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The Simile as a Unifying Device in Paradise Lost

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The Simile as a Unifying Device in *Paradise Lost*

by

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PREFACE

While taking a course in English Classicism I became interested in the study of the simile. The simile, a device taken for granted in any epic, is regarded primarily as an enriching element which broadens the scope of the poem. During a detailed study of the similes used in the Iliad and those used by Milton in delineating the character of Satan in Paradise Lost, I began to see the many other facets of this device.

The first suggested topic was a comparative study of the simile as used by Homer in the Iliad, Spenser in The Faerie Queene, and Milton in Paradise Lost. After some research and consideration, this plan was discarded in favor of a study of the simile as a unifying device in Paradise Lost.

The revival of interest in the works of Milton has caused an output of scholarly works on his philosophy, literary style, life, and on other aspects encountered in the craftsman and his works. James Whaler has been an outstanding contributor to the study of Milton's techniques of simile. Most of his discoveries have been incorporated in scholarly articles included in the literary journals. I am

particularily indebted to Whaler for listing and categorizing the similes.

I am deeply grateful to the professors of the Graduate Department of English, Barry College, for their unfailing assistance in the preparation of this thesis. I am particularily indebted to Sister Robert Louise, who guided me in the selection and direction of the topic; to Sister Mary Ellen for her close and critical reading of the text; and to Sister Thomas Catherine for her many valuable suggestions. I also wish to thank all who, by their thoughtfulness and cooperation, have helped to make this paper a reality.

CHAPTER I

THE NATURE AND USE OF SIMILE

Epic poetry as one of the most ancient forms of literary composition has necessarily undergone many modifications in its development. In all probability the simile, one of its most marked conventions, is also one of its most ancient conventions. When Aristotle mentions the simile in The "Art" of Rhetoric he does so with the Iliad in mind. William Knight states that by the time Homer began writing the Iliad, the simile was already an accepted and necessary artistic device.[1]

The simile is closely allied to the metaphor, which is believed to have been the prior figure. In fact, Aristotle maintains that the simile is a metaphor and must be used like one since there is little difference between them.[2] Most information on the nature and function of the simile is gleaned by becoming more familiar with the metaphor, which is considered by many to be the basic poetic

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[1] William F. J. Knight, Roman Vergil (London, 1944), p. 170.

[2] Aristotle, The "Art" of Rhetoric, trans. John Henry Freese (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), p. 367.

figure.

Elizabeth Sewell in The Human Metaphor states that the "metaphor is inherent in language" and is closely related to the simile, personification, myth, and allegory. In its simplest form it "consists in the perception and exhibition of a relationship or correspondence between two separate or diverse entities or phenomena." The metaphor and the simile are alike in that in both "the mind sees and expresses an analogy" but differ in that in the metaphor "there is an inherent movement toward the fusion of the two terms."[3] The basis for both the metaphor and the simile is that there must be a clearly perceived and apt relationship between the figure of speech and its tenor. The simile does not fuse the two terms, but, with the addition of a word or group of connective words, draws the mind to see that one thing is "like" or "as" another. John Middleton Murry concludes that "it seems impossible to regard metaphor and simile as different in any essential property."[4] On one hand the metaphor is called a compressed simile, and on the other the simile is called a metaphor introduced with

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[3]Elizabeth Sewell, The Human Metaphor (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964), pp. 42-43.

[4]John Middleton Murry, Selected Criticism 1916-1957 (New York, 1960), p.66.

a "like" or an "as."

The tools of language are the words of the language made effective by the skill with which they are employed. I. A. Richards states that "words are the meeting point at which regions of experience which can never combine in sensation or intuition come together. They are the occasion and the means of that growth which is the mind's endless endeavor to order itself."[5] The simile and the metaphor, deeply rooted in our spoken language as well as in our more formal written prose and poetry, developed in accord with man's need for expressing himself. The language of primitive man must have once been very simple because his needs and his experiences were limited. But as man began to question his behavior and to seek reasons for the natural phenomena surrounding his world, the language need became more complex. Bruno Snell, who, in his book The Discovery of the Mind, explores the language development necessary for the expression of both objective and subjective ideas, states that "human behavior is made clear only through reference to something else which is in turn explained by analogy with human behavior." He continues by saying that this fact "pertains to all Homeric similes . . . all genuine

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[5]Ivor A. Richards, The Philosophy of Rhetoric (New York, 1964), p. 130.

metaphors, and in fact to every single case of human comprehension."[6] In order to draw an analogy man had to use that which was well known to him and was therefore dependable in its actions and reactions. According to Hermann Frankel, the early Greeks in seeking order in the "bewildering variety of subjective human behavior" turned to those realms of nature in which distinctive qualities are given to objective facts." Comparisons were made with nature, animate and inanimate, which suggested "at once a certain behavior and definite character."[7] Human behavior was equated with the swift deer, the courageous lion, and the steadfast rock.

The simile and the metaphor, then, evolved in the natural progress of the creation of language. They are derived either from a verb or an adjective since they refer either "to an activity, which is the concern of the verb, or to a property, which is described by an adjective."[8] According to Michael Coffee the simile is distinguished by

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[6]Bruno Snell, The Discovery of the Mind (Oxford, 1953), pp. 200-201.

[7]Hermann Frankel, Review of Der Charakter in der Sprache der fruhgriechischen Dichtung (Sermonides Homer Pindar), by Marg. Walter, American Journal of Philology, LX, No. 240 (1939), 478.

[8]Snell, p. 194.

two forms, the short simile and the epic simile. The short simile consists of an introductory word followed by a noun, with or without modifiers, and usually contains no finite verb; such as, "innumerable as the Stars of Night" (V.745).[9] The long or epic simile consists of a separate sentence preceded by introductory words,[10] such as Milton's description of the flight of Satan through hell.

> As when far off at Sea a Fleet descri'd
> Hangs in the Clouds, by Equinoctial Wings
> Close sailing from Bengala, or the Isles
> Of Ternate and Tidore, whence the Merchants bring
> Thir spicy Drugs: They on the Trading Flood
> Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
> Fly stemming nightly toward the Pole. So seem'd
> Far off the flying Fiend:
>
> (II.636-643)

Coffee indicates that the long simile also includes "cases in which one or more clauses containing a finite verb or verbs are attached to the original phrase of composition."[11] An example of this is found in Milton's description of the

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[9] Complete Poems and Major Prose of John Milton, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (New York, 1957). All excerpts of Paradise Lost are taken from this volume.

[10] Michael Coffee, "The Function of the Homeric Simile," American Journal of Philology, LXXVIII, No. 310 (1957), 113-114.

[11] Coffee, p. 116.

number of Satan's prostrate hosts:

> His Legions, Angel Forms, who lay intrans't
> Thick as Autumnal Leaves, that strow the Brooks
> In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
> High overarch't imbow'r.
>
> (I.301-304)

Besides those similes which are included under the title of epic simile because of structure, there are those that are included because they suggest heroic qualities or proportions. The circumference of Satan's shield is so broad that it "hung on his shoulders like the Moon" (I.287).

