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Milton's Eve : a comparison with Eve in the major analogues preceding Paradise Lost

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MILTON'S EVE: A COMPARISON WITH EVE IN THE MAJOR ANALOGUES PRECEDING *PARADISE LOST*

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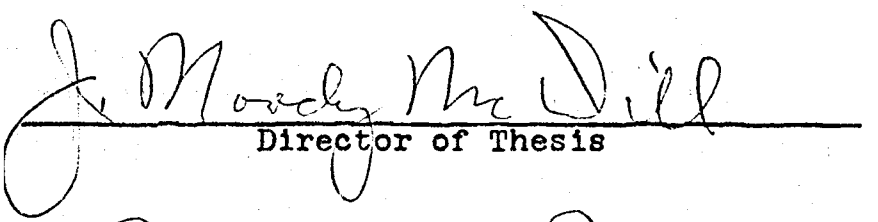

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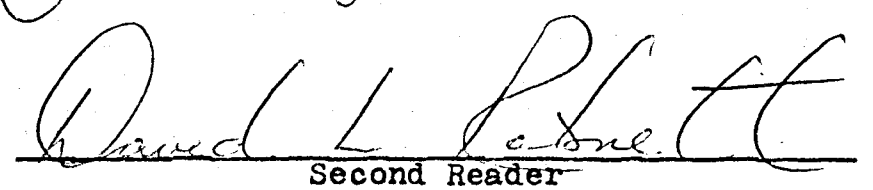

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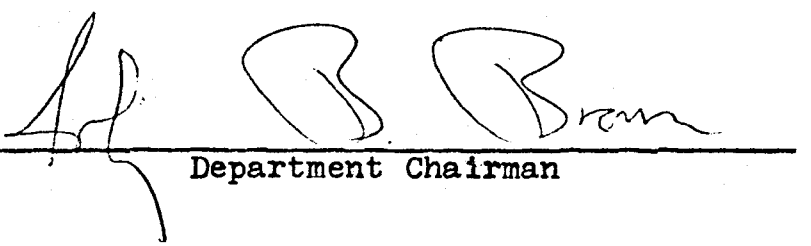

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Milton's character of Eve in Paradise Lost has been interpreted by critics as both the vehicle for Milton's abuse of women, and the example of Milton's favoritism towards them. The great variety of interpretations of the same character seems to be the result of not considering Milton's Eve as a combination of qualities gathered from both the Biblical and literary traditions, and influenced by Milton's theological beliefs and his intentions for Paradise Lost. By comparing Milton's Eve with her major predecessors, this thesis will interpret Milton's characterization according to the literary history of the character, and show how Milton's particular changes in the tradition have contributed to his purpose for Paradise Lost.

Milton's stated purpose in writing Paradise Lost is to "justify the ways of God to man."[1] (I, 26) He is accepting

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[1]Merritt Y. Hughes, John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose (New York: The Oddyssey Press, 1957), p. 212. All subsequent references to Paradise Lost are from this edition and will be parenthetically included in the text as to book and line number.

the challenge to make Adam and Eve's fall believable.[2] He does so by creating an Adam and Eve who demonstrate typically human characteristics and by providing motivation for their decisions and actions. In Paradise Lost Eve is important on both a realistic and a symbolic level to Milton's dramatization of the reasons behind her and Adam's fall. Eve's function in Milton's effort to justify the Fall by providing believable participants whose actions are motivated begins with her creation. Milton humanizes Eve by presenting her with both weak and strong qualities, and explaining the purpose for her creation as the fulfillment of the role of "help meet." He also motivates Eve's actions physically and psychologically by creating dramatic events which occurred before her temptation. While Milton expands the tradition about Eve as a realistic character by humanizing and motivating her, he also creates an original symbolic Eve by proposing that she was created in the image of Adam. Adam, as the embodiment of reason, is incomplete without Eve as the embodiment of passion. Together Adam and Eve's qualities are necessary for the wholeness of the human race, but the separation of reason and passion into different dramatic persons enables Milton to dramatize their conflict. The

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[2]Fredson Bowers, "Adam, Eve and the Fall in Paradise Lost," PMLA, 84 (1969), 264.

conflict between every man's rational and sensual self is part of Milton's motivation of Adam's fall, and Eve, as the symbolic image of Adam, completes Milton's explanation of Adam's choice to disobey God. After the Fall, Eve's function in the reconciliation between man and God is also part of Milton's justification. Eve is a carefully drawn character,[3] and is instrumental to the theme of justification in Paradise Lost.

A large part of Eve's involvement in Milton's justification is the way she functions in the motivation for her own and for Adam's fall. It is therefore necessary that she, as well as Adam, exhibit certain human frailties even before sin was introduced into the world. This might seem like a contradiction of the idea that Adam and Eve were created perfect. They were created the first humans, not gods, and so have the necessary limitations and imperfections of human nature. Milton stresses the fact that Adam and Eve were free to choose to disobey God, and were strong enough to choose obedience. In Paradise Lost God Himself describes man: "...I made him just and right,/ Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall." (III, 98-99) Once the freedom of choice is established, Milton must only concentrate on motivating Adam and Eve's decisions.

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[3]Dorothy Durkee Miller, "Eve," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 61 (1962), 543.

The importance of Eve in Milton's plan for Paradise Lost necessitated that he have a concept of the character slightly different from the traditional Eve. But despite Milton's changes in the literary character, he does not create an Eve that is radically different. This is especially true in respect to Eve's position in the hierachy of living things. Milton was obviously working with the Biblical story that assigns woman an inferior role to man, and during a time when the current thought placed man above woman on the Great Chain of Being. There is no doubt that the notion of an hierarchical scale of nature exists in Paradise Lost.[4] Raphael explains to Adam:

> O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
> All things proceed, and up to him return,
> If not deprav'd from good, created all
> Such to perfection, one first matter all,
> Indu'd with various forms, various degrees
> Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
> But more refin'd, more spiritous, and pure,
> As nearer to him plac't or nearer tending
> Each in thir several active Spheres assign'd,
> Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
> Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
> Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
> More aery, last the bright consummate flow'r
> Spirits odorous breathes: flow'rs and thir fruit
> Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd
> To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
> To intellctual, give both life and sense,
> Fancy and understanding, whence the Soul
> Discursive, or Intuitive; discourse
> Is oftest yours, the latter most is ours,
> Differing but in degree, of kind the same. (V, 469-490)

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[4] Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea (Cambridge, Massachussetts: Harvard University Press, 1936), p. 164.

The idea of woman's place below man's in this continuance of living things was sanctioned by the Puritans and Humanists of Milton's day. The Humanists were opposed to the Courtly Love tradition which artificially elevated woman,[5] and the Puritans were reacting against the Roman Catholic Church's worship of woman.[6] It is therefore unfair to accuse Milton of misogyny for accepting Eve as subordinate to Adam, when this was the accepted attitude of his day. Milton takes trouble in Paradise Lost to illustrate Eve's importance, despite her secondary position. She is created after Adam, but is an absolute necessity, not an added pleasure found in paradise. She is also granted free will equal to Adam's and while subordinate to him, cannot be forced by his command. Even the weaknesses that cause her fall are not restricted to her as a female, but are characteristic of Adam and the entire human race. While Milton maintains Eve's traditional position as a female in the scheme of living things, he stresses the qualities she shares with humanity, both male and female. Milton's concept of Eve is necessarily altered from his predecessor's concepts by his use of Eve in his justification of the Fall.

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[5]Paul N. Siegel, "Milton and the Humanist Attitude Toward Women," Journal of the History of Ideas, 11 (1950), 43-44.

[6]Katherine M. Rogers, The Troublesome Helpmate: A History of Misogyny in Literature (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), p. 135.

The predecessors of Milton's Eve are discovered in numerous literary parallels to Paradise Lost. Watson Kirkconnell in The Celestial Cycle translates or describes over three hundred analogues of the Fall story, and then admits even this impressive list is not exhaustive. I have limited this investigation to only seven major analogues, all of which preceding the publication of Paradise Lost: the Caedmonian Genesis, Du Bartus': La Seconde Semaine, Grotius': Adamus Exul, Andreini's L'Adamo, Salandra's Adamo Caduto, Vondel's Adam in Ballingschap, and Calvin's Commentaries on Genesis. My selection is based on the fact that these Adam and Eve stories are the ones best known and most often associated with Milton. They also deal with the same thread of narrative as Paradise Lost, each relating the same basic events of the creation and temptation of Adam and Eve. The major justification for selecting these particular analogues is the probability that Milton was familiar with them, and the conclusion that his Eve is the direct or indirect revision of the combined literary character presented by them.

Many studies have dealt solely with the problem of Milton's sources, and some have even accused Milton of plagiarism. The probability that Milton was familiar with the seven analogues chosen for comparison has been established by critical or historical works. One of the earliest

observations concerning Milton's sources was made by Voltaire, in 1727, when he stated:

> Milton, as he was traveling through Italy in his youth, saw at Florence a comedy called 'Adamo,' writ by one Andreino....The subject of the play was the Fall of Man....
> Milton pierced through the absurdity of that performance to the hidden majesty of the subject, which, being altogether unfit for the stage, yet might be (for the genius of Milton, and his only,) the foundation of an epic poem.[7]

Milton's travels also provide evidence of his probable familiarity with Grotius' Adamus Exul. David Masson states in his extensive biography of Milton that Milton met and talked with Hugo Grotius. Likewise, extensive studies have been devoted to Milton's use of DuBartus, Vondel, and Caedmon. For example, George Edmundson in his Milton and Vondel: A Curiosity of Literature concludes that Vondel's Adam in Ballingschap probably did not come into Milton's hands until he had almost completed Paradise Lost, but insists that from the ninth book on there are striking similarities between the two works. S. Humphries Gurteen, in his comparison of Caedmon and Milton asserts:

> His [Caedmon's] "Fall of Man" is the only poem, so far discovered, that could be supposed for a single moment to have influenced Milton's brilliant and powerful imagination...the discovery of this long lost manuscript, and its publication

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[7]François Voltaire, Essay on Milton, ed. Desmond Flower (Cambridge: Folcroft Library Editions, 1970), pp. 1-2.

> by Junius at Amsterdam in 1655, render it possible that Milton may have seen the work of the Anglo-Saxon poet, prior to the commencement of his Paradise Lost.[8]

George Taylor is equally convinced that Du Bartus is the only possible work in which the entire body of subjects in Paradise Lost survives from the Middle Ages. His book, Milton's Use of Du Bartus, draws a detailed comparison of Milton and Sylvester's translation of Du Bartus, a work Milton almost assuredly knew. No critic has yet developed the possibility of Milton's using Salandra's Adamo Caduto; but the time of publication before Paradise Lost, and Milton's acclaimed knowledge of languages, combined with his appetite for reading make it very possible that he had read the work. Of course, it is generally agreed that Milton's, as well as the analogue authors', first source was Genesis itself. Milton, especially, deliberately tried to make the maximum direct use of Genesis and succeeded in scarcely omitting a detail found in it.[9]

Calvin's teachings were certainly familiar to Milton and to several of the authors of the analogues. While Calvin's interpretation of Eve is not a literary work in the same sense as the other analogues chosen, it is included because Milton and most of his predecessors wrote in the theological

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[8]S. Humphreys Gurteen, The Epic of the Fall of Man: A Comparative Study of Caedmon, Dante and Milton (New York: Haskell House, 1964), p. 131.

