Upon reading John Milton's Paradise Lost, one cannot help but notice that its tone, its moving scenes and confrontations, and its moments of psychological and cathartic impact all help to shape what one might call the poem's total effect -- the impressions it leaves with the reader. Upon close examination it becomes obvious that Milton was consummately adept in his adaptation of the dramatic element in his great epic. What is generally unrecognized, yet surprisingly evident, is that the dramatic element plays a unique and singularly important role in building the poem's grandeur. This dramatic element, more than any of Milton's other numerous and adroit tools, molds and shapes the epic into its acclaimed greatness. What is indeed surprising is that so little recognition has been given to Milton's dramatic ability and his use of it in Paradise Lost.

It will be later shown that the poem owes much to what would otherwise be known as devices of the playwright -- that its numerous scenes and confrontations delve into the psychological and invoke catharsis. It will also be noted that the poet was steeped in a sometimes unrecognized dramatic background and that his own dramatic efforts are more significant than generally acknowledged. That Milton wanted to make his "great work" a drama, and that he had outlined plans for, and had even begun, such a drama, will also be documented. Furthermore, Milton's theme, the fall of man, had previously been treated most often in dra-

matic form, and Milton drew from his dramatic predecessors. This will be explored later as well. In short, it is the purpose of this thesis to show that much of what went into Paradise Lost came from "the solemn theatre of the poet's imagination"¹ and that the epic framework of Paradise Lost was perhaps the best stage for this theatre. Merritt Y. Hughes sums up the poem's dramatic nature more succinctly when he says:

A reader coming to Paradise Lost for the first time and going rapidly through it to the end of Book X is likely to get the impression that he is reading drama. It is a heightened kind of drama which is too big for the stage and too rich for it in poetic perspectives around the conversations and debates that take up more room than the narrative does.²

Before exploring the dramatic aspects of Paradise Lost, one would do well to examine the current state of scholarship on the subject. Immediately, it is evident that the poem's dramatic significance has not received the attention it deserves. The consensus seems to be that whatever dramatic ramifications the poem may have, they are merely the literary backwash of the epic itself. There are reasons for this scholarly attitude and they bear examination.

First, there are those of the "epic school" who contend that since Milton's great work was an epic, all insight into the poem was "epic" and not dramatic. The universality of the concept seems to be its own justification. Hanford puts it better when he comments on "the fact that his [Milton's] greatest achievement is in epic, whence it is assumed that

¹Walter Raleigh, Milton (New York: Benjamin, Bloom, Inc., 1967), p. 78.

²Merritt Y. Hughes, ed., John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose (New York: The Oddysey Press, 1957), p. 173.

he is an 'epic genius' and that whatever dramatic qualities may be observed in his work are relatively unimportant, an accidental outcome of his subject, and not the product of his more vital inspiration."³ However, it is my belief that the dramatic potential of the epic had gone largely unnoticed in the past because no one had previously tapped it as deeply as had Milton.

A second group of scholars hold to "the notorious Miltonic selfconsciousness, which has led critics to regard all his work, from Lycidas⁴ to Samson, as essentially autobiographical and non-dramatic."

There are also those who point out that Milton held his contemporary drama in low esteem. This can be documented by remarks he made in one of his later pamphlets. The topic is amateur dramatics at Cambridge:

In the colleges many of the young divines, and those next in aptitude to divinity, have been seen upon the stage writhing and unboning their clergy limbs to all the antic and dishonest gestures of Triniculoes, buffoons, and bawds, prostituting the name of that ministry which either they had or were nigh having, to the audience of courtiers and court ladies, with their grooms and their mademoiselles.

While they acted and over acted among other young scholars I was a spectator; they thought themselves gallant men and I thought them fools; they made sport and I laughed; they mispronounced and I disliked; and to make up the atticism, they were out, and I hissed.⁵

Such a commentary by Milton, however, merely displayed his disapproval of the Jacobean drama which he viewed while a student at Cambridge. It does not reflect a distaste for the dramatic genre itself. Indeed,

³ James H. Hanford, John Milton, Poet and Humanist (Cleveland: Western Reserve, 1966), p. 225.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ida Langdon, Milton's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1924), p. 84.

Milton may have grown to dislike much of all he associated with Cambridge, considering his experiences there. In actuality, he must have had a high opinion of the drama as a literary form.

He has shown in Arcades, Comus, and Samson Agonistes an interest and ability in drama, not to mention his unfinished plans for not one but many dramas, as listed in the Trinity Manuscript. It is true that his tastes in the dramatic leaned slightly to the classical side. It is also true that his early plans for a drama favored the antique. Nevertheless, there is no denying his admiration of more recent drama. In his introduction to Samson Agonistes, Milton calls tragedy "the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all other Poems." His respect for Shakespeare and knowledge of his work is well known and will be discussed in greater detail later. The first of Milton's verse to appear in print was An Epitaph on the Admirable Dramatick Poet, W. Shakespeare.⁶ It contributed to the Second Folio in 1632, and Hanford says that the lines therein show that "we have no reason to doubt the sincerity of Milton's admiration of the bard."⁷

In addition to the aforementioned reasons why the dramatic significance of Paradise Lost has been overlooked, it should be noted that there has been little scholarly effort in this direction, and certainly none which could approach the scale of the studies done in Milton's epic background by Dr. E. M. W. Tillyard and Sir Maurice Bowra. This is not

⁶ Raleigh, p. 7.

⁷Hanford, John Milton, Englishman (New York: Crown Publishers, 1949), p. 43.

to say, though, that scholars are not cognizant of such a point. Hanford wrote an essay in 1917 entitled "The Dramatic Element in Paradise Lost" which is quite weighty. He says of our earlier arguments that "the true battleground for these opinions is Paradise Lost, for it is here that the epic and dramatic impulses meet, as I believe in equal strength." He concludes that the dramatic contributions to the poem, if nothing more, at least make it "a far-reaching modification of the epic form." Miss Helen Gardner contends that the character of Satan is much akin to Macbeth, Dr. Faustus, and Middleton's Beatrice — Joanna. Alvin Thaler has provided us with innumerable similarities and analogies of Milton to Shakespeare, enough to argue convincingly that Milton was greatly influenced by the bard of Avon. J. W. Hales, among others, has built a strong case around the comparison of the plots of Paradise Lost and Macbeth. Several people, among them Arthur Barker, contend that Paradise Lost was modeled on a five-act tragedy. F. T. Prince has isolated an element which he calls "the theatrical sublime" and shown its presence in Paradise Lost. So the topic has not gone unexplored. All of these men and their contributions will be thoroughly studied later in this thesis.

Each of the above-mentioned scholars has made a valid point toward the contention that the dramatic element is an abnormally significant force in the total scheme of Paradise Lost and was a force in Milton's mind during its composition. None of these men, and no one else to my knowledge, has been able to, or attempted to, compile a complete defense

⁸ Hanford, Poet and Humanist, p. 227.

⁹ Ibid.

of that contention. The only assertions made have been singular in scope, though many seem valid. It is the purpose of this thesis to organize and unite an aggregate body of arguments to show that the drama is indeed an intricate part of Paradise Lost; it is only through examining all of the dramatic ramifications of this epic that we can see the true effect made upon it by drama.

An interesting point which should be made before beginning these arguments is that the poem differs radically from other epics in a variety of ways. The epic is, according to Thrall, Hibbard, and Holman:

a long narrative poem in elevated style presenting characters of high position in a series of adventures which form an organic whole through their relation to a central figure of heroic proportions and through their development of episodes important to the history of a nation or race.¹⁰

Within the scope of this definition, some glaring epic deficiencies come to mind. Generally speaking, epics trace the exploits and daring deeds of a central hero. This hero embodies the glorious traditions of his country or race in a near superman fashion. It is easy to see that Paradise Lost falls short in this important qualification. With Homer, the heroes are Achilles (The Iliad) and Odysseus (The Odyssey). Virgil employs Aeneas in The Aeneid and the Beowulf poet, of course, has Beowulf as his hero. The most significant departure from this tradition, up to the time of Milton, is that of Lucan in De Bello Civili. (His hero

¹⁰William F. Thrall, Addison Hibbard, and C. H. Holman, A Handbook To Literature (New York: The Oddyses Press, 1960), p. 176.

¹¹J. A. K. Thompson, Classical Influences on English Poetry (London: George Allen and Urwin, 1951), p. 58.

would probably be Caesar, and in this respect Lucan would be doing what some critics say Milton did if he had made Satan his hero.) When one examines the heroic deeds of Achilles, Odysseus, Aeneas, and Beowulf, not to mention countless others, Milton's hero seems child-like in comparison, whoever he may be. It is not completely clear who Milton's hero is, although most critics seem to think today that Adam is the hero, representing man. Whoever Milton intended as his hero (separate justifications can also be made for Satan and Christ), he is endowed with human qualities. Adam makes a human mistake for a human reason - love. Satan is capable of the emotions of a human being, though he is not one. Though heroes of other epics have human feelings, they lack the depth of emotion and the frailties of Adam. Even though critics generally agree today that Adam is the hero, the fact that there has been so much disagreement is sufficient to illustrate that even Adam is not a hero of true epic proportions. Neither Adam, nor any of the other characters in Paradise Lost, dominates the story as does the traditional epic hero. The nearest thing to a feat of grandeur Adam performs is his choice whether or not to eat of the forbidden fruit, and even in this act he fails. Such a feat can hardly be likened to that of slaying Grendel or the Cyclops. It is obvious that Adam is heroic in a sense far different from that of his epic predecessors.

A second departure from standard epic format is seen in the fact that Milton's purpose was far different from any predecessor or precedent. In his own words, he wanted to "justifie the ways of God to man," meaning that he wanted to explain God's reasons for placing man in his present environment, showing that man had earned his place. By our earlier definition we can easily see that this purpose is not at all akin to

that of Milton's predecessors. Previous epics were aimed at the glorification of a culture, race, or country. Their heroes embodied traits and customs of the nation they represented and thus brought glory to that nation. Milton had no such intention. He obviously was not trying to glorify the human race in comparison with others, for no others existed. A glorification of hell was incontestably not his purpose. It is highly unlikely that he set out to bring recognition and glamor to heaven, for it wasn't needed. So we see that this is another epic inconsistency, and one which points out the broad difference in scope between Milton's work and previous ones.

Another radical departure from epic tradition by Milton is his adaptation of soliloquy and relation. For him they serve as revelations of character and motive and thus constitute an integral part of the plot.¹² Previously their structural significance was considerably less. When Satan makes his "Myself am hell" speech, he is uncovering to the reader part of his inner composition and motivation, and is thus lending more credence to the plot. Seldom, if ever, does Beowulf, Aeneas, Achilles, or Odysseus reveal his inner turmoils. More will be said about this in the discussion of the dramatic characteristics in the poem later in the paper.

Also noteworthy is the fact that "Milton marks with a distinctness unknown in the epic the precise weakness in both Adam and Eve which leads them to destruction."¹³ It is also unusual that in all of Book VII and

¹²Hanford, Poet and Humanist, p. 229.

¹³Hanford, Poet, p. 230.