Both the long and short simile are found in the Iliad and the Odyssey. And, although the short comparison is found in other than Greek works and seems to have a lengthy ancestry as an epic device, the long simile "seems rare in oral epics other than the Iliad and Odyssey and . . . seems to belong to one of the latest strata of the Homeric language."[12]

I. A. Richards has analyzed the structure of the metaphor (and the simile) into two component parts--the idea called the tenor and the image called the vehicle; together they form the figure whose interaction provides the meaning. The meaning evoked can be the result either of a direct

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[12]Coffee, p. 116.

resemblance to a thing or of the attitude of the author, and is influenced by both the likenesses and differences perceived. He considers three facets of the possibilities of effectiveness through comparison. A comparison may be simply putting two things together in order to allow them to work together; or it may be a study of their likenesses and differences; or "it may be a process of calling attention to certain aspects of the one through the co-presence of the other."[13] As soon as two things are placed together the mind tries to find meaning in their relationship. Although the exact meaning is often unpredictable and ephemeral, it is in the precise use of the vehicle of the figure that meaning can be structured.

The decision as to how to make use of his material and the execution of this decision determines the worth of an artisan. As Anne Hamilton points out, the quality and stature of the poet is evidenced by his own perspective in "recognizing larger relationships and meanings within and behind the experience" of his work, and by his degree of familiarity with imagination and inspiration.[14] It is as a

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[13]Richards, p. 120.

[14]Anne Hamilton, The Seven Principles of Poetry (Boston, 1940), p. 257.

result of these qualities that a poet is the maker of the elevated language required for works of great art. According to Longinus there are five principal sources of elevated language, two of which are innate in the poet and three the product of art. The two sources innate in the poet are "the power of forming great conceptions" and "vehement and inspired passion." The three which are partially the product of art are: first, the formation of figures of thought and of expression; secondly, noble diction, which in turn comprises choice of words, use of metaphors, and elaboration of language; and thirdly, dignified and elevated composition.[15] The simile is included under the category of noble diction.

The poet in creating similes must have not only the necessary technical skill but he must realize his subject with intensity of imagination. He must have the creativity and percipience to realize the potential effectiveness of certain comparisons. He should be alert to the similarity between dissimilars, and, although the similarity must be a true similarity, according to Murry "it should have lain hitherto unperceived, or but rarely perceived by us, so that

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[15] Aristotle's Poetics, Longinus on the Sublime, ed. Charles Sears Baldwin; trans. Ingram Bywater and W. Rhys Roberts (New York, 1930), p. 67.

it comes to us with an effect of revelation: something hitherto unknown is suddenly made known."[16] Not only should the image contain what Sister Mary Francis Slattery calls "plentitude of precise correspondence" but there should be an allowance made for the imagination of the audience. At times the most effective comparison is one that is only partially stated, for then the audience can complete the image.[17] In this way the poet manipulates his audience by stripping the imagery of irrelevancies and allowing the reader to supply the implied relevancies from his own experiences. Sewell states that a characteristic of the similes in the greater works is that they are fertile. They "lend the mind energy to work and to work further."[18]

The simile can be used in as many ways as the skill and imagination of the writer allows. It can be used to instill a mood, create suspense, regain interest, grant relief and respite, illustrate, catch an impression, support and develop tone, add color, dignity, and weight. The image

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[16] Murry, p. 67.

[17] Sister Mary Francis Slattery, The Pursuit of Grace in the Technique of the Poetic Process According to Alexander Pope (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1952), p. 235.

[18] Sewell, pp. 59-60.

created may be visual, auditory, or refer to any of the other senses; it may refer to any physical experience, or it may be psychological. The source of the simile may be historical, biblical, mythological, physical, spiritual, animate, or inanimate. The tenor and the vehicle may agree in one point only, a tertium comparationis, or it may agree in other more subtle ways. Coffee states that

> the primary correspondence between simile and context lies in at least one point of sensible data, a physical movement, appearance, sound; or the simile has expressed something measurable: space, distance, time or numbers. But often the relationship is too complex to allow the function of the simile to be formulated in such terms. In many of these measurement is the basis of comparison, but there is a series of movements or a nexus of different kinds of movements, and so here the function may be described as illustrating a situation or the status of a series of actions.[19]

Furthermore, sometimes the simile illustrates a purpose as well as an action. Milton uses the simile in a unique manner by allowing it to foreshadow happenings in what James Whaler calls prolepsis.[20] In this instance Milton uses the simile, not only in a narrow sense by relating it to the context in which it is locked, but in a wider sense to the broad experience of the entire poem.

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[19] Coffee, p. 125.

[20] James Whaler, "The Miltonic Simile," PMLA, XLVI (March, 1931), 1036.

This paper will consider the function of the simile within the epic Paradise Lost. Since, to date, this is the last important epic that has been written in the English language, the only means of understanding its construction is through an understanding of the construction of the epics of the early classic period. Those considered in this research were primarily Homer's Iliad and Odyssey and, secondarily and casually, Vergil's Aeneid. As already stated by Knight, when Aristotle discusses the simile he does so with the Iliad in mind. Knight also tells us that

> At the stage which Homer has reached, there is nothing primitive about similes. They are artistic devices controlling delicately and powerfully the mind of the percipient, as the poet wills. They create effects by reinforcement, contrast, and general enrichment of the moment's mental world. . . . They are part of the imagery, and work like other imagery. All imagery is ultimately, at the time, both comparison and also just what the poet chooses to mention; and what the poet chooses to mention, in a certain order and rhythm, almost is the poem.[21]

When both Vergil and Milton wrote they followed patterns already developed and used by Homer. In certain instances they repeated similes Homer used because in the history of the epic this practice is allowed if the poet

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[21] Knight, p. 170.

can use the borrowed material to advantage.[22] In fact, as Highet states, " . . . an apt allusion will for the alert reader, evoke a scene more vividly, and will bring out all the force of an event."[23] Vergil and Milton, however, faced a problem which Homer did not. The epic was basically an oral poem, but by the time they wrote, it had become a written form which, according to the epic tradition, had to employ the techniques of an oral poem.

In order to present the epic in a solemn, courtly manner both men had to depend on the style they created. According to Clive Lewis, Milton accomplished this by

> (1) The use of slightly unfamiliar words and constructions, including archaisms. (2) The use of proper names, not solely or chiefly for their sound but because they are names of splendid, remote, terrible, volumptuous things. They are there to encourage the sweep of the reader's eye over the richness and variety of the world . . . (3) Continued allusion to all the sources of heightened interest in our sense experience (light, darkness, storm, flowers, jewels, sexual love, and the like), but all overtopped and "managed" with air of magnanimous austerity.[24]

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[22] Examples of this practice are the bee simile (I.768-775), the wolf simile (IV.183-187), and the autumn leaves simile (I.302-304).

[23] Gilbert Highet, The Classical Tradition (New York, 1950), p. 155.

[24] Clive Staples Lewis, A Preface to "Paradise Lost" (New York, 1942), pp. 39-40.

The simile has become a vehicle for conveying this style. The simile reinforces the tone and the meaning by the aptness of its comparison and the richness of its material. Thomas M. Greene refers to Milton's similes as "little Chinese boxes of meaning."[25] Each simile is firmly imbedded in the meaning structure as well as in the syntactical structure of the poem. Analysis of the individual simile demonstrates the power of imagination with which Milton perceived even the most subtle points of comparison in each. It can also be shown grammatically that the simile is not just an embellishment which can easily be attached or detached from the verse, but that it is firmly established and anchored as an integral part of the whole.

