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A STUDY OF SATAN AND THE POLITICS OF HELL IN PARADISE LOST

by

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A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

Approved,
George W. Whiting

3 1272 00400 0483

Houston, Texas
May, 1954

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PREFACE

The purpose of this study is to examine the political treatment of the fallen angels in Paradise Lost and, as far as possible, to relate the ideas and attitudes expressed in the epic to those found in Milton's prose tracts. Paradise Lost is not, of course, a thinly disguised allegory designed to interpret the tumultuous events of seventeenth century England; the major themes of the poem--"Eternal Providence," the Fall, the promise of redemption--exclude that possibility. Milton's explicit purpose of justifying "the wayes of God to men" leaves little ground for considering the poem to be mainly political. But this is not to say that Milton deliberately excluded all reference to things political from Paradise Lost.

The problem facing Milton as a poet was to make visible and concrete "things invisible to mortal sight." The task was not unlike that of Raphael, to

> . . . relate
> To human sense th' invisible exploits
> Of warring Spirits . . .

and to

> . . . unfold
> The secrets of another World, perhaps
> Not lawful to reveal . . .

Milton's solution, that of the poet and not of the philosopher or theorist, was found, like Raphael's, "By lik'ning spiritual to corporeal forms." Although classical epic tradition and Biblical myth gave him at once the form and matter for his poem, Milton drew upon many other diverse sources--Greek

philosophy, Patristic and Rabbinical commentary, the thought of his own day. But the immediate artistic problem was to assimilate this mass of material into his mythical framework in the most concrete and dramatic manner possible. The bare Old Testament story of the Creation and the Fall hardly afforded scope for a narrative whose ambitious purpose is to "justifie the wayes of God to men."

One way in which Milton enriched his myth was to treat many aspects of his subject in distinctly political terms. Satan, sitting "on a Throne of Royal State," often hurls the epithets tyrant and monarch heavenward; his transgression is represented as a revolt "Against the Throne and Monarchy of God"; his followers call him "thir matchless Chief" yet bow towards him "With awful reverence prone." Satan and the other devils receive the largest share of political terminology that is in any way relevant to Milton's tracts on liberty, for the hellish crew throughout the poem are fallen and consequently near to fallen man. The Monarchy of Heaven is perfect and immutable and accepted as just. Although Adam was created superior to Eve and given "Absolute rule" over her, few, if any, directly political implications are involved in Adam's acquiescing in her wish that he, too, taste of the apple; throughout most of Paradise Lost our first parents live in the state of innocence and consequently, like God, are far removed from the world of mundane politics. I shall attempt to show, then, that the state affairs of the rebel angels embody a meaning which is related to and, in the main, consistent with the ideas Milton developed during his long period of pamphlet warfare.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The first two books of Paradise Lost present Satan and his followers as a group of defeated rebels trying to determine in what way they can regain their lost state or at least improve their present condition. That Milton's conception of them is largely political is evident even in the answer to the epic question ("Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?") which effects a transition from the introduction to the action of the poem:

> Th' infernal Serpent; hee it was, whose guile
> Stirrd up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv'd
> The Mother of Mankinde; what time his Pride
> Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his Host
> Of Rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring
> To set himself in Glory above his Peers,
> He trusted to have equald the most High,
> If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim
> Against the Throne and Monarchy of God
> Rais'd impious Warr in Heav'n and Battel proud
> With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
> Hurld headlong flaming from th'Ethereal Skie
> With hideous ruin and combustion down
> To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
> In Adamantin Chains and penal Fire,
> Who durst defie th'Omnipotent to Arms.
> (I, 34-49)

The great debate of Book II gives Satan scope to reveal his cunning and stature as a leader; the skillful manipulation of the emotions and loyalties of the fallen angels is aimed at convincing them of Satan's apparent worthiness and unselfishness, the sine qua non of a popular leader. From the point of view of his followers Satan is everything a leader should be: he is not concerned with the interests of self, he has resisted what he has styled tyranny, and he accepts

as leader the most dangerous duties conceivable to them. Although the orderly behavior of the fallen angels under Satan's rule prompts Milton to exclaim:

> O shame to men! Devil with Devil damnd
> Firm concord holds: men onely disagree
> Of Creatures rational, though under hope
> Of heav'nly Grace . . . (II, 496-499)

the praise has been somewhat qualified--"for neither do the Spirits damnd / Loose all thir vertue" (482-483)--and, as I shall attempt to show in this study, the political situation of Hell is ultimately wrong in Milton's system of thought, even though it may seem to work efficiently for a time. But before a detailed examination of the political genesis of Satan may be undertaken, some consideration of the motives for and the nature of his revolt is necessary.

The tumultuous events leading to the ejection from Heaven of Satan and his followers are related not by the narrative voice of the poem but by Raphael in answer to Adam's request. Some of the angel's earlier remarks to Adam are relevant to the problem of Satan's revolt and fall. Raphael has expounded to Adam a concise version of the doctrine of the chain of being (V, 469-503): a scale of creation rising by steps, each perfect in itself, to the final source of all being, "from whom / All things proceed." Man's place in this mighty chain, though fixed, is not static: Raphael offers Adam and his race the possibility of rising finally "all to spirit"--on the crucial condition that "ye be found obedient". The scale allows ascending, not climbing; "God made thee perfect, not immutable," Raphael cautions. Since the angel's

remarks about the great chain were occasioned by Adam's surprise that Raphael should partake of earthly food, the possibility of man's rising is presented in terms of diet:

> . . . time may come when men
> With Angels may participate, and find
> No inconvenient Diet, nor too light Fare:
> And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
> Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
> Improv'd by tract of time, and wingd ascend
> Ethereal . . .

But the injunction is that man ascend through obedience; he may not violate the order of the chain. Satan, offering the fruit to Eve, effects a distorted parallel to Raphael's promise:

> And what are Gods that Man may not become
> As they, participating God-like food?
> (IX, 716-717)

This is much like what Raphael had said, but here there is no mention of rising by slow ascending degrees, in "tract of time"; Satan urges Eve to take matters into her own hands, to bring about a sudden disruption of the chain--to raise herself "by putting off / Human, to put on Gods" (IX, 713-714). Immediately after eating the apple, Eve is aware of the break in the chain. Wondering whether to let Adam share the "Full happiness" of the newly acquired knowledge with her, she momentarily considers withholding the apple in order to alter her position in the chain relative to Adam, who before the Fall had "Absolute rule" (IV, 301):

> . . . shall I to him make known
> As yet my change, and give him to partake
> Full happiness with mee, or rather not,
> But keep the odds of Knowledge in my power
> . . . . . .

> . . . [so to] render me more equal, and perhaps
> A thing not undesireable, sometime
> Superior . . . (IX, 817-825)

Satan's fall is due, of course, to a similar failure to remain obedient, to respect the integrity of the chain. The great chain is, in effect, a metaphorical version of the idea of hierarchy, which C. S. Lewis finds fundamental to Paradise Lost.[1] Although Adam fell as a direct result of Eve's capitulation to the serpent's temptation, Satan's transgression was the same as Adam's. The fall of Satan, no less than that of Adam, is the result of disobedience; both Satan and Adam disrupt, or interfere with, the order established by God. Otherwise, however, as Milton's God makes clear, there are significant differences which finally determine the fate respectively of the fallen angels and of fallen man:

> The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
> Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls deceiv'd
> By th' other first: Man therefore shall find Grace,
> The other none . . . (III, 129-131)

But, in any event, the external, objective nature of the fall is a violation of the divine scheme of things, the great chain, the hierarchy. At the risk of oversimplification and consequent distortion, I shall not attempt a thorough analysis of the inner or psychological causes of Satan's revolt or attempt to find what Mr. Tillyard would call the conscious and unconscious meanings in Milton's treatment of Satan. Pride or "sense of injur'd merit" is a readily

obvious cause which is manifested in many, if not all, of Satan's words and acts; and pride as the cause of Satan's revolt may be conveniently interpreted, for the purposes of this study, in terms of hierarchy or the chain--dissatisfaction with the divinely ordained system or a manifestation of this dissatisfaction in the desire to change it, both of which are evident in Satan.

Raphael's account of the rebellion of the angels indicates that it began as what Arnold Stein calls "mass contagion."[2] The revolt, originating in the mind of Satan, spreads rapidly through the ranks of the heavenly host. Satan, in disgust and envy occasioned by the proclamation of "Messiah King anointed" (V, 664), easily persuades Beelzebub to transgress (V, 673-693). Raphael's comment after repeating to Adam Satan's speech:

> So spake the false Arch-Angel, and infus'd
> Bad influence into th' unwarie brest
> Of his Associat . . . (V, 694-696)

demonstrates the validity of the maxim Adam delivers to Eve after her dream:

> Evil into the mind of God[3] or Man
> May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave
> No spot or blame behind . . . (V, 117-119)

It also points towards the ease with which the perilous balance of the system of hierarchical values postulated in the poem may be upset at any time. Raphael's account of the revolt affords Satan no chance to utter a soliloquy; we are given only what Satan says in public: the words which easily "infus'd / Bad influence" into Beelzebub, the address to "the

third part of Heav'ns Host," the debates with Abdiel, the furious exchanges during the battle, and the leader's vaunting encouragement to his troops. The difference between Satan's private speeches and emotions and the pose he assumes before others needs no extended comment at present. Raphael, even if he has heard a Satanic soliloquy (and it is certainly useless to speculate on the possibility), does not see fit to communicate it to Adam-- and, besides, the reader has already been allowed to eavesdrop on Satan several times. Adam is told that after God had "begot" the Son "All seemd well pleas'd, all seemd, but were not all" (V, 617). Satan fell, Raphael says in effect, through wounded pride, through failure to abide by the true hierarchical principles set forth earlier to Adam: Satan "could not beare / Through pride that sight [of the Son anointed] , and thought himself impaird" (V, 664-665). From this wounded pride sprang his "Deep malice . . . and disdain" (V, 666).

Much later, after having been forced from Heaven, sojourned in Hell, and fought his way through Chaos, Satan confesses to himself both the reasons for and the injustice of his revolt:

> . . . Pride and worse Ambition threw me down
> Warring in Heav'n against Heav'ns matchless
> King:
> Ah wherefore? he deservd no such return
> From mee, whom he created what I was
> In that bright eminence, and with his good
> Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
> What could be less then to afford him praise,
> The easiest recompence, and pay him thanks,

> How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
> And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
> I sdeind subjection, and thought one step
> higher
> Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
> The debt immense of endless gratitude,
> So burdensome, still paying, still to ow;
> Forgetful what from him I still receivd,
> And understood not that a grateful mind
> By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
> Indebted and discharg'd; what burden then?
> (IV, 40-57)

Here Satan, developing the implications of Raphael's "thought himself impaird," discloses his knowledge of the hierarchical scale he has violated. Although Satan's speech is not, like Raphael's in Book V, devoted to an exposition of the system operating in the universe, it nevertheless clearly shows his consciousness of the doctrine:

> . . . lifted up so high
> I sdeind subjection, and thought one step
> higher
> Would set me highest . . .

Satan does not plead that there was any injustice inherent in this system (although a few lines later he reasons himself into a position in which he must paradoxically blame for his present wretched condition "Heav'ns free Love dealt equally to all"). Nor does he hesitate to admit that his revolt itself has been vain and unjust:

> . . . Pride and worse Ambition threw me down
> Warring in Heav'n against Heav'ns matchless
> King.

The pose assumed before his followers Satan has suddenly dropped. He gives an account of the great chain from the point of view of the Fall and consequently an account far more effective than Raphael's: Satan has learned the truth

of the doctrine through the bitter and harsh experience of disregarding it. An authorial aside a little later in the narrative provides a pathetic commentary which Satan himself could have made:

> . . . So little knows
> Any, but God alone, to value right
> The good before him, but perverts best things
> To worst abuse, or to thir meanest use.
> (IV, 201-204)

The false notion of raising oneself in the hierarchical scale seems indeed to be an idea that accompanies the fallen always. Satan himself is, of course, responsible for spreading it. In Book I he announces to his assembled followers:

> . . . who can yet beleeve, though after loss,
> That all these puissant Legions . . .
> . . . shall faile to re-ascend
> Self-rais'd, and repossess thir native seat?
> (I, 631-634)

Satan's rhetorical question receives an implicit <u>yes</u> as answer in the infernal debate when Moloc proposes a full-scale war to speed up the natural ascent of spirits:

> . . . in our proper motion we ascend
> Up to our native seat: descent and fall
> To us is adverse. Who but felt of late
> . . . . . .
> With what compulsion and laborious flight
> We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easie then.
> (II, 75-81)

Another <u>yes</u> comes even with Mammon's policy of founding an empire in Hell, for the devils wish to embrace this procedure as much to avoid the sword of Michael as

> To found this nether Empire, which might rise
> By pollicy, and long process of time,
> In emulation opposite to Heav'n. (II, 296-298)

Emulation in this case, no less than open war, involves

active interference with the natural upward motion; these means are contrary to obedient rising by slow steps in "tract of time," although emulation seems to be the same.

Satan uses a distorted and very inaccurate version of the hierarchical doctrine in the preparations not only for his second great offense (persuading Eve to eat the fruit) but also for his original. His speech (V, 772-802) to the assembled angels, actually his first public address, contains most of the elements of the doctrine of hierarchy, but they are jumbled. To what extent Satan is purposely jumbling things for obvious reasons and to what extent the jumbling represents an idea sincerely held is difficult, perhaps impossible, to determine. It is mainly attributable, I believe, to the personal "sense of injur'd merit" which lies just below the surface of the rhetoric. In any event, appearing before his followers and lacking the knowledge he is about to gain through the full experience of evil, Satan cannot deal honestly with the facts as he will in the moment of self-candor we have seen in Book IV. In the context of the whole poem the speech in Book V is, of course, absurd, as C. S. Lewis points out;[4] but, considered by itself, it sufficiently masks its contradictions to be a shrewd and effective piece of mob psychology: only Abdiel sees through the mask. The wilful way in which Satan almost unobtrusively allows these contradictions into his speech (with only superficial and inadequate reconciliation) foreshadows the furious sophistry of the debate with the "seditious" Abdiel which

ensues. Satan begins his speech with heavily ironical taunts about the actual hierarchical positions held by his followers; the emphasis, as it always turns out to be with Satan, is on the external trappings which denote "Semblance of worth not substance" (I, 529):

> Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Vertues, Powers,
> If these magnific Titles yet remain
> Not meerly titular . . . (V, 772-774)

Satan continues impressively enough, urging his followers "to cast off this Yoke" of "Knee-tribute . . ., prostration vile, / Too much to one" but now doubled with the elevation of the Son. He bitingly reminds them of the paradox of their being equally free yet not actually equal. This paradox leads him to utter another to explain the first:

> . . . for Orders and Degrees
> Jarr not with liberty, but well consist.

Satan here achieves two ends: he arouses his followers against the Son for assuming monarchy over them, for infringing on their "liberty," and he is carefully preventing them from dismissing the idea of hierarchy, for he himself is about to exact from them "Knee-tribute" and "prostration vile." Later, when Satan has managed to get Hell into some sort of order, the fallen angels bow towards him "With awful reverence prone" (II, 478). He is, in effect, persuading his followers to exchange their positions in a monarchy for subservience to a true tyrant. At the conclusion of his speech he becomes almost explicit on this point. The "magnific Titles," he cries, "assert / Our being ordaind to

govern, not to serve." Yet "Orders and Degrees / Jarr not with liberty." Satan feels that he was not ordained to serve. The transfer of his own feelings to the situation of his followers wins immediate approval from them; Satan's desire to invert the hierarchical order, or at least to form a new and independent one, is not obvious to them, however; for, during the battle, he is still considered, in the words of one of the rebels, as a "Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free / Enjoyment of our right as Gods" (VI, 451-452).