VIII, the elaboration of "how and wherefore this world was created," there is hardly a mention of or reference to Homer or Virgil, suggesting a sort of epic inconsistency. One can also notice that a majority of the speeches are aimed at the psychological or dramatic. Even Milton's subject, the fall of man, is not the stuff from which epics are usually made. Its grandeur, though genuine, is one of great depth, not of glamor and action.

Many of these epic inconsistencies show the trend or shift toward the emphasis on the importance of inner feelings and expression which reached fruition under Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Milton himself hints at the "consciousness of a radical difference between his epic and others"¹⁴ in the invocation at the beginning of Book IX:

I must now change
Those notes to tragic . . .
Not sedulous by nature to indite
Wars, hither to the only argument
Heroic deemed. (ll. 5-6; 27-9)

Certainly we must agree that, although conforming strictly to most epic conventions, Milton left many behind in the composition of Paradise Lost.

Surprisingly, in view of the above arguments, there is evidence that Milton took steps to insure that his great work conformed reasonably to epic standards -- that he strove to see that the poem was "made epic." The most obvious of these is the textual change in the 1667 and 1674 editions. At first glance it would appear that the Horton poet greatly expanded his work, as it was transformed from ten to twelve books. Yet close examination reveals the addition of only five lines at the beginning of Book XII. These five lines only serve to point out that Michael

¹⁴Ibid., p. 241.

had "paused Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd" (XII,11.2-3). The narration then resumed exactly as it was in the former edition. Some scholars are quick to justify the structural change by the somewhat disproportionate length of the former Book X.¹⁵ In view of Milton's consistent adherence, whenever possible, to epic conventions, it would appear that this is one such example of this adherence. The epic was supposed to contain twelve divisions, be they books, chapters, or cantos. Since the original edition of Paradise Lost did not meet this requirement, it seems likely that Milton wanted his second to fulfill it.

Thus, Milton did adhere to epic conventions in writing Paradise Lost; what has not been mentioned is that he was careful when and where to use them. By epic devices are meant such techniques as the invocation of a muse, the epic or Homeric simile, and the epic question, to name just a few. To delve further into this would require examples, and such is not in the scope of this thesis. It seems that Milton was careful not to overuse these devices, and he especially stayed away from them at moments of greatest dramatic pitch, for to use epic conventions for adherence's sake only is not artistic. Frequently such techniques can interrupt the flow of the poem and the reader's train of thought.

One such example is provided us early in the poem. There is little of real dramatic content throughout the first book, as its purpose is more or less introductory. It is here, and in places like this, that Milton unleashes seemingly endless streams of epic conventions — such as

¹⁵Lawrence A. Sasek, "The Drama of Paradise Lost, Books XI and XII," in Studies In English Renaissance Literature (Louisiana State University, 1962), p. 352.

the epic or Homeric similes provided to describe Satan's legions. Instead of stating that they were quite numerous, Milton goes out of his way to describe them as

Thick as Autumnal Leaves that stow the Brooks
 In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades
 High overarch't imbow'r; or scatter'd sedge
 Afloat, when with fierce Winds Orion arm'd
 Hath vex'd the Red Sea Coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
 While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd
 The Sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
 From the safe shore thir floating Carcasses
 And broken Chariot Wheels . . . (I, 11.301-310)

This is one of many such Homeric similes which abound towards the end of Book I. The great council begins in Book II and with it the scene of perhaps the greatest dramatic impact in the entire poem. Satan and his fallen legions of angels find themselves in "bottomless perdition" (I, 1. 43), and it is decided to call a council to discuss their fate. A description of this scene runs through approximately the first five hundred lines (over half the Book) and not one Homeric simile is to be found. Yet immediately upon the termination of the council, we are presented more Homeric similes comparing some of the departing fallen angels with "th' Olympian Games or Pythian fields"(II, 1. 530), and others of their group to Alcides (1. 542). The point here is that when Milton comes to a scene of importance he does not abound in the use of epic conventions. When the scene slackens in intensity he feels more free to use the abundance of epic devices he can draw from precedent. It seems that Milton is careful not to interrupt the flow of his poem at moments of dramatic pitch and is cautious to plant his adherences to epic precedent at convenient points in the story.

The radical departure of Milton from epic tradition in his handling

of Paradise Lost is no idle point. An awareness of this is necessary in order to understand fully that he was creating an entirely different type of epic -- a "dramatic epic." The various points of departure from epic tradition all contribute to Milton's adaptation of dramatic technique, dramatic precedent, and dramatic intensity. Realizing the difference between his and previous epics, Milton went to considerable pains to insure that his work had sufficient epic conformity. The result is an epic of unparalleled dramatic brilliance.

CHAPTER ONE

Milton's Dramatic Background and Familiarity With Elizabethan Playwrights

John Milton was born in 1608 during the high period of Elizabethan drama, a fact which bears further exploration and comment with relevance to our subject. The years 1580-1595, preceding Milton's birth, marked the rise of Elizabethan drama in the work of Shakespeare's predecessors and his own early experimental work. The high period of Elizabethan drama fell from 1595-1616 with a gradual decline from 1616-1640, the theatres being closed in 1642.

By 1576, the inn yard as a place for professional performances of plays had given way to the public theatres of London: The Theatre (1576), The Curtain (1577), The Rose (1592), The Swan (1594), The Globe (1599), and The Fortune (1600). By 1600, at least eleven theatres were built in and about London, with The Red Bull, Whitefriars (1605), and The Hope (1613) yet to come. In addition, there were several richly adorned private theatres for royalty and nobility. At this time there were two prominent actor companies, The Admiral's Men and Lord Leicester's Men (which Shakespeare took over in 1608, the year of Milton's birth). In spite of the continued interest in court and school plays, the Elizabethan playwright wrote mainly for the public theatres and the great body of the people. There was universal acceptance of the drama throughout

London.

The playwrights during the first period mentioned above have lost some of the fame they then shared — men like John Lyly, Thomas Kyd, Robert Greene, and George Peele. The most dominant figure of that period, though, was Christopher Marlowe. In spite of the fact that he died in 1594, works like Tamburlaine, Dr. Faustus, The Jew of Malta, and Edward II lived after him and were surely known and read by Milton. In fact, Paradise Lost itself seems to be impregnated with "Marlowe's Mighty Line."

The high period of Elizabethan drama fell during the first nine years of Milton's life. It is unthinkable that it did not leave its mark on the young scholar-poet. Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, and Dekker were the leading figures in the shadow of Shakespeare, the dominant literary figure of the era. "Milton was born in the golden age of the drama, and a score of masterpieces were put on the London stage while he was in his cradle." ¹⁷ Indeed we know of his familiarity with the stage. In Elegy I he writes to Diodati, "When I am tired, the magnificence of the arched theater diverts me and the chattering actors invite me to applaud them." (ll. 27 ff.). More will be said shortly about the lasting impressions Shakespeare seems to have left with Milton.

With the dramatic background Milton must have absorbed, it is easy to see that he held the genre in high regard. Under the heading "Of That Sort of Dramatick Poem Which Is Called Tragedy" in the introduction to

¹⁶Alonzo C. Hall and L. B. Hurley, Outlines of English Literature (New York: D. C. Heath and Co., 1930), p. 50.

¹⁷Raleigh, p. 5.

Samson Agonistes, he calls tragedy the "gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all other poems." He tells the function of tragedy in Paradise Regained:

Thence what the lofty grave Tragedians
 taught
 In chorus or Iambic, teachers best
 Of moral prudence, with delight receiv'd
 In brief sentence precepts while they
 treat
 Of fate, and chance, and change in human
 life,
 High actions, and high passions best
 describing. (IV, ll. 261-266)

It would seem natural for him to choose for his greatest work that genre which was "gravest" and "moralest" and would best describe "high actions, and high passions."

There have been several studies made which link the words of Milton with those of noted dramatists. Such procedures can be stretched out of all proportion, but in this case, I feel that such a point is well within the bounds of reason. The evidence is at best circumstantial, but bears close observation, especially in the light of Milton's earlier-mentioned dramatic background (and the further evidence of his dramatic interests later to be presented).

It is not surprising that a great number of these parallel passages under discussion are those which link Shakespeare to Milton. Milton's admiration of, and familiarity with, Shakespeare are both known and documented. One such example can be found in Eikonoklastes where Milton "points out a verbal parallel between a passage in Richard III and a phrase in one of Charles' prayers," commenting on "the historic truth of

Richard's hypocrisy." ¹⁸ That "Shakespeare stood high in Milton's love" ¹⁹
 is borne out by the generalizing statement of Ida Langdon that "the dra-
 matic allusions in his later works were the reminiscences, and the dra-
 matic preferences in his later life were the outgrowth of an early cath-
 olic enjoyment of dramatic literature." ²⁰

A perspective on Milton's fondness for Shakespeare can be seen in
 several ways. One can study the emotions and effects brought forth in
Paradise Lost and see significant similarities. Parallelism in situa-
 tion can be easily noted. Finally, the student can be more specific and
 compare actual passages from Paradise Lost with those in Shakespeare
 which are strikingly alike in tone and word.

Although the specific examples which abound are quick and easy to
 note, it is perhaps more significant to isolate the emotions and feelings
 which more deeply and accurately convey the purpose of the dramatist
 than several brief passages could do. These show, when studied, the
 "great impulse of the spirit which passed from the dramatists to Milton
 and led him to conceive his theme in the light of their creations." ²¹

Compare, for example, the process through which Adam experiences happi-
 ness, agony, despondency, spiritual strengthening, and, finally, salva-
 tion with the similar one in which Lear finds a final spiritual victory. ²²
 There is also the element of catharsis, descended from Greek drama, which

¹⁸Hanford, Poet and Humanist, p. 226.

¹⁹Langdon, p. 85.

²⁰Ibid., p. 83.

²¹Hanford, Poet and Humanist, p. 239.

can be felt when Adam realizes the significance of his sin. The realization of Adam is similar to that of Oedipus.

When one looks at the element of inner agony or self-torment, he need go no farther than Milton's own Samson for a comparison with the inner remorse and torture of Satan. The isolated emotion is the same. Further dramatic precedent for it can be found in Shakespeare's Claudius (Hamlet) or Marlowe's Mephistophilis (Dr. Faustus). Satan's well-known speech "which way I flie is Hell; Myself am Hell" is a good example of this feeling of torture. He continues:

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. (IV, 11.79-82)

This is the same thought expressed in Hamlet by Claudius's fruitless prayer. Both long "for a reconciliation which is made impossible by the
23
sin itself." Claudius expresses it:

What then? What rests?
Try what repentance can; what can it not?
Yet what can it when one cannot repent? (III, iv, 11.64-6)

Similarly, Mephistophilis says:

Whither should I fly?
If unto God, He'll throw me down to Hell. (II, i, 11.465-66)

Hence Milton's Satan can as easily slip unnoticed into the royal garb of Claudius as he could momentarily take over the role of Mephistophilis or

²²Ibid., p. 243.

²³Ibid., p. 238.

Faustus. Each is tortured within by the knowledge that Hell and eternal damnation are inescapable.