Whaler, an authority on Milton's use of the simile, in several articles lists the functions, patterning, grouping, and subject matter of the similes. His extensive study of the epics of western civilization lend authority to his comparisons of the similes of Paradise Lost with those of the other great epics. Since this chapter is intended to be a general summary of different aspects of the simile, I shall quote freely material from the Whaler articles.

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[25] Thomas M. Greene, The Descent from Heaven (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 395.

In "The Miltonic Simile," Whaler clearly states that his purpose is "to consider what Milton does with simile, some of the problems he solves with it, what individual mastery of technique he exhibits in comparison with his epic predecessors." Whaler lists seven summary statements:

> 1. Milton's similes are reducible to logical patterns, which exceed in variety those of any ancient poet;
> 2. A typically complex Milton simile directs each detail to some application in the field; i.e., homologation rather than heterogeneity between terms is the rule;
> 3. As grammarian, Milton firmly locks each simile in context, shunning the pitfalls of bravura by
> a. restraining individual similes from running beyond a certain length;
> b. refusing, however apt it may be, to emphasize simile by letting it fall at the end of a period or subdivision;
> 4. Milton is the first epic poet to add to the simile the function of prolepsis;
> 5. Milton uses animal similes very frugally, and only when he can surpass those of previous epics in suggestive homologation;
> 6. Milton's simile-groups have no rivals in previous epic with respect to
> a. the number of groups in which constituents are arranged climactically;
> b. felicitous baroque irregularity in distribution of groups;
> 7. Milton is Homeric in his general subordination of metaphor to simile.[26]

Whaler's article explains in detail the first four

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[26]Whaler, p. 1034.

points. He has found that Milton's similes can be grouped into four patterns; 1) simple pattern, "the poet presents but two terms, sure that the salient points of resemblance will be instantly recognized;"[27] 2) complex pattern with perfect homologation, for every point of comparison in the text;[28] 3) complex pattern with logical digressions, this pattern is seen only in the similes of "increasing complexity;"[29] and, 4) complex pattern with four terms in a ratio, "this pattern is used to express relative magnitudes."[30] In order to illustrate the use of each pattern, he has listed every simile in Paradise Lost according to its pattern. As a general rule the simple similes are those restricted not only according to meaning but according to line-length of one or two lines. A few simile-clusters are included in this group, some of which border on the complex; "the logical structure of others show interesting divergence from the norm."[31]

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[27] Whaler, p. 1038.

[28] Whaler, p. 1040.

[29] Whaler, p. 1052.

[30] Whaler, p. 1063.

[31] Whaler, p. 1039.

The complex pattern with perfect homologation is "the prevailing type of complex pattern in Paradise Lost." It "occurs five times as often as the digressive type," and is found in all twelve books. The third pattern, complex pattern with logical digression, is used fifteen times. It is found in the first five books and in the ninth and eleventh book. The fourth pattern is restricted in use; it is found only eight times in three variations of pattern. Whaler attributes this restraint to Milton's art. This pattern "is liable to abuse especially in a poem wherein the supernatural must be communicated in terms of things mundane. But Milton does not use it often; so that, when he does set down such a simile, it is all the more effective."[32]

Whaler says that "Milton employs simile to explain or to emotionalize or to ennoble or to relieve or to anticipate, or to fulfill two or even several of these functions at once." He lists five functions of the simile and couples them with examples from Paradise Lost; illustration, aggrandizement, relief, prolepsis, and that function which is implied in all similes, that of giving pleasure. The poet illustrates in order to "have us see or image clearly a

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[32]Whaler, pp. 1037-64. Examples are given of all patterns and variations illustrated by a use of symbols which lend the article a mathematical appearance.

process, . . . a living being . . . a thing or place . . . an action." An action may be illustrated in a series of movements paralleled in a simile-cluster. The supernatural may be given "outline perspective and proportion" through the illustrative quality of the simile. An abstract idea may be defined "by presenting an analogous concrete thing or experience." The clarification of "relations between two characters" may be handled through the simile by "adjusting image to fable so as to reinforce the poet's sympathetic or unsympathetic attitude."[33]

Another use of the simile of illustration is to "direct and focus the emotions (1) through logical digression, or (2) by exhibiting analogous physical phenomena apt to suggest and arouse emotions like those in the fable." According to Whaler the function of aggrandizement in Milton's fable "is perhaps the most important of all." Milton ennobles and raises his fable to "sublimity or magnificence" by "his frequent use of classical myth and of encyclopedic reference to scientific research, geography, history, the Bible, and to belles lettres." Both illustration and aggrandizement can be found in the same simile, but usually illustration is for the purpose of making

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[33]Whaler, pp. 1035-1037.

something clear and therefore homely examples are used. Aggrandizement usually employs comparisons less familiar, thereby creating an atmosphere apart.[34] B. Rajan agrees with Whaler's idea and also states that Milton strengthens "this tendency to heroic aggrandizement by the comparative form of his similes," which "are continually maintaining that A is bigger, better, or more beautiful than B."[35]

The simile for the purpose of giving relief is used sparingly by Milton because it implies suspension in narrative. Such similes are digressive in nature, according to Rajan, and "usually serve to accentuate by contrast the superhuman grandeur of the events which they relieve."[36] In the fourth function of the simile, prolepsis, an event is anticipated by means of the simile. Whaler believes that this function of the simile is distinctive with Milton "although it may occur sporadically in the classics." The fifth function of the simile is "to please." "A simile worthy of an artist is meant to please. When, as sometimes happens in Homer . . . but never in Milton, this is almost

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[34] Whaler, pp. 1035-37.

[35] Balachandra Rajan, "Paradise Lost" and the Seventeenth Century Reader (New York, 1962), p. 121.

[36] Rajan, p. 121.

the sole function, it may fairly be called decorative."[37]

As has been already stated, Milton avoided the purely decorative simile in order not to lure his readers from the story. Whaler observes that each simile has been placed in such a way that it has become necessary, and, even though it may not be "absolutely undetachable, it always tends to be structurally and esthetically organized."[38] No simile is too prominent; each is locked into the grammar and firmly attached by a variety of nexuses. The longer similes, those of five or more lines, are set into the narration by means of a dual nexus. In his study of the grammatical nexus, Whaler examined the forty-eight longer similes, including the simile-clusters treated as one simile, to determine the predominant pattern used by Milton. The conclusion drawn is that Milton employs the classic pattern of context-simile-context. He states that "the simplest and most natural connectives between S (the simile) and A (the context) are as or like to introduce S, so or thus to resume A;"

> . . . side-long he works his way.
> As when a ship by skillful Steersman wrought

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[37] Whaler, p. 1037.

[38] James Whaler, "The Grammatical Nexus of the Miltonic Simile," JEGP, XXX (July 1931), 334. Whaler discusses the nexus extensively in this article.