Satan's tampering with hierarchy has its political significance within the scope of Paradise Lost. Satan is not, as he would have others think, interfering with a tyrannical system; Paradise Lost does not present the divine order as tyranny but rather as a system which is inherently right and just. It is right, according to the ideas in the poem, that superiors should rule inferiors. As Abdiel says (to Satan, by the way);

> . . . God and Nature bid the same,
> When he who rules is worthiest, and excells
> Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
> To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebelld
> Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee.
> (VI, 176-180)

Adam transgresses, as Lewis observes, by obeying Eve rather than God;[5] Satan, as Stein points out, is wrong in placing his allegiance downward to his followers rather than upward to God.[6] It is only in the unclear vision of a Satan that the order is defective, and even Satan, we see in Book IV,

realizes his initial error, although the admission is never communicated to others. The temptation is great--Shelley, among others, succumbs to it--to look at Satan as a noble republican struggling against an ignoble tyrant. Even the facts of Milton's political career would seem to offer supporting evidence for this view of the poem. But God in Paradise Lost, whatever he may at times seem to Satan, is not a Stuart ruler: Charles I Milton did not consider superior to his subjects in wisdom, virtue, and goodness; God he did. Even though, as Lewis suggests, "there is felt to be a disquieting contrast between republicanism for the earth and royalism for Heaven," to think that Milton was "secretly of the devil's party" discloses "a deep misunderstanding of Milton's central thought."[7] Not only in the epic poem but in some of the prose tracts as well is the idea of hierarchy presented as a thing desirable and good in itself. In the tract The Reason of Church Government, discipline, which is implicit in hierarchy, is viewed as a thing of absolute necessity, and it is indicated that true discipline has for its archetypal pattern the heavenly order:

> For there is not that thing in the world of more grave and urgent importance throughout the whole life of man, then is discipline.... And certainly discipline is not only removall of disorder, but if any visible shape can be given to divine things, the very visible shape and image of vertue, whereby she is not only seene in the regular gestures and motions of her heavenly paces as she walkes, but also makes her voice audible to mortall eares. Yea the Angels themselves, in whom no disorder is fear'd, as the Apostle that saw them in his rapture describes, are distinguisht and quaterniond into their

> celestiall Princedomes, and Satrapies,
> according as God himselfe has writ his
> imperiall decrees through the great provinces
> of heav'n.[8]

In connection with this passage one is tempted to cite Raphael's qualifying question which follows his promise to tell of "what surmounts the reach / Of human sense . . . / By lik'ning spiritual to corporeal forms":

> . . . though what if Earth
> Be but the shaddow of Heav'n, and things
> therein
> Each to other like, more then on Earth
> is thought? (V, 574-576)

But one must not mistake this question for a direct statement: Raphael just throws out, as it were, a hint, and there is nothing to warrant accepting the hint as a statement of Milton's political philosophy. Since Raphael is speaking of earth before the Fall, the question most probably refers to man's superiority over woman and over the beasts of the field as analogous to the heavenly order. The divine order is static, fixed by God; the earthly hierarchy, asserting the superiority of one species over another, is also fixed. The human or specifically political hierarchy, however, is relative to the goodness and wisdom of men, which are not stable. The most relevant commentary on these lines comes from the prose. In a panegyrical passage on Cromwell from the Second Defense, Milton points out the Protector's great merit as the quality which justifies his high position, yet he goes on to indicate that Cromwell does not need high and elaborate titles:

> To your invincible virtue we all give place, all but such, who without equal ability are desirous of equal honours; who look with envy upon the honours bestowed upon others more worthy than themselves, or who know not that there is nothing in human society more pleasing to God, or more agreeable to reason; that there is nothing more just in a state, nothing more useful, than that the most worthy should possess the sovereign power. That you are such, Cromwell, that such have been your deeds, is acknowledged by all--you, who are the greatest and most glorious of our citizens, the director of the public counsels, the leader of the bravest of armies, the father of your country: for by this title do all good men hail you with spontaneous voice sent forth from the heart. Other titles, though merited by you, your actions know not, endure not; and those proud ones, deemed great in vulgar opinion, they deservedly cast from them. For what is a title, but a certain mode of dignity? Your achievements . . . rise above the popular atmosphere of titles, as the tops of pyramids hide themselves in the clouds.[9]

The implication is clearly that there is a danger in assigning "magnific Titles" or rigid hierarchical values to men in social or political life. There is no proof that a leader's goodness and virtue will not become corrupted, there is nothing to keep a Caesar from accepting a crown, and finally it is angels, not man, "in whom no disorder is feared." Qualifying what may have seemed only exalted, empty praise and revealing that Milton's attitude is tempered with a realistic awareness of the precarious state of affairs in 1654, the conclusion of the passage on Cromwell emphasizes the dangers inherent in a popular leader:

> Last of all, respect yourself, and suffer not that liberty, which you have gained with so many hardships, so many dangers, to be violated by yourself, or in any wise impaired by others. Indeed, without our freedom, you

> yourself cannot be free: for such is the order of nature, that he who forcibly seizes upon the liberty of others, is the first to lose his own, is the first to become a slave; and nothing can be more just than this.[10]

The career of Satan embodies in concrete and dramatic form these ideas stated in the abstract language of the prose tracts. I do not wish to suggest that Satan is really Cromwell in disguise--he is no more that than the God of Paradise Lost is Charles I. But Satan does exemplify a leader who attempts to set up his own hierarchy: although he disguises the fact, his government is a copy of the external features of the heavenly system; and he expends great effort to see that the order within his system remains static. The hierarchies of Heaven and Hell seem to be at opposite poles of the moral sphere; Satan's resolve, "Evil be thou my Good" (IV, 110), and his sense of glory in being "Antagonist of Heav'ns Almightie King" (X, 387) sharply play up the opposition. The following chapters will trace Satan's political conduct in detail.

II. ON THE PLAINS OF HEAV'N

The political career of Satan may be said to begin at the moment he instructs Beelzebub to call together the angels who will be incited to revolt; it ends with the reader's last glimpse of him--transmuted into a serpent, "punisht in the shape he sinnd, / According to his doom" (X, 516-517). In order to explain more clearly the factors involved in Satan's political conduct, I shall trace his career chronologically, referring to the epic sequence of Paradise Lost only when it seems important for purposes at hand. When Satan rises from the burning lake in Book I, he already has a long and complicated history behind him--his dissatisfaction with the elevation of the Son, his organization of the revolt, and finally his disastrous participation in the War in Heaven, events related in a series of flashbacks narrated by Raphael. The chronological time covered in the epic extends from Raphael's account of the elevation of the Son to Michael's prophecy of the time when Satan will be "dissolved" and "New Heav'ns, new Earth" made to replace the old (XII, 546, 549). The events directly narrated occupy a comparatively brief time: the main action of the poem centers upon the events coming immediately before and after the Fall of Man. This emphasis is, of course, in keeping with the invocation of Book I. Milton's central subject, at least as far as the actual narrative is concerned, is

> . . . Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit

> Of that Forbidd'n Tree, whose mortal tast
> Brought Death into the World, and all our
> woe,
> With loss of Eden ... (I, 1-4)

All the events in the poem are presented only insofar as they account for the Fall and help the poet with his assertion of Eternal Providence and the justice of God's ways with men.

The epic time-scheme thus makes the enormous emphasis on Satan in the opening books inevitable; however, it does not necessarily make Satan the central figure of the poem. As the narrative unfolds it becomes increasingly evident that the main drama is to take place not in Hell but in Paradise; the infernal debate itself finally resolves about the problem (of which the solution has never been in doubt) of who will journey to the Garden to tempt Adam and Eve. It is significant that Satan is introduced in answer to the stock epic question: "Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?" (I, 33) The conflicts in Hell are finally subordinated to the temptation, for the general movement of the epic leads finally into the Garden. Consequently the presentation of Satan is qualified in several ways: the action directly narrated in the poem progressively dissipates the tremendous emphasis placed on Satan at the opening; he is reduced even in size--at first he appears as an archangel like "that Sea-beast / Leviathan" (I, 200-201), then as a toad, and at last as a serpent (a serpent both in his disguise in Eden and in his punishment in Hell).[1] Of even more importance, in a consideration of Satan as a politician, is the progressive

slackening of narrative interest in his relation to his followers. After Satan leaves Hell in Book II to embark on his dangerous enterprise, this relationship becomes much less prominent; and when he at last returns--"With what permissive glory since his fall / Was left him" (X, 451-452)--to lead his followers "Triumphant out of [that] infernal pit," (X, 464), the temporary mass metamorphosis into serpents symbolizes the dissolution of the relationship or at least an ironical reversal in attitude on the part of the fallen angels:

> . . . a while he stood, expecting
> Thir universal shout and high applause
> To fill his eare, when contrary he hears
> On all sides, from innumerable tongues
> A dismal universal hiss, the sound
> Of public scorn . . . (X, 504-509)

The actual epic events narrated in Paradise Lost, then, tend to place Satan in a subordinate position. His political career can hardly be said to follow a slowly rising curve; but when he pretends to be at the height of triumph, Satan's fortunes take an abrupt and ironical turn: his successful temptation of Eve, the fulfillment of his promise to his followers, actually brings about not the relief or even the vengeance they had sought but instead (despite the reign of Sin and Death) their utter ruin. Satan's character is seen finally to take its place in the overall scheme of the epic: Satan's evil is at last made the instrument for good. Nor is Satan himself oblivious to the fact that God intends evil to recoil back upon itself to

produce good:

> . . . If then his Providence
> Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
> Our labor must be to pervert that end,
> And out of good still to find means of
> evil. (I, 162-165)

Satan is ultimately defeated in his attempts "to pervert that end"; and, although his success seems at times very easily come by, the evil he brings about ultimately in turn entails, in accordance with the divine scheme, a greater good, no matter how far into the future that good may be. The Fall of Man, leading to the promise of the inner paradise, is ironically the final frustration of Satan's purposes.

The actual chronological events related in the poem put Satan in an even less significant place than the main action leading up to the temptation. The epic framework of Paradise Lost makes it possible for Milton to present Satan as a great dramatic figure opposing Eternal Providence; in this way Satan is responsible for much of the action of the poem: the scenes in Hell, the War in Heaven, and, most important, the temptation. But nevertheless, considered in the large expanse of time covered in the poem, Satan's position is inferior: just as the epic events slowly converge upon the temptation in the Garden, so Satan's importance diminishes as Michael's narration to Adam progresses farther and farther into the future. The emphasis shifts even more definitely (as the opening lines of the poem promise) towards Man. Milton's intention, stated in the invocation, is clearly that the emphasis should be preponderantly on Man, not Satan. Milton's

declaration of intention, of course, must not be taken at face value; it must be tested against the actual completed poem. If, then, Satan is seen to be of undue importance, to be so prominent that it is possible to regard him as the "hero" of Paradise Lost, a serious artistic flaw has been discovered in the poem. There would thus be some justice in Shelley's remarks on the poem when he compares his own Prometheus with Satan:

> Prometheus is, in my judgement, a more poetical character than Satan, because, in addition to courage, and majesty, and firm and patient opposition to omnipotent force, he is susceptible of being described as exempt from the taints of ambition, envy, revenge, and a desire for personal aggrandisement, which, in the Hero of Paradise Lost, interfere with the interest. The character of Satan engenders in the mind a pernicious casuistry which leads us to weigh his faults with his wrongs, and to excuse the former because the latter exceed all measure. In the minds of those who consider that magnificent fiction with a religious feeling it engenders something worse.[2]

It is an easy task to account for Shelley's view of Paradise Lost by considering his own idealistic and revolutionary tendencies. A comparison of a passage from Milton's poem with the final stanza of Prometheus Unbound shows how Shelley can speak of Satan's "patient opposition to omnipotent force" and the "wrongs" Satan suffers. After Michael's revelation to Adam, our grand parent says:

> Henceforth I learne, that to obey is best,
> And love with feare the only God, to walk
> As in his presence, ever to observe
> His providence, and on him sole depend,
> Merciful over all his works, with good
> Still overcoming evil, and by small
> Accomplishing great things, by things deemd
> weak

> Subverting worldly strong, and worldly
> wise
> By simply meek . . . (XII, 561-569)

The catalog of Shelleyan virtues which closes the Romantic drama:

> To suffer woes which Hope things infinite;
> To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
> To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
> To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
> From its own wreck the thing it contemplates:
> Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
> This, like thy glory, Titan! is to be
> Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free:
> This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory!

while it lists some attributes in accord with Milton's beliefs-- "To forgive wrongs," "To defy Power, which seems omnipotent," and so forth--nevertheless includes the specifically non-Miltonic "Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent." Shelley's opinion of Satan is thus, I believe, a result of his own personal ideas, and these ideas caused the Romantic poet to disregard Milton's professed intention and, even worse, to fail to see how this intention is carried out in Paradise Lost.[3] That Milton does carry out his intention and that Satan's activities are related not so much for their own sake as for their place in the overall design of the poem, I have attempted to show in my cursory discussion of Satan in relation to the time-scheme of the epic.

Although Satan's revolt seems to come about almost autonomously--"Through pride" he "thought himself impaird" (V, 665)--the case with which he persuades other angels to follow him is due at least in part to his high prelapsarian position. His effective oratory is, of course, mainly

responsible for his success: the speech from Book V discussed in the previous chapter sways, with the exception of Abdiel, all who hear it; and only Satan's words rouse the fallen from the burning lake in Book I, although Milton is careful to indicate that the evil thus brought about will finally produce good:

> So stretcht out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay
> Chaind on the burning Lake, nor ever thence
> Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will
> And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
> Left him at large to his own dark designs,
> That with reiterated crimes he might
> Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
> Evil to others, and enrag'd might see
> How all his malice served but to bring forth
> Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn
> On man by him seduc't . . . (I, 209-219)

Paradise Lost actually says little about Satan's condition before his fall, and much of that little is deliberately obscure. For one thing, the common tradition that the angels lost their original names after their disobedience is alluded to several times in the poem. Raphael, beginning his narration to Adam of Satan's revolt, takes pains to make known the infamy of Satan's name:

> . . . but not so wak'd
> Satan, so call him now, his former name
> Is heard no more in Heav'n . . . (V, 657-659)

In Book I, before the epic catalogue of fallen angels, Milton suggests a source for the devils' names which seems to contradict what Raphael says, but perhaps the passages when taken together are supposed to indicate that the "sons of Eve" have good authority for what they call Satan and his crew:

> . . . of thir Names in heav'nly Records now
> Be no memorial blotted out and ras'd
> By thir Rebellion, from the Books of Life.
> Nor had they yet among the Sons of Eve
> Got them new Names, till wandring ore the
> Earth,
> Through God's high sufferance for the trial
> of man,
> By falsities and lyes the greatest part
> Of Mankind they corrupted to forsake
> God thir Creator, and th' invisible
> Glory of him that made them, to transform
> Oft to the Image of a Brute, adornd
> With gay Religions full of Pomp and Gold,
> And Devils to adore for Deities:
> Then were they known to men by various Names,
> And various Idols through the Heathen World.
> (I, 361-375)

Even the opening scene of the epic alludes to the fact that the fallen were still nameless; Satan's first words are addressed to:

> One next himself in power, and next in crime,
> Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd
> Beëlzebub. To whom th' Arch-Enemy,
> And thence in Heav'n calld Satan . . .
> (I, 80-82)

In fact, Raphael does not give a catalogue of the angels participating in the War in Heaven; he mentions, of course, besides Satan, only those who play significant roles in the battle. The instructing angel explains:

> I might relate of thousands, and thir names
> Eternize here on Earth; but those elect
> Angels contented with thir fame in Heav'n
> Seek not the praise of men: the other sort
> In might though wondrous and in Acts of Warr,
> Nor of Renown less eager, yet by doome
> Cancelld from Heav'n and sacred memorie,
> Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell.
> . . . . . .
> . . . Eternal silence be thir doome.
> (VI, 373-385)

Even though Milton lacks the explicitness of Chaucer's

"O Lucifer, brightest of angels alle," it is clear that before his fall Satan did occupy a very high position in the heavenly hierarchy. He is, of course, a seraph, a member of the highest of the nine orders of angels. But there is a deliberate ambiguity in Raphael's account of the unfallen Satan:

> . . . hee of the first,
> If not the first Arch-Angel, great in Power,
> In favor and præeminence . . . (V, 659-661)

The passage can mean that Satan was among the highest angels, although he was not the first of these; or, on the other hand, it may mean that Satan was among the highest of the angels and that perhaps he was the highest of these. Raphael's attitude here seems to be in keeping with the advice he later gives Adam:

> . . . Heav'n is for thee too high
> To know what passes there; be lowlie wise.
> (VIII, 172-173)

In any event, Satan is definitely the highest among that portion of the angels who followed him in his revolt. We are told that the angels responded easily to the command, delivered by Beelzebub according to his superior's instructions, to meet at "The quarters of the North" (V, 699):

> . . . all obeyd
> The wonted signal, and superior voice
> Of their great Potentate; for great indeed
> His name, and high was his degree in Heav'n.
> (V, 704-707)

Although the command delivered by Beelzebub was couched in "Ambiguous words" (V, 703) and "lies" (V, 709), the angels did not hesitate to obey the "wonted signal"; after all, they

were used to orders from their superior. Raphael himself seems to be mildly shocked at this early success of Satan's, for he relates his account of it with a qualifying but (V, 704): one would expect the angels to see through the carefully laid plans. Perhaps, however, since they are here merely obeying a command, the angels can be excused; even Abdiel, by the way, apparently did not yet know what was happening. To Raphael the whole opening incident seems to represent, on a small scale, a foreshadowing of the reception of the speech which actually puts the angels in the right frame of mind for the War in Heaven. Raphael, however, does allude to the fact of Satan's high position, a fact which seems to make the angels' unquestioning obedience to their immediate superior inevitable. That they also accept his blasphemous speech urging revolt would also seem inevitable and perversely excusable under the circumstances of his high authority and eminent position; but if such were the case it would constitute an implicit condemnation of Heaven's hierarchical scheme; the rigid system would itself be responsible for the fall of the angels, and they would be free from blame since they would not have been free to choose.[4] One of the functions of Abdiel in the narrative is to cancel the possibility of this implication and to transfer the blame directly to the angels, not the system. The angel whom Satan calls seditious clearly exemplifies freedom of choice. But, almost as if he were blasphemous in his insubordination to Satan, Abdiel is ignored and ridiculed:

> So spake the Seraph Abdiel faithful found,
> Among the faithless, faithful onely hee;
> Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
> Unshak'n, unseduc't, unterrifi'd
> His Loyaltie he kept, his Love, his Zeale;
> Nor number, nor example with him wrought
> To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind
> Though single. From amidst them forth he passd,
> Long way through hostil scorn, which he susteind
> Superior, nor of violence feard aught;
> And with retorted scorn his back he turnd
> On those proud Towrs to swift destruction doomd. (V, 896-907)

The transgression of the angels, since they had the unheeded example of right conduct in their midst, thus becomes even more execrable than that of our first parents. That the angels, like Adam, were free to choose gives a peculiarly ominous tone to the words of warning which Raphael appends to his narration of the War in Heaven:

> . . . list'n not to [Satan's] Temptations, warne
> Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard
> By terrible Example the reward
> Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,
> Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress.
> (VI, 908-912)

Yet Milton's attitude toward the fall of the angels is not a simple matter: even after their painful expulsion from Heaven Satan has little trouble in reasserting his superiority over them, and the suggestion remains that they followed him because of the high rank he had held in Heaven. The final word on the angels--first spoken by Abdiel to Satan:

> . . . thy hapless crew involv'd
> In this perfidious fraud, contagion spred
> Both of thy crime and punishment . . .
> (V, 879-881)

and last by the narrative voice of the poem:

> . . . the dire form [of serpent]
> Catchd by Contagion, like in punishment,
> As in thir crime . . . (X, 543-545)

--emphasizes at once the power of Satan and the inevitability of their fall, only Abdiel's obedience remaining as concrete evidence that they chose to follow Satan.

Even in the account of the beginnings of the revolt--that is, in Satan's first words to Beelzebub, his address to the assembled angels, and the bits of description in the passage--Milton indirectly points up the political and military significance of Satan. This, of course, does not come as a surprise to the reader; the first two books of the poem have shown the political machinery of Hell in operation. However, if we consider the revolt from its initial stages, we see more clearly the way in which Satan attempts to set up his own hierarchy parallel to that of Heaven, a new and inferior hierarchy which turns out finally to be but an ineffective parody of the old. By Book V, Milton has presented much explicit material concerning the heavenly order that serves as preparation for Satan's act of violation in setting up his own order; at the same time this material serves as a contrast to Books I and II. In Book III God the Father is introduced somewhat as a monarch, "High Thron'd above all highth," benignly surveying "His own works and their works" (III, 58-59). The whole passage (III, 56-79) leading to the Father's words to the Son builds up the image of an idealized court in which there are complete order and complete harmony under an all-knowing,

all-powerful ruler:

> About him all the Sanctities of Heaven
> Stood thick as starrs, and from his sight
> receiv'd
> Beatitude past utterance; on his right
> The radiant image of his Glory sat,
> His only Son . . .

The divine vision extends to "the happy garden" and even beyond to

> Hell and the Gulf between, and Satan there
> Coasting the wall of Heav'n . . .

The perfect functioning of the heavenly order is reflected also in the amazing dance of the angels, a miracle of order in complexity:

> Mystical dance, which yonder starrie Spheare
> Of Planets and of fixt in all her Wheeles
> Resembles nearest mazes intricate,
> Eccentric, intervolv'd, yet regular
> Then most, when most irregular they seem:
> And in their motions harmonie Divine
> So smooths her charming tones, that Gods
> own ear
> List'ns delighted . . . (V, 620-626)

The dance, while serving together with the other activities as a contrast to the frustrated games of the fallen angels in Book II, is at the same time a microcosmic parallel to the intricate functioning of the astronomical system, which in itself may be justly considered symbolic of the larger order of the great chain of which it is a part. The "Mystical dance," in its microcosm-macrocosm relationship to "yonder starry Spheare," is similar to Satan's view of Paradise, another manifestation of order:

> To all delight of human sense expos'd
> In narrow room Natures whole wealth,
> yea more. (IV, 206-207)

But the recreation of the angels, when considered in its context, takes on an added depth and significance in addition to its function as contrast and microcosmic parallel; the passage is, so to speak, framed by references to the discord lurking in Heaven:

> So spake th' Omnipotent, and with his words
> All seemd well pleas'd, all seemd, but were
> not all.
> That day, as other solem dayes, they spent
> In song and dance about the sacred Hill,
> . . . . . .
> . . . they slept
> Fannd by coole Winds, save those who in thir
> course
> Melodious Hymns about the sovran Throne
> Alternate all night long: but not so wak'd
> Satan, so call him now . . . (V, 616-658)

The entrance of discord into Heaven is appropriately introduced in a passage celebrating the perfect order which reigns and which owes its very existence to the intricate subordination of part to whole and of inferior to superior. Satan, although high in the hierarchy and yet still only a small part of a much greater whole, is about to disrupt the functioning of the entire order. Shortly the "harmonie Divine," so "charming" that "Gods own ear / List'ns delighted" (V, 623-625), will be offset temporarily by "the odious dinn of Warr" (VI, 408). One of Raphael's metaphors points directly to the discord brought into the music of the spheres; Michael and Satan become

> Two Planets rushing from aspect maligne
> Of fiercest opposition in mid Skie,
> [which]
> Should combat, and thir jarring Sphears
> confound. (VI, 313-315; italics mine)

And Satan himself seems to be referring to the dance as a symbol of order when he calls derisive attention to the confusion wrought among the loyal angels by the newly invented cannon; they act, says Satan,

> As they would dance, yet for a dance they seemd
> Somewhat extravagant and wilde . . . (VI, 615-616)

Here Satan apparently believes himself to be shaking the throne of God by causing the usual participants in the "Mystical dance" to perform in an unregulated manner. This is not, of course, to say that Satan is successful in his revolt; but his revolt is responsible for changes--a third of the angels fall with him, the universe is created to compensate for the loss, and finally his seduction of Adam and Eve is ultimately the cause of the alterations in the "Starrie Spheare / Of Planets and of fixt in all her wheeles" which do away with the perpetual spring of Paradise. The passage thus points up the precarious balance in which the harmony exists: although order is always triumphant in the end, the smallest element of discord seems always to be able to exert its force to throw things into apparent chaos; Satan, from the beginning, is just such a force.

But as soon as Satan and the angels under his command have assembled to discuss what Satan has ambiguously termed "Fit entertainment to receive our King / The great Messiah" (V, 690-691), the purpose of setting up a new hierarchy in opposition to the old becomes clear. In addition to the

address (V, 772-802, discussed in the previous chapter) in which Satan's distorted view of "The great Messiah" becomes obvious (even though the full import of his plans is not explicit), the passage introducing Satan's speech and describing the quarters of the north alludes to the theme of imitation closely associated with Satan and his revolt.

In the first place, Satan places an undue emphasis on external manifestations of superiority, the luxurious trappings of kings without the inward worth which justifies the apparent excess; in Satan, the hollow emphasis is actually a manifestation of evil, a mere imitation of "that high mount of God" (V, 643). It is interesting to note that in Heaven there is richness almost to the point of excess:

> They eate, they drink, and in communion sweet
> Quaff immortalitie and joy, secure
> Of surfet where full measure onely bounds
> Excess, before th' all bounteous King, who
> showrd
> With copious hand, rejoycing in thir joy.
> (V, 637-641)

But here the near-excess is justified by its inclusion within the hierarchy.

Similarly, the "native Honour clad / In naked Majestie" (IV, 289-290) found in Paradise contrasts with Satan's presumptuous imitation. Adam and Eve, remarks J. B. Broadbent, "were provided with as much curious art and luxurious decoration as the king and queen of any human palace. Their majesty is insisted on, but it is independent of man-made pomp and accouterments; . . . their dwelling

place, and especially their bower, are sumptuously adorned by Nature."[5] Satan's purpose in imitating God is, of course, to set up his own artificial hierarchy independent of God's. Satan's method in attempting to achieve this end is to lie: the very act of imitation is itself, in a sense, a lie, and Milton points up the deceits and purposeful ambiguities employed by Satan. The Father of Lies, even so late as the action of Paradise Regained, still uses his old technique of partial truth and ambiguity, as Christ points out in the brief epic:

> . . . that hath been thy craft,
> By mixing somewhat true to vent more lyes.
> But what have been thy answers, what but dark
> Ambiguous and with double sense deluding,
> Which they who ask'd have seldom understood,
> And not well understood as good not known?[6]

The Son thus provides an even better commentary on Satan's method than does Raphael, who in his narration to Adam mentions Satan's casting "Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound / or taint integritie" (V, 703-704). Indeed, in Paradise Lost we can never expect the complete truth from Satan: even in the self-revealing soliloquy at the beginning of Book IV, although Satan acknowledges the injustice of his revolt, he does not allude to what actually happens in the War in Heaven; he prefers to let the record of the battle stand as he has presented it earlier in the poem, not admitting even to himself that external force had little or nothing to do with his defeat. The passage introducing the momentous speech urging revolt thus not only sums up the

methods Satan will employ to sway his followers to rebellion, but it also predicts by implication something of the attitude Satan will assume during the actual battle and later in Hell:

> At length into the limits of the North
> They came, and Satan to his Royal seat
> High on a Hill, farr blazing, as a Mount
> Rais'd on a Mount, with Pyramids and Towrs
> From Diamond Quarries hewn, and Rocks of
> Gold,
> The Palace of great Lucifer, (so call
> That Structure in the Dialect of men
> Interpreted) which not long after, hee
> Affecting all equality with God,
> In imitation of that Mount whereon
> Messiah was declar'd in sight of Heav'n,
> The Mountain of the Congregation calld;
> For thither he assembl'd all his Train,
> Pretending so commanded to consult
> About the great reception of thir King,
> Thither to come, and with calumnious Art
> Of counterfeted truth thus held thir ears.
> (V, 755-771)

The strength inherent in imitating what one revolts against is tested and found sorely deficient in the War which follows; the strength turns out to be insufficient even to make Hell bearable.

The War in Heaven provides the first great defeat suffered by Satan in Paradise Lost; the metamorphosis of Satan and his followers represents the second defeat. The War in Heaven, although there is never any doubt about its outcome, nevertheless is a necessary part of the poem and is, I believe, successfully integrated into the overall design of the epic. Dr. Johnson found Book VI to be inferior to the rest of Paradise Lost:

> The confusion of spirit and matter which pervades the whole narration of the war of heaven fills it

> with incongruity: and the book, in which it is realted, is, I believe, the favourite of children, and gradually neglected as knowledge is increased.[7]

Cleanth Brooks, comparing Milton's battle with the battle of belles and beaux in The Rape of the Lock, finds that "the absurdity of a battle in which the contestants cannot be killed is a flaw in Milton's great poem, whereas Pope turns it to beautiful account in his."[8] James Holly Hanford acquiesces in Johnson's view, concluding that Milton had to fulfill his epic obligations and consequently just did as well as he could with unmanageable materials.[9] These views, which actually are at one in finding Book VI an absurd confusion, are seriously challenged by Arnold Stein, who analyzes the action of the battle as a complex yet thoroughly consistent metaphor showing, among other things, the descent of the rebel angels down the scale from spiritual forms to grossest matter. Stein thus demonstrates that "the 'confusion of spirit and matter' that Johnson deplored is controlled confusion, the dramatic working out of what Satan ignorantly set in motion."[10] The War in Heaven fulfills its major function, however, in dramatizing the relationship between Satan and his followers and in working out to their logical conclusions several themes (principally envy and imitation) closely associated with Satan's revolt.[11]

Before a detailed discussion of the War may be undertaken, it is necessary to consider first the attitude displayed by God towards the revolt:

> Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
> In full resplendence, Heir of all my might,
> Neerly it now concernes us to be sure
> Of our Omnipotence, and with what Arms
> We mean to hold what anciently we claim
> Of Deitie or Empire, such a foe
> Is rising, who intends to erect his Throne
> Equal to ours, throughout the spacious
> North;
> Nor so content, hath in his thought to trie
> In battel, what our Power is, or our right.
> Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
> With speed what force is left, and all imploy
> In our defence, lest unawares we lose
> This our high place, our Sanctuarie, our
> Hill. (V, 719-732)

The Son's reply--

> . . . Mightie Father, thou thy foes
> Justly hast in derision, and secure
> Laugh'st at their vain designes and
> tumults vain. (V, 735-737)

confirms the Father's irony. The divine irony is heard again when the Son is instructed to intercede and end the War by casting the rebel crew out from Heaven and into Hell:

> There let them learn, as likes them, to
> despise
> God and Messiah his anointed King.
> (VI, 717-718)

These ironical bits, placed in the poem just as battle is about to get under way and just before it comes to its conclusion, serve as a kind of frame which influences the mood of the participants: both sides vie with each other in tossing ridicule back and forth, until finally the air is filled with flying mountains:

> So Hills amid the Air encounterd Hills
> Hurld to and fro with jaculation dire,
> That under ground they fought in dismal
> shade;
> Infernal noise; Warr seemd a civil Game

> To this uproar; horrid confusion heapt
> Upon confusion rose . . . (VI, 664-669)