The evil character of Satan readily lends itself to comparison, most frequently with Iago (Othello) and Richard III, among others. The best, and perhaps most brief expression of this quality of Satan is given by Lucifer himself: "Evil, be thou my good" (IX,1.110). Iago similarly acknowledges his own Satanic qualities in his speech in Act II, Scene III, beginning sarcastically, "And what's be then that says I play the villain." (1.342) He comes to the crux of his evil nature with the following words:

Divinity of hell!
When devils will the blackest sins put on;
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows
As I do now. . . (II, iii, 11.356-59)

Satan counters:

The more I see
Pleasures around me, so much the more I feel
Torment within me, as from the hateful seige
Of contrarities; all good to me becomes
Bane. (IX, 11.119-123)

And Richard:

And therefore since I cannot prove a lover
To entertain these fair well spoken days,
I am determined to prove a villain
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
(I, i, 11.28-31)

Similarly, the "self-communion"²⁴ of Adam is likened to Hamlet's famous "To be or not to be" soliloquy. Both are soul-searching thoughts on the merits of death or suicide. Both show the desire of the speaker to give up life for the serenity, tranquility, and peace offered by death.

²⁴Ibid., p. 239.

Yet neither is assured that death will bring forth only peace. There remains significant doubt in the minds of both to eliminate serious consideration of meeting death now. Adam says:

How gladly would I meet
 Mortalitie my sentence, and be Earth
 Insensible, how glad would lay me down
 As in my mother's lap? There I should rest
 And sleep secure . . .
 Yet one doubt
 Pursues me still, lest of all I cannot die,
 Least that pure breath of life, the Spirit
 of Man
 Which God inspir'd, cannot together perish
 With this Corporeal clod; then in the grave,
 or in some other dismal place, who knows
 But I shall die a living death? O thought
 Horrid, if true! (IX, 11.775-89)

Certainly Adam's fear to "die a living death" is the same as that of Hamlet when he says "to die; to sleep. . . perchance to dream" (III, i, 11.64-5). When Adam seeks to "meet Mortalitie my sentence" he is following the search of Hamlet to "take arms against a sea of troubles and, by opposing, end them" (III, i, 11.59-60). The emotion, thought, and even the organization of the two speeches closely parallel each other. This soliloquy of Adam's will be discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

The overall situation presented by Paradise Lost is akin to Elizabethan drama in many ways. Adam's fall provides us with a good example — the "sense of tremendous waste of power and goodness brought to ruin through the seeming accident of fatal access in what might have been a best endowment, an effect analogous to that of Dr. Faustus or Macbeth." ²⁵
 None of the three figures wanted to commit sin, but each was led into the

²⁵Ibid., p.240

act with his eyes open and a keen awareness of the consequences. Indeed, the entire plot of Macbeth is in many ways like that presented in Paradise Lost. J. W. Hales has treated this in an article entitled "Milton's Macbeth,"²⁶ pointing out the kinship in theme and purpose between the two. In each case it is the influence of a woman which spurs the man (Adam, Macbeth) to the initial deed or sin. The naming of a son (Christ, Malcolm) to a position of succession inspires the villain of each (Satan, Macbeth) to action. In fact, "Milton's adoption of romantic love as an essential motive in his story is in itself sufficient to mark his nearness to Elizabethans."²⁷ The triangular relationship of Adam, Eve, and Satan can be likened to that of Othello, Desdemona, and Iago, especially the theme of "innocence and love assailed and broken by a villain utterly evil and of superhuman ingenuity."²⁸ Each of the villains is motivated by revenge — Satan against God and Iago against the Moor, and each has a subordinate to call upon when necessary (Beelzebub, Roderigo).

There exist a great number of passages in Paradise Lost which show striking verbal similarity to dramatists and dramas well known to Milton. Several studies have been made in this direction, with perhaps the most thorough and conclusive ones done by Alwin Thaler. He has shown, through thousands of examples, that Milton had a "habitual closeness to Shakespeare."²⁹ His "findings, as a whole, have won general acceptance."³⁰

²⁶Ibid., p. 237.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Selections included in this paper come from Alwin Thaler, "Shakespeare and Milton Once More," in SAMLA Studies In Milton, ed. J. Max Patrick

He shows that the reflections of Shakespeare in Milton fall into two distinct classes, those related by "underlying dramatic concepts"³¹ and those "solely by the spell of the Shakespearian word or the fascination³² of their imagery." The limits of this exercise do not allow anything more than a brief look at one example. It is provided by Hamlet. "The passionate attachment — strengthened by mutual guilt — between King Claudius and Gertrude is analogous to that between Adam and Eve³³ after the fall." The two men state their respective feelings in similar terms:

Hamlet IV, viii, 1.14:

She's so conjunctive to my life and soul
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her.

Paradise Lost IX, 11.952-8:

. . . I with thee have fixed my lot
 if death
Consort with thee, death is to me as life.
Our state cannot be severed; we are one.

It is easy to see the validity of Mr. Thaler's comparison.

Milton's Plans for Paradise Lost

Although Paradise Lost was not published until 1667, when Milton was

(Gainesville, Florida, 1953), pp. 80-89. This, however, is only one of a series of studies, all of which show the similarity between Shakespeare and Milton.

³⁰Ibid., p. 81.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid., p. 82.

³³Ibid., p. 86.

blind and almost sixty years of age, we know that it had been contemplated for many years before. In fact, we know that "at the age of nineteen, Milton hoped to employ the English language in a grave and noble subject."³⁴ Throughout his life, Milton makes reference to this. Though it is not within the scope of this thesis to trace these references, they appear in such published works as the Vacation Exercises (1628), Elegy VI (1629), Lycidas (1637), Mansus (1640), Epitaphium Damonis (1640), and The Reason of Church Government (1642). With the discovery of the Trinity Manuscript by the Woodwardian Scholar at Cambridge, Dr. Mason, a whole new light was shed upon Milton's projected plans.

The Trinity Manuscript lists topics and ideas for his great work, and in some cases preliminary outlines. It bears out what Milton said in The Reason of Church Government about writing in the form of "Those Dramatic Compositions wherein Sophocles and Euripides raigne shall be found more doctrinal and exemplary to a nation."³⁵ There were over one hundred suggested topics. Thirty-three were from British history, including the idea of a tragedy similar to Macbeth. Many bear out what had been prominent in Milton's mind — a national epic centered around the legendary King Arthur. The subject of the fall of man is treated in four drafts, the first two consisting only of dramatis personae, and no really discernible plan emerges until the third draft.

There, after a prologue spoken by Moses,
three allegorical figures, Justice, Mercy, and
Wisdom, debate "what should become of man

³⁴Grant McColley, Paradise Lost (New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1963), p. 270.

³⁵Harris F. Fletcher, ed., John Milton's Complete Poetical Works, Vol. II (Urbana, Illinois: The University of Illinois Press, 1945), p. 10.

if he fall." The Chorus brings the first act to a conclusion with a hymn to the Creation. The second begins with some unspecified action involving Heavenly Love and the Evening Star and ends with the Chorus's song in celebration of Adam and Eve's marriage and the beauties of Paradise. In Act III Lucifer appears "contriving Adams ruine," after which the Chorus "feares for Adam and relates Lucifers rebellion and fall." The temptation itself is omitted, either because Milton himself could not think of a way of coming to terms with Adam and Eve's nakedness or because he wished to emulate the Greek tragedians by reporting the most spectacular action through the mouth of a messenger, and the fourth act begins with Adam and Eve already fallen. When Conscience has consigned them to the judgement of God the Chorus, "bewails and tells the good Adam hath lost." By Act V the fallen pair are already exiled from Eden. Having been confronted with various allegorical afflictions, they are finally comforted by Faith, Hope, and Charity, and the Chorus "briefly concludes."³⁶

This draft has left its marks on Paradise Lost. A striking similarity is the comfort given Adam and Eve by Faith, Hope, and Charity. This is reminiscent of the manner in which Michael comforts Adam. Further influence is provided by the allegorical characters such as Wisdom, Justice, Mercy, Conscience, Death, and the like. Their effect on Paradise Lost can be seen in "the allegory of sin and Death, and the suggestion of dumb-show and pantomime of Death and Sickness in Michael's prophecies in Book XI."³⁷

³⁶J. M. Evans, Paradise Lost and the Genesis Tradition (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 213.

³⁷Marjorie H. Nicolson, John Milton: A Reader's Guide To His Poetry (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Company, 1963), p. 181.

It is difficult to say how much time elapsed between the first three drafts and the fourth, but apparently some did, as the first three drafts are all found on page thirty-five of the manuscript and the fourth is on page forty. The fourth draft is notably different, more thoroughly developed, and has a new title, changed from "Paradise Lost" to "Adam Unparadised." Scholars have linked the fourth draft to the Dutch playwright Hugo Grotius's Adamus Exul, and more will be said about this in the next chapter. At the close of Draft IV, Milton wrote the words, "Compare this with the former draft." It is brief and significant enough for us to take a look at it in its entirety.

Act I. The angel Gabriel, either descending or entering— showing, since this globe was created, his frequency as much on earth as in heaven— describes Paradise.

Next the chorus, showing the reason of his coming: to keep his watch in Paradise after Lucifer's rebellion, by command from God, and withal expressing his desire to see and know more concerning this excellent and new creature, man.

Act II. The angel Gabriel, as by his name signifying a prince of power, tracing Paradise with a more free office, passes by the station of the chorus, and desired by them relates what he knew of man, as the creation of Eve, with their love and marriage.

Act III. After this Lucifer appears, after his overthrow; bemoans himself; seeks revenge upon man.

The chorus prepares resistance at his first approach. At last, after discourse of enmity on either side, he departs.

³⁸McColley, p. 286.

³⁹Adam Unparadised originally had no act divisions, but according to the corrected precedent set by Peck in 1740 we can establish these act divisions. McColley uses them in his book.

The chorus sings of the battle and victory in heaven against him and his accomplices, as before, after the first act was sung a hymn of the Creation.

Act IV. Here again may appear Lucifer, relating and insulting in what he had done to the destruction of man.

Man next and Eve, having been by this time seduced by the serpent, appear confusedly, covered with leaves. Conscience, in a shape, accuses him; Justice cites him to the place whither Jehovah called for him.

In the meantime, the chorus entertains the stage, and is informed by some angel of the manner of his fall.

Here the chorus bewails Adam's fall.

Act V. Adam then and Eve return and accuse one another; but especially Adam lays the blame to his wife — is stubborn in his offense.

Justice appears, reasons with him, convinces him. The chorus admonishes Adam, and bids him beware Lucifer's example of impenitence.

The angel is sent to banish them out of Paradise; but before causes to pass before his eyes in shapes a masque of all the evils of this life and the world. He is humbled, relents, despairs.

At last appears Mercy, comforts him; promises him the Messiah; then calls in Faith, Hope, Charity; instructs him. He repents, gives God the glory, submits to his penalty.

The chorus briefly concludes.

Compare this with the former draft.