> Nigh River's mouth or Foreland, where the wind
> Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her Sail;
> So varied hee.
>
> (IX.312-316)

The opposite of this pattern is AS, "A [context] being given, S [simile] may follow without a second connective with A."[39]

> Gliding meteorous, as Ev'ning Mist
> Ris'n from a River o'er the marish glides,
> And gathers ground fast at the Laborer's heel
> Homeward returning. High in Front advanc't
>
> (XII.629-633)

This form is not common with Milton. Whaler has found that, of the forty-eight similes, thirty-three are in the SA pattern and thirteen are in the AS pattern. He has formulated five reasons why the AS pattern may be used. For variety and liveliness the poet may invert the terms and treat the context as the simile, introducing it with the concluding connective "so." For the same reason he may use a negative form. He may omit the second connective "if it is not required for clearness," or if it "would encumber the narrative." Fifthly, this form would be used if the simile were placed at the end of a division, "a function virtually ignored by Milton."[40]

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[39] Whaler, p. 327.

[40] Whaler, pp. 328-329.

A variety of connecting words is used by Milton. The variation of these words is likewise determined by the artistry of the poet. If the same words are found in proximity to each other it is because they do not hinder the flow of the narration nor seem repetitious. There seems to be no fixed rules governing their variation. Furthermore, similes, as has been noted previously, may be single or in groups called clusters. The simile-cluster as used by Milton is highly effective. Used sparingly but precisely, it is "an indispensable part of that effect of massed but controlled splendor which is very near to the heart of his epic style."[41] The simile-cluster is a group of simple or complex similes that have the context in common and the point of comparison usually constant. As an example of variation in the point of comparison, Whaler presents "the supreme example in English of how a cluster of similes may mark the successive stages in an action." The example is taken from Paradise Lost, I.302-355, where "six similes within fifty-four lines are grouped in two sections of three members each." The action is that of Satan calling the fallen angels from their helpless state on the burning

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[41] James Whaler, "Compounding and Distribution of Similes in Paradise Lost," Modern Philology, XXVIII (February, 1931), 327.

marl.

S Leaves (Host is prostrate) 302-5
r multitude, hushed supineness, helplessness

S Sedge (Host is prostrate but in wild weltering movement 305-7
r multitude, helpless under exterior forces

S Crushed Egyptian army (Host is prostrate, but moving under outside forces) 307-11
r broken disorder and confused helplessness

(Satan's charge to awaken . . . . . 314-30)

S Pickets caught asleep (Hosts are roused from trance) 332-35
r speed of upspring, blind obedience

S Locusts (Hosts take to flight) 338-43
r multitude, disorderly mass milling into order; suggestion of plague

S Migrant Northern barbarians (Hosts are rudely organized under leaders) 351-55
r multitude, order, obedience, ruthlessness.[42]

The example not only graphically illustrates a variation in the cluster pattern, but it demonstrates the illustrative power of the cluster.

In all there are thirty simile-clusters in the books of Paradise Lost where the dominant voice is that of the narrator. Simile-clusters are inappropriate in conversation and are therefore scarce in Books V, VI, VII, VIII, and XII.

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[42]Whaler, p. 314.

The clusters are massed in Books I and II for the purpose of the aggrandizement of Satan and his Hosts, and are used to describe both static and dynamic situations. The example of Satan's Hosts recovering is that of a dynamic situation; the cluster describing the Garden in Book IV is that of a static situation.

Seven of the thirty simile-clusters contain three or more similes which are arranged climactically within the cluster. The group of similes may be either homogeneous or heterogeneous. The description of the Garden in Book IV. 268-284, is an example of the homogeneous climactic arrangement. The simile-cluster contains four similes connected by negative nexuses to emphasize that the Garden is remote from all other gardens. The effect is not only remote and majestic but also ironic.

> . . . Not in that fair field
> Of Enna, where Proserpin gath'ring flow'rs
> Herself a fairer Flow'r by gloomy Dis
> Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain
> To seek her through the world; nor that sweet
> Grove
> Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd
> Castalian Spring might with this Paradise
> Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian Isle
> Girt with the River Triton, where old Cham,
> Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Lybian Jove,
> Hid Amalthea and her Florid Son,
> Young Bacchus, from his Stepdame Rhea's eyes;
> Nor where Abassin Kings thir issue Guard,
> Mount Amara, though this by some suppos'd

> True Paradise under the Ethiop Line
> By Nilus head, enclosed with shining Rock,
> A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
> From this Assyrian Garden, where the Fiend
> Saw undelighted all delight, ...
> (IV.268-286)

The use of the negative nexus implies that the Garden of Paradise in which Satan finds himself is not the same as any of the named gardens. That it is not that garden in which Proserpina is abducted by Dis, but, actually, it is here that Eve is "gathered" by Satan. The Garden is not that Grove and Castalian spring of Daphne where the oracle makes prophecies; but it is that Garden into which Satan enters by stealth and in which Raphael warns Adam against Satan. The Garden is said not to be like the Nyseian Isle, where the god Bacchus was reared in secret; but it is that Garden where both Adam and Eve, after eating the apple, become intoxicated "as with new wine." The Garden is not like Mount Amara, where the Abyssinian kings keep their sons enclosed, but it is that place where, in spite of God's loving protection, Adam and Eve turn against God and from which they are expelled. The cluster is proleptic; this effect is developed and emphasized by piling images of gardens in which the acts that took place are not stated but implied. The climactic arrangement lies in these implied actions; harvest of good and evil, entrance of evil and

warning given to good, triumph of evil expressed in loss of self-control, and punishment of evil.

Whaler says that Milton's "crowning success in climactic arrangement" occurs in Book IV. 10-20, where Satan is beset by doubts. "Here the secret of effective climax is the increasing heterogeneity between terms." Satan is compared to a cunning man who has found his match (man to man); then he is compared to a persistent swarm of flies (life to life), and then to a rock dashed by the waves (man to rock).[43] The felicitous placement of these simile-clusters contributes to the baroque atmosphere of Paradise Lost, effecting a tone of unity and extravagance.

So far in this paper the technicalities of the simile have been discussed. Milton has created his distinct style through a variety of words and constructions, strange and terrifying names, and allusions to remote locations and situations. One of the devices he uses to produce this style is the simile. The simile may be simple or complex with digressions that are either heterogeneous or homogeneous. The similes may have a variety of connecting words; the longer similes are usually encompassed by a dual set of connectives which, for the sake of variety as well as

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[43]Whaler, p. 316.

for meaning, may be negative in form or may be omitted. The common method of setting the simile in the narrative is to have it preceded and followed by the context in such a way that it appears necessary to the fable. In accord with the baroque style of the epic, to emphasize actions or situations and to offer variety Milton arranges similes either singly or in clusters. With artistic structuring of technique and meaning, his similes fulfill the functions of illustration, aggrandizement, relief, prolepsis, and a combination of any of these functions, which in any artistic simile results in a pleasing effect.

With a work of such magnitude as Paradise Lost Milton employed a variety of means in which to achieve a unified whole. One of the most obvious is that of the organization of the subject matter. Basically, there are three sets of characters, three settings, and three divisions of the twelve books. The three sets of characters are Satan and the fallen angels, God and the Messiah, and Adam and Eve with Raphael and Michael. The three settings are Hell, Heaven, and Earth, including Paradise. The three divisions of the twelve books are the first four in which the plan for the fall and redemption of man is formulated, the middle four books in which Adam is instructed, and the last four books in which the fall, punishment, and acceptance of it

take place.