[9]Joseph E. Duncan, Milton's Earthly Paradise: A Historical Study of Eden (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1972), p. 15.

atmosphere of Calvin's teachings, and his interpretation of the Bible was most influential.

The comparison of Milton's Eve with her seven predecessors will be structured around the four basic events of the Adam and Eve story: Eve's creation, Eve's temptation and fall, Eve's temptation of Adam and Adam's fall, and Adam and Eve's punishment and reconciliation with God. An examination of each author's treatment of Eve's creation will show the purpose each imagined she should achieve. Milton expands the roles Eve fulfills to enable her to function realistically as Adam's wife, and symbolically as Adam's image. Eve's temptation and fall scenes will show Milton's unique presentation of a physically and psychologically motivated Eve. The chapter dealing with Eve's temptation of Adam will demonstrate how Milton explains Adam's fall by presenting Eve symbolically as Adam's image. After the fall, Milton's Eve is again unique in her importance in Adam and Eve's reconciliation with God. Milton takes advantage of the tradition created by his predecessors in his characterization of Eve. But he also changes the tradition in order to create an Eve who plays a major part in his main purpose of justifying the Fall. This purpose results in Milton's unique concept of Eve as a concrete human character, and at the same time, a symbolic character.

CHAPTER II

Eve's Creation

The circumstances surrounding Eve's creation, as presented in Paradise Lost and its analogues, illustrate each author's interpretation of why Eve was created, and exactly what her place was in the hierarchy of living things. The answer to the question of Eve's purpose is found in an examination of the functions each author expected her to fulfil. According to the Biblical story, God created Adam and then realized that He had not created a "help meet" for him. As a remedy God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and from one of his ribs created woman. The brevity of the Biblical account leaves unexplained the reason for Eve's creation and the role she was to play as complement to Adam. The best hint about Eve's purpose is the term "help meet" used to describe her. Calvin explains that in the original Hebrew this term meant "as if opposite to," or "over against him," and interprets the term to import that Eve was answerable to Adam, but in every way fitted for him in likeness of body, mind, disposition and affection.[10] "Help

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[10]John Calvin, Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis, trans. Reverend John King (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), pp. 130-131.

meet" has many interpretations, but explicit in the term is the idea of Eve in relationship to Adam. Traditionally her position is below Adam because of the ranking of male above female on the Great Chain of Being. Milton and his predecessors supported this view, but with qualifications. Milton in particular revised the idea so that while Eve ranks below Adam in status, she fulfils the role Milton defined for her. She is no less perfect in the qualities God gave her, or the fulfilment of her role, than Adam. The definition of Eve's role is generally accepted by Milton and his predecessors as sexual partner, childbearer, and subordinate to Adam. Milton expands Eve's role as the first wife to include homemaker and intellectual companion. He devotes much of Paradise Lost to details depicting Eve's characteristics, and dramatizes her performance of the different aspects of her role. These realistic details are unique to Paradise Lost among the fall stories and serve to humanize Eve, making her more believable and consequently her contribution to the Fall more believable. Milton is also original in expanding Eve's purpose beyond her realistic function to the symbolic function of being Adam's reflected image. Milton does not reject Eve's purpose as presented by his predecessors, but he adds complexity to the established literary character.

The best known part of Eve's creation is the Biblical account of God taking a rib from Adam to make Eve. Milton and all the analogue authors mention this version with little variation. The only exception is Du Bartus who neglects the event completely. There is symbolic significance in Eve's medium of creation being Adam's rib. According to the legends of the Bible the fact of Eve's origin being Adam's bone gave her certain feminine characteristics and created a mutual harmony between Adam and Eve because she is his own flesh. It would therefore be natural for Eve to submit willingly to Adam as her medium of origin.[11] Eve's creation after Adam and from his flesh emphasizes her secondary position to him. Milton is careful to explain the difference in position of Adam and Eve as a difference of sex. His predecessors merely emphasized the designation of sex but never expanded on Eve's sex as the reason for her position in relation to Adam. In Salandra's work, God tells Adam, "I made thy helpmeet, Woman, like to thee,/ With difference of sex but not of soul."[12] Grotius also stresses that the difference between Adam and Eve is one of sex, when Adam says, "I seem'd to lack a comrade who should differ from

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[11]Sister Mary Irma Cocoran, Milton's Paradise With Reference to the Hexameral Background (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, Inc., 1945), p. 64.

12Watson Kirkconnell, The Celestial Cycle (New York: Gordian Press, 1967), p. 293.

me/ Only in point of sex...."[13] Milton describes the significance that this difference between Adam and Eve makes in their positions relative to each other:

> ...though both
> Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;
> For contemplation hee and valor form'd,
> For softness shee and sweet attractive Grace,
> Hee for God only, shee for God in him. (IV, 295-299)

It is clear that this difference in position means a distinction between the purposes of each sex. The result is that Eve, while created second to Adam and not quite equal to him, is dramatized in Paradise Lost as fulfilling a well defined purpose. Milton's predecessors leave Eve's purpose unexplained making it impossible to judge if they believe their Eves fulfil their purposes or do not.

The inequality of Adam and Eve also implies a difference in qualifications. Traditionally the greatest gift Eve was given by God was her physical attractiveness. While no one disputes Eve's beauty, each author gives it various amounts of attention. Du Bartus, Calvin and Vondel give Eve's beauty almost no specific description. Caedmon describes Eve as an angel, "in beauty fashioned," but gives the same compliment to Adam, neglecting to judge which one possessed the greater attractiveness.[14] Andreini is a little

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[13] Kirkconnell, p. 137.

[14] Ibid., p. 24.

more verbose and calls Eve "alone the world's delight."[15] In Grotius' work Adam describes his instant love for Eve when he first witnessed her beauty:

> ...O my wife, stood by,
> Fashion'd in beauty from my proper flesh and blood;
> And when I saw thee, sweet amazement seized upon
> My still inactive limbs; a new flame melted me
> With all the fires of love....[16]

Adam is even more excited about Eve's beauty in Salandra's work and praises her by comparing her favorably with every other creation in Paradise. His praise is so lavish that Eve warns him:

> Yet praise God only; for a common rib,
> However fair to see, could give thee nothing,
> In such a work, all honour is the Maker's.[17]

Milton also describes Eve's beauty, but is more elaborate in his praise of it, as well as her other charms. He describes Eve's, as well as Adam's physical appearance in detail:

> His /Adam's/ fair large Front and Eye sublime declar'd
> Absolute rule; and Hyacinthine locks
> Round from his parted forelock manly hung
> Clust'ring, but not beneath his shoulders broad;
> Shee as a veil down to the slender waist
> Her unadorned golden tresses wore
> Dishevell'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd
> As the Vine curls her tendrils, which impli'd
> Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway. (IV, 300-308)

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[15] Kirkconnell, p. 241.

[16] Ibid., p. 139.

[17] Ibid., p. 303.

Even Eve is stunned by her own beauty when she sees her reflection in water after she is created. But Adam is the most ardent admirer of Eve's beauty, and while relating to Raphael his feelings when Eve was created, describes her as a creature "so lovely fair,/ That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now/ Mean." (VIII, 471-473) Adam's praise is so abundant it compels Raphael to warn him of the dangers of admiring Eve too much, and forgetting God, much as Salandra's Eve must warn Adam. Satan himself is not immune from Eve's charms in Paradise Lost, and as a testament to her great beauty, is momentarily affected for the better when he sees her just before tempting her:

> Thus early thus alone; her Heav'nly form
> Angelic, but more soft, and Feminine,
> Her graceful Innocence, her every air
> Of gesture or least action overaw'd
> His Malice, and with rapine sweet berev'd
> His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought. (IX, 457-462)

In none of the analogues is Eve created with the power to temper Evil, even if only temporarily. Milton's granting Eve this power, his vivid description of her, and the amount of admiration for Eve in the poem combine to make her obviously more beautiful than her predecessors. Milton does not hesitate to give Eve superiority over Adam in beauty. His insistence upon the inequality of Adam and Eve does not mean Eve is necessarily second to Adam in all respects. In her sphere as female she excels in certain qualifications,

especially beauty. Milton's exaggeration of this simple part of the tradition about Eve intensifies his character with elaboration and detail.

The fact that Adam was alone and needed a "help meet" to be created was first noticed by God in the Biblical story and in each of the analogues. Only Milton places the first realization of Adam's need in the mind of Adam. As in the rabbinical accounts, the naming of the animals, coming to Adam in pairs, induced in Adam an awareness of his need for a mate.[18] Adam was lonely, the only ill he experienced in unfallen Paradise, and he needed companionship. He explained his problem to God:

> ...of fellowship I speak
> Such as I see, fit to participate
> All rational delight, wherein the brute
> Cannot be human consort;... (VIII, 389-392)

Adam's loneliness was obviously twofold. He needed sexual, as well as intellectual, companionship. God agreed with Adam's decision not to mingle with the animals and as a solution created Eve. Eve was created out of necessity, which Milton emphasized by having Adam realize his need for companionship. Eve's characteristics and functions therefore depended directly on Adam's needs. She had to be created of the opposite sex and on the same general level in the

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[18]Harris Francis Fletcher, Milton's Rabbinical Readings (New York: Gordian Press, 1967), p. 170.

scheme of living creatures as Adam, in order to provide him with the type of companionship he needed. As a female she functioned as sexual companion for Adam. As an outgrowth of that function she is also characterized as mother and homemaker. The other part of Eve's twofold purpose is to provide Adam with intellectual companionship. Milton alone presents Eve in all these capacities and provides dramatic detail of Eve performing these functions.

In every analogue except Andreini's, Eve's sexual function is mentioned. Only Du Bartus, like some rabbinical authors, makes reference to Adam having unnatural unions with animals before Eve's creation.[19] All the other authors restrict Adam's sexual experiences to Eve. Vondel calls Eve Adam's mate, and has Eve promise Adam sexual response: "...and every kiss and favor/ can look for passionate return from me."[20] Caedmon, in an attempt to be more subtle, refers to Adam and Eve's physical union in marital terms, rather than sexual ones. Milton differs from his predecessors in his celebration of Adam and Eve's sexual union and the beauty of their naked bodies. In Paradise Lost sexual relations occur before the fall in an ideal and pure state, and Milton regarded Adam and Eve's consummation of their marriage as an

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[19]Duncan, p. 16.

[20]Kirkconnell, p. 462.

expression of their love, their chief delight in Paradise, and the fulfilment of God's command:[21]

> Straight side by side were laid, nor turn'd I ween
> Adam from his fair Spouse, nor Eve the Rites
> Mysterious of connubial Love refus'd:
> Whatever Hypocrites austerity talk
> Of purity and place and innocence,
> Defaming as impure what God declares
> Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
> Our maker bids increase, who bids abstain
> But our destroyer, for to God and Man?
> Hail wedded Love....(IV, 741-750)

Only Milton dramatizes Adam and Eve's sexual union, presenting Eve in her role as Adam's sexual partner.