The influence of Draft IV on Paradise Lost is definite and can be easily traced. The first half and last quarter of Book IV are foreshadowed, as is the battle in Heaven (V and VI), the description of the creation (VII), and the sections of Book VIII which relate the creation of man. A majority of the themes and episodes vital to Books IX — XIII

then follow. McColley has made a detailed study of the consistency of ⁴¹
Paradise Lost with Draft IV and it is included below:

- Bk. IV, 13 ff. Lucifer appears after his overthrow, bemoans himself, seeks revenge on man.
- Bk. IV, 131 ff. The angel Gabriel [cf. Satan] . . . describes Paradise.
- Bk. IV, 285 ff. The angel Gabriel coming to . . . Paradise after Lucifer's rebellion [cf. Satan] . . . to see and know more concerning this excellent and new creature man.
- Bk. IV, 440 ff. The angel Gabriel . . . passes by the station of the chorus, and . . . relates [cf. Eve-Adam; Adam-Raphael] what he knew of man, as the creation of Eve, with their love and marriage.
- Bk. IV, 799 ff., 878ff. The chorus [cf. Gabriel and his guards] prepares resistance at his first approach. After discourse of enmity on either side, he departs.
- Bk. V, 577 ff., VI. The chorus [cf. Raphael] sings of the battle and victory in heaven.
- Bk. VII, 192 ff. . . . was sung by the chorus a hymn of the Creation [cf. Raphael].
- Bk. IX, 97 ff., 412 ff. Here again may appear Lucifer, relating
 Cf. X, 460 ff. and insulting in what he had done to the destruction of man.
- Bk. IX, 1051 ff., 1101 ff. Man next and Eve . . . seduced by the serpent, appear confusedly, covered with leaves.
- Bk. X, 842 ff. Conscience . . . accuses him.
- Bk. IX, 412 ff. . . . the manner of his fall.
- Bk. X, 21 ff. The chorus [cf. the ethereal people] bewails Adam's fall.

⁴⁰McColley, p. 292.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 292-3.

Cf. Bk. X, 101 ff.

Justice cites him to the place whither Jehovah called for him.

Bk. IX, 1131 ff.
Bk. X, 863 ff.

Adam then and Eve return and accuse one another, but especially Adam lays the blame to his wife.

Bk. X, 909 ff.

Justice [cf. Eve] appears, reasons with him, convinces him.

Bk. XI, 126 ff.

The angel [cf. Michael] is sent to banish them out of Paradise.

Bk. XI, 421 ff.

But before, causes to pass before his eyes . . .

a masque of all the evils of this life and world.

Bk. XI, 448 ff.,
754 ff.

He [Adam] is humbled, relents, despairs.

Bk. XI, 868 ff.,
Bk. XII, 360 ff.

Mercy [cf. Michael] comforts him, promises him the Messiah.

Bk. XII, 582 ff.,
574 ff.

Calls in Faith, Hope, Charity; instructs him.

Bk. XII, 552 ff.,
610 ff.

He repents, gives God the glory, submits to his penalty.

Despite the apparently faithful adherence of Paradise Lost to Draft IV of the Trinity Ms., there are significant variations and inconsistencies which should be noted. None of the major themes of the first three books are mentioned, and Book V is almost completely devoid of its influence. In addition, there are specific inconsistencies. In Adam Unparadised, Gabriel appeared specifically to describe Paradise, as well as to view and describe Adam and Eve. In Paradise Lost, comparable functions were performed by Satan. The chorus of angels in Adam Unparadised related the victory in heaven, the world's creation, and that of man. It is Raphael who performs these functions in the epic. The argument between Satan and the angelic chorus in the fourth draft became a contest

in the epic between Satan and the foremost angels of the guard in charge of Paradise. Conscience, though not a form, nonetheless persisted to bother Adam in his sorrow. There are further inconsistencies, but the above should serve to establish that Paradise Lost, though consistent with much of Adam Unparadised, is not completely dependent upon it. ⁴²

There is even speculation that there was a fifth and more complete draft either lost or yet undiscovered. Edward Phillips, a relative and contemporary of Milton, comments in his "Life of Milton" that Paradise Lost was indeed to have been a drama. He says, "This subject was first designed a tragedy, and in the fourth book of the poem there are six verses, which several years before the poem was begun, were shown to me and some others, as designed for the very beginning of said tragedy." ⁴³

Milton As A Dramatist

Any discussion of the merits of Milton's conscious dramatic works would necessarily be limited to three such efforts: "Arcades", Comus, and Samson Agonistes, the first two having been written prior to the composition of Paradise Lost and the latter afterwards. Comment on these three works is relevant because of (1) the misunderstanding by many of what constitutes a masque, and (2) the dramatic excellence of all three.

Of all the genres in which Milton delved, the one which has proved most baffling to critics and scholars is that of the court masque. The masque, perhaps more than any literary genre, was a part of its own so-

⁴²Ibid., pp. 288 - 91.

⁴³Edward Phillips, "Life of Milton," in Hughes, p. 1034.

ciety and its own times. When such a society and times became extinct, then so did the masque, for all intents and purposes. It was dependent upon a monarchy and upon the presence of royalty who belonged to such a form of government. It was also largely dependent upon the dance as an integral part of its total effect. Since the performance of court masques virtually ended with the overthrow of the monarchy in 1640, then it is logical to assume that objective and realistic criticism of the masque ended with it.

Unfortunately, many critics have not had such vision. The weight of criticism has ignored "Arcades" and been grossly unfair and critical of Comus. John G. Demaray says that it all began with Samuel Johnson who condemned Comus as drama, for such reasons as the lack of adherence to standards set for classical Greek drama, among others. Speaking generally of the work, Dr. Johnson said that "throughout the whole the figures are too bold, and the language too luxuriant for dialogue."⁴⁴ The weight of criticism, it seems, has been equally short-sighted and generally due to a lack of understanding of the masque genre. Mr. Demaray says that "Rarely has a work been praised or condemned for so many wrong reasons."⁴⁵

With these concepts understood, let us take a brief look at "Arcades." The masque was not published until 1645 and its date of presentation is not known. Demaray contends, though, that it was written and performed during the period 1630-34, early in Milton's life. It was written in hon-

⁴⁴F. P. Walesby, ed., The Works of Samuel Johnson (Oxford, 1825), VII, p. 123.

⁴⁵John G. Demaray, Milton and the Masque Tradition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 2.

or of the Countess Dowager of Derby and, though a complete work itself, was just "Part of an Entertainment," the remains having been lost. The masque consists of an opening song eulogizing the Countess, a long speech and two songs by "The Genius of the Wood." As far as plot is concerned, "Arcades" has none to speak of, but it should be remembered, such was not its purpose. Despite its tone and brevity, the masque has definite dramatic moments, and evokes this comment from Demaray: "Written without noticeable complexity in thought and imagery, and apparently staged without benefit of elaborate masquing equipment, "Arcades" is disarming in its simplicity as a written work and as a stage production. The Countess Dowager of Derby has indeed been granted a most gracious tribute."⁴⁶

Comus was at once longer, more elaborate, and more dramatic in nature. Written some four years later, the masque was never given a real title other than A Mask Presented at Ludlow Castle. Its inaccurate title is derived more from habit than anything else, and has for some time won general acceptance, though calling the masque Comus is as unrealistic as calling Paradise Lost "Satan." The theme of the masque is that virtue, uncloistered virtue, will prevail over all evils. The Lady represents this virtue, and she proves unassailable even to the cogent and somewhat dramatic arguments of her tempter, Comus. She finds that both safety and her brothers provide a happy ending.

Though the theme and plot of Comus are simple, they are not trite, and the work contains considerably more dramatic tension than would normally be found in a masque. In fact, Henry Lawes, who collaborated with Mil-

⁴⁶Demaray, p. 58.

ton on it, writing the music and playing the part of the Attendant Spirit, took it upon himself to alter some of Milton's lines for production. He shortened certain long passages and broke heavy speeches into dialogue, as the text was "too weighty to serve the social purpose for which it was designed."⁴⁷ It seems that Milton was "emboldened by the experience of "Arcades," and, having profited by a matter of four years' added growth⁴⁸ in wisdom, tended to take matters into "his own hands." C. L. Barber agrees and goes a step farther, pointing out that in addition to making Comus more dramatic in tone than would normally be expected in a masque, Milton took steps to minimize the dependence of the work on an elaborate setting.⁴⁹ He suggests that perhaps Milton was aiming for a kinship with Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream and The Tempest, and calls the masque "a drama centering on the Lady."⁵⁰ There can be no doubt that Comus is most unusual, if not unique, in both its low key approach to the pageantry and emphasis on the dramatic in the masque form. Comus was Milton's first attempt at blank verse, the line used by Shakespeare and Marlowe. In fact, the dramatic influence of Shakespeare on Comus has⁵¹ been studied by Ethel Seaton in ESEA, XXXI (1945), pp. 68-80. Comus, according to Miss Seaton, echoes much of Romeo and Juliet and The Tempest

⁴⁷Hanford, Englishman, p. 62.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹C. L. Barber, "A Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle," in The Lyric And Dramatic Milton, Joseph H. Summers, ed., (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), p. 43.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Hughes, p. 87.

in its imagery and language. Another possible source is George Peele's Old Wives Tale, though positive proof of the influence on Comus is lacking.

The most dramatic portion of the masque occurs in a dialogue between Comus and the Lady, as he tries unsuccessfully to convince her to renounce her chastity. He warns her that only a wave of his wand would turn her into a statue, but she is fearless and boasts, "Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind"(1.663). He argues that she should allow her "dainty limbs" for "gentle usage and soft delicacy"(1.681). But she retorts that time will never "restore the truth and honesty That thou hast banished from thy tongue with lies." (11. 690-1) His last argument ["List, Lady, be not coy, and be not cozen'd with that same vaunted name Virginity." (11. 738-9)] is unsuccessful and the scene ends shortly thereafter, as does the masque.

The remaining dramatic work of Milton, Samson Agonistes, needs no introduction and little comment in its connection with the purpose of this exercise. Published in the same volume as Paradise Regained (1671), Samson "shows Milton using all his strength and the accumulated reflections of a lifetime, as at long last he came back to his old project of a sacred tragedy." ⁵³ That he had long planned to write a drama has earlier been established. It is not surprising that he chose to follow the example of classical Greek tragedy, "the gravest, moralest, and most profitable

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Albert C. Baugh, A Literary History of England (New York: Appleton - Century-Crafts, Inc., 1948), p. 696.

of all other Poems,"⁵⁴ which had the power to raise "pity and fear, or
 terror, to purge the mind."⁵⁵ The fact that Milton has shown consummate
 dramatic ability in this, a drama which "never was intended",⁵⁶ for the
 stage, clearly establishes the possibility that Paradise Lost could have
 close ties in this regard. It is likely that the two pieces were writ-
 ten at periods not too distant in time. Whatever the critical accep-
 tance of Samson, it is nonetheless important that Milton the dramatist
 did exist and that such a dramatist would likely capitalize on his abil-
 ity in a work of the scope of Paradise Lost. Since Samson followed so
 closely behind Paradise Lost, and since Paradise Lost contains so much
 that can be called dramatic, one might assume that Samson is the result
 of Milton, the frustrated dramatist. One can see from dramatic fore-
 shadowings in "Arcades" and Comus and in the fulfilled dramatic project
 provided by Samson Agonistes that the drama was a definite part of Mil-
 ton's literary mind. Paradise Lost falls somewhere in between the two,
 both in its date of composition and in its adaptation of the dramatic.
 Although obviously not up to Samson in dramatic content, the epic cer-
 tainly surpasses its masque antecedents.