The use of language differs according to character, setting, and grouping of books. Greene in The Descent from Heaven notes several styles in each of the three settings.

> The style of Paradise Lost is a product of analgous fashion. . . . diversity springs not only from Milton's acute sense of decorum but from the several conceptions of language which had once lain in incipient conflict within his mind. . . . Milton's own style in describing heaven virtually eschews similes and his language, if elevated, is markedly less dense than elsewhere. . . . If the style which describes heaven is "pure," that which describes hell is markedly accommodated to the darkness visible. We make out the dim, gray, physical forms through a fog of jagged syntax, deceptive similes, confusion of physical and abstract, straight-faced but withering irony. . . . Milton's third style, that which is accommodated to earth, represents something of a mean between his celestial and infernal manner. Terrestrial vision after the fall is obscured. But even before it, the appearances of this world are capable of misleading, and the style is a little less transparent than that of heaven.[44]

Greene observes Milton's use of syntax, diction, grammar, as well as figuration. My concern in this essay is only with figuration.

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[44]Greene, pp. 380-81. Anne D. Ferry, Milton's Epic Voice (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 69-70, presents the same idea. "Ancient and orthodox tradition guided Milton to create in Paradise Lost a God who speaks a language of statement. . . . The same tradition and reverent sense of decorum inspired Milton to avoid similes in his description of Heaven."

Moreover, since so much of the atmosphere of Paradise Lost is established through the use of the similes, particularly in the first books, it would seem worthwhile to investigate the similes and their relation to one another and to the books in which they are located. By taking the similes out of context and comparing and grouping them it can be seen that there is a unity of meaning within the similes alone. In relating them to the text, we find a more specific bond of unity operating.

The similes of the first four books are of an expansive structure used to delineate Satan, his followers, and Hell. The similes modifying Satan are consistently extended even in Book IV, where he is reduced in stature and importance. Paradise, on the other hand, is described in relatively moderate terms, and Adam and Eve receive little similic attention. The similes of the second set of books are simple in nature--the books in which Raphael is instructing Adam. Since Adam's knowledge is necessarily curtailed through lack of experience, Raphael is able to make only simple comparisons. The last four books contain similes that subtly underline the human qualities of Adam and Eve. More extended similes are used here than were used in the middle group of books but even these are simple in nature.

Furthermore, Greene states, Milton used various styles for the purpose of effecting in language the differences that exist in Heaven, Hell, and on Earth. It may also be said that these styles represent the three levels of rhetoric with which Milton would have been fully knowledgeable. The first four books are presented in the grand style; Satan is elevated to the heights in grandiose terms. The middle four books are plain, the "docere" style. It might be stretching a point to state that the last group is written in the "delectare" style, but elements of it can also be found.

An attempt has been made in presenting the similes to group them according to similarity of meaning and effect. By including the book and line number of each, I show that these similes, on a whole, are placed throughout entire books or even related from book to book. This procedure, I believe, demonstrates one of the unifying techniques used by Milton. That there is diversity is true, but within the diversity there are also unity and orderly planning.

Because of the number of similes contained within the first group of books I have treated each of these books separately. In doing this I have found that each book contains a central image to which the similes contribute a

molding effect.

A different technique has been pursued with the similes of the middle set of books. Since it is within these books that most of the conversation takes place, I have investigated the pattern of repetition of simile in the voices of Adam, Raphael, and the narrator.

The last set of books is unique in that the similes and the points of reference in the context are concerned with human qualities or needs. The consistency of this technique likewise contributes to the effect of unity.

CHAPTER II

TONE IN THE SIMILES OF BOOKS I-IV

The similes of the first four books are of an expansive structure used to create a bond of unity by gravitating around the central effect of the potential Satanic threat. The setting, the characters, and the action are introduced in these books which set the tone for the entire course of Paradise Lost. Each book has a definite function in this scheme. Hell and Satan are introduced in Book I, the strategy of the fall, Sin, and Death in Book II, the Messiah and the strategy of triumph in Book III, and Adam and Eve in the Garden in Book IV. The similes of Book I magnify Satan and his followers and obscure their evilness. Those in Book II appeal to sound and sight and introduce a tone of falseness and horror. In Book III the similes reinforce light as the predominant image and contrast the kingdoms of light and darkness. Those of Book IV are used to effect a meaning of fall and redemption and to prepare for the demise of Satan as the heroic character. Each book is treated separately to demonstrate how the similes effect a unity of meaning through the reinforcement of the central

figure of each book, thereby contributing to the function of the first four books as setting the tone for the entire epic.

The impact of Book I relies partially on the masterly flow of carefully selected similes. Beginning *in medias res*, Book I presents dim, shadowy figures drawn from the recesses of time, from mythological and from biblical sources; figures relating to super nature, to heroes of all time, and to all that captures the mind and imagination of man. James Thorpe quoting Sir Walter Raleigh states that Milton has created a sense of "dignity and distance by choosing comparisons from ancient history and mythology, or from those great and strange things in nature which repel intimacy."[1] Satan is aggrandized but other effects are also produced. Marjorie Nicholson notes that the Satanic forces are seen to be "dangerous and destructive;" there is a sense of confusion in their wild disarray.[2]

In Book I there is a constant forward surge of similes implying size, strength, and potential danger which

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[1] James E. Thorpe, *Milton Criticism: Selections from Four Centuries* (London, 1951), p. 139.

[2] Marjorie Hope Nicholson, *John Milton, A Reader's Guide to His Poetry* (New York, 1963), pp. 192-193.

affords little relief in the tension of the book. Milton has accomplished this in four distinct ways through similes. He uses similes which distort distance, size, and number; similes which describe the Satanic hosts in deliberately misleading terms by comparing them to heroic things; animal similes which imply the threat of danger; and similes which incorporate superstitions to effect the clouded perception of the fallen angels.

Hell is a place of "darkness visible" where all is seen in a confused and distorted manner. Heaven is so opposite to Hell that Hell is situated "far remov'd from God and light" (I.73). It is a furnace, ". . . a fiery Deluge, fed / With ever-burning Sulphur unconsum'd" (I.68-69). With the appearance as of "the shatter'd side / Of thund'ring Aetna (I.232-233) the "singed bottom all involv'd / With stench and smoke" (I.236-237) on which Satan walked with steps "not like those steps / On Heaven's Azure" (I.296-297). Satan is "as huge / As whom the Fables name of monstrous size, / Titanian, or Earth-born . . . Briareos or Typhon, . . . or Leviathan" (I.196-201). His shield "broad . . . like the Moon" (I.286-287); his spear would make the "tallest Pine . . . but a wand" (I.292-294); his appearance is

Of Glory obscur'd: As when the Sun new ris'n

> Looks through the Horizontal misty Air
> Shorn of his Beams, or from behind the Moon
> In dim Eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
> On half the Nations, and with fear of change
> Perplexes Monarchs.
>
> (I.594-599)

His "shape and gesture proudly eminent [he] / Stood like a Tow'r" (I.590-591); his "Imperial Ensign . . . Shone like a Meteor" (I.536-537).