While Heaven is thus almost going "to wrack" (VI, 670), God the father calmly sits "Shrin'd in his Sanctuarie of Heav'n secure, / Consulting on the sum of things (VI, 672-673). Indeed, so striking is the apparent disinterestedness with which God views the wild uproar before him and so carefully does Milton present the contrast between the War's confusion and God's calmness that Maurice Kelley is led to wonder why the "De doctrina does not list irony as one of the divine attributes"![12] It is not surprising, then, that ridicule and scorn are major weapons in the War. God himself seems to confirm this view in his remarks to Abdiel early in Book VI, just before the battle begins. The faithful angel had left the rebels amid "hostil scorn" (V, 904), and his only reply had been "retorted scorn" (V, 906). To angels, at any rate, scorn is much harsher and actually more injurious than violence, says God to Abdiel:

> . . . well done, well hast thou fought
> The better fight, who single hast maintaind
> Against revolted multitudes the Cause
> Of Truth, in word mightier than they in Armes;
> And for the testimonie of Truth hast born
> Universal reproach, far worse to beare
> Than violence . . . (VI, 29-35)

It is true that the sword of Michael causes Satan such pain that he " [writhes] him to and fro convolv'd" (VI, 328); but when he gnashes, it is "for anguish and despite and shame / To find himself not matchless": his pride is wounded (VI, 340-341). When the mountains hurled by the loyal angels

produce "pain / Implacable, and many a dolorous groan" (VI, 657-658) in addition to the accompanying embarrassment, we are immediately reminded that the rebels are "now gross by sinning grown" (VI, 661). The loyal angels suffer no physical pain from the cannon turned upon them, only derision; and they are subject to this derision ("far worse to beare / Than violence") because of the heavy armor they wear. The plight of the faithful angels puts their loyalty to a test severe indeed: suffering "Foule dissipation . . . and forc't rout"(VI, 598) and being made "to thir foes a laughter" (VI, 603), they are the object of Satan's derision---the rebels "among themselves in pleasant veine / Stood scoffing" (VI, 628-630). But by the time the "gross by sinning grown" rebels throw themselves from Heaven, the physical pain seems as intense as the mental; scorn and violence have almost become one to them:

> The overthrown [the Son] rais'd, and as a
> Herd
> Of Goats or timerous flock together throngd
> Drove them before him Thunder-strook, persu'd
> With terrors and with furies to the bounds
> And Crystal wall of Heav'n, which op'ning wide,
> Rewld inward, and a spacious Gap disclos'd
> Into the wastful Deep; the monstrous sight
> Strook them with horror backward, but farr worse
> Urg'd them behind; headlong themselves they
> threw
> Down from the verge of Heav'n, Eternal wrauth
> Burnd after them to the bottomless pit.
> (VI, 856-866)

Besides the indignity of being like "a Herd / Of Goats or timerous flock," they are "Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n" (VI, 852). They preserve barely enough will to throw

themselves into Chaos in order to escape the near-dilemma of being "Strook . . . with horror backward, but far worse / Urg'd [from] behind." At their last instant in Heaven the rebels are made to appear more ridiculous than ever before. God's scorn, operating through the agency of the Son, has been brought to bear upon Satan and his crew; they, like Abdiel, are subjected to "Universal reproach," but are unable to reply with "retorted scorn": their humiliation is at last complete.

Although it would no doubt be inaccurate to say specifically that Satan imitates the ironical tone of some of God's speeches, he nevertheless employs his own variety of irony--harsher, more scornful, yet in the end completely impotent--against his opponents; and, as I shall attempt to make clear in discussing the battle, he uses something very like irony--related to his "Ambiguous words," subtle, misleading, yet in the end as ineffective as the irony employed against his opponents--in his dealings with his followers. This deception of Satan's is directed towards attempting to make his followers believe that they are struggling for something that he calls liberty at the same time that he is keeping them securely under his control.

Satan's aim of setting up a hierarchy at once imitative of and opposed to God's is reflected not only in the speech urging revolt but as well in the frequent parallelisms of things divine and things Satanic found in the poem (some of which I have already noted). Even before the revolt started,

Satan had his great palace, "From Diamond Quarries hewn, and Rocks of Gold" (V, 759), which he used "In imitation of that Mount" (V, 764) as a meeting place for the angels he was about to seduce from obedience. As the War in Heaven gets under way the reader suddenly recognizes the source for some of the details found in the Hell of Books I and II. The loyal angels march to battle

> . . . to the sound
> Of instrumental harmonie that breath'd
> Heroic Ardor to adventrous deeds
> Under thir God-like Leaders, in the Cause
> Of God and his Messiah . . . (VI, 64-68)

After the fallen arise from the burning lake at the command of Satan,

> . . . Anon they move
> In perfet Phalanx to the Dorian mood
> Of Flutes and soft Recorders; such as rais'd
> To highth of noblest temper Hero's old
> Arming to Battel, and in stead of rage
> Deliberat valour breath'd . . . (I, 549-554)

The loyal angels, however, do not tread on the ground:

> . . . high above the ground
> Thir march was, and the passive Air upbore
> Thir nimble tread . . .
> . . . . . .
> . . . so over many a tract
> Of Heav'n they marchd, and many a Province
> wide
> Tenfold the length of this terrene . . .
> (VI, 71-78)

But the fallen, too, have an equivalent of the flying march, no matter how painful and disheartening to them the imitation be:

> Another part . . .
> . . . . . .
> . . . bend
> Four ways thir flying March, along the Banks

> Of four infernal Rivers . . . (II, 570-575)
> They passd . . .
> Ore many a Frozen, many a Fierie Alpe,
> Rocks, Caves, Lakes, Fens, Bogs, Dens, and
> shades of death. (II, 619-621)

These imitations, however, are relatively insignificant (and perhaps I am forcing the issue in presenting them specifically as imitations), although they do point towards Satan's desire to make his own system as much like the one he has revolted against as possible. In Book VI there are more explicit references to Satan's imitative aim. He makes a grand entrance parodying that of the Son whom he envies:

> High in the midst exalted as a God
> Th' Apostate in his Sun-bright Chariot sate
> Idol of Majestie Divine, enclos'd
> With Flaming Cherubim, and gold'n Shields.
> (VI, 99-102)

Only the words Apostate and Idol are specifically associated with Satan; Sun-bright Chariot, Flaming Cherubim, and especially exalted refer to the Son. Raphael is in effect describing Satan as having been set up by the rebel angels as a false object of worship (an Idol), whereas the true object would be and is the image of divine majesty, the Son.[13] There follows a reference to the "gorgeous throne" (VI, 103) of Satan with the further suggestion of imitation. As the battle reaches its point of highest intensity--the point at which the forces of good and of evil are in apparent deadlock--and the rebel angels rise to meet the challenge of the mountain-throwing legions of Michael, Raphael emphasizes the imitative aspect of the battle:

> The rest in imitation to like Armes

> Betook them, and the neighboring Hills uptore; (VI, 662-663)

So the revolt which was incited from the palace

> In imitation of that Mount whereon
> Messiah was declar'd in sight of Heav'n
> (V, 764-765)

reaches a stalemate as Satan's crew imitates the battle tactics of the loyal, not their dignity and worth.[14]

Yet to Satan, despite his early high ambitions, this impasse itself is for the time being glorious. Early in the battle Satan had told Michael that the rebels meant to win "The strife of Glorie," "Or turn this Heav'n itself into the Hell / Thou fabl'st" (VI, 290-291); now it would seem that the stalemate fulfills Satan's boast, for, as Raphael says, "all Heav'n / Had gone to wrack" (VI, 669-670) if the Father had not sent forth the Son to root Satan out of Heaven. Raphael's narration of the War in Heaven records the progressive degeneration of Satan's ambitions; the end he seeks becomes lower and lower as the battle goes on; and the attitudes expressed by Satan in the battle help to define the complex nature of the relationship of Satan to those whom he has persuaded to follow him.

As his first speech in Heaven to his followers makes clear, Satan has in mind the idea of inverting the hierarchy established by God or at least setting up a new one independent of the old--an aim ambitious to the point of foolishness, as Gabriel tauntingly reminds Satan when he refers to him as one "whom follie overthrew" (IV, 905). Raphael gets some-

thing of the mixed folly and ambition of the revolt into his description of Satan's followers hurrying off to battle with "rigid Spears, and Helmets . . . , and Shields / Various, with boastful Argument portraid" (VI, 83-84) and into his account of their goal:

> . . . they weend
> That self same day by fight, or by surprize
> To win the Mount of God, and on his Throne
> To set the envier of his State, the proud
> Aspirer, but their thoughts proved fond and vain
> In the mid way . . . (VI, 86-91)

The ambition is, of course, inseparable from the folly, but as the ambition becomes less, the folly remains at least as great, if it does not become indeed greater. Abdiel, when he meets Satan at the beginning of the battle, makes his own point about foolish ambition:

> Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reacht
> The highth of thy aspiring unoppos'd,
> The Throne of God unguarded, and his side
> Abandond at the terror of thy power
> Or potent tongue; fool, not to think how vain
> Against th' Omnipotent to rise in Arms.
> (VI, 131-136)

In the fierce exchange of words Abdiel gives Satan an order which alludes directly to the result of the uprising:

> Reign thou in Hell thy Kingdom, let mee serve
> In Heav'n God ever blest . . . (VI, 183-184)

Later, in Hell, Satan confirms this as his purpose, or at least decides that he has made the wiser choice; from Satan's point of view it is then "Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heav'n" (I, 263). The War in Heaven is the

field of action in which Satan gradually arrives at this position.

In the first day's encounter with Michael the archfiend begins to hint at the change which is taking place:

> . . . we mean to win [the strife]
> Or turn this Heav'n it self into the Hell
> Thou fabl'st, here however to dwell free,
> If not to reign: mean while thy utmost force,
> And join him nam'd Almightie to thy aid,
> I flie not, but have sought thee far and high.
> (VI, 290-295)

Satan's announced aim carried the implicit assumption that the rebels (or, more exactly, Satan himself) were to rule in Heaven. Satan had insisted that "Orders and Degrees / Jarr not with liberty" (V, 792-793), yet had insisted just as vehemently that the Son, though more powerful and splendid than all other beings in Heaven, had no right to rule or to expect obedience from them. The reference to "Our being ordaind to govern, not to serve" (V, 802) confirms the desire to rule. But when Satan stands up to Michael, the boast seems to have dropped a notch, although not to the last notch of all, that of reigning in Hell. Now, having felt the ridiculing shouts of joy from the loyal angels (VI, 200-202) after being struck by Abdiel, Satan offers an alternative to victory: turning Heaven into a sort of Hell; the insistence is now on "here however to dwell free, / If not to reign." The ambiguity of "If not" seems to point towards an acceptance of not being able to reign and, at the same time, towards a hope that he will be able to reign even so. At any rate, we soon learn just what dwelling free in Heaven comes to mean to Satan.

After the first day's battle Satan addresses his troops with perhaps more enthusiasm than the occasions warrant; but the enthusiasm does not disguise the change in his ambitions:

> O now in danger tri'd, now known in Armes
> Not to be overpowerd, Companions deare,
> Found worthy not of Libertie alone,
> Too mean pretense, but what we more affect,
> Honor, Dominion, Glorie, and renowne,
> Who have sustaind one day in doubtful fight
> (And if one day, why not Eternal dayes?)
> What Heavens Lord had powerfullest to send
> Against us from about his Throne, and judg'd
> Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
> But proves not so . . . (VI, 418-428)

Although Satan still loudly proclaims the cause of "Libertie" (to say nothing of "Honor, Dominion, Glorie, and renowne," which all indicate the higher aim of ruling in Heaven), the praise he lavishes on his followers is not that their valor is sufficient for victory but that it is sufficient for waging a war that will last forever: "And if one day, why not Eternal dayes?" Satan goes on to admit that his forces have suffered some setbacks, but these are really nothing since their wounds are "Soon closing, and by native vigour heald" (VI, 436). Then Satan suggests a remedy for their plight and a way in which they may better their lot: "Weapons more violent," he says,

> May serve to better us, and worse our foes,
> Or equal what between us made the odds,
> In Nature none . . . (VI, 439-442)

Even here the desire for victory is not explicit; no more is suggested by "serve to better us, and worse our foes" than just embarrassment and scorn, and it turns out that the

"Weapons more violent" produce a sight among the loyal angels to which Satan can derisively call the attention of his followers. This is the only victory possible with "Weapons more violent," and Satan, aware that angels are "Incapable of mortal injurie" (VI, 434), does not expect any other kind. He knows as early as the first day of battle what he later affirms in Hell: the best that he can hope for is "To wage by force or guile eternal Warr" (I, 121), and even this is denied him (although not within the action of Paradise Lost, but in the prophetic vision presented to Adam by Michael). When Satan boasted to Michael that he intended to dwell free in Heaven ("If not to reign"), he indicated, whether he was aware of it or not, that freedom had degenerated into the ability to wage "eternal Warr."

To Satan's followers, too, we immediately learn, liberty (as well as "Honor, Dominion, Glorie, and renowne") consists of conducting a war which will go on indefinitely.[15] Rising to urge the invention of "Weapons more violent" (and by displaying himself "Sore toild, his riven Armes to havoc hewn" [VI, 449], unconsciously contradicting Satan's slanted account of the rebels' losses), Nisroc acquiesces in the eternal-war viewpoint. He urges that cannon be invented to offset the "pain" he and his comrades have suffered, for

> . . . Sense of pleasure we may well
> Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine,
> But live content, which is the calmest life:
> But pain is perfet miserie, the worst
> Of evils, and excessive, overturnes
> All patience . . . (VI, 459-464)

Pain is here something suffered in the mind--Satan has emphasized that it is essential for the rebels to "preserve / Unhurt [their] minds" (VI, 443-444)--and the cannon will not be used to destroy but only to "offend / [Their] yet unwounded Enemies" (VI, 465-466). With the invention of the cannon some pleasure will, by the way, be restored to the rebels: when the loyal angels are "offended," the rebels will be able to laugh at their plight. Nisroc does not even pause to consider what would be complete victory, that is, removing from power God and the Son. The only freedom available to the rebels in Heaven is the "Honor, Dominion, Glorie, and renowne" of offending the loyal angels.[16]

Satan's reply to Nisroc about the cannon--

> Not uninvented that, which thou aright
> Beleivst so main to our success, I bring.
> (VI, 470-471)

carries on the newly formed aim of the war, although "main to our success" would seem to imply that Satan expects the cannon to annihilate the enemy. But, qualified by what has preceded it, the phrase clearly refers to success in offending, not destroying. Perhaps Milton wished to suggest also the older meaning of success as merely "outcome," current in the seventeenth century and used by Milton himself, for the cannon provokes the mountain-throwing contest which in turn causes God quickly to end the War. The cannon is thus materially decisive in the "outcome" of the battle, although Satan would not consciously be using success in two senses (despite the accusations brought against him of using "ambiguous words").