In addition to Eve's role as sexual companion for Adam she is also mother of future generations. Calvin, like Milton, believes that God commanded sex, and argues against those who preach celibacy. But Calvin does not mention the pleasures of sex in his commentary. Instead, he justifies it through God's design that human beings on earth should cultivate mutual society between themselves, and have children to increase this society.[22] Salandra and Caedmon picture Eve as talking about the children that she and Adam will have. Children in Vondel's work symbolize Adam and Eve's love and the future of the world:

> Adam. Let offspring year by year be evidence
> Of our fidelity.
> ....

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[21] Corcoran, p. 77.

[22] Calvin, p. 128.

> All that feels life desires to mix itself
> With a like mate, and Nature gives delight
> In the warm act where each begets its kind.
> The future of the world is in thy womb.[23]

Grotius explains Eve's creation in terms of her role as childbearer: "In order that an heir to imperial realms so vast/ In sequence might succeed, a wife was giv'n to Adam."[24] Milton does not neglect this function of Eve, and a voice explains to her:

> Whose image thou art, him /Adam/ thou shalt enjoy
> Inseparately thine, to him shalt bear
> Multitudes like thyself and thence be call'd
> Mother of human Race....(IV, 472-475)

Milton adds a further dimension to Eve's roles of lover and mother which none of the other authors mentions. He shows Eve performing domestic chores when she prepares and serves dinner to Adam and Raphael, in keeping with the idea of the world's first wife as homemaker. Only Vondel, of the other authors, imagined Adam and Eve as dining with angels in his mention of their marriage feast, but he did not actually describe the event, and does not even hint that Eve took part in the preparation. The assignment of woman to domestic chores seems natural and necessary because of her function of bearing and nourishing children, and Milton's description of Eve's ability in serving the angel guest seems to show

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[23]Kirkconnell, p. 461.

[24]Ibid., p. 103.

his desire to demonstrate a natural superiority of Eve over Adam in the management and disposition of household goods.[25] Adam states that "Nothing lovelier can be found/ In woman, than to study household good." (IX, 232-233) But Milton does not mean that Eve should be strictly confined to the material domestic activities. For Milton, "To study household good" also refers to the higher good of the family as a unit, and includes advising the husband in his work for the common good.[26] Milton would seem to agree that if division of labor has been given, and woman assigned the care of the household, it is without the label of inferiority, since her job is as necessary as man's work. Milton's dramatization of Eve's domestic function has no origin in the tradition about her. In Paradise Lost it gives Eve realistic validity as the first wife, and shows another area where she excels in special qualities.

Adam's need for companionship did not stop with the satisfaction of his sexual needs. He also needed an intellectual companion, a role which Eve also filled. In order to provide the appropriate intellectual companionship for Adam, it is obvious Eve must possess a high level of

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[25]John Halkett, Milton and the Idea of Matrimony (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), p. 110.

[26]Allan H. Gilbert, "Milton on the Position of Woman," The Modern Language Review, 15 (1920), 252.

intelligence. Du Bartus, Vondel, and Salandra neglect this requirement and say nothing about Eve's intellectual attributes. Instead they emphasize her intellectual inferiority to Adam, by stressing a weak mind as Satan's reason for choosing to tempt her first. Salandra calls Eve "the weaker partner," Vondel labels her as "simple as a dove." Du Bartus goes even further and explains how Satan assaults the part of the couple which he finds "in evident of defaults," namely Eve, "wavering," "weak," "unwise," and "light." Grotius, while having Satan tempt Adam first, still calls Eve's mind "light," and provides an example of Eve's lack of intelligence by having her absent without explanation from the solemn conversation between Adam and the angel. Caedmon, who also presents Satan as tempting Adam unsuccessfully before trying Eve, merely states that the mind of woman is weak, and that Eve believes what Satan tells her because God made her with a feebler mind. Milton, unlike his predecessors, presents examples in Paradise Lost of Eve's intelligence. While she is inferior to Adam in rational power, she is no more wholly lacking in it than Adam is wholly lacking in the gifts in which she excels. As demonstration of her ability to reason, she raises the question of the purpose of the stars, she understands Adam's scientific explanation of her dream, she joins Adam in morning hymns, she listens to Raphael's narrative of the war in

Heaven, and she names the flowers in Paradise.[27] Milton is even careful to indicate that Eve's intellect is not unable to understand and enjoy Raphael's conversation with Adam after dinner even though she chooses to leave them alone in accordance with the wifely quality of retirement.[28] All these details combine to characterize Milton's Eve as an intelligent being. She might not have a rational intellect equal to the one Adam is praised for, but Milton emphasizes that Eve is not the weak-minded character presented by his predecessors. In Paradise Lost Eve does not fall because of lack of intelligence. She falls because she is deceived, and her intellect falters only after her faith and love for God fail.[29]

Milton believed very strongly in the necessity of the mental companionship of husband and wife. In his Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce he declares that God's chief intention in creating woman is so that man will not be alone, and concludes that "in God's intention a meet and happy conversation is the chiefest and the noblest end of marriage."[30]

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[27]Gilbert, p. 246.

[28]Halkett, p. 111.

[29]Stella P. Revard, "Eve and the Doctrine of Responsibility in Paradise Lost, PMLA, 88 (1973), 77.

[30]Hughes, p. 707.

To achieve this Milton suggests that compatibility of mind is most important in a marriage. Naturally this would require a level of education on the wife's part comparable with her husband's, since companionship cannot exist between the educated and the uneducated. In Tetrachordon Milton also stresses the necessity of woman as an intellectual companion. Speaking about Adam's loneliness before the creation of Eve he concludes:

> ...that by loneliness is not only meant the want of copulation, and that man is not lesse alone by turning in a body to him, unlesse there be within it a minde answerable, that it is a work more worthy the care and consultation of God to provide for the worthiest part of man which is his minde, and not unnaturally to set it beneath the formalities and respects of the body, to make it a servant of its owne vassall.[31]

Milton was using this argument to justify divorce on the grounds of mental incompatibility, but it also points out the importance he attached to the wife being mentally compatible with her husband. This explains why he took trouble to detail Eve's intellectual ability, making it clear that she possessed the intellectual qualifications to enable her to provide Adam with "happy conversation."

The last need of Adam that Eve fulfils is his need to see his own image in creation since he is unable to find

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[31] Frank Allan Patterson, The Works of John Milton, IV (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), p. 87.

himself in unequals such as animals.[32] Calvin , Du Bartus, and Milton call Eve Adam's "other self." As George Taylor points out, Du Bartus and Milton use almost the same words. God describes Eve to Adam in Paradise Lost as "Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self/ Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire," and in La Seconde Semaine as "His Love, his Stay, his Rest, his Weal, his Wife,/ His other selfe, his Help."[33] Calvin explains that God:

> ...created human nature in the person of Adam, and thence formed Eve, that the woman should be only a portion of the whole human race....In this manner Adam was taught to recognize himself in his wife as in a mirror; and Eve in her turn, to submit herself willingly to her husband, as being taken out of him.[34]

It was man's greatest honor that a creature so much like him, as Eve, should be subordinated to him.[35] Eve admits and enjoys her position. Vondel and Milton show Eve happily acknowledging her subordination to Adam. Vondel's Eve tells Adam: "Come, bid me what thou wilt. It seems no yoke/ To subjugate my will to thy commands."[36] Milton's Eve

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[32]Cleanth Brooks, "Eve's Awakening," Essays in Honor of Walter Clyde Curry (Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University Press, 1954), 286-287.

[33]George Coffin Taylor, Milton's Use of Du Bartus (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934), p. 103.

[34]Calvin, p. 132.

[35]Edward Wagenknecht, The Personality of Milton (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), p. 125.

[36]Kirkconnell, p. 139.

also declares to Adam that "God is thy Law, thou mine: to no more/ Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise." (IV, 637-638) But Milton does not mean that Adam's rule over Eve is absolute. Like God's rule over man, that appeals to the free choice of man to serve God, Adam's rule over Eve is a matter of influence. It depends on her free will, and endures only while she agrees with Adam. This is shown by her decision to work alone, against Adam's choice that she should not and is discussed in the next chapter.

Milton goes beyond his predecessors in the extent to which he believes Eve was created to be Adam's image. Calvin and the authors of the analogues agree with the rabbinical tradition which assumes that Eve was created with her own soul and directly in the image of God. Calvin states: "Certainly, it cannot be denied, that the woman also, though in the second degree, was created in the image of God."[37] Milton, contrary to this tradition, makes Eve derive her soul from Adam rather than directly from the image of God.[38] He justifies his theory in Tetrachordon in which he interprets Genesis:

> It might be doubted why he saith, In the Image of God created He him, not them, as well as male and female them; especially since that Image might be common to them both....So had the Image of God bin equally common to them both, it had

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[37]Calvin, p. 129.

[38]Corcoran, pp. 66-67.

> no doubt bin said, In the image of God created He them. But St. Paul ends the controversie by explaining that the woman is not primarily and immediately the image of God, but in reference to the man. The head of the woman saith he, I Cor. II. is the man: he the image and glory of God, she the glory of the man: he not for her, but she for him.[39]

Milton is making a strong case for the oneness of Adam and Eve. Viewed symbolically, Adam and Eve serve to dramatize the conflict of passion and reason which is part of the motivation Milton uses to make the Fall believable. While not functioning solely as female beauty and masculine reason, Adam and Eve do represent these concepts. Eve names herself beauty and praises Adam as Wisdom:

> Part of my Soul I seek thee, and thee claim
> My other half: with that thy gentle hand
> Seiz'd mine, I yielded, and from that time see
> How beauty is excell'd by manly grace
> And wisdom, which alone is truly fair. (IV, 487-491)

Milton dramatizes this symbolic conflict in the way Adam and Eve react during the events that lead up to their fall, especially during Adam's temptation discussed in Chapter III.

Eve's contribution to Milton's justification of the Fall begins with the reason for her creation, and the subsequent functions that she fulfils. As female partner of the first marriage, Eve was created the first wife, or as the Bible names her, "help meet." An examination of Eve's

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[39]Patterson, IV, 76.

purpose has shown that traditionally she was presented almost exclusively as the solution to Adam's need for a mate. She was established as a beautiful example of the female of the human species, created from Adam's rib, but with an individual soul in the image of God. According to the authors preceeding Milton, Eve was created to fulfil the roles of sexual partner for Adam, mother of future generations, and willing subordinate to Adam's rank on the Great Chain of Being. Her purpose was therefore limited and stereotyped. Milton accepts the tradition in all aspects except the question of Eve's creation in the image of God. He presents Eve as the image of Adam. This change in the tradition might be interpreted as too strict an interpretation of the Biblical text, confining Eve to a subservient role. But despite Milton's insistence on Eve's ranking below Adam, he expands traditional reasons for Eve's creation. He is not reluctant to praise Eve's superior beauty, and stresses her intellectual capacities. Milton's Eve functions as Adam's intellectual as well as sexual companion. A more homely and realistic expansion of the tradition is Milton's dramatization of Eve as a homemaker. Milton emphasizes Eve's ability to fulfil the roles he defines for her. Eve in unfallen Paradise is the ideal wife, and Milton makes clear that in the male to female relationship

fulfilment of function is more important than status.[40] According to Milton, Eve is perfect in her fulfilment of her purpose, to be Adam's "help meet." Milton's expansion of the tradition about Eve's roles helps to humanize her and make her more believable. As a more believable character, Eve's part in the Fall of man becomes more believable. Milton's insistence that Eve was created in the image of Adam allows her to also function as a symbolic character. Eve, as the image of Adam and the embodiment of beauty, contributes to Milton's explanation of the Fall by dramatizing Adam's motives for disobeying God.