⁵⁴Hughes, p. 549.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 550.

CHAPTER TWO

"Drama," As the Term Applies to Paradise Lost

Before delving into the dramatic significance of Paradise Lost, it would seem logical to define and analyze the term drama. It is, according to Aristotle, "imitated human action." Professor J. M. Manly determines that there are three necessary elements in drama, they being (1) a story (2) told in action (3) by actors who impersonate the characters of the story. Some writers feel that dialogue is a necessary ingredient, thus excluding pantomime from the generic classification of drama. Professor Schelling shares this view and calls drama "a picture or representation of human life in that succession or change of events that we call story, told by means of dialogue and presenting in action the successive emotions involved." The combination and emphasis of dramatic elements has been so varied in dramatic history, that theoretical definition is extremely difficult.

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What is most difficult to define is the feeling of dramatic intensity, the concentration of emotion that drama carries with it. This is the quality for which Robert Browning was most noted in his famous dramatic monologues. Tied in with this intensity is the insight into revelation of character which drama provides. Shakespeare is not noted

⁵⁷This entire paragraph was paraphrased from Thrall, Hibbard, and Holman, p. 150.

particularly for his use of dramatic technique but for his ability to explore the depth of character in his personages. He is said by some to have been the world's first psychologist. Eliot's "Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" is not known for its adherence to dramatic technique. Therefore, its classification as a dramatic monologue must be due to the concentration of dramatic intensity and revelation of character just mentioned.

This is the real essence of drama — its ability to concentrate tremendous emotional intensity and to reveal depth of character. Certainly these are more important qualities than adherence to dramatic conventions. To be dramatic, as we have come to know the term, a literary work need not be performed on stage and contain a *Dramatis Personae*. The adjective dramatic has come to focus less on the comic and satiric and more on the tragic and soul-searching aspects of the drama. This is the manner in which the term applies to Paradise Lost. In this sense the poem is significantly, if not essentially, dramatic. There are frequent moments of dramatic intensity, numerous scenes in which characters reveal the depth of their souls in soliloquies (i. e. Satan's "myself am Hell" speech in Book IV), and many confrontations which reflect great emotional conflict. Obviously the poem was not intended to be thought a drama, but nonetheless we have a work which incorporates much of what Shakespeare, Jonson, Marlowe, and others put into their great plays. In short, "Milton created what was in form a narrative, but in feeling and content a drama: a colossal pageant of dogma and sacred history."⁵⁸

⁵⁸F. T. Prince, "Milton and the Theatrical Sublime," in Approaches to Paradise Lost, ed. C. A. Patrides (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), p. 62.

The poem, in fact, incorporates what F. T. Prince calls "the theatrical sublime." "The drama, the poem, is shaped and visualized as for a mental stage. We should realize that we are being made to watch the scene and the action on the page: it is there on paper. When Milton wants us to visualize a setting, character, or a movement, he gives us just as much indication as we need." He goes on:

I have in mind Milton's use of organized and enacted spectacle, his demonstration of the meaning of a dramatic moment; which leaves us with the impression of having witnessed a consciously complete performance, on the part of both the poet and his poem. One could call such poetry 'the theatrical sublime'; and one could see it as the detailed application of that power attributed to Milton by Dr. Johnson: 'of displaying the vast, illuminating the splendid, enforcing the awful, darkening the gloomy, and aggravating the dreadful'.⁶⁰

There are many scenes Prince points out which illustrate this mystical quality of Milton's, "the emphatic completeness of the picture and action — the enactment of the picture."⁶¹ This remarkable ability of Milton is demonstrated in Book X when Satan announces to his compatriots the success of his venture to earth. There is a consummate climax which is elaborated for some eighty lines until the body of serpent-angels are left gorging themselves on the Dead Sea fruit of their magnificent triumph:

. . . greedily they pluck'd
The Frutage fair to sight, like that which grew
Neer that bituminous Lake where Sodom flam'd;
This more delusive, not the touch, but taste
Deceav'd; they fondly thinking to allay
Thir appetite with gust, instead of Fruit

⁵⁹Prince, p. 54.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 55.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 56.

Chew'd bitter Ashes, which th'offended taste
 With spattering noise rejected; oft they assayd,
 Hunger and thirst constraining, drugd as oft,
 With hatefullest disrelish writh'd thir jaws
 With soot and cinders filld; . . . (X, ll. 560-70)

There appear many other turning points in action which Prince points out that Milton "has given a similar quality: the use of gunpowder by the rebel angels, and their defeat by the Son of God; or Satan's discovery by Ithuriel, who finds him squatting in the form of a toad, by the ear of Eve":

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Him thus intent Ithuriel with his Spear
 Touched lightly for no falsehood can endure
 Touch of Celestial temper, but returns
 Of force to its own likeness: up he starts
 Discover'd and surpriz'd. As when a spark
 Lights on a heap of nitrous Powder, laid
 Fit for the Tun som Magazin to store
 Against a rumord Warr, the Smuttie grain
 With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the Aire:
 So started up in his own shape the Fiend.
 Back stepd those two fair Angels half amaz'd
 So sudden to behold the grieslie King; . . . (IV, ll. 810-21)

Such demonstrative action is not limited only to Milton's characters; it extends to his universe, which also exhibits the quality of stress laid upon it in significant moments. When the gates of Hell swing open, they do so

With impetuous recoile and jarring sound . . . (II, l. 880)

Another excellent example is provided by Milton's Nature. She is affected by Eve's sin as emphatically as would any character be:

Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat
 Sighing through all her Works gave signs of woe,
 That all was lost. (IX, ll. 782-4)

⁶²Ibid., p. 57.

Later, when Adam learns of Eve's sin, the very garland he has made is affected:

From his slack hand the Garland wreath'd for Eve
Down dropd, and all the faded Roses shed. (IX, ll. 890-1)

Milton is using everything at his disposal to throw emphasis on the scenes he feels are most important. He leaves the reader with a visual effect that hitherto had only been obtained from seeing a drama. His characters, scenery, cosmos--literally everything he can draw on, acts almost with personification, to produce the desired effect.

It also should be mentioned that the poem is not without many dramatic devices. Prince comments thusly: "As for Paradise Lost, it is generally agreed that Milton shows a liking for dramatic technique, and reveals a tendency to think in terms of drama." ⁶³ Already mentioned was Milton's unusual use of the soliloquy, as if before an invisible audience. Satan's famous "Myself am Hell" speech, which will be commented upon later, is a good example. There are speeches which seem to signal the entrance of a new character on the stage or call attention to something approaching [Example: "See where he comes" (IV, l. 866), and "Hark, I hear voices" (V, l. 307)]. Similarly, the setting is introduced through the dialogue of the characters on more than one occasion.

Another technique of the dramatist that Milton calls upon is the element of dramatic irony, defined by Thrall, Hibbard, and Holman as "the words or acts of a character in a play carrying a meaning unperceived by himself, but understood by the audience." One of the most notable examples

⁶³Ibid., p. 53.

of Milton's use of dramatic irony occurs with the exultant return of Satan to Hell, only to be met later with hisses and his transformation to serpent form. It can also be found in the words of Eve, as she tries to convince Adam to eat of the forbidden fruit, assuring him that they have nothing to fear:

On my experience, Adam, freely task,
 And fear of Death deliver to the windes . . .
 As with new wine intoxicated both
 They swim in mirth, and fancies that they feel
 Divinitie within them breeding wings
 Wherewith to scorn the earth. (IX, ll. 988-993)

Both Adam and Eve incorporate what has come more recently to be known as the "tragic flaw," a dramatic technique common in Shakespeare. It can be defined thusly, as embodied in the tragic hero:

Will is directed to the gaining of ends set by passion and judged by reason. The passion which escapes reason and leads men on to their destruction is the passion which marks the tragic hero.⁶⁴

In Eve the flaw is her tendency toward curiosity coupled with her receptiveness to flattery, just as Macbeth embodies the tragic flaw of "vaulting ambition." In Adam it is the more sympathetic trait of his consummate love for and devotion to Eve. This is more tragic because of the desirability and purity of the trait which causes his downfall. The tragic flaws of both Adam and Eve, however, are exemplary of Milton's use of dramatic devices.

A History of the Dramatic Treatments of "The Fall of Man"

Having looked at the term drama and how it applies to Paradise Lost,

⁶⁴Lily B. Campbell, Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes (Cambridge: University Press, 1930), p. 157.

it would appear logical to study the history of the dramatic treatments of Milton's theme — the fall of man. Such a history is largely one of the dramatists' attempts to combat the exceptional disadvantages they faced. Yet the fact that there is such a tradition bears note and, it is hoped, will show that Milton was influenced by the earlier dramatizations of the Fall in his writing of Paradise Lost.

The dramatist has special problems when dealing with the theme of the fall of man. Although the narrative poet can keep the gap between the reader and the story when his purpose is suited, likewise is he able to "focus on those parts of the story that interest him and leave those which do not in the background."⁶⁵ The dramatist is far more restricted. "Every minor inconsistency has to be resolved, every unexplained action or situation accounted for, every unexpressed feeling made explicit."⁶⁶ In short, the entire story must be brought out so the audience can grasp everything, both objective and subjective. The task of the playwright is further complicated by the cosmic scope of the material at hand in treating the Fall. Costumes for Adam and Eve are an immediate problem, but not so difficult as staging the rebellion and fall of Lucifer and the creation of the world.

These difficulties were, in fact, the subject of the preface to the play Adamo, written by the Italian playwright Giovanni Battista Andreini, about whom more will be said later. Andreini's preface notes the general problems presented by the monotony of Adam's life in Paradise and the difficulty of lending verisimilitude to the conversation between the serpent

⁶⁵Evans, p. 192.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 193.

and Eve. He speaks more specifically about his greatest difficulty:

. . ."since the composition must remain deprived of those poetic ornaments so dear to the Muses; deprived of the power to draw comparisons from implements of art introduced in the course of years, since in the time of the first man there was no such thing; deprived also of naming (at least while Adam speaks or discourse is held with him), for example, bow arrows, hatchets, urns, knives, swords, spears, trumpets, drums, trophies, banners, lists, hammers, torches, bellows, funeral piles, theatres, exchequers, infinite things of a like nature, introduced by the necessities of sin; . . . deprived moreover of introducing points of history, sacred or profane, of relating fictions of fabulous deities, of rehearsing loves, furies, sports of hunting or fishing, triumphs, shipwrecks, conflagrations, enchantments, and things of a like nature, that are in truth the ornament and soul of poetry."⁶⁷

The authors of the two earliest treatments of the Fall, the Drama de Primi Parentis Lapsu (Ignatius Diaconus, 850) and the twelfth century French Mystère d'Adam (author unknown), evaded most of the serious staging problems by leaving out the supernatural events preceding the Fall and concentrating generally on the experiences of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

⁶⁸ The anonymous author of the Mystère was particularly adept in handling the two most practical difficulties, the problem of Adam and Eve's nakedness and the conversation between Eve and the serpent. The first was accomplished in this mann: "Adam indutus sit tunica rubea, Eva vero muliebri vestimento albo, peplo serico albo."⁶⁹ The second was

⁶⁷Raleigh, pp. 93-4.

⁶⁸Evans, p. 193.