Besides its importance in defining the aims of the battle, the Nisroc episode is perhaps even more important in making clear the relationship of Satan to his followers. When Raphael describes the entrance of Satan into the battle--

> High in the midst exalted as a God
> Th' Apostat in his Sun-bright Chariot sate
> Idol of Majestie Divine, enclos'd
> With Flaming Cherubim, and gold'n shields.
> (VI, 99-102)

we receive the official (and accurate) view of Satan as the angel aspiring to set up his own hierarchy. Yet when he had swayed the angels to rebellion, he had protested against something very like what he parodies as he enters the battle. The assumption that the angels simply preferred to pay "Knee-tribute" and "prostration vile" to Satan rather than to the Son is canceled by the contents of the speech which began the rebellion, and it would be absurd to offer as an explanation for the disparity between the speech and Satan's being "Idol of Majestie Divine" the conjecture that the angels, being used to orders and degrees, instinctively transfer their allegiance to Satan. When, at the opening of Book II, Satan sits high on his throne of royal state, we are reminded that he was "by merit rais'd / To that bad eminence" (II, 5-6), so that he has somehow earned his position. The situation in Book VI is similar: Satan has earned, or so it appears to his followers, his right to be treated as a god. Nisroc addresses Satan as

> Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free
> Enjoyment of our right as Gods . . .
> (VI, 451-452)

Previously Raphael had referred to Adramelech and Asmadai as "Two potent Thrones, that to be less than Gods / Disdaind" (VI, 366-367). Clearly, the import of these passages is that the rebels see Satan not as one who wishes to rule (as Abdiel and Michael see him) but rather as one who is only helping them to secure a freedom in which they may all exist with equality. The closing line of Satan's speech inciting revolt--"Our being ordaind to govern, not to serve" (V, 802)--indicates as much. If the angels are not to serve, whom are they to govern? They will govern, Satan leads them to believe, not only themselves but also all the other celestial beings; it is right that they should govern, not that they serve. Satan, then, with his "Ambiguous words and jealousies" (V, 703), appears to the angels to be a champion of liberty who will help them to what Nisroc styles "free / Enjoyment of our right as Gods." The two angels "that to be less than Gods / Disdaind" are evidently typical of the whole rebel crew (Raphael does not indicate that they are different from any of the others): they have no idea that Satan is the "proud / Aspirer" (VI, 89-90) to the throne of God. Raphael sees what Satan really is and thus describes him as "Idol of Majestie Divine"; the rebels are not conscious of Satan's status as Idol; the pomp they allow to him he has earned as their leader, not their monarch. After the battle they expect "free enjoyment / of their right as Gods,"

for they disdain to be less than gods. Satan's position, they believe, is only temporary, and Satan uses every means in his power to demonstrate to them his resourcefulness as leader. The elaborate and painstaking introduction of the cannon -- withheld until Nisroc has said that the inventor "deserves / No less than for deliverance what we owe" (VI, 467-468) -- is almost as shrewd a stratagem as Satan's offer to voyage through Chaos to Paradise.

Satan, then, in the War in Heaven acts as a leader appointed to take charge of affairs in an emergency (an emergency, of course, of his own contrivance). He does not address his followers as such but rather calls them "Companions dear" (V, 673; VI, 419). Zera S. Fink, in an appendix to The Classical Republicans, has called attention to Milton's treatment of Satan as a "dictator" in the brief epic:

> In Paradise Regained Satan is clearly represented as a dictator created by the general assembly of devils. This conception appears first in the representation of the situation created by the appearance of Christ as a national emergency. It is so described by Satan in his speech to the council at the beginning of the action, when he asserts that it "admits no long debate" and must "with something sudden be oppos'd" (Bk. I, ll. 95-96). In this view of the matter the devils acquiesce, and thereupon, by Milton's own specific statement [the only instance of the word dictator in Milton's poetry] , they make Satan dictator:
>
> > Unanimous they all commit the care
> > And management of this main enterprize
> > To him their great Dictator . . .
> > (Bk. I, ll. 111-113)

> The conception is, moreover, carried over from the first Satanic council to the second one in Book II, Satan's report on this occasion making clear that his powers were extraordinary. He has acted, he declares, as he understood and
>
> with the vote
> Consenting in full frequence was impowr'd
> (Bk. II, ll. 129-30).
>
> That his powers were also temporary may be deduced from his care to have them renewed at the second council (Bk. II, ll. 233-35).[17]

The Satan in Books V and VI of Paradise Lost--Satan making his first attack against the Son--is in much the same political position as the Satan who later sets out to tempt Christ; the chief difference lies in the fact that in the War Satan does not have to take such extreme precautions to insure that his followers believe his office is only temporary. The great scenes in Hell which open the epic reveal most clearly the manner in which Satan exerts what is in effect absolute rule over his followers at the same time that he participates in what is externally a free commonwealth.

III. BY MERIT RAIS'D

The complexity of the political machinery of Hell which the opening books of Paradise Lost shows in motion is due principally to Satan's manipulation of events so as to hold absolute sway over a group whom he has persuaded to revolt from what he has called the Son's "Monarchie over such as live by right / His equals" (V, 795-796). At the risk of oversimplification and consequent distortion, this political machinery may be described in terms of a dichotomy or an opposition of the official Satanic version of Hell as a state ruled for the public good by a council and the actual set-up, an absolute monarchy presided over by Satan. The official account is reflected in Satan's speeches to his followers, in their reaction to his various proposals, and in the superficially democratic behavior of the peers; the actual absolutism of Satan is revealed in the way in which he controls the debates, in his conversations with Sin, in his soliloquies, and, most obviously, in the bits of narrative comment and description interspersed throughout the action of the poem. But closely related to this dichotomy in the politics of Hell are several prominent themes of the epic: Satan's aim of waging eternal war as a means of revenge, his conscious imitation of Heaven, and God's method of frustrating the devils by submerging them deeper into despair as they purposefully strive to raise themselves. Despite Satan's carefully contrived plans, the events in which he participates

are finally out of his hands.

After the disastrous and humiliating experience of the fall from Heaven, the immediate problem facing Satan as adversary of God and man is to rouse his followers and to decide by what means he can best continue to practice his technique of offending God and the Son through eternal war. The fall has given a new twist to Satan's motivation--the envy he had felt for the Son is now somewhat subdued by envy of Adam; and the desire to usurp the throne of Heaven, which Satan through bitter experience has learned cannot be fulfilled, is replaced by the desire for revenge; envy and revenge, as the opening of the poem indicates, become almost inseparable:

> . . . hee it was, whose guile
> Stirred up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv'd
> The Mother of Mankinde . . . (I, 34-36)

As a politician, however, Satan's immediate problem is to conduct the affairs of Hell with a sure hand at the same time that he convinces his followers that they all have an equal voice in the various decisions that they make. Despite Satan's boastful and optimistic statement to Beelzebub--

> In Arms not worse, in foresight much advanc't,
> We may with more successful hope resolve
> To wage by force or guile eternal Warr.
> (I, 119-121)

--the events narrated in Book VI clearly indicate that although the devils may indeed not be lessened in arms, force itself is an ineffective weapon. Guile is the only means of offending God, and Satan's cautious and almost off-hand mention of the

newly created world indicates the only place where guile can at once serve to effect revenge and to satisfy Satan's envy of Adam and the Son. In Book I, when he is apparently just suggesting possible courses of action which the council of devils will decide upon, Satan leaves open other possibilities; there are, in any event, other means, he tells his followers:

> Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife
> There went a fame in Heav'n, that hee ere long
> Intended to create, and therein plant
> A generation, whom his choice regard
> Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven:
> Thither, if but to prie, shall be perhaps
> Our first eruption; thither or elsewhere.
> (I, 650-656)[1]

Force as such will be of little help in the eternal war that Satan wishes to conduct--this much has been learned in the battle in Heaven. The need of new tactics--the exploitation of which provides impetus for all events which follow upon the close of the infernal debate--has also been inferred from the defeat on the plains of Heaven:

> . . . our better part remains
> To work in close design, by fraud or guile
> What force effected not: that hee no less
> At length from us may find, who overcomes
> By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
> (I, 645-649)

But Satan cannot yet demand that his own wishes be followed; he is too shrewd to usurp overtly the government of those whom he has incited to revolt in the name of liberty. His political task is thus to make the debate move inevitably towards the resolution that sends him to Paradise to tempt Adam and Eve and at the same time to make his position over his

followers appear to remain in full accord with the principles of liberty for which they revolted.

As we have seen, during the battle in Heaven Satan's original aim--derisively termed by Raphael as sitting on the throne of God--descends to that of eternal war, to be conducted by offending God. However, the desire to sit on a throne has not subsided; there is still the throne of Hell, and there is the possibility of reigning over the newly created race of man. The devils acquiesce in the view that they may rule man; and, until the "victorious Arm" of the Son hurls Sin and Death into the "Mouth of Hell" to "seal up [its] ravenous Jawes" forever (X, 634-637), man is indeed enslaved. But the devils are never permitted to know of Satan's plan of being absolute ruler not only of themselves but of the world of men as well: Sin and Death, not the devils, rule man. To them it appears that they will all share in the government of the world which will go on "To good malignant, to bad men benigne" (XI, 538). When on his return from Paradise Satan announces that man is now "To Sin and Death a prey" (X, 490) and that "By Sin and Death a broad way now is pav'd" (X, 473), Satan evidently intends that his followers shall understand his references to Sin and Death only as shallow personifications, not as the figures who to him are quite real. The absence in this passage of the italic type used elsewhere in the poem to designate these allegorical beings seems to reinforce the devils' ignorance of the offspring of Satan; the reference in the same speech

to those other grim figures, Chaos and Night, whom Satan met on his voyage to Paradise gives them more the stature of beings (and, incidentally, italic type):

> . . . plung'd in the womb
> Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wilde,
> That jealous of thir secrets fiercely oppos'd
> My journey strange, with clamorous uproare
> Protesting Fate supreame . . . (X, 476-480)

Since Satan then purposely attempts to withhold from his followers knowledge of the existence in Hell of Sin and Death, an examination of what passes between Satan and his "Fair Daughter, and ... Son and Grandchild both" (X, 384) may well serve as a preliminary step to explicating the politics of Hell.

Milton's great argument required that the rule of Sin and Death be established as a consequence of the Fall of Man, and the allegorical representation of Death, as Verity has pointed out,[2] had been used by Spenser and in morality and early Elizabethan plays. The figures of Sin and Death, however, have important functions in the action of Paradise Lost in addition to that of simply fulfilling the requirements of Milton's theological scheme. Sin, we learn in Book II, sprang from the head of Satan during the meeting of angels which led to the War in Heaven; Death was born in Hell, the result of the secret union of Satan and Sin in Heaven. Satan, not recognizing the once fair Sin, is reminded of her origin:

> . . . at th' Assembly, and in sight
> Of all the Seraphim with thee combin'd

> In bold conspiracy against Heav'n:King,
> All on a sudden miserable pain
> Surpris'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzie
> swumm
> In darkness, while thy head flames thick and
> fast
> Threw forth, till on the left side op'ning
> wide,
> Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
> Then shining heav'nly fair, a Goddess armd
> Out of thy head I sprung: amazement seis'd
> All th' Host of Heav'n; back they recoild
> affraid
> At first, and calld me Sin . . . (II, 749-760)

But in Books V and VI nothing is heard of Sin, nor in the scenes in Hell is there any mention of her. Sin, like Death, is purely allegorical, and Milton's use of allegory here is precise: the birth of Sin comes at the very moment Satan urges disobedience through revolt; the "amazement" or bewilderment which seized the angels fittingly describes what would be the first responses to Satan's proposals. In the continuation of the passage quoted above, Sin seems to sum up the way in which his words sway all but Abdiel and perhaps even the way in which Satan himself becomes firmer in his resolve as Abdiel becomes more vehement in opposition:

> . . . back they recoild affraid
> At first, and calld me Sin, and for a Sign
> Portentous held me; but familiar grown,
> I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
> The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft
> Thy self in me thy perfet image viewing
> Becam'st enamourd . . . (II, 759-765)

The generation of Death by the incest of Sin and Satan, this union indicating the complete breach in obedience on the part of Satan, apparently takes place as the battle in

Heaven begins (the time-sequence is somewhat indefinite):

> . . . [thou] full oft
> Thy self in me thy perfet image viewing
> Becam'st enamourd, and such joy thou took'st
> With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
> A growing burden. Mean while Warr arose,
> And fields were fought in Heav'n . . . .
> (II, 763-768)

And, last of all, the actual birth of Death appropriately occurs in Hell, the region in which Satan's plans for swaying Adam and Eve from obedience were made. But, for the purposes at hand, what is important about these allegorical personages is the relationship they have to Satan, and it is this relationship, of course, that is relevant to the political situation in Hell.

In the action of Paradise Lost the figures of Sin and Death appear before no one but Satan; as Stein has commented, "they demonstrate another order of being, the crude mechanistic existence of allegorical being." As Satan progressively degenerates he moves closer and closer to this state, finally, in his metamorphosis, becoming himself "a monster illustrating an allegory."[3] The followers of Satan, in the mass transformation, also descend to this crude state of being--"like in punishment, / As in thir crime" (X, 544-545). Yet even then they do not actually see or converse with Sin and Death, who now "in body" inhabit the earth:

> . . . in Paradise the hellish pair
> Too soon arriv'd, Sin there in power before
> Once actual, now in body, and to dwell
> Habitual habitant; behind her Death
> Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet
> On his pale horse . . . (X, 585-590)

The devils themselves remain in Hell with Satan, who has sent Sin and Death into the world as his "Substitutes":

> My Substitutes I send ye, and Create
> Plenipotent on Earth, of matchless might
> Issuing from mee . . . (X, 403-405)

Although in his first meeting with Sin Satan had said that his mission was to release from Hell "all the heav'nly Host / Of Spirits" who "Fell . . . from on high" (II, 824-826), the fact remains that the devils stay in Hell, never seeing the offspring of Satan.

As far as Satan's political maneuvering is concerned, however, Sin and Death seem to be "Substitutes" in a very special way. In terms of the allegory Sin and Satan, we remember, are very nearly identified: the fiend had seen in her his own "perfet image"; their union, occurring about the time the War in Heaven commenced, had produced Death.[4] Satan, Sin, and Death are all of the same substance; "fatal consequence," says Sin, "unites us three" (X, 364). In any event, Satan is sending a part of himself to hold sway over mankind. Yet the devils are still not allowed to exert any part of themselves in the governing of the world; although they, like Satan, are "gross by sinning grown" (VI, 661), they are not related to Sin and Death in the way that Satan is. Satan is in effect, then, ruling without the aid of his followers: "My Substitutes I send ye," he says, not "Our Substitutes." Sin and Death serve as vicegerents for Satan rather than as emissaries representing the whole community of Hell. It is almost as if King Satan were appointing members

of his royal line to important offices in a newly acquired province; the family relationship is explicitly that of a monarch, his consort, and his children. In the speech (X,383-409) in which authority is bestowed upon his "Substitutes," Satan uses certain terms which indicate specifically the political nature of the family relationship. First of all, Satan is introduced as "Prince of Darkness." Then the act of building the bridge between the world and Hell proves Sin and Death worthy to be "the Race / Of Satan"; the bridge itself has

> . . . made one Realm
> Hell and this World, one Realm, one
> Continent
> Of Easie thorough-fare . . .

The infernal pair Satan instructs to descend to Paradise to "dwell and Reign in bliss" and "Dominion exercise" over man, who will be made "thrall." Finally, on Sin and Death Satan's "hold of this new Kingdom all depends." When Sin first meets Satan on his return from Paradise, she too assumes that her father is monarch: God, she tells Satan, will "henceforth Monarchie with thee divide" (X, 379); Satan will "Monarch reign" (X, 375) over Hell and the world.