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[40] Miller, p. 545.

CHAPTER III

Eve's Fall

Eve is often blamed for the plight of the world, and labeled the betrayer of mankind, because of her disobedience of God's command not to eat the fruit of one tree in Paradise. All subsequent generations, banned from an earthly paradise, have asked why Eve was deceived by Satan and chose to disobey God. The analogues to Paradise Lost, forming part of the tradition about Eve, present her as falling because of ambition. There is one notable exception in Caedmon, who changes the basic facts of the Biblical account, and has Satan convince Eve that by eating the fruit she was obeying God. Milton rejects the opportunity to whitewash Eve's motives, and agrees with the idea of Eve possessing the human frailty of ambition. But as with Eve's creation, Milton adds to the tradition about Eve in order to explain the reasons behind the Fall. He presents Eve as a psychologically believable character, dramatizing events which occurred before Eve's temptation as an expression of certain of her character traits and her state of mind. The incidents Milton creates have no

foundation in tradition, but function in Paradise Lost as a foreshadowing of Eve's fall. Milton also uses the circumstances surrounding Eve's temptation, such as her being alone, and Satan's arguments, to explain her fall. Because Milton presents motivation for Eve's fall, her part in the Fall is believable.

Only Salandra, among the analogue authors, joins Milton in presenting a preview of Eve's temptation. But whereas Milton uses two dramatic events, Salandra uses merely a conversation between Adam and Eve. Salandra presents a mysterious, unexplained yearning of Eve for the forbidden tree. She finds the tree enticing, and admits her feelings to Adam:

> Adam, to tell the truth, the Tree is pretty.
> It has a hidden power that draws one to it
> Even in sheer despite of one's desire.
> Fair though it be and charming to behold,
> I shall stay fasting....[41]

This certainly hints towards Eve's fall, but leaves unexplained why she was attracted to the tree. There is no dramatic cause, nor psychological explanation for her attraction.

Milton uses two original events before Eve's fall to demonstrate the vulnerability on her part that will lead to her disobedience. He presents Eve admiring

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[41]Kirkconnell, p. 302.

her reflection, and Satan tempting her with a dream. Just after her creation, Eve sees her reflection in water, and admires it without knowing at first that it is her own image. As Milton emphasizes throughout the poem, Eve's admiration was not an overevaluation of her beauty. The incident does not indicate an impulse on Eve's part to excessive feminine vanity and self-centeredness as it has often been interpreted. It does, however, show a susceptibility on Eve's part, hinting at the method of temptation that could ruin her. She is sensitive to beauty, perhaps too sensivive, and finds it easier to love the image of herself mirrored in the pool than the less obvious image of herself as reflected in Adam.[42] In the second independent experience Milton gives to Eve, he has Satan, "squat like a Toad" at her ear. Satan causes Eve to dream of eating the forbidden fruit and becoming a goddess. In her dream, Milton's Eve is like Salandra's, and finds the tree suddenly "fair." The difference is that in the dream Eve's attraction to the tree is clearly a desire for godhood. Adam explains that dreams are merely imaginations, and consoles her with the fact that mere temptation cannot

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[42]Brooks, p. 284.

defile the victim:[43] "Evil into the mind of God or Man/ May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave/ No spot or blame behind...." (V, 117-119). Eve is remorseful about her dream and fearful of having sinned. Adam's understanding and reassurance are fulfilment of his matrimonial role as sustainer of his wife in times of moral stress,[44] and Eve's need for Adam's help fulfils her role as subordinate and companion. The whole dream sequence seems to be a reversal of the Fall itself, with Eve rejecting the opportunity for self-advancement and Adam meeting the problem with wisdom and courage.[45]

The circumstances of Eve's temptation require that Satan find her alone. Vondel's devils express the reasoning that a victim alone would be easier to tempt:

> Luc. We must not try both man and wife together.
> Asm. One at a time we'll take them. That were wise.
> Luc. Blessing and curse are common to them both. They have one mind and but a single will.
> Asm. If one of them should change in will and purpose, the other in his mate's dark track will follow.[46]

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[43] John S. Diekhoff, "Eve, the Devil, and Areopagitica," Modern Language Quarterly, 5 (1944), 431.

[44] Halkett, p. 110.

[45] Irene Samuel, "Purgatorio and the Dream of Eve," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 63 (1964), 449.

[46] Kirkconnell, p. 451.

Salandra, Vondel, and Milton explain how Eve happens to be alone for Satan to tempt. Salandra gives credit to the devils themselves for arranging it, and has an echo lure Adam away in a futile search. Vondel presents the idea of leaving Eve alone as originating from Adam. Adam seeks solitude for himself:

> Permit me, at this point, to turn aside,
> To speak with God in my solitude
> Give thanks to Him for thy companionship
> Excuse me, pray.[47]

Neither of these authors makes Eve responsible for her vulnerable position, but rather leave her a lonely victim for Satan's plan. Only Milton gives Eve an active part in arranging her separation from Adam.

In Paradise Lost it is Eve's idea that she and Adam work apart on the day of the Fall in order to complete the gardening faster. The discussion between Adam and Eve that follows shows Eve as surprisingly independent. When Adam asks that she stay with him in order to keep him company, and so that he can protect her from their enemy, Eve accuses Adam of not trusting her "firm Faith and Love." She bases her argument for working alone upon the rightness of meeting temptation rather than avoiding it, the displeasure of having to restrict their activity if they avoid temptation, and the honor to be gained in withstanding

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[47]Kirkconnell, p. 462.

temptation and proving their virtue by test.[48] Her arguments echo Milton's declaration in Areopagitica. Eve asks:

> And what is Faith, Love, Virtue unassay'd
> Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?
> Let us not then suspect our happy State
> Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
> As not secure to single or combin'd,
> Frail is our happiness, if this be so,
> And Eden were no Eden thus expos'd. (IX, 335-341)

In Areopagitica Milton declares that "the knowledge and survey of vice is in this world so necessary to the continuing of human virtue."[49] Unlike the other Eves, Milton's Eve seems to have a purpose in arranging to be alone. She is going to put her virtue to the test by experiencing evil. Adam has already assured her, after her dream, that the mere experience of evil does not defile if it is resisted. It is almost as if she hopes to meet Satan.

Adam's final granting of Eve's request to work alone has generally been interpreted as a weakness on Adam's part. Some more unusual interpretations include an attempt at reverse psychology to trick Eve into staying,[50] and a hope on Adam's part that she would stay without his

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[48] Diekhoff, p. 431.

[49] Hughes, p. 729.

[50] Anthony Low, "The Parting in the Garden in Paradise Lost," Philological Quarterly, 47 (1968), 31.

insistance as a spontaneous gesture of love.[51] A more logical reason is Eve's intellectual and determined argument. She certainly shows herself an intellectual match for Adam, and even manages to argue without losing her feminine charm. She always replies with "sweet austere composure." But since Milton stresses Adam's superior reason, it is unreasonable to believe that Milton is suggesting that Adam was persuaded by Eve's arguments. The obvious reason why Adam could not command Eve to stay is Eve's freedom of choice. This does not show a weakness on Adam's part, since before the Fall Adam and Eve's relationship is a hierarchy of love and nature, and not a rule of force subjugating woman to man.[52] Milton insists that Eve, despite her secondary position to Adam, is granted the right to choose to obey or disobey God and Adam, just as Adam is granted the right to choose to obey or disobey God. So Adam must admit that "God left free the will," and allow Eve to go and rely on her virtue:

> Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
> Go in thy native innocence, rely
> On what thou hast of virtue, summon all,
> For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine
> (IX, 372-375)

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[51] Revard, p. 73.

[52] Low, p. 35.

Only Milton's Eve, among her predecessors, is allowed to purposely be alone as the result of her own insistence.

The analogues do not agree on the exact form in which Satan appeared to Eve, but in each account Satan is a sophisticated arguer. The arguments Satan uses help explain why Eve chose to believe them and consequently disobey God. Satan's technique of getting Eve's attention is first of all to flatter her. Vondel especially emphasizes Satan's flattery. It reaches such a point that Satan must reassure Eve that he has no sexual intentions toward her, despite his admiration, in order not to frighten her. In each analogue Satan's argument contains the promise that the fruit will make Eve a goddess, but each author adds embellishments to the argument. Calvin explains it the most simply by saying that Satan denied that the fruit could injure and promised that it would produce divinity. In Du Bartus' work Satan very briefly argues that the fruit will make Eve a goddess. Vondel elaborates Satan's argument by having him appeal to Eve's intelligence, telling her that it it "contrary to right and reason" that God was capable of creating something evil. Since the fruit is good to eat with the power to do only good, God must have forbidden it out of jealousy. While Grotius agrees with Vondel, he expands Satan's argument still further. He claims that if God loves man he would remove the fear of

death from the fruit, and if He does not love man, then Eve has a right to shake off His yoke. Satan encourages Eve to lay claim to her rights while she has a chance before a jealous God decides to snatch away what he has bestowed. Andreini's Satan claims that the trifle of eating one piece of fruit could not possibly ruin the whole world, and God certainly could not commit a deed of death. But Andreini's Satan also stresses the injustice of God's law: "Outraging with such yoke your liberty,/ Making you slaves, not lords, inferior/ To the wild beasts, to whom He gave no laws?"[53] Satan deceives Eve further by seeming to confide his motives. He claims that God allows him to eat the fruit in order to preserve the memory of heaven, and that he wants to elevate man to godhood so that he can be lord of beasts on earth. In each case Satan deceives Eve into believing that the fruit will advance her from human to god, and convinces her to doubt God's motives. Once she begins to doubt God, disobedience becomes logical.

Caedmon provides Satan with the most unusual argument. In the guise of a heavenly messenger, he begs Eve not to reject him as Adam had done, in a previously unsuccessful temptation. He wants her to eat the fruit and then guide

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[53]Kirkconnell, p. 247.

Adam to eat it in order to please God by obeying his messenger. Unlike the other authors, Caedmon has Satan rely on Eve's love for Adam and desire to help him in order to make her sin. In Caedmon, Eve is innocent of doubting God.

Salandra's approach is just the opposite. His Satan entices Eve to listen to his arguments by threatening to tell Adam the secret of the forbidden fruit:

> ...I'll tell them rather
> To a more virile listener, thy husband.
> He, with more courage and more wit than thou,
> Will listen fearlessly to all my counsel,
> Which has utility and helpfulness,
> And he will bind it to his breast as wise.[54]

Completely dependent on Adam, Salandra's Eve wants to call her husband after hearing Satan's promises of godhood in order for him to help her decide about the fruit. But Satan convinces her that since Adam was created the first human, she has a right to be first to become divinity. He then tricks Eve, who is unbelievably naive, into just touching the fruit to prove that she will not die. When godhood does not result Eve herself suggests eating the fruit as an alternative to tearing open her breast in order to get the fruit closer to her heart. Like all the others, except Caedmon's Eve, Salandra's Eve falls, deceived by Satan into believing she could become a goddess.

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[54]Kirkconnell, p. 317.

Salandra's Eve is just a bit more dependent on her Adam, and more naive than the other Eves.