The number of the Satanic host is as great "as Autumnal Leaves . . . or scatter'd sedge (I.302-304) or the "floating Carcasses of [Busiris and his Memphian Chivalry]" (I.310,307); or like "a pitchy cloud / Of Locusts" called by Moses (I.340-341) which "hung / Like Night and darken'd all the Land of Nile" (I.342-343); or the barbarians of the North that "Came like a Deluge on the South" (I.354). At the completion of Pandemonium these harsh terms of comparison are exchanged for nobler ones. They become as innumerable "As Bees / In Spring time" (I.768-769), or "like that Pigmean Race / Beyond the Indian Mount, or Faery Elves" (I.780-781).

The distortion of distance is accomplished by placing Heaven and Hell in opposition to each other. The completion of this picture is placed in Book III where Heaven is described in lucid terms, short and concise, with no overtones

of mythology. The place Aetna and the fabled monsters are chosen not only for their size but for their overtones as gods who defied Zeus and were defeated. Size is further distorted by using a comparison with known things, such as the moon and the Pine, which are developed to add another dimension. The shield is equal in size to the moon, which then is placed in the distance and clouded with the unknown through the development of the simile. It is this moon "whose Orb / Through Optic Glass the Tuscan Artist views" (I.287-288) and whose lands and mountains are being discovered.

All the facets of the evil of Satan are not discovered at first sight, as is seen in this and the companion simile in which Satan's spear is said to be of such height that the tallest Pine, reserved for the use of the Admiral's ship, is "but a wand." (I.294). Satan is the leader, the Admiral; since his trip through Chaos in Book II is compared to that of a ship, this simile may be considered anticipatory. The use of the term "wand" may be solely for the sake of size, since a wand is a slender twig; or it may imply the rod used by a magician. In Book IV Satan assumes the role of magician by changing his size and appearance in order to dupe Eve.

Each of the similes already mentioned could be analyzed in tense, in term, and in general and particular meaning, since each, as Thomas Greene comments, is a "Chinese box of meaning."[3] C. S. Lewis points out, however, that "the Miltonic simile does not always serve to illustrate what it pretends to be illustrating."[4] After having studied Milton's similes closely, I would conclude that they do illustrate what they claim to be illustrating. Over and above the obvious comparison there is an integral incorporating into the text and an extension of allusion and meaning.

As in the case of Satan, those similes describing the Satanic hosts are deliberately misleading in that the hosts are compared to things heroic and noble. Their appearance is that of "Gods" (I.570) faithful but scarred as "Forest Oaks, or Mountain Pines, / With singed top" (I.613-614). They respond to the call of Satan with the alacrity of "men wont to watch / On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread" (I.332-333). Their discipline and valor is

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[3]Thomas M. Greene, The Descent from Heaven: A Study of Epic Continuity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 395.

[4]Clive Staples Lewis, A Preface to "Paradise Lost" (New York, 1942), p. 41.

that of heroes

> . . . of noblest temper
> . . . . . .
> . . . instead of rage
> Deliberate valor breath'd, firm and unmov'd
> With dread of death to flight or foul retreat
> . . . . . .
> . . . Thus they
> Breathing united force with fixed thought
> Mov'd on in silence to soft Pipes that charm'd
> Thir painful steps o'er the burnt soil; . . .
> (I.552-562)

Their united force exceeds that of any combination of the ancient heroes; the legendary pygmies "Warr'd on by Cranes," the heroic forces "That fought Thebes and Ilium," King Arthur and his "British and Armoric Knights," and all those heroes who / Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban, / Damasco, or Morocco, or Trebisond" (I.576-584). They are not only noble and valorous but they hasten to work as eagerly as those "Pioners . . . who / Forerun the Royal Camp" (I.676-677). Their combined effort is like the effect "As in an Organ from one blast of wind / To many a row of Pipes the sound-board breathes" (I.708-709), so that Pandemonium rises "like an Exhalation" (I.711) and is "Built like a Temple" (I.713). "Not Babylon, / Nor great Alcairo such magnificence / Equall'd" (I.717-719); in fact, there is no work of ancient wonder but which is "easily outdone / By Spirits

reprobate" (I.696-697).

The size of the great hall is "like a cover'd field, where Champions bold / Wont ride in arm'd" (I.763-764). The completed edifice dwarfs the fallen angels who swarm thick "As Bees / In spring time" (I.768-769) as they "Throng numberless, like that Pigmean Race / Beyond the Indian Mount, or Faery Elves" (I.780-781). The size of Pandemonium is made even greater by contrast with the tiny size of bees, pygmies, and elves.

Milton's device of diminution--that is of beginning with the gigantic and ending with the minute--is used a number of times. The size of the fallen hosts has diminished from that of "Forest Oaks" to that of bees, pygmies, and elves. He has also moved from the concrete to the imaginative, from trees to elves, from warriors to politicians, from ancient heroes to clustering bees, from things more noble to things less noble.

The common heritage of a writer of epic poetry is the accumulation of the similes used by his predecessors. Following in the tradition of Homer and Vergil, Milton should have made wide use of the animal simile, but, as James Whaler notes, he is distinguished by his "virtual renunciation of animal simile, unless he can find a more exact

correspondence between the figure and the context than his predecessors did."[5] This being so, then there may be a good reason why Book I contains three of the nine longer animal similes. The three similes, those of Leviathan, the locusts, and the bees, are carefully separated so as not to appear too noticeable.

Satan is compared in size to Leviathan, the fabled beast of the Bible, huge in size and strength (I.200-208). Then a seeming digression is introduced. A pilot in the dark of night mistakes Leviathan for an island, a place of refuge. The pilot, when light comes, will discover his mistake and realize his dangerous position. The implication to be discerned is that the evil of Satan, the Prince of Darkness and Subterfuge, is not fully understood by man until seen in the light of Christ. The simile affords the relief of the cool sea and the relief of humorous as well as a dangerous situation in which the pilot finds himself. Milton does not end the story: we never know whether the foolish pilot escapes or pays with his life for his foolhardiness in sailing in an unknown sea after dark. The simile is proleptic, with Satan as Leviathan and man as the pilot. A

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[5]James Whaler, "Animal Similes in Paradise Lost," PMLA, XLVII (June, 1932), 534. Whaler locates three animal similes in Book I, two in Book III, and one each in Books I, V, VI, and X.

pilot is one who is so sure of his way that he can lead others: only Christ, the Pilot of Light, can give the assurance of leading man from the darkness of Satan. Man is not his own pilot and cannot trust entirely to himself as Adam and Eve did. In the darkness of their pride they identified with Satan and nearly shipwrecked mankind until rescued by the Pilot of Light. In this one simile Milton has combined the functions of illustrations, relief, prolepsis, and pleasure.

The second animal simile used is that of the locusts. The fallen angels responding to the call of Satan are as innumerable as the cloud of locusts "That o'er the Realm of impious Pharoah hung / Like Night, and darken'd all the Land of Nile" (I.342-343). Not only are they innumerable but they pose a threat to the Pharoah, a threat administered by God. Whaler points out that Milton's simile is more successful than Homer's:

> Satan's hosts are actually winged like locusts, and possess, in addition, what Homer's Trojans do not possess--the quality of imminent pestilence to all earthly life, added to the qualities of multitudes and restlessness both individual and in mass.[6]

The third of the animal similes, the bee comparison

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[6]Whaler, p. 543.