If the second meeting of Satan with Sin and Death reveals the fiend at the height of his monarchal triumph (a triumph, to be sure, subject to the curb of God's plan of bringing good out of evil and, therefore, an illusory triumph), the first meeting shows Satan setting out for Paradise with high and ambitious hopes. The long dialogue

between Satan and his daughter is only slightly less explicit about the monarchal aspirations of Satan and (in line with the Satanic policy of imitating things heavenly) in at least one place travesties God and the Son. Satan, at first struck with amazement by the incredible foulness of Sin, learns that he must flatter her in order to persuade her to open the gates of Hell for his passage through Chaos. Knowing that Sin is actually his daughter and that only she may release him from Hell, Satan suddenly changes his attitude towards her so that the "Sight . . . detestable" (II, 745) becomes now his "Dear Daughter": Milton's introductory comment underscores the irony in Satan's words:

> . . . the suttle Fiend his lore
> Soon learnd, now milder, and thus answerd
> smooth.
> Dear Daughter, since thou claim'st me for
> thy Sire,
> And my fair Son here showst me, the dear
> pledge
> Of dalliance had with thee in Heav'n . . .
> (II, 815-819)

The degeneration of Satan is nowhere more vividly demonstrated than in the complete lack of irony in his addressing Sin as his "Fair Daughter" (X, 384) on his return from Paradise.[5] Sin herself suggests (with a broad hint at paralleling the rule of God with the Son at his right hand) the monarchal nature of Satan's ambitions when she predicts what his success will bring:

> . . . thou wilt bring me soon
> To that new World of light and bliss,
> among
> The Gods who live at ease, where I shall
> Reign

> At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
> Thy daughter and thy darling, without end.
> (II, 866-870)

Satan's own hierarchy parallels God's at another salient point: the Son's perfect obedience. Going to battle, the Son says that "to obey [God] is happiness entire" (VI, 741); Sin, rightly attributing her existence to Satan, reasons that her obedience will take her to that "World of light and bliss." The difference is subtle and important: to Sin obedience itself is not happiness but only a means to happiness; it is as if she had no choice in the matter:

> Thou art my father, thou my Author, thou
> My being gav'st me; whom should I obey
> But thee, whom follow? . . . (II, 864-866)

The first meeting of the fiend with his allegorical children, then, no less than the second, conveys an unmistakable impression of Satan's aspirations to monarchy. His apparent triumph in Books IX and X (apparent because it will only heap more damnation upon himself and because man will ultimately find the inner paradise, happier far) is in accord with his promise of eternal war; for Satan, as Sin says, will hold only divided monarchy with God, something different from his original aim of usurping the throne of Heaven. But in the infernal debate there was no mention of Satan's permanently being monarch even of Hell; Satan appears to his followers only as a leader who has earned his position by merit and heroism--"Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free / Enjoyment of our right as Gods" (VI, 451-452), as Nisroc called him during the battle in Heaven. Sin and Death alone are

allowed to share in Satan's triumph: they go to Paradise as representatives of Satan, not of his followers. The allegorical figures, fulfilling symbolically Satan's aspirations in the eternal war with God, become what might be called extensions of Satan's role of monarch; but the devils never see the offspring of Satan.[6]

In Hell, however, the devils do participate in Satan's elevation to the position of Monarch, although they do so with no sense of the contradiction involved in so elevating one who has revolted against monarchy: at the close of the debate the infernal council has become actually, although not nominally, the court of a tyrannical monarch. Only twice (in addition to occasional references to him as sultan or emperor) during the scenes in Hell--immediately before and immediately after his self-consciously heroic offer to undertake the voyage through Chaos to Paradise--is Satan referred to explicitly as a monarch, and then it is the epic narrator, not the followers, who points out the actuality. Satan speaks to his assembled devils "with Monarchal pride" (II, 428); and, when he rises at the end of his address, he is "The Monarch" (II, 467). Milton, describing the conclusion of the debate--

> The Stygian Councel thus dissolv'd; and forth
> In order came the grand infernal Peers:
> Midst came thir mighty Paramount, and seemd
> Alone th' Antagonist of Heav'n, nor less
> Then Hells dread Emperour with pomp Supream,
> And God-like imitated State; him round
> A globe of fierie Seraphim inclos'd
> With bright imblazonrie, and horrent Arms.
> (II, 506-513)

implicitly contrasts actuality (Satan as "Hells dread Emperour" imitating, as he had done when he entered the battlefield as a proud aspirer, the external adornments of the Son) and appearance ("The Stygian Councel" of "infernal Peers" with Satan preëminent), although the actuality is presented as if it were only appearance (Satan seemed "Hells dread Emperour"). The poet thus looks at the proceedings of the devils as they would see themselves: for to them Satan does indeed seem "Hells dread Emperour": his merit and courage have raised him to a position of authority among his "Peers" and have enabled him to accept a throne. The sense in which Satan actually is a monarch or an emperor--and truly "Alone th' Antagonist of Heav'n"--is not clear to the devils; indeed, the very term monarch is to them infamous, for Satan is almost as effective in applying monarch as in applying tyrant to God:

> . . . hee who reigns
> Monarch in Heav'n . . .
> Sat on his Throne, upheld by old repute,
> Consent or custom . . . (I, 637-640)

The reception the devils give Satan on his return from Paradise makes it obvious that they consider him to be only a hero who has been granted special honors in accord with his merit, not an absolute ruler. The passage contrasts sharply with Satan's talk of "My hold on this new Kingdom" as he departed from Sin and Death. He is described now as "thir great adventurer" (X, 440) and then, when his followers finally behold him, as

> Thir mighty Chief returned: loud was th' acclaime:
> Forth rushd in haste the great consulting Peers,
> Rais'd from thir dark Divan, and with like joy
> Congratulant approachd him, who with hand
> Silence, and with . . . words attention won.
> (X, 455-459)

Satan's return is that of the popular hero and leader, not a monarch to whom awful reverence is due. In fact, only in his soliloquies and in his meetings with Sin and Death does the fiend make his aspirations explicit.

The first words Satan utters in Paradise Lost imply the relationship between himself and his followers which the devils accept throughout the poem: if "mutual league, / United thoughts and counsels, equal hope / And hazard in the Glorious Enterprize" joined Satan and the others, "now misery hath joind" them "In equal ruin" (I, 87-91). Satan made them aware of encroachments on their freedom, persuaded them to revolt, fell with them from Heaven, and now is suffering with them; the fiend makes no suggestion to Beelzebub that the purpose of the revolt was to try to set Satan up as God. In the answer to the epic question is the real aim of Satan, not a movement for freedom and equality but for Satan's own elevation; "mutual league, / United thoughts and counsels" were but Satan's means: the followers of Satan were instruments "by whose aid" he aspired "To set himself in Glory above his Peers" (I, 38-39). But throughout the sections of the poem in which Satan is shown in contact with his followers he maintains the pose of a magnanimous

leader bent only on serving those who have bestowed their trust on him.

Some remarks in Satan's opening exchange with Beelzebub, however, perhaps seem to show a relaxation of the pose and indeed an affirmation of Satan's aspirations "To set himself in Glory above his Peers"; but the principal point here is, I believe, that to his followers and to Beelzebub, who have known Satan as a general in the War in Heaven, these remarks indicate only the fiend's concern for his troops. For example, part of the first speech to Beelzebub:

> . . . yet not for those [dire Arms]
> Nor what the Potent Victor in his rage
> Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
> Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fixt mind
> And high disdain, from sense of injur'd merit,
> That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend,
> And to the fierce contention brought along
> Innumerable force of Spirits armd
> That durst dislike his reign, and mee preferring,
> His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd
> In dubious Battel on the Plains of Heav'n,
> And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
> All is not lost; th' unconquerable Will,
> And study of revenge, immortal hate,
> And courage never to submit or yeild:
> And what is else not to be overcome?
> That Glory never shall his wrauth or might
> Extort from mee. To bow and sue for grace
> With suppliant knee, and deifie his power
> Who from the terrour of this Arm so late
> Doubted his Empire; that were low indeed,
> That were an ignominy and shame beneath
> This downfall; since by Fate the strength of Gods
> And this Empyreal substance cannot fail,
> Since through experience of this great event
> In Arms not worse, in foresight much advanc't,
> We may with more successful hope resolve
> To wage by force or guile eternal Warr. (I, 94-121)

Certainly everything here down to "That Glory never shall his wrauth or might / Extort from mee" indicates Satan's own position in the revolt; it was he who felt "sense of injur'd merit"; it is he who will never "repent or change"; and "durst dislike [God's] reign, and mee preferring" seems to be an explicit admission that the rebels chose Satan as a monarch to replace God. But actually the events of Books V and VI indicate that they preferred Satan because they considered him, in Nisroc's words, "Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free / Enjoyment of our right as Gods"; Satan managed to make his own "sense of injur'd merit" a general feeling that all the angels had been slighted, and consequently he was able to conduct a revolution in the name of liberty. The rebels looked upon Satan then as a leader who would carry them to freedom and equality; in Hell he keeps up this deceptive pose. Actually, to Beelzebub, Satan's opening speech is that of the most courageous of the rebels, the general who sets an example of defiance for the others to follow; it is not to Beelzebub the speech of a ruler. "The Victor will never make me surrender my hate, my desire for revenge, and my unconquerable will," says Satan in effect; "it would be as shameful and ignominous to the rest of us as to me if we were to bow with suppliant knee." The fallen must all be like their leader, heroic and courageous; they must all "wage by force or guile eternal Warr"; there is no decent alternative. Beelzebub's reply confirms Satan's military rank and prowess, not his monarchal aspirations:

O Prince, O Chief of many Throned Powers,

> That led th' imbatteld Seraphim to Warr
> Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds
> Fearless . . . (I, 128-131)

"O Prince" might seem to imply that Beelzebub considers Satan to be something of a monarch, but he is referring to the fiend's position before the revolt; for a little later when Satan's leaders gather around "Thir great Commander," we are told that they are "Princely Dignities, / . . . that earst in Heaven sat on Thrones" (I, 358-360): they would not have given up their thrones only to be subservient to a Satan who was anything more than "Thir great Commander," their general. Satan's reply to Beelzebub indicates specifically the pose of leader, not monarch; he plans to reassemble the "afflicted Powers" in order to

> Consult how we may henceforth most offend
> Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,
> How overcome this dire Calamity.
> (I, 186-189; italics mine)

As far as circumstances permit, things must be conducted in accord with the principles of freedom in whose name the rebellion was urged.

One other speech, that of Satan upon rising from the burning lake, seems almost to reveal what is beneath the mask:

> . . . Farewel happy Fields
> Where Joy for ever dwells: Hail horrours,
> hail
> Infernal World, and thou profoundest Hell
> Receive thy new Possessor: One who brings
> A mind not to be chang'd by Place or Time.
> The mind is its own place, and in it self
> Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.
> What matter where, if I be still the same,
> And what I should be, all but less then hee

> Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at
> least
> We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
> Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
> Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
> To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:
> Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav'n.
> But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
> Th' associats and copartners of our loss
> Lye thus astonisht on th' oblivious Pool,
> And call them not to share with us their part
> In this unhappy Mansion; or once more
> With rallied Arms to try what may be yet
> Regaind in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell?
> (I, 249-270)

Satan apparently is the "new Possessor" of Hell, he "brings / A mind not to be chang'd by Place or Time," and in his "choice / To reign is worth ambition though in Hell." It matters little that he is in Hell "if [he] be still the same." It appears that the fiend is openly exulting to Beelzebub in the prospect of being the sole ruler, even if only of Hell. However, "new Possessor," although it is certainly a true description of Satan, can very well be made to apply to all the devils, and this is precisely what Satan then proceeds to do. It is almost as if Satan had forgotten himself and then quickly rectified his error (if indeed it is an error). For one thing, Satan merely implies that he is the "new Possessor" of Hell; he does not say, "I bring a mind not to be changed . . ." Whoever the "new Possessor" is, he brings such a mind. Then the fiend explains his statement about the mind of the "new Possessor" by generalizing about minds:

> The mind is its own place, and in it self
> Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.

This applies, of course, to the immediate situation of all the

fallen; it is true of all minds. Then, furnishing a concrete instance of the theory he has just set forth, Satan uses himself as an example (the initial occurence of the first person in the passage), for now he can afford to speak directly of himself:

> What matter where, if I be still the same,
> And what I should be, all but less then hee
> Whom Thunder hath made greater? . . .

Satan is now the general, not the monarch; what is true of himself should be true of all his followers: Satan's mind, or any mind, gives freedom, and "Here at least / We shall be free." Then, in Satanic logic, freedom is the same as reigning: "Here we may reign secure." Not Satan alone, but all the devils will at once be free and will reign. "We"--now all the devils--have become the "new Possessor" of Hell. Satan's statement that

> To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:
> Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav'n,

taken by itself, is clearly an indication of his wish for monarchy over Hell; but, in the context of the speech, it is made to mean monarchy for all the fallen, for Satan offers it only as his own personal choice.[7] Consequently the followers are to be roused not as subjects but as "Th' associats and copartners of our loss"--with the emphasis again on choice: "Th' associats and copartners" may either share "their part / In this unhappy Mansion" or, if they prefer, "try what may be yet / Regaind in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell." Satan makes his own choice known, but he does not insist that it be

given any priority. Thus Beelzebub hears Satan's speech only as the impersonal, objective words of a general who is thoughtful of his troops and placed above them only because he is an excellent leader: Satan's voice, says Beelzebub, is to the devils

> . . . thir liveliest pledge
> Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
> In worst extreams, and on the perilous edge
> Of battle when it rag'd, in all assaults
> Thir surest signal . . . (I, 274-278)

When Satan finally appears before his assembled legions he leaves no opening for doubt that his interest is only the common interest of the whole group. Although Satan maintains throughout his speech the pose of the magnanimous leader who has concern only for the welfare of his followers, he nevertheless manages so well to control the sympathies of the group that by the time Book II opens he is actually sitting on a throne. Milton's description of Satan's emotional state before the address unobtrusively calls attention to the discrepancy between the appearance and the actuality of the political relationship of the fiend and his followers:

> . . . cruel his eye, but cast
> Signs of remorse and passion to behold
> The fellows of his crime, the followers
> rather
> (Farr other once beheld in bliss) condemnd
> For ever now to have thir lot in pain.
> (I, 604-608)

Part of Satan's remorse is due to the elaborate deception practiced on the angels who fell with him as well as to the fall from Heaven: they had joined him as "fellows" in the revolt against what Satan had called tyranny, but actually

they were only his "followers." Even in Hell, as the apparent equality of the devils makes obvious, they are treated in such a way that they think they are the "fellows" of Satan, but the events make it plain that they are only the "followers."