Satan in Paradise Lost uses the same Biblical promise of divinity as in all the analogues except Caedmon's poem. He also uses elaborate flattery, not devoid of sexual overtones, to gain Eve's attention and confidence. The difference between Milton and his predecessors is the extent of Eve's participation in the discussion with Satan, and the working out of the preparation Milton has made for Eve's fall. Satan merely points out that the fruit that is denied to Adam and Eve has given him the power to speak. The idea of the injustice of God's law comes from Eve:

> How dies the Serpent? Hee hath eat'n and lives,
> And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
> Irrational till then. For us alone
> Was death invented? Or to us deni'd
> This intellectual food for beasts reserv'd? (IX, 736-768)

Besides leading Eve into conclusions that question God's command, Satan uses her own argument against her by emphasizing that the forbidden tree will give her the knowledge of good and evil. His argument resembles the one Eve used to defend her wish to work alone:

> Deterr'd not from achieving what might lead
> To happier life, knowledge of Good and Evil;
> Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
> Be real, why not know; since easier shunn'd? (IX, 696-699)

Since Milton has already dramatized Eve as an advocate of this theory, it is a difficult argument for her to ignore. Instead of relying on pure faith, she tries to use reason

to understand God's commandment. While Milton does not present Eve as lacking in intellect, she is the symbolic representative of beauty, not reason. She is certainly no match for the subtle debater Satan. Once she chooses to question God, she is deceived by her own theories about good and evil. Disobedience follows.

Eve's fall depends almost exclusively with each author on her ambition and sensual desire. Du Bartus describes Eve as she eats the fruit:

> ...our ambitious Grandam,
> Who only yet did heart and eye abandon
> Against the Lord, now farther doth proceed,
> And hand and mouth makes guiltie of the deed.[55]

Calvin interprets Eve's fall as sin of ambition for knowledge. He stresses that this sin is common to all humanity, not merely a feminine characteristic:

> Because the desire of knowledge is naturally inherent in all, happiness is supposed to be placed in it but Eve erred in not regulating the measure of her knowledge by the will of God. And we all daily suffer under the same disease, because we desire to know more than is right, and more than God allows; whereas the principle point of wisdom is a well-regulated sobriety in obedience to God.[56]

Andreini's Eve also falls because she believes Satan's promise of divinity. Eve in Salandra's work disregards her

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[55]Kirkconnell, p. 69.

[56]Calvin, p. 151.

impulse to call Adam, because she is ambitious enough to want to obtain godhood before Adam. Vondel emphasizes the sensual attraction of the forbidden fruit, and while Eve is ambitious, she rationalizes her sin as she speaks to the tree:

> I trust it is not sin to taste of thee.
> ....
> Cease, cease to tantalize my appetite!
> ....
> What harm is in one bite, a venial fault?
> Fondness for sweets is easily forgiven.[57]

The sensual appeal of the forbidden fruit is also stressed by Grotius' Eve: "O sweetest apple, how thy heavenly beauty smiles/ And charms my eyes, and how thy fragrance raptures me!"[58] But while Grotius' Eve also falls through ambition, she is less selfish in motive, and thinks of future generations:

> Shatter whate'er opposes thee, and free thyself!
> Weigh out how much reward the secrets of the tree
> Can bear with them. Thou wilt have knowledge of all things.
> Thou wilt become devine. I think this must be dared.
> The welfare of mankind depends upon one bite.
> ...
> Thou canst enrich a thousand ages yet to come.
> Shall thy race then obey as slaves or live in freedom?
> Shall they be men, or gods? Which lot is happier?[59]

Eve in Caedmon's work is the exception and is completely noble in her motive for eating the fruit. Since she was

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[57]Kirkconnell, p. 465.

[58]Ibid., p. 171.

[59]Ibid., p. 173.

deceived by Satan into believing he was an angelic messenger, she believed that eating the forbidden fruit would shield Adam from his supposed disobedience of God's messenger. According to S. Humphrey Gurteen it is Adam's welfare and his alone that dominates Eve's will. He sees Caedmon's Eve as the prototype of true womanhood, selfless and self-sacrificing.[60]

Milton's Eve does not suddenly turn ambitious as in the majority of the analogues, nor is she guilt-free as in Caedmon's work. Milton presents an Eve whose disobedience has been hinted by the development of her character. Milton's Eve is undoubtedly prone to ambition and susceptible to beauty. She is jealous of the serpent's ability to eat the fruit she is denied and desires to gain the knowledge of good and evil. Her desire for knowledge does not come as a surprise since she displayed the desire for experience, or a test of her virtue, when she argued with Adam about working alone. She has also displayed a previous susceptibility for the sensual in her admiration of her reflection, and as the embodiment of beauty in the poem, it is natural that she be attracted to the sensual. Milton, like some of his predecessors, heightens the

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[60]Gurteen, pp. 215-216.

physical attractions of the forbidden fruit. He also adds a realistic motive for Eve's attraction to it by setting her temptation at noon, the hour when she would be hungry:

> Meanwhile the hour of noon drew on, and wak'd
> An eager appetite rais'd by the smell
> So savory of that Fruit, which with desire,
> Inclinable now grown to touch or taste,
> Solicited her longing eye....(IX, 739-743)

Milton's Eve is psychologically and physically motivated to disobey God. When she reaches for the fruit she is feeding both her "Body and Mind."

An important part of Milton's justification of the Fall is his motivation of Eve. Eve lacks developed motivation in the analogues, with the exception of Caedmon's work in which she is strictly unselfish. Milton presents Eve's fall traditionally, as caused by her ambition. This creates the problem of dramatizing why the world's first and perfect female chose her own advancement over obedience to God. Milton accomplished this by humanizing Eve, and making her actions physically and psychologically believable. The process that began with Milton's handling of Eve's creation, and her purpose, is continued in his dramatization of original events before her fall and the circumstances that surround it. Eve is characterized by certain human vulnerabilities and with the right to choose obedience or disobedience of God. She is susceptible to beauty as demonstrated by her admiration of her reflection,

and susceptible to a desire for knowledge as shown in her argument for working alone. Milton has Satan use Eve's own weaknesses against her. Physically she is attracted to the fruit because of her hunger at noon, and psychologically she is attracted by the fruit's beauty and her desire for knowledge of good and evil. By using the tradition about Eve, and adding to it, Milton is able to explain Eve's fall, and thereby, justify part of the entire Fall.

CHAPTER IV

Eve's Temptation of Adam

Eve's own fall is only a portion of her involvement in the entire Fall Story. She is also instrumental in the reason why Adam chose to follow her example of sin. In fact, she, in place of Satan, is Adam's tempter, often considered her most despicable action. This is because Eve is naturally different after her disobedience to God's command. She has been corrupted by sin and is no longer innocent. She is not merely guilty of ambition and mistaken reasoning as during her own fall, but is guilty of threatening and purposefully deceiving Adam. She uses verbal argument to tempt Adam much as Satan used it to tempt her. In the analogues Eve is presented with a variety of motives and excuses for deciding to make Adam join her in sin. Milton makes Eve humanly selfish, and allows her no excuses for her actions. The analogues also make Adam's decision to join Eve almost a direct reaction to her argument. Milton does not make Eve's influence over Adam to be that of a superior debater. Instead he uses Eve's entire relationship to Adam as an explanation

of Adam's choice to disobey God. It is in this aspect of the Fall story that Milton's Eve functions most obviously as the symbolic image of Adam. As with Eve's temptation and fall, Milton uses natural human weaknesses to motivate Adam's decision, and stresses Adam's freedom to choose obedience or disobedience of God. But Eve remains the answer to why Adam chose her over God and plunged the world into sin.

Several of Milton's predecessors excuse Eve's temptation of Adam by having Satan cause her to experience the knowledge he promised, and help her to tempt Adam successfully. This eliminates the problem of motivating Eve, since she could honestly believe the fruit performed good, and explains Adam's fall as an indirect deception by Satan. Calvin alone neglects to speculate at all on Eve's motives. Vondel has the serpent promise to help Eve to get Adam to eat the fruit. Deceived by Satan into believing his promises have been fulfilled, Eve is anxious to share godhood with Adam in Andreini's and Grotius' works. After Andreini's Eve eats the fruit she is ecstatic:

> How all the flavours of all other fruits
> Are met in this alone! Ah, where is Adam!
> Adam! Dear Adam! Nay, he answers me not.
> I must go speedily to seek him out.[61]

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[61]Kirkconnell, p. 251.

Grotius' Eve has an equally noble motive for tempting Adam: "...Now one privilege remains:/ To make my husband sharer in so great a good!"[62] In Caedmon's work, where Eve is completely deceived by Satan into believing that eating the fruit will be obeying God, she also is motivated by the idea of sharing good with Adam. These Eves are presented as conveniently deceived by Satan, so that it is not necessary to explain why they chose to doom Adam to death alone with themselves.

Du Bartus and Salandra do not excuse Eve's actions. Du Bartus compares Eve to Satan himself in her role as tempter of Adam. He dramatizes her selfishness by drawing an analogy between her temptation of Adam and a mountain climber, who when he falls brings his friend down with him. Salandra comes the closest to picturing Eve as Milton does. Salandra's Eve knows immediately after eating the forbidden fruit that she was wrong because she is visited by the typical morality play character Death. She hopes that she can reduce her own fault by causing Adam to sin also:

> ...If I alone eat and God blames me
> For sins already done, shall I alone
> Be caught, with blushes on my guilty face?
> I'll make him eat, too, so that I, a woman,
> May be less blamed if Adam, being a man,
> Eat likewise. Thus his fault were my defense.[63]

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[62]Kirkconnell, p. 175.

[63]Ibid., p. 325.

She even rationalizes that Adam is already guilty for leaving her alone for Satan to tempt. Both of these Eves provide a tradition concerning the incident of Adam's fall from which Milton's Eve might have developed.

Milton's Eve is equally as selfish as Salandra's and Du Bartus' Eves but her motives are slightly different. Just after eating the forbidden fruit, she is not sure if it has done her good or not. First thinking the fruit has elevated her as promised, she wonders about withholding it from Adam in order to gain equality:

> But keep the odds of knowledge in my power
> Without copartner? so to add what wants
> In Female Sex, the more to draw his Love,
> And render me more equal, and perhaps,
> A thing not undesireable, sometime
> Superior: for inferior who is free? (IX, 820-825)

After this unparalelled example of ambition, Milton's Eve considers that if she should die as a result of her deed, Adam would be wedded to another Eve. This jealous thought convinces her to share the fruit with Adam. Unlike any of his poetic predecessors, Milton, in agreement with most of the rabbinical literature, chooses to present Eve's jealousy as her chief motive.[64] Milton shows a definite change in Eve after her fall. He does not hesitate to have her exhibit feelings that are the direct result of

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[64]Fletcher, p. 206.

her sin. Her jealousy is certainly an ignoble reason for chancing Adam's death, and is not characteristic of Eve before her disobedience. Milton has eliminated the problem of excusing Eve's decision to tempt Adam by using her to exemplify the corruption of sin.