⁶⁹Mystère, p. 1. "Let Adam be dressed in a white tunic, and Eve in a white woman's garment with a white silk wimple."

handled thusly: "Tunc serpens artificiose compositus ascendet iuxta stipitem arboris vetite; cui Eva proprius adhibebit aurem, quasi ipsius ascultans consilium. Dehinc accipiet Eva pomum, porriget Ade." By doing this, Satan is separated from his stageprop serpent form and is able to make his own speeches.

The theme was later treated with less artistry and subtlety by four English miracle cycles: York, Chester, Ludus Coventriae, and Towneley. All were more ambitious in their aims — they began with Lucifer's pre-mundane fight with God, as they were committed to the entire cycle of sacred history from the Creation to the Redemption. Their presentations were reduced to manageable proportions by eliminating a celestial war and presenting it verbally (York) or symbolically with Lucifer's desecration of God's throne. They handled the serpent's scene with an actor in a serpentine costume which, in itself, led to complications. They vary on matters of smaller scope, but are essentially similar. There are also two sixteenth century Norwich plays which follow the four cycle plays closely. One difference occurs when the devil introduces himself as follows:

Affayre Aungell usseyd me tylle
to Ete at appyl take nevyr no drede.⁷³

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 15-16. "Then a serpent, cunningly put together, shall ascend along the trunk of the forbidden tree; unto whom Eve shall approach her ear, as if hearkening to its counsel. Thereafter, Eve shall take the apple and shall offer it to Adam."

⁷¹Evans, p. 193.

⁷²This accidentally revived the ancient rabbinic belief that the serpent actually walked on two legs. Other similar problems were inspired as well.

⁷³Norwich B, ll. 40-41.

The final pre-seventeenth century treatment of the subject in drama is provided by two Cornish plays, the fifteenth century Ordinale de Origine Mundi and the sixteenth century Creation of the World by William Jordan. The two are closely related and noted for their strict adherence to Biblical sequence of events and their emphasis on Eve's temptation of Adam. ⁷⁴

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the internal development of the various episodes concerned with the dramatic treatment of the Fall was virtually complete. "It remained only to organize them within some more clearly defined dramatic structure, to clarify their outlines and manipulate their sequence rather than enlarge their actual content or multiply their number!" ⁷⁵ This accomplishment was completed by Hugo Grotius, the Dutch playwright, in 1601. His Adamus Exul employed the form of a classical five-act tragedy, and in doing so, changed the entire structure and emphasis.

The first act opens with a soliloquy from Satan, who has just arrived at Paradise. Once he has let the audience know his intentions, he describes Eden and the formation of Adam and Eve. He contrasts their happiness with his own loneliness. He decides to assault Adam, under disguise as a friend, and Eve, disguised as a snake. The Angelic Chorus appears at this point, summarizing the Devil's rebellion and condemning his hostility to God and mankind.

Act II introduces Adam who is told by an angel of the world's creation. As the angel departs, Eve enters and is told by Adam of her own creation. The two of them join in a hymn praising the Creation.

⁷⁴Evans, p. 203.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 207.

In the brief third act, Satan approaches Adam, who rejects him. Satan leaves, warning Adam of future vengeance. The Chorus then encourages Adam to refuse to eat of the forbidden fruit.

Act IV opens with Satan tempting Eve in the form of a serpent. He uses fallacious logic to induce Eve to partake of the fruit in an exceptionally long dialogue, disappearing as Adam approaches. Eve tells Adam of her actions and admonishes him to eat of the tree also, but he resists. Finally an appeal to his love for her causes Adam to eat the fruit. Adam immediately feels the effects of sin and asks that Eve alone be punished. The Chorus intervenes and informs them of the effect of their sin on the future of mankind.

The fifth act begins with Satan gloating over his triumph. Adam and Eve appear, with Eve looking the stronger of the two, and eventually consoling Adam into the hope of expiating their crime through punishment. She convinces him not to try suicide. God then summons them and decrees the promise of future salvation. With this to comfort them, the pair leave Eden.

There are few, if any, portions of Grotius's play which can be called original. "What is original is the classical five-act form and the relatively sophisticated dramatic technique by means of which the traditional material has been adapted to fit it." ⁷⁶ Grotius has aborted the clumsy and awkward methods of his predecessors and ingeniously adopted the remains of their work into "the first genuinely dramatic play on the Fall of Man." ⁷⁷

⁷⁶Evans, p. 211.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 212.

Evans contends that Grotius was instrumental in the shaping of Paradise Lost.⁷⁸ It is true that in May or June of 1638, Milton visited the Dutchman before going to Italy. It is also true that, upon returning in 1639, Milton began work on the previously discussed Trinity Manuscript and its four drafts of a drama on the Fall. Close examination of the third draft of the Trinity Ms. and Adamus Exul reveals striking similarities, yet a look at the fourth draft, Adam Unparadised, makes it look infinitely closer to Adamus Exul. "If, as Milton instructs us to, we compare the fourth draft with the third, it appears that every major modification he has introduced into the later draft could have been inspired by Grotius's play. Their total effect is to recast the story in a form recognizable similar to that of the Dutch drama."⁷⁹ Evans goes even further, saying that "the total design of Paradise Lost proves to be closer to that of the Adamus Exul than any of the previous plans for the work" (Drafts I, II, III, and IV), and that Milton "adapted Grotius's new pattern as the skeleton of Paradise Lost."⁸⁰

It is my belief that Grotius's drama did affect Milton in his writing and plans for Paradise Lost. To say just how much it affected him would be purely subjective judgment and not within my authority. The influence it had is certainly far greater than any other dramatic source, though some critics contend that L'Adamo by Giambattista Andreini and Adamo Caduto by Serafino della Salandra were of significant influence. The former is an Italian play. The weight of critical opinion is that it does

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Ibid. p. 214.

⁸⁰Ibid.

not have a legitimate claim to being of importance in the shaping of Paradise Lost. The latter was not completed until 1647 and was perhaps not even known to Milton. Likewise, the date of Vondel's Adam in Ballingschap (1664) seems to rule it out as a possible source.

Paradise Lost As A Five-Act Epic

It has been earlier pointed out that Milton was steeped in dramatic tradition, that he had produced drama of some significance, and that Paradise Lost was originally planned as a drama. Also mentioned, but not elaborated upon, was the fact that Milton originally published Paradise Lost in 1667 with a ten-book division. The time has come to take a closer look at this fact and examine its implications.

The original ten-book division immediately invites dramatic comparison. The classical tragedy was, of course, composed of five acts and this is sufficient to call for closer examination. Arthur Barker has said that "the structure of Paradise Lost owes much to the neo-classical theory, formulated by the Italians, and of great force among Milton's predecessors, which closely associated the tragic and epic forms and resulted in a long series of abortive five-act epic experiments." He continues, "the relation of Milton's theory to this tradition deserves closer attention." He goes further when he states that "the 1667 edition of Paradise Lost presents a firmly organized five-act epic, perfectly exemplifying what were thought to be the Aristotelian requirements for structure."

⁸¹Arthur E. Barker, "Structural Pattern in Paradise Lost," in Milton - Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. Arthur E. Barker (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 146.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³Ibid., pp. 146-7.

A good example of the five-act epic is provided us by Davenant's Gondibert. Reading from the Preface to Gondibert, we can learn the ideal requirements of the five-act epic:

The first Act is the general preparative, by rendering the chiefest characters of persons, and ending with something that looks like an obscure promise of design. The second begins with an introduction of new persons, so finishes all the characters, and ends with some performance of that design which was promised at the parting of the first act. The third makes a visible correspondence in the underwalks, or lesser intrigues, of persons, and ends with an ample turn of the main design and expectation of new. The fourth, ever having occasion to be the longest, gives a notorious turn to all the underwalks, and a counterturn to that main design which changed in the third. The fifth begins with an intire [sic] diversion of the main and dependent Plotts, then makes the general correspondence of the persons more discernible, and ends with an easy untying of those particular knots which made a contexture of the whole, leaving such satisfaction of probabilities with the Spectator as may perswade him that neither Fortune in the fate of persons, nor the Writer in the Resentment, have been unnatural or exorbitant.⁸⁴

With this definition in mind, "the implications of the ten-book
 division of the poem are too plain to need much comment."⁸⁵ Books One and Two of the 1667 edition combine to form Act I, Books Three and Four
 compose Act II, and so on.⁸⁶ With this pattern in mind, the plot unfolds in this manner: Act I introduces us to Satan, the devils in Hell, and

⁸⁴As footnoted in Barker, pp. 147-8.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 148.

⁸⁶Arabic numerals will be used when the books of the 1667 edition are discussed. Roman numerals will refer to the better known 1674 edition.

presents the great consult and Satan's trip to the Universe. Act II opens with a scene in Heaven, follows Satan's flight to Earth, and ends with his first attempt to operate his plan. Act III employs the epic's allotted ability to return to the past and recounts the story of Satan's defeat in heaven. Act IV is both the longest and most crucial. It contains Raphael's telling of the creation, the colloquy on astronomy and woman, and the tale of the Fall. This is a pivotal act — it shows Satan's success. Act V presents the immediate consequences of the Fall, the biblical vision of misery, the vision of Michael, and the final expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise.

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When compared with each other, the two editions of Paradise Lost fulfill the five-act epic theory in the following manner:

Act I	-	1667 edition Books 1 and 2	1674 edition Books I, II
Act II	-	Books 3 and 4	Books III, IV
Act III	-	Books 5 and 6	Books V, VI
Act IV	-	Books 7 and 8	Books VII, VIII, IX
Act V	-	Books 9 and 10	Books X, XI, XII

This is due to the divisions Milton decided upon. He took Book Seven and made it into VII and VIII in the 1674 edition. Likewise, Book Ten became XI and XII.

Barker suggests that with the change in editions, Milton also could have intended a shift in his "proposed" five-act epic. Structurally, the first two acts would remain the same, but as an alternative, he suggests that Books V, VI, VII and VIII "in the actual time scheme of the poem one day,"⁸⁸ compose the third act. According to this change, Act IV would

⁸⁷Barker, p. 147.

now become Books IX and X (the Fall and its consequences, ending in a day), and Act V would compose Books XI and XII (the misery and redemption of man). Each would contain one day's time.

In the suggested new alignment, Act III provides, in the words of Davenant, a most "ample turn of the main design and expectation of new," thus fulfilling his requirements, but Act IV, although still crucial and pivotal, no longer gives "a counterturn to that main design which changed in the third." It does, however, prepare for the final victory prophesied in Act V.

However Barker's theory is interpreted, it is certainly undeniable that the idea of the five-act epic could have been a compelling force on Milton in the composition of *Paradise Lost*. In light of the other dramatic ramifications of *Paradise Lost*, the possible association of Milton with the five-act theory certainly carries a great deal more credibility than it otherwise would. With this evidence in mind, it becomes increasingly believable that Milton was perhaps trying to combine the best features of the epic with those of the drama in a work heretofore unparalleled in scope.