The actual address requires close examination:

> O Myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers
> Matchless, but with th' Almighty, and that strife
> Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
> As this place testifies, and this dire change
> Hateful to utter: but what power of mind
> Foreseeing or presaging, from the Depth
> Of knowledge past or present, could have feard
> How such united force of Gods, how such
> As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
> For who can yet beleeve, though after loss,
> That all these puissant Legions, whose exile
> Hath emptied Heav'n, shall faile to re-ascend
> Self-rais'd, and repossess thir native seat?
> For mee, be witness all the Host of Heav'n,
> If counsels different, or danger shunnd
> By mee, have lost our hopes. But hee who reigns
> Monarch in Heav'n, till then as one secure
> Sat on his Throne, upheld by old repute,
> Consent or custom, and his Regal State
> Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed,
> Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
> Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
> So as not either to provoke, or dread
> New warr, provok't; our better part remains
> To work in close design, by fraud or guile
> What force effected not: that hee no less
> At length from us may find, who overcomes
> By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
> Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife
> There went a fame in Heav'n, that hee ere long
> Intended to create, and therein plant
> A generation, whom his choice regard
> Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven:
> Thither, if but to prie, shall be perhaps
> Our first eruption; thither or elsewhere:
> For this Infernal Pit shall never hold
> Cælestial Spirits in Bondage, nor th' abysse
> Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
> Full Counsel must mature: Peace is despaird,
> For who can think Submission? War then, Warr
> Op'n or understood must be resolv'd. (I, 622-662)

The opening of the speech--down to "repossess thir native seat"--consists mainly of the exaggerated praise a general might bestow upon his legions; the emphasis is predominantly upon their strength and union in battle. But at the same time Satan is able to make this praise contain an implicit excuse absolving him from guilt for the present wretchedness of the devils: no "power of mind / Foreseeing or presaging" could predict the fall of "such united force of Gods . . . / As stood like these." Only the Almighty could defeat the "Powers / Matchless," and only such a mind as the Almighty's could know that they would fall. The praise reaches its climax in the fallacious notion of raising oneself to Heaven rather than, as Raphael instructs Adam in Book V, rising by slow degrees. Then comes the explicit excuse removing whatever guilt the devils might feel Satan possessed--

> For mee, be witness all the Host of Heav'n,
> If counsels different, or danger shunnd
> By mee, have lost our hopes . . .

which, in addition to absolving him, simultaneously emphasizes his wise and brave merit. To the reader it is an excuse only; to Satan's audience and to Satan himself, it is the reason and hence an excuse as well. The blame is definitely and ironically placed on God: the Almighty revealed everything but his strength, says Satan, and "his strength conceald / . . . tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall." (To himself, in Book IV, Satan blames "Heav'ns free Love dealt equally to all" [68].) While he is craftily blaming God for the ruin of the devils, he is also subtly

contrasting the defects of the celestial government with the positive virtues of the infernal: the devils are treated as a unit ("our attempt," "our loss," and so forth) with Satan no more than temporary leader; God, on the other hand, is a monarch who tempts his subjects to revolt and consequent fall! Most insidious of all is Satan's attributing to "old repute, / Consent or custom" the security of the throne of Heaven; his own wise counsels and heroic conduct, previously alluded to in this speech, are meant to contrast with the apparently arbitrary reign of God and in fact constitute the "merit" which ironically raises Satan to the "bad eminence" (II, 5-6) of a throne in Hell. (Monarch, as I have indicated above, is a hateful term in Hell and is applied to Satan only by Sin and the epic narrator.) The fiend then proceeds to explain what has been learned in the War in Heaven: "fraud or guile" are the only instruments which can be used successfully, and the most propitious place to employ these instruments is in the newly created world.

The voyage through Chaos to Paradise turns out, of course, to be a crucial step in establishing and maintaining the leadership in Hell, but Satan does not insist that the attack on man be the plan adopted by the devils, although "fraud or guile" must be the means of overcoming their foe. Perhaps we will go to Paradise to practice our designs, says Satan, "thither or elsewhere." Cautiously, the fiend closes his address with remarks about the "Full Counsel" which will be necessary before any final decision can be made; all that

is certain is that "Warr / Op'n or understood must be resolv'd." This speech shows Satan at his greatest height as a popular leader; the devils, despite the ruin he has caused them, wholeheartedly accept everything he says; he appears to them still to be the mighty general who led them to battle; and his excuses for losing the battle seem to them sufficient. No Abdiel is present to detect the fallacies and lies which Satan utters. With a subtle stroke Milton makes the fallen angels express their approval of the fiend by having them act out, though only temporarily, the boast that Hell will not "Long under darkness cover" celestial spirits and the conclusion that war "must be resolv'd":

> . . . to confirm his words, out-flew
> Millions of flaming swords . . .
> . . . the sudden blaze
> Farr round illumind Hell: highly they rag'd
> Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped
> Arms
> Clashed on thir sounding shields the din of
> warr. (I, 663-668)

The construction of "Pandæmonium, the high Capitol / Of Satan and his Peers" (I, 756)--besides being a pretentious imitation of the "Towred structure[s] high, / Where Scepterd Angels held thir residence" (I, 733-734)--represents a crucial step in Satan's setting up his own hierarchy independent of God's; although Hell is externally a sort of republic or commonwealth under the leadership of a great military hero who must leave all decisions of policy to the council representing the people and who indeed would not even consider taking matters into his own hands, Satan, at the opening of

Book II, actually sits "High on a throne of Royal State." To Satan's followers, however, royal is a term reserved for reference to the Monarch of Heaven:

> . . . hee who reigns
> Monarch in Heav'n . . .
> . . . . . .
> . . . his Regal State
> Put forth at full, but still his strength
> concealed.

To them, the monarch of Hell is so unlike the monarch of Heaven that Satan is hardly a monarch at all. God's throne is "upheld by old repute, / Consent or custom"; Satan, on the other hand, takes great pains to assure his councilmen that he himself has been raised to his position by much more than his original position in the hierarchy (which, under the circumstances of the revolt, would hardly be enough to make him still their chief). Before their fall, he reminds them, they exercised "free choice" to select him as leader; and the merit of what he has achieved "in Counsel or in Fight" has given him the throne "Yeilded with full consent."

> Mee though just right, and the fixt Laws of
> Heav'n
> Did first create your leader, next, free
> choice,
> With what besides, in Counsel or in Fight,
> Hath been achievd of merit, yet this loss
> Thus farr at least recoverd, hath much more
> Establisht in a safe unenvied Throne
> Yeilded with full consent . . . (II, 18-24)

At this point before considering the debate itself, it is necessary to return momentarily to something that Satan said to Beelzebub a little earlier: "Here at least / We shall be free" and "Here we may reign secure" (I, 258-

259, 261). The combination of simultaneously reigning and being free, as I have indicated above, means monarchy for all the fallen, and the actual set-up in Hell appears to provide just this sort of government. True, the fallen are not all allowed to sit in the council which decides events, but the "Peers" summoned to the great consultation are "the worthiest" members "From every Band and squared Regiment" of devils (I, 757-759), and these "Peers" as well as the body of devils addressed towards the close of the first book have given to Satan the highest position: "Yeilded with full consent." Satan, too, as I have indicated, although he sits on a throne in Hell and even acknowledges that he has accepted "Royalties, and not refuse[d] to Reign" (II, 451), insists that his interest is not himself but the whole community:

> . . . I should ill become this Throne, O Peers,
> And this Imperial Sovranty, adornd
> With splendor, armd with power, if aught
> propos'd
> And judg'd of public moment, in the shape
> Of difficulty or danger could deterre
> Mee from attempting . . . (II, 455-450)

Besides, Satan's "Imperial Sovranty," as well as his courage, causes him to undertake the mission to Paradise which will bring all the devils closer to the state from which they fell; as he had cautioned them when first inciting the revolt,

> . . . Orders and Degrees
> Jarr not with liberty, but well consist.
> (V, 792-793)

When Satan volunteers to go to Paradise, "Orders and Degrees" are not only not jarring with "liberty," but they are functioning to protect it as far as the infernal council is concerned. But if in their exchange Satan's phrase "new Possessor" (I, 252) seemed to Beelzebub to refer to all the devils, to Satan it meant only himself, no matter how skillfully his rhetoric and "ambiguous words" may have deceived his associate. Satan, despite his protests to the contrary, is in complete control of the infernal debate of Book II; the course of the speeches leads finally and inevitably to Satan's volunteering for the voyage through Chaos to Paradise and the consequent adoration of him as a god "equal to the highest in Heav'n" (II, 479) so that he has, to all appearances at least, fulfilled his plan of establishing himself at the head of a hierarchy independent of God's.[6]

Satan's speech (II, 11-42) to the grand council in Pandemonium makes it very clear not only what the subject for debate is but also that the leader will leave it up to the council to decide what course of action must be taken. After asserting that the devils have union even stronger than that of the angels because no one will envy the leader in Hell, Satan proposes the subject: whether or not to attempt "To claim [their] just inheritance of old" and, if so, whether "op'n Warr or covert guile" be the better means to employ.

Then he steps aside to let his followers argue the issues among themselves. Satan's own interests--specifically his desire for revenge on God by seducing Adam and Eve and his desire for absolute control over his followers--are perfectly safe during this apparently democratic procedure, for he has provided the council with all the information it will use in its debate and has implicitly indicated in his speech to the assembled legions in Book I the only solution which the devils can work out. The false doctrine that fallen spirits "re-ascend / Self-rais'd" (I, 634) insures that the devils will attempt in some measure to fight back at God; the knowledge, gained through the fall, that God's strength is superior leaves "fraud or guile" (I, 644) as the only weapon to use against God; finally, although Satan says "thither or elsewhere" (I, 656), Paradise is the only place Satan mentions as a possible point of attack, and the devils know of no other. The debate then takes its natural, predetermined course.

Moloc's counsel of overt war, although it does embody an attempt at trying to raise the fallen, is ineffective because the other devils know that force itself is ineffective. Belial's plea for remaining in Hell in "peaceful sloth" (II, 227), made more attractive by Mammon's suggestion of exploring the riches of Hell, almost wins the full support of the devils, but it too fails because it does not contain the idea of ascending "Self-rais'd." Beelzebub's proposal satifies at

once the demands of moving to a higher state (Paradise) and of "fraud or guile"; therefore

> . . . The bold design
> Pleas'd highly those infernal States, and joy
> Sparkl'd in all thir eyes; with full assent
> They vote . . . (II, 386-388)

Beelzebub then reminds council of the dangers involved in traveling through Chaos and--what is most annoying to devils who have felt the strength of good angels augmented by that of God--"the strict Senteries and Stations thick / Of Angels watching round" (II, 412-413). Satan's offer to go alone at once ends the debate and confirms his preëminent position above his followers. He becomes, in effect, truly the monarch of Hell, not merely a temporary leader, although to the other devils he is "thir matchless Chief" (II, 487). To them their bowing to Satan is in recognition of his merit; they are not aware of his "close ambition varnisht ore with zeal" (II, 485):

> . . . Towards him they bend
> With awful reverence prone; and as a God
> Extoll him equal to the highest in Heav'n:
> Nor faild they to express how much they prais'd,
> That for the general safety he despis'd
> His own . . . (II, 477-482)

When Satan returns from Paradise the devils greet him not as a monarch but as "thir matchless Chief"; joyful congratulations (X, 457-458) are due a leader; "awful reverence" is due a monarch. The infernal council thus elevates him, unconsciously and through his own contrivance, to a position in its own hierarchy exactly parallel to that of God in the celestial hierarchy, as it had once carried its leader into battle as "Idol of Majestie Divine" (VI, 101).

Once out of Hell and given occasion to utter soliloquies, Satan himself explicitly reveals the part that desire for continued sway over his followers played in his decision to go to Paradise. Having imbruted himself as a serpent, the fiend reflects on the added "merit" his task will give him among the devils (and the added security it will lend to his throne):

> To mee shall be the glorie sole among
> Th' infernal Powers, in one day to have marrd
> What hee Almightie stil'd, six Nights and Days
> Continu'd making, and who knows how long
> Before had bin contriving . . . (IX, 135-139)

In the first soliloquy the reader is allowed to hear, the idea of divided monarchy with God (the idea exulted in by Sin, as we have seen) Satan unblushingly puts forth without apparent thought of his followers:

> Evil be thou my Good; by thee at least
> Divided Empire with Heav'ns King I hold,
> By thee, and more then half perhaps will
> reigne;
> As man ere long, and this new World shall
> know. (IV, 110-113)

When the fiend first beholds Adam and Eve, he sarcastically pretends that he comes their friend and benefactor--to take them where

> . . . there will be room,
> Not like these narrow limits, to receive
> Their numerous offspring . . . (IV, 383-385)

Then he mentions his followers with the same ironical, insincere tone:

> And should I at your harmless innocence
> Melt, as I doe, yet public reason just,
> Honour and Empire with revenge enlarg'd,
> By conquering this new World, compells me now

> To do what else though damnd I should
> abhorre. (IV, 388-392)

As Milton notes, "public reason just" and "Honour and Empire" serve only as excuses:

> So spake the Fiend, and with necessitie,
> The Tyrants plea, excus'd his devilish
> deeds. (IV, 393-394)

"Public reason"--Satan's duty to his followers--is actually "Honour," which he seeks only to make his hold on the devils firmer, and "Empire" refers, of course, to his rule over man through the intermediation of Sin and Death.[9]

IV. CONCLUSION

If the analyses of passages from Paradise Lost set forth in this study are accurate, then certain general statements about the political relationship implicit in Milton's treatment of the fallen angels may be linked to some of the ideas expressed in the prose tracts on liberty which the poet continued to produce until April, 1660, the date of the second edition of The Readie & Easie Way. This is not to say, however, that any positive political doctrine may be abstracted from the poem; at best, the circumstances of the rebel angels--both in their fall from Heaven and in their efforts at alleviating their wretched condition in Hell--show the disastrous results of setting up the wrong kind of government.

The celestial government in Paradise Lost, if considered as the archetype of earthly monarchies, might be called an embodiment of a political doctrine, but the monarchy of Heaven with its complete harmony and order represents a state not to be achieved by men, although order and harmony are goals to be striven for.[1] The difficulty is that, as Milton says in the First Defense, monarchy "easily slips into the worst sort of tyranny"; fallen man is not constant and stable enough in virtue and wisdom to remain a monarch without becoming corrupt;

> who is worthy to hold on earth a power that shall resemble the divine power, save one who, as he far excels other men, is even in wisdom and goodness likest unto God? and such a person, in my opinion, none can be but the Son of God we wait for.[2]

The closer the imitation of the divine monarchy, the more severe the ensuing tyranny, as the "God-like imitated State" of Satan demonstrates.

Milton's finished political doctrine--in which the choice between monarchy and commonwealth is represented as a choice between slavery and liberty--is found in the pamphlet whose second edition appeared almost on the very eve of the Restoration, The Readie & Easie Way.[3] Milton's last political tract presents a forceful negative argument in answer to the question: should monarchy be reinstated by the English people? The substance of the poet's argument is that readmission of monarchy in the person of Charles II will necessitate the loss of all the gains in civil rights achieved recently at great price. Terrible evils, far worse than those known under Charles I, will inevitably result. While he admits that the Commonwealth has proved unstable for several years, Milton shames his countrymen for their too easy admission of failure as he points out the few changes required to achieve a permanent, well-functioning form of representative government. Since "men have smarted so oft for committing all to one person,"[4] he strongly emphasizes the great need for a council composed of the best qualified men, "chosen by the people to consult of public affairs from time to time for the common good."[5] More specifically, this general council would control the army and navy maintained to preserve peace and liberty, control public revenue, and make civil laws. It is important to note that for the transaction of affairs of great con-

cern, the general council would elect from its own members a smaller Council of State. The general council, composed of the ablest men of the commonwealth, would be perpetual. Thus, as Fink points out, Milton saw the problem of government to rest neither in the selection of a dictator to take over in times of crisis nor in the acceptance of an inevitably pernicious monarchy. The true solution lay in the formation of perfect institutions like the general council which would be self-sufficient during emergencies as during normal times. A state thus governed would make the constitutional dictator a supererogatory evil.[6]

Fink has shown the relation of the Satan of Paradise Regained to the ideas in this last political tract of Milton's. The brief epic portrays the fiend as a "dictator" who takes over the affairs of the state during a national emergency and fails miserably to achieve his purpose:

> Thus there emerges out of the poem a point of view thoroughly consistent with that in The ready and easy way, in which Milton had put his full faith in the adequacy of perfectly-contrived institutions to meet all situations whether of peace or crisis.[7]

In the War in Heaven in Paradise Lost Satan fills a political position very similar to that in the later epic: although he is not specifically appointed to the office of dictator, he serves as a commanding general to whom all the authority of the recently organized group of rebel angels is entrusted during their struggle for "free / Enjoyment of [their] right as Gods" (VI, 451-452). The failure of the apostates in battle, with its ruinous consequences, thus also implies Milton's impatience with and lack of faith in any form of

government whose normal institutions cannot contain any emergency.