In the analogues Eve's temptation of Adam parallels Satan's temptation of her. She uses verbal argument to deceive Adam, as well as, taking advantage of his love for her. Calvin merely states that Adam received the fruit from Eve's hand, and does not elaborate on the brief Biblical statement of this incident. Du Bartus describes Eve as: "Cunningly adding her quaint smiling glances,/ Her wiley speech and pretty countenances."[65] The other analogues also present Eve as a cunning arguer who uses her feminine charms, but these poets detail her arguments. She flatters Adam, shows by her presence that the fruit does not cause death, argues the illogic of God's command, and promises Adam godhood. Grotius, Salandra, and Vondel expand her arguments still further by stressing the marriage bond. Salandra's Eve accuses Adam of being cowardly, and finally threatens suicide if he refuses to join her. In Grotius' work, she accuses Adam of doubting her honesty, and insists that his love for her should be greater than

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[65]Kirkconnell, p. 70.

his love for God. Vondel's Eve is even more insistent in her arguments and nags Adam:

> I am thy flesh, and bone; so bear thyself
> More like a man, and let us live together,
> Sharing one common lot....
> ...
> ...and in obedience
> To this my first request, vouchsafe to me
> Thy first true glance of love. Obedience
> Will bring thee peace. I will have no refusal.[66]

When that argument fails, she threatens him:

> Whilst thou wert sleeping, thou wert given a wife
> To grace thy bed, and took her without love,
> Even as now without regret thou partest.
> A loveless meeting means painless parting.
> Another rib still lies below thy heart:
> Let God then manufacture thee a wife
> According to thy fancy!...[67]

Only Caedmon's Eve deceives Adam with no ill motives, and is able to persuade him by her sincerity rather than threats that she had gained a supernatural mental state:

> When the winsomest woman in words was abundant,
> Till the mind of the man becomes mastered to trust in
> The pledge that the woman kept plighting in words,
> Yet she did it sincerely; she saw not the evils.[68]

Milton does not present an innocent Eve as Caedmon does, nor one that threatens, as Grotius, Salandra, and Vondel do. Instead he gives Eve an unemotional and concise argument to persuade Adam to eat the fruit. J. M. Evans points out Milton's originality in presenting Eve's approach, and calls

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[66] Kirkconnell, p. 468.

[67] Ibid., p. 469.

[68] Ibid., p. 37.

her argument "a carefully calculated series of lies designed to arouse his loyalty not to her but to the idea of hierarchy."[69] Milton's Eve, following Satan's example, first uses flattery, telling Adam how much she missed him. Then she proceeds with an orderly argument, first telling him they were mistaken about the tree, and then citing the serpent as an example of its powers. Finally, she admits having tasted it herself. She argues that Adam must eat the fruit also in order that they not be parted by her approaching godhood, and tells the lie that she would not enjoy divinity without him:

> Thou therefore also taste, that equal Lot
> May join us, equal Joy, as equal Love;
> Lest thou not tasting, different degree
> Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
> Diety for thee, when Fate will not permit. (IX, 881-885)

She has already played with the idea that it might be nice to be superior to Adam, but decided not to chance death alone. Milton's Adam does not need the threats and emotionalism of the other Eves. He is convinced immediately to join Eve, as soon as he hears of her disobedience.

Like Eve's, Adam's motives for falling differ in each author's work. In Caedmon Adam is completely deceived by the positive assertions of Eve. He shows none of the weaknesses the other authors present him as having. Du

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[69] J. M. Evans, Paradise Lost and the Genesis Tradition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 283.

Bartus explains Adam's fall by calling him blind. His weakness is that he fails to see through Eve's deception, and lets her will prevail. Andreini, Grotius, and Vondel show Adam falling in an effort to please Eve. In Vondel's work Adam rationalizes his act:

> O Father, if Thou canst forgive Thy son
> For one brief lapse, that I may please my spouse.
> Pray overlook it as a passing fit.
> One must be soft and gentle with the weak.[70]

Andreini's Adam chooses to obey Eve over God because he claims that her requests are commands, and "Tis meet to obey/ The one who toiled and wept to make me a god."[71] In Grotius' version, Adam also chose to obey Eve, and illogically rationalizes his act as God's command:

> To witness that thus far naught in my wife has pleased me
> But Thee Thyself, whose image she has mirrored back.
> To the companion of my blessings....
> ...
> ...Doth God not will
> That love of wife should be preferr'd above all others,
> Even of parent? Tis His will. Give me the apple!"[72]

Salandra's Adam decides to obey Eve under her threat to destroy herself if he fails to prove his love by obedience. Calvin is the only one among the analogue authors who credits Adam's fall to a sin similar to Eve's, the sin of ambition:

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[70] Kirkconnell, pp. 469-470.

[71] Ibid., p. 256.

[72] Ibid., p. 185.

> We may say unbelief has opened the door to ambition, but ambition has proved the parent of rebellion, to the end that men, having cast aside the fear of God, might shake off his yoke.[73]

All the analogues have Eve's nagging or threatening of Adam as a major factor in his decision to join her. He is almost coerced into disobedience in order to quiet Eve.

Milton presents a very different Adam, especially with respect to the speed with which he decides to join Eve in her sin after hearing what she has done. Eve gives a persuasive argument, but it is almost not needed. Adam simply resolves to die with her:

> Of Enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown,
> And mee with thee hath ruin'd, for with thee
> Certain my resolution is to Die:
> How can I live without thee, how forgo
> Thou sweet converse and Love so dearly join'd,
> To live again in these wild woods forlorn?
> ...
> The Link of Nature draw me: Flesh of Flesh,
> Bone of my Bone thou art, and from thy State
> Mine shall never be parted, bliss or woe. (IX, 905-916)

Adam clearly chooses Eve over God, quickly, and seemingly without doubt. The result J. M. Evans calls a "motivational vacuum."[74] But actually Milton has motivated Adam for this decision throughout the poem, and his decision is part of the symbolic conflict between passion and reason. It is clear why Adam falls, when his previous statements about

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[73]Calvin, p. 153.

[74]Evans, p. 287.

Eve, and his whole relationship to her are examined. Adam shows a tendency to be overcome by Eve's attractiveness in Paradise Lost. In Adam's conversation with Raphael, Milton emphasizes what might be considered a weakness in Adam. Adam admits Eve's power over him:

> All higher knowledge in her presence falls
> Degraded, Wisdom in discource with her
> Loses discountnanc't, and like folly shows;
> Authority, and Reason on her wait,
> As one intended first, not after made
> Occasionally; and to consummate all,
> Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat
> Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
> About her, as a guard Angelic plac't. (VIII, 551-560)

Adam is claiming that his reason fails to maintain its superiority when confronted with Eve as the representative of beauty. Raphael warns him against subjecting himself to Eve's beauty, and failing to give the proper value to his own quality of reason. It seems to be exactly this mistake that he makes. His excessive admiration and love for Eve cause him to follow her instead of being her leader, thereby inverting the Chain of Being order of man over woman, and also the order of reason over beauty. The subjugation of reason by passion results in an inability of the reason to function properly, and consequently for Adam to act in a way contrary to his knowledge of what is right.[75]

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[75]John M. Patrick, Milton's Conception of Sin as Developed in Paradise Lost (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1960), p. 60.

The answer to why Adam is susceptible to Eve's beauty and allows himself to be so overcome by it that he is willing to die with Eve after only a moment's consideration, has several critical interpretations. Critics like Millicent Bell have claimed that Adam fell through "human love."[76] This excuses Adam's disobedience by making his love for Eve too strong for him to let her die alone. Most of the analogues tend to present this idea by having Eve's threats work effectively on Adam. But Milton, unlike his predecessors, believes Eve was created in Adam's image. When Adam learns of Eve's disobedience he must choose between Eve and God. This is a choice between images: his image mirrored in Eve, or God's image mirrored in himself.[77] He chooses the obviously more enchanting image of himself in Eve, an expression of gross self-love, a kind of Narcissism, not human love for Eve as herself. Adam makes it very clear that his choice is one of self in his previous descriptions of Eve: "best image of myself" (V, 95) and "myself before me." (VIII, 495-496) His self-love makes it impossible for him to act independently of Eve and let her sin alone; because he believes that there is

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[76]Millicent Bell, "The Fallacy of the Fall in Paradise Lost," PMLA, 68 (1953).

[77]Brooks, p. 284.

no Eve apart from him.[78] Adam's choice of himself over God is the same sin as Eve's ambition. Both stem from pride, vanity and self-love. Adam and Eve each alienated themselves from God out of over-confidence in themselves. Adam is quick to decide to follow Eve's example of sin because, unlike Adam in the analogues, he is placing himself, not Eve, over God.

Milton does not blame Adam's fall on his love for Eve, and makes it clear that Adam's decision was an independent act of self-serving sin. This is possible only by presenting Eve symbolically as the sensual counterpart to Adam's reason, and as Adam's image. The analogues use Eve only on the realistic level as Adam's wife, and for the most part, excuse her act of temptation by making her unaware of the evil resulting from her sin. They also make Adam's decision to follow Eve in disobedience depend on his love for Eve, and her ability to threaten and nag him into compliance with her wishes. The idea that Adam could decide to disobey God, and risk the disruption of his very existence, only because of a momentary need to please Eve, does not seem believable. Only Milton, by using Eve symbolically, is able to explain Adam's fall in terms of believable human weaknesses. When Eve is understood as the

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[78]Barry Edward Gross, "Free Love and Free Will in Paradise Lost," Studies in English Literature, 7 (1967), 103.

sensual part of Adam's image, it is clear that he is choosing himself, as mirrored by Eve, rather than God. The idea of self-love is an easily understood human weakness, and makes Adam's action understandable, even though ignoble. It also makes clear that Adam and Eve are guilty of similar motives for their disobedience of God, and therefore, neither is more to blame than the other for the Fall. Eve's function as Adam's image in Paradise Lost enables Milton to explain the reasons behind Adam's fall, without making Eve responsible for it. Milton's predecessors failed to accomplish this.

CHAPTER V

After the Fall

An important part of any explanation of the Fall is an understanding of its results. Milton devotes a large portion of Paradise Lost to events which occurred after Adam and Eve ate the fruit. As during the events surrounding the Fall, Adam and Eve act according to their free choice, making certain decisions first to avoid responsibility for their sin and blame each other, and then to forgive each other and repent of their disobedience. God's actions are justified by the contract He had made with Adam and Eve. The breaking of His one commandment not to eat the fruit of one tree was to result in death. Even though Adam and Eve disobeyed the commandment, God was merciful and death was delayed. But Adam and Eve's individual punishments and their exile from Eden were devastating enough, despite God's mercy, to cause their complete despair. That they were able to reconcile themselves to their position, each other, and God, and thereby reconcile all future generations, is the result of Eve's ability to accept responsibility for her sin, to ask Adam to forgive her, and to express

unselfish love for Adam. The analogue authors for the most part fail to give Eve such a major part in establishing the well-being of mankind after the destruction of man's innocence. However, Milton, who has consistantly changed the traditional character of Eve so that she would function in Paradise Lost to help with his purpose of justifying God's ways, presents a post Fall Eve who is instrumental in the reconstruction of the alliance between mankind and God. Milton achieves this without having Eve act inconsistantly with the character as presented in the previous parts of Paradise Lost. Eve continues to be both a realistic and a symbolic character.