Scenes of Particularly Dramatic Content in Paradise Lost

Perhaps the best of all the arguments supporting the thesis that Paradise Lost is essentially dramatic in nature, is provided by the drama

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 152

⁸⁹Barker.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 153.

and intensity of many of its own scenes. The fact that Milton wrote in an elevated style would seem to suggest that he chose to play down the dramatic, but play it down he does not. In fact, the concentration of emotion and intensity of several of the scenes in *Paradise Lost* are more than noteworthy — they rank, in my opinion, among the most dramatic in English literature. This is accomplished despite the previously mentioned Homeric style and the fact that Milton chose to describe his characters in generalities. We know few specific details about what Adam, Eve, and Satan look like. Yet this knowledge is unnecessary, for we know everything about the way they think, feel, and act. This is why we are swept along with them into the drama of their respective plights.

The "Stygian Council," or "great consult," to my mind is the most moving and dramatic scene in the entire work. Milton carefully prepares for it in Book I and spends much of Book II in the council. The scene takes place in Pandaemonium, "the high Capitol of Satan and his peers," (I, l. 756) and is the occasion for an important decision. The fallen angels are called together, "A thousand Demi-Gods on golden seats," (I, l. 796) to determine what to make of their future. They have recently been repulsed from Heaven, have fallen into Hell, and must decide what, if anything, they will do about their plight. The council is presided over by Satan ("High on a Throne of Royal State . . . Satan exalted sat." II, ll. 1-5), who is shown at his wily and manipulative best. His problem is to convince the fallen angels to continue to entrust him with their leadership, but he must be careful, as he has already failed them once in their aborted attempt to gain control of Heaven.

As he addresses them, he reminds them of their former magnificence.

His first words are "Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heav'n"(II,1. 11). With the taste of their former life still fresh in their minds, he comes right to the point: "I give not Heav'n for lost," (1. 14). He acknowledges that he had been their leader, but, wanting to preserve the air of democracy, says that they are all equal ("for none sure will claim in Hell precedence" 11. 33-3), and suggests that they all discuss what should be done ("We now debate" 1. 42).

The first to rise and speak is, fittingly, Moloch, "the strongest and the fiercest spirit that fought in Heaven; now fiercer by despair" (11. 44-5). True to his reputation, Moloch minces no words: "My sentence is for Open War" (1. 51). The ground in Hell must have trembled as he continued his moving speech:

. . . let us rather choose
Arm'd with Hell flames and fury all at once
O'er Heav'n's high Tow'rs to force resistless way.
(11. 60-2)

He would fight his way into heaven, despite all odds, for "what can be worse than to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss, condemned in this abhorred deep to utter woe" (11. 85-7). Any outcome could be no worse than their present fate, he argues, and therefore his reason for choosing to fight:

. . . and by proof we feel
Our power sufficient to disturb His Heav'n,
And with perpetual inroads to Alarm,
Though inaccessible, his Fatal Throne:
Which, if not Victory, is yet Revenge. (11. 101-5)

Moloch "ended frowning" (1. 106), and his "look denounced desperate revenge" (1. 107), leaving the stage vacant for the next speaker.

Milton the dramatist comes to the front with the next speaker, Belial, providing a dramatic contrast to Moloch. A smooth-spoken diplomat, Belial

was quite the opposite of Moloch, "in act more graceful and humane" (l. 109). In fact, "a fairer person lost not Heav'n" (l. 110). In spite of Belial's suave and soft manner, "all was false and hollow" (l. 112) for

. . . though his Tongue
Dropt Manna, and could make the worst appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low,
To vice industrious, but to Nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful. (ll. 112-7)

In short, Belial, in spite of his frequently evil intentions, had the ability to "please the ear" (l. 117).

Belial begins his speech diplomatically, so as not to offend Moloch: "I should be much for open War, O Peers" (l. 119), but explains that he feels that out-and-out warfare would throw "ominous conjecture on the whole success" (l. 122). He emphasizes Moloch's last word ("Revenge") and reasons that "the Tow'rs of Heav'n are fill'd with Armed watch" (ll. 129-30) and that even if the fallen angels gained entrance, "our great Enemy all incorruptible would on his Throne sit unpolluted" (ll. 138-9). He points out that when such an attempt had failed, "thus repuls'd, our final hope is flat despair" (ll. 142-3). What Belial does propose, however, is that the fallen angels "exasperate Th'Almighty to spend all his rage" (ll. 143-4). He says "that must be our cure" (l. 145). By resigning themselves to their fate they will be far better off than in any of many alternative suggestions he brings to mind, such as being "chain'd on the burning Lake" (l. 169), which "sure was worse" (l. 169). He warns that they "procure not to ourselves more woe" (l. 225). His words, diametrically opposed to those of Moloch, are said by Milton to be "cloth'd in reason's garb" (l. 226) for there is always the possibility that "our Supreme Foe in time may much remit his anger" (l. 310) and forgive them.

Mammon is the next speaker and he dissuades both previous arguments, pointing out that while winning an all-out war is impossible, being restored to Heaven by a forgiving God would still be inadequate, for they would have to

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 Halleluiahs . . . (ll. 240-3)

He feels "how wearisome Eternity so spent in worship paid to whom we hate" (ll. 247-8). He suggests, as an alternative plan, that they have the power and ability to raise magnificence out of Hell and that they should not dread Hell ("This deep world of darkness do we dread?" [l. 263]) "Our greatness will appear then most conspicuous," he reasons, "when great things of small, useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse we can create." (ll. 257-260).

Mammon's speech is greeted by applause so thunderous "as when hollow Rocks retain the sound of blust'ring winds" (l. 386). The angels were nearly unanimous in their approval of his plan, "so much the fear of Thunder and the sword of Michael wrought still within them"(ll. 293-5).

Cued by Satan to act immediately, Beelzebub stands and quiets the angels with his stately presence ("in his rising seemed a Pillar of State" [ll. 301-2]). Using the same strategy as that of Satan, he opens his remarks in praise of the assembled group: "Thrones and Imperial Powers, off-spring of Heav'n, Ethereal Virtues." But also like Satan, he comes quickly to the point: ". . . or these titles now must we renounce, and changing style be call'd Princes of Hell" (ll. 310-14). Rather than agree with the words of Mammon, Beelzebub masterfully hammers on the idea that they are prisoners and slaves ["This place our dungeon" (l. 317);

"In strictest bondage" (1. 321); "His captive multitude" (1. 323)]. Having raised their ire, he proceeds to agree that war is impossible but revenge is necessary, and suggests finding "some easier enterprise" (1. 345). Finally he makes his point:

. . . There is a place
 (If ancient and prophetic fame in Heav'n
 Err not) another World, the happy seat
 Of some new Race call'd Man, about this time
 To be created like to us, though less
 In power and excellence, but favor'd more
 Of him who rules above. (1. 345-352)

He suggests, "Thither let us bend all our thoughts" (1. 354), to learn of men and which would be the most effective way of attacking them — "either with Hell fire" (1. 363) or to "seduce them to our party (1. 363)" in hopes that God would "with repenting hand abolish his own works" (11. 369-70). His motive is now clear: "This would surpass common revenge, and interrupt his joy in our confusion" (11. 370-1).

We know that Satan supplied Beelzebub with his plan, for only from "the Author of all ill could Spring so deep a malice" (11. 381-3). It remains for the campaign manager, Beelzebub, to get his candidate elected to fulfill the task. The master politician senses the correct moment and springs the question in such a way as to scare off all others:

. . . But first whom shall we send
 In search of this new world, whom shall we find
 Sufficient? who shall tempt with wand'ring feet
 The dark unbottom'd infinite Abyss
 And through the palpable obscure find out
 His uncouth way . . . (11. 402-7)

— and so he continues. He further electrifies the room with his final words "on whom we send the weight of all and our last hope relies" (11. 414-15).

Beelzebub is seated in the chamber, now breathlessly quiet, for none of the angels are anxious to volunteer for such responsibility and danger.

The wily master, waiting for exactly the right moment, now rises "above his fellows with Monarchal pride (l. 428)" and begins his acceptance speech. His first words, again, are ones of praise for his peers—"O Progeny of Heav'n, Emyreal Thrones" (l. 430). He emphasizes the difficulty of his task: ". . . long is the way, and hard, that out of Hell leads up to light" (ll. 432-3). Likewise, he also immodestly states that he realizes he is taking more than his share of "hazard." He closes by saying: "I abroad through all the Coasts of dark destruction seek deliverance for us all" (ll. 463-5). He leaves no room for assistance from others—"This enterprise none shall partake with me." His words took their desired effect—his followers were grateful and awe-struck:

. . . . Towards him they bend
 With awful reverence prone; and as a God
 Extoll him equal to the highest in Heav'n
 Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd,
 That for the general safety he despised
 His own. (ll. 477-82).

Ended as abruptly as it began, the consult had achieved exactly what Satan wanted. All under the appearance of a democratic meeting, he had manipulated the most powerful and most eloquent of the fallen angels cleverly to gain his way. In perhaps the most heightened moments of intensity presented by the poem, the clever Satan employs all his tricks—eloquence, false modesty, and excellent timing, almost as though rehearsed. These, plus the assistance of his political aid Beelzebub, combine to outweigh some cogent arguments by his forceful and intelligent peers—Moloch, Belial, and Mammon. The dialogue is handled quite skillfully, as Milton adds just the right tone and setting for each of the speeches. There are moments when the reader can sense the reaction of the audience. It ranges from anger and fear (Moloch), to submission (Belial), to agreement and acceptance (Mammon), to anticipation (Beelzebub), and finally to

acclamation (Satan). It is a truly consummate scene of drama, seldom, if ever, matched in English literature.

Another scene of moving dramatic confrontation occurs immediately after Eve falls victim to Satan's words and eats of the forbidden fruit in Book IX. Earth has already "felt the wound (l. 782)" and Eve has deliberated at some length before deciding, for reasons both selfish and of love, to share her secret with Adam. She approaches him and asks, "Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay?" (l. 856), to start the conversation, and then begins to get to the point: "This Tree is not as we are told, a Tree of danger tasted" (ll. 863-4). She says that the tree is "of Divine effect to open eyes, and make them Gods who taste" (ll. 866-7). She admits to having tasted the fruit ("I have also tasted [ll. 873-4]"), and says that she now has "opener . . . eyes," "dilated Spirits," and an "ampler heart" (ll. 775-6). She asks him to join her so they can share "equal Joy, as equal Love" (l. 882).

Adam's reaction is not what Eve had anticipated.

. . . Adam, as soon as he heard
The fatal Trespass done by Eve, amaz'd,
Astonied stood and Blank, while horror chill
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd;
From his slack hand the Garland wreath'd for Eve
Down dropp'd, and all the faded Roses shed:
Speechless he stood, and pale . . . (ll. 889-95)

After some thought he wants to know why Eve had sinned:

. . . how hast thou yielded to transgress
The strict forbiddance, how to violate
The sacred Fruit forbidd'n! Some cursed fraud
Of Enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown,
And mee with thee hath ruin'd, for with thee
Certain my resolution is to Die. (ll. 902-907)

The last two lines show the depth of his love for Eve. He is willing to die with her out of love. She is his

. . . Flesh of Flesh,
 Bone of my Bone thou art, and from thy State
 Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe. (ll. 913-5)

He says it even more succinctly, "to lose thee were to lose myself."