The relationship between Satan and the other devils after their expulsion from Heaven is, from the standpoint of the followers, much the same as it was during the War; Satan is the preëminently brave, virtuous, and unselfish leader who accepts the throne of Hell despite the dangers involved in thus being "against the Thunderers aime / [their] bulwark" (II, 28-29). The rebels are at last free from the yoke of God's tyranny, as Satan reminds Beelzebub near the beginning of the poem; but, since the war against the tyrant must go on by one means or another, the fallen do have an immediate problem before them, and it is when Satan volunteers to undertake the dangerous mission to Paradise that the devils bow before him and exalt him as a god "equal to the highest in Heav'n" (II, 479). From their point of view, the most effective commentary on Satan's position would be one from the early tract Of Prelaticall Episcopacy, in which Milton cites the examples of Pericles and Brutus as parallel to that of Calvin, who had to control affairs in Geneva until his presbyters were able to take care of themselves:

> Brutus that expell'd the Kings out of Rome, was for the time forc't to be as it were a King himself, till matters were set in order, as in a free Commonwealth. He that had seen Pericles lead the Athenians which way he listed, haply would have said he had bin their Prince, and yet he was but a powerfull and eloquent man in a Democratie, and had no more at any time then a Temporary, and elective sway, which was in the will of the people when to abrogate.[8]

The general atmosphere of the infernal debate seems to indi-

cate, too, that Satan is not in absolute command over his followers, for he lets any of his councilmen speak who will; the progress of the debate apparently is left for them to determine. In the language of The Readie & Easie Way, the devils participating in the debate are members of a council "where no single person, but reason only swaies."[9]

But the difficulty with the infernal council is that it not only has selected Satan--by "free choice" (II, 19)--to sit on the newly established throne but has also bestowed great honors upon him for volunteering his services in their cause. True, during the debate and up until his heroic offer is made, he seeks no special distinction for himself but instead just acts as a moderator; he and the other devils are apparently equal in right:

> Whether of op'n Warr or covert guile,
> We now debate; who can advise, may speak.
> (II, 41-42; italics mine)

The group, he says, has "union, and firm Faith, and firm accord" (II, 36). It might seem that Satan's elevation is only a just recognition of his merit in putting his followers (or, to them, his fellows: "The fellows of his crime, the followers rather" [I, 606])before himself; but in Milton's

> free Commonwealth . . . they who are greatest, are perpetual servants and drudges to the public at thir own cost and charges, neglect thir own affairs; yet are not elevated above thir brethren, . . . may be spoken to freely, familiarly, friendly, without adoration.[10]

Satan actually becomes a monarch who "must be ador'd like a Demigod."[11]

As I have tried to indicate in this study, the

complexity of the politics of Hell arises mainly from Satan's cunning in manipulating events so as to make the state in which he exerts absolute rule appear to his followers to be one which they themselves control. Sin and Death in the poem provide Satan with an occasion to be explicit about his monarchal aspirations. The opposition between the republican structure of Hell and the monarchal structure is, of course, the opposition of attitudes between Satan and his followers. From this complexity one may, I believe, infer a political meaning generally consonant with Milton's final views on liberty, although the meaning is negative. Satan as a monarch, although a monarch in disguise among his subjects as a patron of freedom yet still ruling them, is actually a tyrant; in his role as monarch of the earth, he brings Sin and Death to man. The council in Hell is itself insufficient to meet emergencies and, selecting one member to relieve its gravest crisis, is doomed--not only by the divine plan of bringing good out of evil but as well by the very principles upon which Hell is apparently organized-- to the defeat symbolized by the mass metamorphosis.

NOTES:

In this study of Paradise Lost, I have used the edition of Helen Darbishire (Oxford, 1952), the first volume of the projected Poetical Works. All references to Milton's other works, prose or poetry, refer to The Works of John Milton, edited by Frank Allen Patterson (New York, 1931-1938), the Columbia Edition.

Chapter I

1. C. S. Lewis, A Preface to Paradise Lost (London, 1942), pp. 72-80.

2. Arnold Stein, Answerable Style: Essays on Paradise Lost (Minneapolis, 1953), p. 75.

3. Adam seems here to be using the word God with reference to the angels. See Maurice Kelley's remarks on Milton's use of this word here and in other passages. (This Great Argument: A Study of Milton's De Doctrina Christiana as a Gloss upon Paradise Lost, Princeton Studies in English, No. 22 [Princeton, 1941], pp. 87-88)

4. Lewis, p. 96.

5. Ibid., p. 72.

6. Stein, pp. 15-16.

7. Lewis, p. 72.

8. The Reason of Church-Government, III, 184-185.

9. Second Defense, VIII, 223.

10. Ibid., VIII, 227.

Chapter II

1. In support of his thesis that Satan is an absurd villain, Lewis traces the fiend's progress thus: "From hero to general, from general to politician, from politician to secret service agent, and thence to a thing that peers in at bedroom and bathroom windows, and thence to a toad, and finally to a snake--such is the progress of Satan." (A Preface, p. 97)

2. Preface to Prometheus Unbound, The Complete Poetical Works of Shelley, ed. Thomas Hutchinson (Oxford, 1904), p. 222.

3. Douglas Bush notes that nothing that God can inflict brings Satan to "repent or change." He adds that this phrase, which Shelley deemed glorious at the conclusion of Prometheus Unbound, actually repudiates all Christian teaching, since the "unconquerable will" represents not a "religious and ethical will," but the "irreligious and naturalistic will to power." Bush adds that even Walter Savage Landor, who found Milton's theology loathesome, realized that "'There is neither truth nor wit . . . in saying that Satan is hero of the piece, unless, as is usually the case in human life, he is the greatest hero who gives the widest sway to the worst passions.'" (Paradise Lost in Our Time [Ithaca, 1945], pp. 70-71)

4. In an unpublished dissertation entitled "Some Scholastic Elements in Paradise Lost" (University of Illinois, 1945), Alfred Henry Deutsch points out that the problem of Lucifer as the instigator of the other angels agrees with Aquinas, who states: "The sin of the highest angel was the cause of the others' sinning; not as compelling them, but inducing them by a kind of exhortation." (P. 152)

5. J. B. Broadbent, "Milton's Paradise," MP, LI (1954), 166.

6. Paradise Regained, I, 432-437.

7. Samuel Johnson,"Milton," Lives of the English Poets, ed. George Birkbeck Hill (Oxford, 1905), I, 185.

8. Cleanth Brooks, The Well Wrought Urn (New York, 1947), p. 89.

9. James Holly Hanford, A Milton Handbook, 4th ed. (New York, 1946), pp. 206-207.

10. Stein, Answerable Style, pp. 17-37.

11. Dick Taylor also challenges the view of the battle as a failure by analyzing it as a dramatic embodiment of the conflict between obedience (the Son) and disobedience (Satan). ("The Battle in Heaven in Paradise Lost," Tulane Studies in English, III [1952], 69-92)

12. Kelley, This Great Argument, p. 194. Kelley observes, "in the epic, the Father is hardly a school divine, viewing the trend of things with an academic impassivity. He displays a gamut of emotions ranging from anger and wrath to mild approval and paternal pride, and by no means least of these moods is his sporadic irony."

13. References to the Son as image of the Father:

. . . on his right

> The radiant image of his Glory sat.
> (III, 62-63)

> Too much to one, but double how endur'd,
> To one and to his image now proclaimd.
> (V, 783-784)

> But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on
> Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,
> Image of thee in all things . . .
> (VI, 734-736)

In his exchange with Gabriel, Satan sarcastically refers to Adam as "Gods latest image" (IV, 567).

14. A parallel to the temporary deadlock in the War in Heaven occurs in Book IV when Satan and Gabriel almost fight, but the scales, representing divine justice, prevent the fray:

> . . . now dreadful deeds
> Might have ensu'd, nor onely Paradise
> In this commotion, but the Starrie Cope
> Of Heav'n perhaps, or all the Elements
> At least had gon to rack, disturbd and torne
> With violence of this conflict, had not soon
> The Eternal to prevent such horrid fray
> Hung forth in Heav'n his golden Scales, yet seen
> Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion signe.
> . . . . . .
> . . . The Fiend lookd up and knew
> His mounted scale aloft: nor more, but fled
> Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.
> (IV, 990-998; 1013-1015)

15. Satan's trusting "to have equald the most High" (I, 40) seems to be an allusion to the deadlock in the battle.

16. Verity's note--"offend = Lat. offendere, 'to strike, to hit'"--confirms the metaphorical use of the word to indicate that the rebels will only offend their enemies (or make them appear foolish by striking at them with force). (A. W. Verity, ed., Paradise Lost [Cambridge, 1910], p. 519)

17. Zera S. Fink, The Classical Republicans: An Essay in the Recovery of a Pattern of Thought in Seventeenth Century England, Northwestern University Studies in the Humanities, No. 9 (Evanston, 1945), p. 195.

Chapter III

1. Hanford, summarizing the great debate of Book II, says

that Beelzebub "introduces into the discussion a new fact, craftily held back till the progress of the debate demanded it--the existence of an undefended world peopled by creatures liable to attack--a matchless opportunity for the satisfaction of a revenge as fierce as Moloch's by means as safe as Belial's." (A Milton Handbook, p. 199) Hanford seems to overlook, however, this passage in which Satan puts forth to his whole following the news of the new "generation" and the statement in the Argument to Book I--"Satan . . . tells them lastly of a new World and new kind of Creature to be created, according to an ancient Prophesie or report in Heaven."

2. Verity, p. 420.

3. Stein, Answerable Style, p. 158.

4. The union of the fiend with his allegorical daughter would be as thorough and as complete as the union of angels which Raphael blushingly and hurriedly describes to Adam, although that of Satan and Sin would naturally be as foul as that of the angels is pure:

> Easier then Air with Air, if Spirits embrace,
> Total they mix, Union of Pure with Pure
> Desiring; nor restraind conveyance need
> As Flesh to mix with Flesh, or Soul with Soul.
> (VIII, 626-629)

C. S. Lewis's comment is apt:

> It is by his own will that [Satan] revolts; but not by his own will that Revolt itself tears its way in agony out of his head and becomes a being separable from himself, capable of enchanting him (II, 749-766) and bearing him unexpected and unwelcome progeny. (A Preface, p. 97)

5. In Book X the epic narrator ironically shows Sin through Satan's eyes by calling her his "faire / Enchanting Daughter" (352-353). Sin is still the same horrible creature she was when Satan met her in Book II; Satan himself has grown now even grosser by sinning.

6. Mr. Tillyard observes that

> Satan, Sin, and Death are a close parody of the Trinity. Satan corresponds to the Father. He begets a daughter Sin, and proceeding from them both there is the third member of the infernal Trinity, Death. (Studies in Milton [London, 1951], p. 60)

This parody, however, is actually not very close, for

the roles of Sin and Death seem to be reversed: Satan's son, if the parody were exact, would have to correspond to the Son of God and not to the Holy Spirit (a member of the Trinity who does not figure prominently in Paradise Lost); Sin, Satan's daughter, however, as Tillyard implies, takes the place of the Son of God and promises to "Reign / At [Satan's] right hand voluptuous." To complicate the matter of a close parody of the Trinity, Satan himself often imitates the Son of God (as when he volunteers to go to Paradise alone to tempt Adam and Eve). But in any event, the parody is strongly suggested, even though it is not a fully developed parallelism; and the followers of Satan are left in the position of being under an infernal monarchy parallel to the celestial one from which they revolted.

7. The contrast between the mutual reign of the whole group (something desirable) and the reign of one (something infamous) Satan perhaps intends to emphasize in some of his invective against the Monarch of Heaven:

> . . . our Grand foe,
> Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
> Sole reigning holds the Tyranny of Heav'n.
> (I, 122-124; italics mine)

8. But Satan is not exempt from the consequences of attempting to raise himself, of course. Just as the devils have even more damnation heaped upon themselves for trying to improve their condition by seducing Adam and Eve to revolt, Satan himself suffers in addition, as he painfully admits in Book IV, for his own personal ambitions:

> While they adore me on the Throne of Hell
> With Diadem and Scepter high advanc't
> The lower still I fall, onely supream
> In miserie; such joy ambition findes.
> (IV, 89-92)

9. F. R. Leavis, somewhat embarrassed by T. S. Eliot's revised views on Milton, attempts to show, among other things, that one of Milton's chief defects as a poet is, in the words of A. J. A. Waldock (Paradise Lost and Its Critics [Cambridge, 1947]), "his failure to realize his undertaking, to conceive it dramatically as a whole, capable of absorbing and depersonalizing the relevant interests and impulses of his private life. He remains in the poem too much John Milton, declaiming, insisting, arguing, suffering, and protesting." Leavis finds it sufficient only to quote, as a minor example of excessive personal intrusion into the poem, the narrative reflection on the argument ensuing immediately upon the Fall:

> . . . Thus it shall befall
> Him who to worth in Woman overtrusting

> Lets her Will rule; restraint she will not brooke,
> And left to her self, if evil thence ensue,
> Shee first his weak indulgence will accuse.
> (IX, 1182-1186)

This, of course, appears to be Milton "suffering, and protesting" about the unfortunate marriage to Mary Powell, which occurred twenty-five years before the publication of Paradise Lost. However, any such implications in the passage are canceled by the lines which follow (not quoted by Leavis); Milton remains sufficiently aloof from his fallen couple to view them with objectivity:

> Thus they in mutual accusation spent
> The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,
> And of thir vain contest appeerd no end.
> (IX, 1187-1189; italics mine)

The remark about "Him who to worth in Woman overtrusting / Lets her Will rule" is dramatically relevant, in the context of the poem, for in the reader's first glimpse of Adam and Eve comes the implicit comment that any subservient act on the part of Adam is a severe breach of the relationship in which they were placed by God:

> Hee for God onely, shee for God in him. (IV, 299)

Raphael, too, explicitly warns Adam that Eve is the "weaker" of the two (VI, 909). Had Milton written

> Such was that happy garden-state,
> While man there walked without a mate,

he would no doubt be censured for these lines, too.

The chief defect of Paradise Lost, however, is Satan: "the Satan of the first two books appears no more, the Satan of the address to the Sun near the the beginning of Book IV being a different one--different in conception. But, not satisfied that this substitution restores the proper balance of sympathy, Milton . . . intervenes constantly to incite a disparaging view of Satan--to 'degrade' him, the extreme instance of the 'technique of degradation' being the pantomime trick in Book X by which the infernal host, breaking into applause, are made to hiss." Satan is, as I believe I have shown in this study, the same Satan throughout Paradise Lost: Milton's devil is an extraordinarily complex character who, as Rajan observes (Paradise Lost & the Seventeenth Century Reader [New York, 1948], p. 102), changes according to the circumstances in which he finds himself. The magnanimous leader of the opening books keeps up a pose which he can do without when he is by himself; what Leavis and Waldock call "degradation"

(imposed upon Satan by the poet in an effort to restore the balance lost in the scenes in Hell) is actually a progressive degeneration, a result of Satan's tampering with the moral law which is postulated in the poem and of which the fiend shows consciousness even in Book I:

> . . . If then his Providence
> Out of evil seek to bring forth good,
> Our labour must be to pervert that end,
> And out of good still to find means of evil.
> (I, 162-165)

reveals Satan's knowledge of the divine plan, and (in addition to the notion of gaining "resolution from despare" [I, 191])

> . . . hee
> Who now is Sovran can dispose and bid
> What shall be right . . . (I, 245-247)

reveals his knowledge that God actually is omnipotent (even though Satan concedes that the omnipotence is only that of force, he has felt what force can do).

Chapter IV

1. See the passage on discipline from The Reason of Church-Government quoted on pp. 12-13.

2. First Defense, VII, 279.

3. Wilbur Elwyn Gilman, Milton's Rhetoric: Studies in His Defense of Liberty, The University of Missouri Studies, XIV, No. 3 (1939), p. 115.

4. The Readie & Easie Way, VI, 125.

5. Ibid., VI, 125-126.

6. Fink, The Classical Republicans, p. 196.

7. Ibid.

8. Of Prelaticall Episcopacy, III, 92.

9. The Readie & Easie Way, VI, 122.

10. Ibid., VI, 120; italics mine.

11. Ibid.

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