Immediately after Adam and Eve have eaten the forbidden fruit they exhibit corruption by sin. The process has already started with Eve when she tempts Adam to join her. Milton and his predecessors all present the idea of corruption by having neither Adam nor Eve accept the responsibility for their own sins, but try to blame God, each other, and the serpent. All the analogues also mention the Biblical incident of Adam and Eve becoming ashamed of their nakedness as indication of the feeling of guilt that is the result of their sin. Only Salandra and Milton dramatize Adam and Eve's corruption further. Salandra, in the typical morality play style that he uses throughout Adamo Caduto, shows Eve in particular becoming

completely saturated with guile, deceit, falsehood and depravity. Milton demonstrates Adam and Eve's condition after their fall in much more realistic terms. He uses the contrast between their idyllic sexual union before the Fall and their lustful union afterwards. After Adam eats the apple passion becomes destructive, reason becomes befuddled, and both he and Eve act as if they are drunk.[79] They lust after each other: "Carnal desire inflamming, hee on Eve/ Began to cast lascivious Eyes, she him/ As wantonly repaid; in Lust they burn." (IX, 1013-1015) Milton's clear dramatization of the devastating effects of sin, affecting both Adam and Eve equally, make their cruel blaming of each other for causing the Fall more understandable.

In the Biblical judgment scene, Adam and Eve are both guilty of refusing to accept responsibility for their own sin. Milton and his predecessors all maintain this tradition. Even Caedmon, whose work is almost an attempt to exonerate Adam and Eve from any wrongdoing in the Fall, presents Adam blaming Eve, and Eve blaming the serpent. Caedmon's Adam laments having ever seen Eve:

> For having once plead with the Prince, the good Ruler,
> To frame thee and fashion thy form from my limbs,
> For thou hast misled me and lost me my Lord,
> I may sorrow for aye to have seen thee at all.[80]

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[79]Wagenknecht, p. 112.

[80]Kirkconnell, p. 39.

He even implicates God Himself in his blame by reminding Him that Eve, who placed the fruit in his hand, was brought to him by God. Salandra and Grotius also present Adam blaming Eve and Eve blaming the serpent. Du Bartus' version repeats the same scene:

> O righteous God (quote Adam) I am free
> From this offence: the wife thou gavest me
> For my companion and my comforter,
> She made me eat that deadly meat with her.[81]
>
> Lord (answers Eve) the Serpent did entice
> My simple frailty, to this sinful vice.[82]

Vondel changes the emphasis slightly, having Adam and Eve accuse each other of failing to do what was required of them:

> Eve. So thou wouldst cast thy fault upon
> my shoulders!
>
> Adam. Cause of my downfall and all grief
> to come, Are these the ways of woman?...
>
> Eve. A man should be a model to his wife.
> ...
> Weak female nature through desire was lost.
> ...
> A man should still be resolute and firm
> And hold his grond till woman's nature
> yields.[83]

Andreini and Calvin are each explicit about how this reaction on the part of Adam and Eve made them each the

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[81]Kirkconnell, p. 71.

[82]Ibid., p. 72.

[83]Ibid., pp. 474-475.

"picture of corrupt nature." Calvin speaks of Eve:

> Eve ought to have been confounded at the portentious wickedness concerning which she was admonished. Yet she is not struck dumb, but after the example of her husband, transfers the charge to another; by laying the blame on the serpent, she foolishly, indeed, and impiously, thinks herself absolved.[84]

Andreini states the same idea through an Angel's regretful speech about the mistake Adam and Eve are making:

> And how much better it had been for man
> To say: "I have sinned. Pardon, O Lord, I pray Thee!"
> Than to accuse his spouse and she the Serpent.
> ...
> ...and let each learn that God approves the meek and punishes the proud.[85]

Milton presents Adam and Eve traditionally as blaming each other for the Fall. As a continuation of the corruption of Adam and Eve by sin, Milton shows them in the same selfish light as in the analogues. But Milton dramatizes their blame of each other more like Vondel than the others. He has Eve accuse Adam of weakness for letting her work alone:

> Being as I am, why didst not thou the Head
> Command me absolutely not to go,
> Going into such danger as thou said'st?
> Too facile then thou didst not much gainst,
> Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
> Hadst thou been firm and fixt in thy dissent,
> Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with mee.
> (IX, 1155-1162)

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[84] Calvin, p. 164.

[85] Kirkconnell, p. 258.

Eve is reminding Adam of his place ahead of her on the Chain of Being, and its implied responsibilities. Adam, however, does not reply as Vondel's Adam does, with counter accusations that Eve should have upheld him. Instead Milton's Adam relies on the argument that he had no right to restrain Eve's decision to go if she so chose:

> I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold
> The danger, and the lurking Enemy
> That lay in wait; beyond this had been force,
> And force upon free will hath here no place. (IX, 1171-4)

This answer seems irrefutable,[86] and stresses Milton's main rationalization of the Fall, Adam and Eve's free choice. In none of the analogues do Adam or Eve use this argument.

Milton also partially changes the tradition of the judgment scene. In Paradise Lost Adam blames Eve, and God Himself for his sin, and Eve blames the serpent, as in the analogues. But there is a great imbalance between Adam's loquacity of self-justification and Eve's brief humility.[87] Adam insincerely declares that he is unwilling to speak evil of Eve, and then declares that Eve, the supposedly perfect gift of God is to blame for his sin:

> This woman thou mad'st to be my help,
> And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,
> So fit, so acceptable, so Divine,
> That from her hand I could suspect no ill,
> And what she did, whatever in itself,
> Her doing seem'd to justify the deed;
> She gave me of the Tree, and I did eat. (X, 137-143)

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[86] Low, p. 33.

[87] Gilbert, p. 256.

Adam appears at his worst in this scene. His blaming of Eve is not only selfish, it is unworthy of his position as her husband. Eve's very brief "The Serpent me beguil'd and I did eat," (X, 162) makes her humble and almost repentent compared with Adam. Milton is hinting at Eve's part in the reconciliation between Adam and Eve and God. Beginning with her statement to God concerning the reason for her sin, Milton presents Eve as the meek sinner for which Andreini's Angel wishes. Eve rather than Adam acts in a way which leads to their reunion with God.

The result of the Judgment scene is God's announcement of punishment. The Biblical story provides the traditional punishments of pain in childbearing and subjection to Adam for Eve, and hard labor raising food from a sterile earth for Adam. Milton and each of the analogue authors relate the Biblical punishments without variation. The significance in Milton's treatment of the announcement of punishment is his emphasis on the judgment of each person separately for what that person independently did.[88] Eve's liability to individual punishment emphasizes the fact that she, independent of Adam was free to fall or not to fall. After God's judgment Eve's position of voluntary subjection to Adam becomes enforced subjection: "...and

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[88]Revard, p. 70.

to thy Husband's will/ Thine shall submit, hee over thee shall rule." (X, 195-196) This seems to be a partial solution to one reason for the Fall, Eve's free will. Of course the worst punishment for Adam and Eve was their banishment from Eden. This more than anything was met with despair.

Adam and Eve's complete despair takes the form of wishes for death in Paradise Lost and two of the analogues. In Vondel's and Grotius' works Adam contemplates suicide and must be dissuaded by Eve. Vondel's Eve begs Adam not to leave her a widow, and criticizes his decision to die:

> Where's thy high genius now, that once could reach
> To comprehend the stars?...
> ...If my tears
> And humble pleas can move thee not, permit me
> To die together with thee, at thy side;
> For without thee I do not care to live.[89]

Adam answers that he will prolong his life because of love for Eve. This is a strange reversal of roles, having Eve preach reason. In Grotius' work Eve shows even more dominance over Adam, and pleads with him to use his male valor and reason: "Grant thyself time to gain self-mastery back once more/ And shed this untamed violence by using Reason!"[90] She argues that he must live so as not to be styled a coward who is afraid of life, so that

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[89]Kirkconnell, p. 476.

[90]Ibid., p. 195.

he will not compound his sin of disobedience with murder, and so that their future children might live. Finally she offers to die with Adam and he decides:

> Enough, enough, my wife, I shall obey thy word.
> Again shall I obey. Thou conquerest my heart,
> For right or wrong, thou art sole ruler of my thought.[91]

Both Vondel and Grotius present an unusually calm, intelligent, domineering Eve after the Fall, who is a complete contrast to their Eves before the Fall. Before the Fall, neither author bothered to make any effort to show Eve as an intellectual character.

Milton's Eve is not the victim of a contradictory characterization. Milton has established his Eve as the symbolic personification of beauty and put her in conflict with Adam as reason. After the Fall, Milton continues Eve's symbolic role. Adam in his despair longs for death, and speculates upon it, but it is Eve who suggests suicide as a solution to God's judgment. Death would prevent them from having children who must live banished from Eden, and experience eventual death:

> Then both ourselves and Seed at once to free
> From what we fear for both, let us make short,
> Let us seek Death, or be not found, supply
> With our own hands His Office ourselves. (X, 999-1002)

It is Adam who demonstrates the more reasonable mind, pointing out the difficulties of Eve's impassioned plan.

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[91]Kirkconnell, p. 195.

His speech also defends with calm reason God's just punishment of them, and the fruitlessness of trying to escape it:

> No more be mention'd then of violence
> Against ourselves, and wilful barrenness,
> That cuts us off from hope, and savors only
> Rancor and pride, impatience and despair,
> Reluctance against God and His just yoke
> Laid on our Necks....(X, 1041-1046)

Adam is maintaining his control over Eve as passion, and giving his reason the superior position. As in Milton's dramatization of Eve's dream, Adam is also fulfilling his matrimonial role as sustainer of Eve in times of moral stress. The hierarchy of the Chain of Being and the discipline of reason controlling passion are restored after their disruption by Adam and Eve's sin. Eve remains consistent in Paradise Lost. Before, during, and after the Fall she is both a realistic female and the symbolic representative of the sensual.

Eve is instrumental in the reconciliation between Adam and herself with God. Milton makes Eve's part explicit in Paradise Lost. She is first of the two to express humility and love. The restoration of matrimonial harmony between Adam and Eve leads to a larger harmony between man and God.[92] Only two of the analogue authors

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[92]Halkett, p. 134.

provide any basis for Milton's characterization. Grotius presents Eve as assuming the blame for both their sins when she is trying to convince Adam not to kill himself: "...Whatever error thou hast made thus far/ Is my fault surely. Condign punishment awaits me./ Sadly I had deceived thee...."[93] Eve's confession of her sin, and her unselfish assumption of blame had to be at least part of the reason for Adam's decision against suicide, and his renewed declaration of love for Eve. Andreini also presents Eve as first to confess her own fault:

> Adam, my Adam, whom I still call mine
> Though I have caused your ruin, hapless Eve
> Confesses, mourns, and sighs at her mistake,
> ...
> ...And I suffer pain,
> Seeing you pale, distraught...
> ...
> A woman, only evil do I merit.[94]

Milton's Eve also confesses blame, but goes even further and lovingly offers to sacrifice herself for Adam. Her speech of confession and love is even more meaningful because it follows Adam's insulting her: "Out of my sight, thou Serpent." (X, 867) Eve answers Adam's hate and anger:

> Forsake me not thus, Adam, witness Heav'n
> What love sincere, and reverence in my heart
> I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
> Unhappily deceiv'd; thy suppliant

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[93]Kirkconnell, p. 201.

[94]Ibid., p. 258.