(l. 959) Eve asks him, "to undergo with mee one Guilt" (l. 971) and partake of the fruit, assuring him that God will not punish them with death ["Adam, freely taste and fear of Death deliver to the Winds" (ll. 989-90)]. "Fondly overcome with Female charm" (l. 999), Adam takes the fruit from her and eats. The results are felt everywhere ("Earth trembl'd from her entrails" [l. 1000]), and as the sky lowered and thunder began, the couple was not aware of the significance of their sin. Dramatic irony mirrors their emotions "as with new Wine intoxicated both" (l. 1008), they caroused ["now let us play" (l. 1028)], made love, and slept.

The two soon awaken, "naked left to guilty shame" (l. 1058), and begin to see each other in a different light. Adam, now realizing the true significance of his transgression, chastizes Eve. The fruit was "Bad Fruit of Knowledge" (l. 1073), he says, and furthermore tells her that henceforth they are "naked . . . of Honor, void of Innocence, of Faith, of Purity" (ll. 1075-6). He wonders how they will be able to face God or the angels and suggests that they clothe themselves with leaves to hide their shame. He reminds Eve that he had warned her not to go off by herself that morning. Her reply is that he could have commanded her not to go. It is now obvious that they are having their first disagreement, and it grows stronger. Adam continues to criticize Eve until the end of Book IX as

. . . they in mutual accusation spent
 The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,
 And of thir vain contest appear'd no end. (ll. 1187-9)

This is an important and moving scene, because it depicts the drama of Adam's sin and the subsequent false delusions, guilt, and bitterness of the couple. The emotions of Adam are especially brought out — his love for Eve, his hope that no harm will befall them, his shame and guilt, and finally his resentment of Eve. It is handled with great skill. The emotions are human ones, to be sure, and there seems to be a touch of Shakespeare or Marlowe in the ability of Milton to convey the happiness, guilt, and anger the couple share. Critics frequently point out the possibility of autobiographical significance in the handling of the scene (Milton's resentment of Mary Powell). If such comment is valid, it would perhaps account for the strong feelings of Adam and the way they are so consummately expressed.

Perhaps the most dramatic speech in all of Paradise Lost is Adam's soliloquy in Book X. It follows immediately after Adam has learned what his future holds from God and has begun to see it unfold. It runs some one hundred and twenty-five lines and is the longest single speech in the poem, excluding the narratives by Raphael and Michael. Kester Svendsen calls it a "dramatization" and a "dramatic monologue, not only for what it reveals of Adam, but as a revelation of Adam." ⁹¹ He says the scene is a "tragic recognition scene" ⁹² and one which contains echoes of both the Greeks and Shakespeare. ⁹³

⁹¹Kester Svendsen, "Adam's Soliloquy in Book X of Paradise Lost," in Milton - Modern Essays in Criticism, Arthur E. Barker, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 328.

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Ibid.

In "one of the loneliest scenes in literature," Adam's thoughts and words take him up and down the scale of emotions and reach the depths of his soul. It is not unlike Hamlet, and even seems to combine the essence of two of Hamlet's greatest speeches. His thoughts on death --

. . . How gladly would I meet
Mortality my sentence, and be Earth
Insensible, how glad would lay me down
As in my Mother's lap. (X, ll. 775-8)

are strangely reminiscent of those of Hamlet in his earlier mentioned "To be or not to be" monologue. And his words, "though divided with that bad Woman" (ll. 836-7), ring much like the Prince of Denmark's well-known "Frailty, thy name is woman" (I, ii, l. 146) outburst.

Most important is the psychological depth of his words and the gamut of emotions. "He moves from despair and grief to resentment, to uncertainty, to fear and horror, to desperate irony, and finally, to terror.... The psychological experience of the soliloquy is a catharsis as a process of discovery; as Adam learns more about himself, he purges off the grosser corruption of his will."⁹⁵

A final point made by Mr. Svendsen is Milton's adept use of sound. Adam's words are "full of the harsh sounds which Chard Powers Smith, in analyzing Shakespeare's poetry, has described as those which give strength and fiber to English verse."⁹⁶ Svendsen goes on to illustrate the K sound in such words as becom, accurst, request, Maker, clay, concur'd, darkness, corporeal, and clod, alleging that they "contribute, unobtrusively but⁹⁷ unmistakably, to the emphasis upon Adam's agony."

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 329.

⁹⁵Ibid.

Even Books XI and XII, often thought of as padding, and unjustifi-
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 ably considered by many to have little artistic relevance, are of
 great dramatic importance. The two act as one scene in which Adam learns
 the future from Michael. They are important because they show Adam react-
 ing to his greatest moment of crisis.

. . . the voice of Adam keeps breaking into
 the story: questioning, sorrowing, rejoicing.
 Instead of a mere historical pageant, we have
 a dialogue in which the incidents narrated
 are selected for their effect on Adam. The
 angel's tone and mood change with those of
 his interlocuter. Constantly three elements —
 Michael's mission, the story of Biblical
 events, and Adam's state of mind — are linked
 by cause and effect relationships. The last
 two books of Paradise Lost thus became a
 study of Adam's development from horror at
 the thought of leaving Paradise, to shame
 and despair at the consequences of his sin,
 to a final understanding of, and reconciliation
 with, God's purpose.⁹⁹

Hence, even the last two books can be "appreciated for their due signifi-
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 cance as the end of a drama of sin and promise."

There are many other scenes and speeches which can be equally ex-
 pounded upon for their dramatic content, though to do so would be super-
 fluous. A few which come quickly to mind are the separation of Adam and

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 333.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Lawrence A. Sasek, "The Drama of Paradise Lost, Books XI and XII," in
 Barker, Milton — Modern Essays in Criticism, p. 342.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 343.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

Eve, the temptation of Eve, the famous "Myself am Hell" soliloquy of Satan, the opening soliloquy of Satan, a "dramatic revelation of
pride and passion,"¹⁰¹ and the transition of Satan and his followers to serpent forms. Never before has an epic approached either the quantity or the quality of the drama to be found in the scenes listed above, explained earlier, or the many dramatic scenes not even mentioned. Paradise Lost is truly a dramatic showpiece.

¹⁰¹Douglas Bush, Paradise Lost in Our Time (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1945), p. 70.

CONCLUSION

It has been shown that the drama has had a significant and generally unrecognized influence on Paradise Lost. Likewise, we have seen that John Milton was born into a period of great dramatic fruition, that he was familiar with the works of the great dramatists, and that he showed considerable admiration for them. Milton's own dramatic efforts have been noted, with the conclusion that he himself had significant experience as a dramatist. We have also seen the Trinity Manuscript, and from it have learned of Milton's plans to write not one, but many dramas. It is interesting, if not conclusive, that most were to be on the fall of man and that he had gone through four drafts on such a topic, the last being a well-developed scenario, Adam Unparadised.

Furthermore, the history of the dramatic treatments of the Fall was examined, with some interesting conclusions: (1) that the subject had been thoroughly treated dramatically in the past, and (2) the Adamus Exul of Hugo Grotius bears a striking similarity to Paradise Lost. It has been noted that Paradise Lost bears a strong, if not identical resemblance, to the structural requirements of a largely unnoticed dramatic genre--the five-act epic. Finally, we have examined many of the scenes in Paradise Lost for dramatic content, learning that they abound in it. It was also shown that Paradise Lost departs radically from epic tradition in many ways.

All of the above raise a logical question, Since both the poem and

its author had such strong dramatic leanings, and since the poem is quite different from the stock epic, why did Milton employ the epic framework? Why didn't he write Paradise Lost as a drama, as he had originally planned? The answers, obviously, were known only to Milton, but we can draw significant conclusions to answer many of the queries.

First, we can assume that Milton did intend to write Paradise Lost as a drama. The four drafts found in the Trinity Ms. are developed systematically and we must assume that there was a fifth draft which Milton was working on, from what Edward Phillips tells us. The nature of the speeches in the epic suggests drama, as already noted. We must assume that he was forced to abandon the idea because it was not taking shape as he had hoped. There are several probable reasons.

Foremost is the fact that the scope and magnitude of Milton's theme was not adaptable in the way he wanted it to be. We have noted that Milton's tastes in drama leaned to the classical. Such a theme was nearly impossible to handle with a strict observance of the unities of time, place, and action. The epic, with its greater allowances for such restrictions, would provide a more natural habitat. It would allow for greater depiction of the magnificence of Heaven, the hollowness and void of Hell, the beauty of Paradise. No setting could cope with such a challenge. Previously we have discussed other significant difficulties in staging such a drama. They, too, would be eliminated with the adoption of the epic, as would the problem of the time element. The in medias res beginning made the plot much easier to handle.

Furthermore, the epic was the most adaptable genre to the dramatic nature of Milton's presentation. It also allowed him greater liberties in using his poetic brilliance. It was recognized as perhaps the great-

est of literary challenges and would be more likely to fulfill Milton's dream of a single, great work. It should be further remembered that Milton lived in an age in which the drama was not held in high esteem. The theatres were closed for a brief period, and even when they reopened, the quality of the plays was inferior. Hence a drama would not have found a receptive public in Milton's contemporary England.

Finally, we have noted similarities between the structure of Paradise Lost and the requirements of the five-act epic. This point should not go unnoticed. It is highly possible that Milton had these requirements in mind when he wrote Paradise Lost. Why else would his epic differ so radically from those of tradition?

In conclusion, it cannot be said what Milton planned as he wrote Paradise Lost. What we have to judge his intentions by is the finished product and no more. Paradise Lost, the fruit of his efforts, is unquestionably more dramatic than its epic predecessors. It is unique in epic tradition in its use of dramatic technique. The qualities which separate it from precedent can all be linked to the drama. Why this aspect of criticism has been relatively ignored is difficult to determine, but it should no longer go unnoticed.

It would appear that John Milton, although deciding to use the epic format for his work, could not dim the dramatic brilliance of his original plan. Seeing the adaptability of his modus operandi to dramatic technique, Milton was able to write Paradise Lost in much the manner it was originally conceived — dramatically. Whether he followed the plan of Davenant is not really important. What is important is that the adoption of the epic plan allowed Milton a full stage for his dramatic abilities. He put this full stage to good use in producing a work unparalleled in

scope and rarely equalled in dramatic brilliance.

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VITA

I was born in Richmond, Virginia in 1944 and attended school there, graduating from Thomas Jefferson High School in 1962. That fall I matriculated at The University of Richmond and graduated in 1966. While an undergraduate at Richmond, I was named to Omicron Delta Kappa and "Who's Who Among Students", and served as captain of the tennis team.

Having enrolled in the Graduate School at the University of Richmond in 1966, I also served as assistant tennis coach and received a tuition scholarship from the athletic department. I taught English at Thomas Jefferson High School the next year. In addition to coaching the team to an undefeated season and state championship, I completed the remaining course work for my M.A. degree at Richmond.

That summer (1968) I married the former Patricia Brown of Westhampton College and the Ohio State University Graduate School. We have one daughter, Jacqueline, born in 1970.

In January, 1969 I accepted a position at the U. S. Naval Academy, and in June of that year was named head tennis coach. Serving in that capacity now, I am the president-elect of the Eastern Intercollegiate Tennis Coaches Association. I have held various jobs connected with tennis during the past eight summers.