(I.768-775) which terminates Book I and introduces Book II, has its origin in the works of Homer and Vergil. Both Lewis and Whaler agree that this simile has "the power of action at a distance,"[7] and is proleptic in that it "serves as a perspective device."[8] According to Whaler,

> Milton is the first to take a whole commonwealth of winged spirits to the whole polity of a hive, ... Milton's spirits are not only winged, but actually reducible to the diminutive size of real bees. Before our own eyes they diminish . . . .[9]

Davis Harding makes this interesting observation that further clarifies Milton's use of the simile:

> Milton's bees reproduce the movements of the Fallen Angels from the time they converge on Pandemonium to the moment they are called to order . . . . We hear the rustling of innumerable wings and the busy humming, which is like the low murmur of statesmen sharing their views in an antechamber before some high conference gets under way. The effect is heightened by the onomatopoeia produced by the massed sibilants to which Milton resorts to reinforce his literal meaning.[10]

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[7]Lewis, p. 42.

[8]Whaler, p. 551.

[9]Whaler, p. 551.

[10]Davis P. Harding, "Milton's Bee-Simile," in Milton Studies in Honor of Harris Francis Fletcher, Board of editors: G. Blakemore Evans and others (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961), p. 57.

A succession of similes further diminishes the size and noise of the bees. The fallen angels are compared with human beings rather than with animals when they become as small as dwarfs or pygmies or "Faery Elves." The murmur of the bees subsides into the mirth of a midnight revelry and then to the silence of the night as the Great Council begins in the solemnity of the hush. Lewis says that

> . . . it is by contrast with the fairies that these councillors have grown so huge, and by contrast with the fanciful simile that the hush before the debate becomes so intense, and it is by that intensity that we are so well prepared for the opening of Book II.[11]

The fourth set of similes used by Milton in Book I incorporates superstitious beliefs that implement the effect of the clouded perception of the fallen angels. Satan is compared to the "Moon / In dim Eclipse" which "with fear of change / Perplexes Monarchs" (I.596-597,598-599). According to a superstitious belief of the time, an eclipse was seen as the forerunner of some disaster. It was thought to be "unlucky for an enterprise of lawful nature to be started in the moon's eclipse; but that the time is favorable for unlawful designs."[12] Certainly Satan's enterprises are of

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[11] Lewis, p. 42.

[12] "Eclipse," Encyclopaedia of Superstitions, Folklore, and the Occult Sciences of the World, (Chicago, 1903) II, 94.

an unlawful nature. Not only is his glory in eclipse but also his intentions. The second simile is that of the fairies discussed in the above paragraph. A peasant observes them dancing and they so charm his senses that "At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds" (I.788) as "overhead the Moon / Sits Arbitress" (I.784-785). The full moon is associated as a time of magic and loss of mental control. Eve loses her sense of right and wrong when she is overcome by the charms of Satan and succumbs to his unlawful demands. Both similes have a proleptic quality and add to the general feeling evolving from this book that all will end in disaster for Satan and his followers.

In Book I Milton has deftly built a picture of a heroic Satan, valiant followers, and a majestic Hell. This picture has been subtly but consistently put out of focus so that the true Satan, hosts, and Hell can be seen. The similes play a major part in presenting the truth by distorting the grand and noble terms used. In Book II there is a movement from the physical descriptions of Book I to delineations of emotions. There is an appeal to sight and sound rather than to measurement, and motion becomes a subject for comparison.

The tone of Book II is one of falseness and horror.

Satan and his followers are no longer united to God, the source of all truth and goodness. Instead, they must now depend upon themselves, and they are false even to their own hosts. There is a repetition of the terms "false" and "hollow" both within the context and the similes. The Great Council itself, with which Book II opens, is false in premise and argument. Three of the powers speak: Moloch calls for "open war;" Belial, "false and hollow," calls for a policy of waiting; and Mammon, with his speech of "wait and endure," calls for a policy of peace. The members of the Council react with approval to Mammon's speech. A murmur of approval fills the assembly

> . . . as when hollow Rocks retain
> The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long
> Had rous'd the Sea, ...
>
> (II.285-287)

The fallen angels have been lulled by their accomplishments since the fall, as

> Sea-faring men o'erwatcht, whose Bark by chance
> Or Pinnace anchors in a craggy Bay
> After the Tempest . . . .
>
> (II.288-290)

This long disgressive simile aptly synthesizes the condition of the fallen angels. The speeches have been long and

violent, and, just as the rocks only reflect the sound that is near them, so the angels reflect their approval, not as rational beings but as an echo. They are willing to turn robot-like to their leaders for direction. This tendency becomes even more apparent in the following similes.

Beelzebub, the Prince of Flies, stands; his majestic sage demeanor draws the attention of the crowd so that they become "still as Night / Or Summer's Noon-tide air" (II.308-309). Both night and noon are terms used to symbolize the activities of Satan: they are used consistently as times of sin. Beelzebub proposes that there be one volunteer who will undertake the dangerous task of discovering the new creation and creatures so that they, the fallen angels, may be avenged. All the nobility of the fallen angels disappears as each squirms to make himself less noticeable. At this moment of shame, Satan, who is the instigator of the proposal, in all his god-like majesty, volunteers. Satan has capitalized on the reaction he expected of his followers and in this way raises himself even higher in their esteem. As they rise to honor him their rising is

> . . . as the sound
> Of Thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
> With awful reverence prone; and as a God
> Extol him equal to the highest in Heav'n:
> (II.476-479)

Milton ascribes to Satan the God-figures but then modifies them by making the "Thunder" remote and by modifying "God" with the indefinite article "a."

Three of the preceding similes are figures of sound; "a murmur of approval," "still as night," and "sound of Thunder." Two others also appeal to the sense of hearing. Both are introduced with the negative nexus, "nor . . . less . . . than" or "less than if." Milton uses this form whenever he wishes to enlarge the figure to contrast with something known to the reader. Both similes, clustered together, describe the sounds of Chaos heard by Satan as he stands on its edge preparing to cross. His ears are assailed by sounds

> . . . (to compare
> Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,
> With all her battering Engines bent to rase
> Some Capital city; or less than if this frame
> Of Heav'n were falling, and these Elements
> In mutiny had from her Axle torn
> The steadfast Earth. . . .
>
> (II.921-927)

Although sound is the primary point of comparison, the attitude of violence of the fallen angels, particularly Satan, toward God and his new creation is just as clearly perceived. The fallen angels are in mutiny against God; it is their purpose to tear the occupants of the earth from their

steadfast love of God.

A second area of comparison used by Milton in Book II is that of deceptive resemblances. Book II opens with Satan enthroned in oriental splendor in the council hall of Pandemonium and closes with his having completed successfully his journey through Chaos, bearing the scars of the journey like a weather-beaten vessel. The question is, which is a more true picture of Satan, the despot or the honestly scarred vessel? The scene of oriental splendor is repeated in Book X when Satan returns to Pandemonium after successfully duping Eve. By the repetition of this scene Milton seems to be pointing out a similarity between barbaric wealth and evil. Satan is the embodiment of evil in planning the fall, in executing it in detail, and in triumphing in his victory against God.