> I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,
> ...
> ...Both have sinn'd, but thou
> Against God only, I against God and thee
> And to the place of judgment will return,
> There with my cries importune Heaven, that all
> The sentence from thy head remov'd may light
> On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe,
> Mee, Mee only just object of His ire. (X, 914-936)

Eve fulfils her role as subordinate and wife by indicating her need for Adam and begging for his support.[95] Adam is moved by Eve's humility, her dependence, and also her beauty.[96] He responds to her and their reconciliation with God is begun with their forgiveness of each other:

> She ended weeping, and her lowly plight,
> Immovable till peace obtain'd from fault
> Acknowledg'd and deplor'd, in Adam wrought
> Commiseration; soon his heart relented
> Towards her, his life so late and sole delight,
> Now at his feet submissive in distress,
> Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking,
> His counsel whom she had displeas'd, his aid;
> As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost,
> And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon.
> (X, 937-946)

After Adam and Eve's reunion they pray to God in repentance, and He accepts their prayers. Milton bases Adam and Eve's repentence on Eve's initiation.

Eve's part in bringing about the reconciliation between man and God make it appropriate that she should be likened to Mary who is called the "second Eve." This is a familiar comparison, but not a scriptural one.[97] Calvin

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[95]Duncan, p. 181.

[96]Halkett, p. 133.

[97]Gilbert, p. 260.

is emphatic in his scriptural interpretations that Eve is not linked in any way with Mary. Calvin's view of God's promise that Eve's seed shall bruise Satan's head is that the power of bruising Satan is imparted to all faithful men. Seed means the posterity of woman generally, and not the one man, Jesus Christ.[98] Calvin also refuses to give any significance to Eve's name meaning life. He explains that Adam's naming of Eve is a celebration of his escape of imminent death. Calvin exclaims that Adam could not deem Eve "the mother of the living who before any man could be born, had involved all in eternal destruction."[99]

Milton, as well as several of the analogue authors, does not use Calvin's interpretation. Du Bartus speaks of Christ as the good result of Adam and Eve's sin: "Making thee blessed more since thine offence,/ Than in thy primer happy innocence...."[100] Salandra presents the morality character Mercy as consoling Adam and Eve by foretelling the salvation through Christ, and the knowledge that Eve is primal mother...."[101] Milton does more than

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[98]Calvin, pp. 170-171.

[99]Ibid., p. 181.

[100]Kirkconnell, p. 74.

[101]Ibid., p. 215.

his predecessors to emphasize the comparison of Eve and Mary, and the restoration of mankind through the seed of Eve. There is no doubt that Milton rejected Calvin's interpretation, and instead allows Eve's seed to mean Christ Himself:

> Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.
> So spake this Oracle, then verfi'd
> When Jesus son of Mary second Eve (X, 181-183)

Milton also hails Eve's name: "Eve rightly call'd, Mother of all Mankind,/ Mother of all things living, since by thee/ Man is to live, and all things live for Man." (XI, 159-161) Eve in Paradise Lost unlike her predecessors, is given as much importance as possible in the deliverance of mankind. Milton seems to stress that Eve's part in Adam and Eve's reconciliation with God, and the future of all generations to follow, at least in part, undoes her sin and stores the result of it.[102] To accomplish this, Milton insists on the idea of Christ as woman's seed far beyond the Biblical tradition or the tradition established by his predecessors.

When Adam and Eve in Paradise Lost leave Eden, they leave with a much more explicit hope for the future than the first couples in any of the analogues. The fact that they can be hopeful about living out of Paradise is part of Milton's explanation of the Fall. The demonstration

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[102]Gilbert, p. 261.

of God's mercy in His just punishments and His offer of deliverance through Christ, and the promise that life outside Paradise is possible, make the Fall seem a little less horrible. Eve is necessary to Milton's dramatization of Adam and Eve as reconciled to their punishment, and hopeful about the new life ahead of them. Milton alters the Eve presented in the analogues. He is consistant in having her function symbolically as the sensual one and realistically as Adam's wife even after the Fall. In keeping with the characteristics she was given at creation, "softness and sweet attractive grace," Eve is meek when facing God's judgment. She reacts sensually and must rely on Adam's superior reason after God announces their punishment. Most importantly, she responds with love and self-sacrifice to Adam's hateful insults. The resulting reconciliation between Eve and Adam leads to their reunion with God, and His promise of hope through Christ. Eve is the instrument which makes it possible that the "Promis'd Seed shall all restore." (XII, 623) The Eves of the analogues do not play nearly as large a part as Milton's Eve in helping to provide a hopeful future for mankind. Milton's Eve is instrumental in allowing Paradise Lost to end with an optimistic note despite the Fall. Adam and Eve leave Paradise together reunited in love, and reconciled to God:

The World was all before them, where to choose
Thir place of rest, and Providence thir guide:
They hand in hand with wand'ring step and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way. (XII, 646-649)

CHAPTER IV

Conclusion

The comparison of Milton's Eve with her major predecessors has shown how Milton changed the traditional Eve so that she could help make the Fall in Paradise Lost believable. Traditionally, Eve is usually seen as a symbol of evil and occasionally as a deceived victim. Neither type of Eve would have provided Milton with a character who could function realistically as well as symbolically. Milton creates a humanized characterization of the first woman so that her psychological and physical motivations for choosing to disobey God are believable, and therefore, her part in the Fall is credible. Milton also created Eve in Adam's image, the sensual counterpart to his reason, dramatizing the conflict between the forces of mind and body, and providing Adam with a believable motivation for disobeying God. Finally, Milton's Eve initiates the reconciliation between herself, Adam, and God, and is the instrument through which Christ will be given to future generations for their deliverance Milton uses Eve in his major purpose of justifying the

Fall without altering her beyond recognition from the Biblical character.

Milton and his predecessors present a very similar Eve as far as the major traditions concerning her creation. Milton does not change the traditional fact of Eve being created from Adam's rib because of Adam's great need for a companion. But Milton's Eve does differ from the Eves of the analogues in several significant details. Milton begins his use of Eve in his purpose of justification even with her creation. According to the Bible, the reason Eve was created was to be Adam's "help meet." The analogue authors interpret "help meet" to mean a beautiful sexual companion for Adam. She is more equal to him than the animals, and therefore, a more appropriate mate, but she is still subordinate to him. Milton makes Eve's purpose include intellectual companion, housewife, and most important, Adam's image. The changes Milton makes in the purpose behind Eve's creation are important to his conception of the character and her function in Milton's purpose of explaining the Fall.

The events leading up to and surrounding Adam and Eve's fall are not supplied by the Bible. The analogue authors give almost no attention to providing any motivation for Eve or Adam's disobedience. The traditional explanation for Eve's fall is ambition. Milton does not

disregard the accepted reason behind Eve's fall, but is careful to give her motivation for acting as she does. First he establishes her freedom as a human being to choose obedience or disobedience to God. Then Milton provides dramatic evidence through original events preceeding Eve's temptation that hint toward possible human frailties. Finally, he makes Eve's desire for independence, and a chance to confront evil lead her to work alone in the garden. Satan's vastly superior polemic abilities, Eve's established weaknesses, and the added physical fact of Eve's hunger at noontime combine to cause Eve's disobedience. Adam's fall is likewise carefully motivated in Paradise Lost. However, the analogues present more of a tradition to follow in explaining Adam's fall. Eve nags and threatens Adam in almost each analogue until he finally weakens, and out of love for Eve declares that he will join her in eating the fruit. Milton again changes the tradition and has Adam fall because of love for himself, not Eve. Milton uses Eve, functioning symbolically as Adam's image, to dramatize Adam's choice of self over God. In Paradise Lost Eve becomes the vehicle for explaining not only her own fall, but also Adam's.

Eve is also important in the events following the Fall. Milton's justification theme continues after the Fall. He attempts to soften the impact of the world's

plunge into sin by emphasizing God's mercy in judging Adam and Eve, and the redemption of mankind through Christ. The analogue authors again provide a tradition that Milton possibly could have developed. In some analogues Eve begs Adam's forgiveness after they have realized the horror of their position after the Fall. But Milton gives Eve the role of initiator of the reconciliation between herself and Adam that leads to their reunion with God. He emphasizes her humility and selflessness in expressing love in answer to Adam's hatred. The idea of Mary as the "Second Eve" is also an established tradition, and appears to some extent in Milton's predecessors. But again, Milton expands the tradition, making Eve instrumental in his justification of the Fall. He repetitiously compares Eve to Mary, stressing the interpretation that Eve's "seed" is Christ, thereby emphasizing Eve's part in mankind's redemption. If Eve can be blamed for the Fall of man, she at least must also be credited with a part in mankind's deliverance according to Paradise Lost.

The result of Milton's expansion and alteration of the literary character of Eve, not into a character inconsistent with the Biblical Eve, but into one who serves his purpose of justification, is a Miltonic concep. of Eve herself. She is definitely not a female character

for which "women have much to forgive Milton"[103] as critics like Denis Saurat have claimed. Nor is Eve the biased presentation of an author in love with the character as Edward Wagenkneck believes.[104] Instead Milton's Eve is a combination of the tradition which blames Eve for the Fall of man, places her in a position subordinate to Adam, and gives her characteristics supposedly of lesser excellence than Adam's, with the result of creating a believable character who could help justify the Fall. Milton maintains the tradition of Eve as secondary to Adam in the hierarchy of the Chain of Being, but does not make her fall depend on typically feminine frailties. Milton also does not make Eve directly responsible for Adam's fall, but motivates Adam to fall through self-love. Eve's part in her own and Adam's reconciliation with God, and the redemption of mankind through Christ give her a noble role to counterbalance her part in bringing sin into the world. Milton is careful to present Eve as an individual. She is given the same choice of obeying or disobeying God that is granted to Adam, and is also given freedom to obey or disobey Adam's commands. Along with freedom to choose evil as well as good, Eve is punished individually for her actions. Milton

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[103]Denis Saurat, Milton: Man and Thinker (London: J. M. Dent and Son, 1944), p. 141.

[104]Wagenkneck, p. 130.

has created an independent Eve in Paradise Lost, free from the stereotypes of the tradition, but at the same time, not alien to them. His Eve is linked inseparately to his accomplishment of justification of the Fall of man. Eve seems to be one of his major tools in dramatizing motives for the Fall and explaining the consequences of it. While making Eve instrumental in his justification, Milton has also made her a vivid, believable character, possessing human strengths as well as weaknesses. She has helped Milton's justification, and he has helped her reputation.

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Vita

I was born in Annapolis, Maryland, on October 24, 1947. My father is an officer in the U. S. Navy, so my family has moved often, and I can claim no particular area as my home. In June, 1965, I graduated from Abington Senior High School, in Abington, Pennsylvania. The next four years I attended Randolph-Macon Woman's College in Lynchburg, Virginia, where I majored in English literature and minored in education. I received an A. B. degree from R-MWC in June 1969. That same summer I married William E. Wheeler, and began work for my master's degree at the University of Richmond. My studies were interrupted for two years while I worked as in insurance adjuster for Fireman's Fund American Insurance Company. In 1972 I stopped working and returned to the University of Richmond as a full time graduate student. I interrupted my studies again in June, 1973, when our first child, William Charles, was born. I returned to school when he was four months old. After graduation I have no immediate career plans.