Moving from his throne of state and journeying through Chaos, Satan "As in cloudy Chair ascending rides / Audacious" (II.930-931); but his ascent is almost his downfall. He encounters "A vast vacuity: all unawares / Flutt'ring his pennons vain plumb down he drops" (II.932-933). It is the permissive will of God, however, that he continue, and in this fact there is irony. Satan with all his audacious self-assurance is deluded into thinking that he is able to overcome all obstacles whereas in his very plan he

is being sustained by God. The Evil One is deceiving only himself. When he returns in triumph he will find his opulent throne as deceptive for his serpent form as the "cloudy Chair" for his journey.

Satan is victorious in his journey through Chaos even though the way is more dangerous

> . . . than when Argo pass'd
> Through Bosporus betwixt the justling Rocks:
> Or when Ulysses on the Larboard shunn'd
> Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steer'd.
> (II.1017-20)

His heroic stance is renewed by having him face dangers greater than those faced by Ulysses. Once he leaves Chaos he is safe and

> . . . with ease
> Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light
> And like a weather-beaten Vessel holds
> Gladly the Port, though Shrouds and Tackle torn.
> (II.1041-44)

That little note of deception is found again in "dubious light." By comparing Satan to Ulysses, Milton has made him heroic; by comparing him to the weatherbeaten vessel Milton has made him appear less heroic. This is not due to the condition of the vessel, but to the fact that there is only one other ship simile in Book II and that has as its vehicle a fleet of merchant ships (II.636-642). If the two are

meant to be in any way related, as most of Milton's figures are, then Satan has diminished from a proud fleet to a single vessel. He has also diminished from the hero-adventurer to a simple merchant dealing in spices or, perhaps, sin, Satan's more suitable merchandise.

A repetition of the verb "seemed" implements the tone of deception or clouded vision. A description of death is nebulous. Death is of a substance "that shadow seem'd," (II.669) and "what seem'd his head / The likeness of a Kingly Crown had on" (II.672-673). Even more pertinent to clouded vision are the two mirage similes. According to the Book of Macabees Jerusalem was forewarned of its destruction by a mirage which appeared in the sky. Milton apparently alludes to this event in describing the games of the fallen angels "As when to warn proud Cities war appears / Wag'd in the troubl'd Sky . . ." (II.533-534). In this figure the fallen angels can anticipate destruction. The second mirage simile is that of the fleet already mentioned. Satan towers so high as to be almost lost from sight, "As when far off at Sea a Fleet descri'd / Hangs in the Clouds" (II.636-637).

These similes of strained vision are not peculiar to Book II alone. They are found in other books, and, as such, send out threads which unite the fabric of Paradise Lost.

Greene's statement applies to all the similes and constructions allied to this purpose:

> This world is vulnerable to deceit, and Milton subtly underscores the passage from heaven to earth by heightening the demonic insidiousness of his language. The fallen reader's imperfect reason must strain to make out relations as the pilot strains with his physical eyes, as Galileo strains with his telescope, as the fowls gaze with mistaken recognition on the angel, as Adam and Eve will fail to strain and so blur all our vision.[13]

Sin and Death are also introduced in this Book. Similes describing them evoke revulsion and horror. The voice of the narrator warns that in Hell there are worse things "Than Fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd" (II.627). "Vex'd Scylla" is "Far less abhorr'd than" the dogs surrounding Sin's waist (II.659-660),

> Nor uglier follow the Night-Hag, when call'd
> In secret, riding through the Air she comes
> Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance
> With Lapland Witches, while the laboring Moon
> Eclipses at thir charms.
> (II.662-666)

Myth and superstition underscore the evil of the situation.

It is in Hell that the unholy three meet: Satan, Sin, and Death. As an enforcement of this trinity there are

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[13]Greene, p. 387.

several instances of triplets. Death is described as "black . . . as Night, / Fierce as ten furies, terrible as Hell" (II.670-671). The fallen angels discuss false philosophy which "with a pleasing sorcery could charm . . . excite . . . or arm . . . With stubborn patience as with triple steel." (II.566-569). Instances of the triplets are found outside of the similes, reinforcing the threeness; Hell is "A Universe of death . . . (II.622) Where all life dies, death lives, and Nature breeds, / Perverse . . . things" (II.624-625); the angels idle away their time

> Part on the Plain, or in the Air sublime
> Upon the wing, or in swift Race contend,
> As at th' Olympian Games or Pythian fields.
> (II.528-530)

Included here is a feeling of pretense at playing games intended for superior athletes.

In Book II there are four similes of measurement, three of which are related by mention of terms of war and war equipment. Such terms are appropriate in the book where war has been declared on God and his new creation. A section of Hell has

> A gulf profound as the Serbonian Bog
> Betwixt Damiata and Mount Casius old,
> Where Armies whole have sunk: . . . .
> (II.592-594)

The reference is historical: such a bog is located on maps tracing the trek of the Jews from Egypt to Palestine. Although comparison is mainly for size, it may also be interpreted as an allusion to the danger of Hell. Or, since this bog was encountered by the Jews on their way home from bondage, it might allude to the providence of God who protects his people from danger and destroys their enemies. Satan and his hosts, the enemies of God and his people, will be destroyed by God. This is the promise through which Adam eventually realizes peace.

Once the gates of Hell have been opened wide they cannot be closed; instead, there is now room

> That with extended wings a Banner'd Host
> Under spread Ensigns marching might pass through
> With Horse and Chariots rankt in loose array.
> (II.885-887)

Using the gates as a measuring instrument, Sin and Death, following Satan, build the broad highway between Earth and Hell (X.312-324), which rivals that between Earth and Heaven (III.529-537). The interrelation of such figures closely unites the twelve books. Chaos is a battlefield of the embryo elements that are "unnumber'd as the Sands / Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil" (II.903-904), and which are agitated "to side with warring Winds and poise / Thir lighter

wings" (II.905-906).

The fourth simile is what Lewis would call a perspective device. In a complex pattern the magnitude of the world is compared to Heaven as the smallest star is compared to the moon "in bigness as a Star / Of smallest Magnitude close by the Moon" (II.1052-53). To one who stands on the edge of Chaos and views this pendant world, it appears small, vulnerable, and yet enticing. Satan is poised on the edge eager to investigate its unknown riches and possibilities.

The fifth category of similes in Book II is that which describes emotions. These similes incorporate elements of sight, sound, deception, revulsion, and war. In form all but one are extended, and four are introduced by the nexus "as when." At the conclusion of the Great Council the fallen angels rejoice.

> . . . in their matchless Chief:
> As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds
> Ascending, while the North wind sleeps, o'erspread
> Heav'n's cheerful face, the low'ring Element
> Scowls o'er the dark'n'd lantskip Snow, or show'r;
> If chance the radiant Sun with farewell sweet
> Extend his ev'ning beam, the fields revive,
> The birds thir notes renew, and bleating herds
> Attest thir joy that hill and valley rings.
> (II.487-495)

The ironical contrast between sun and darkness,

virtue and its lack, between a day of sunshine and a moment of it, adds a note of poignancy to the simile. The pastoral element gives relief to the scene after the tensions of the speeches and the lack of volunteers. This is followed immediately by a shift in action.

Part of the punishment of Hell is a lack of control. Some of the fallen angels idle away their time in adventure and speculation while

> Others with vast Typhoean rage more fell
> Rend up both Rocks and Hills, and ride the Air
> In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
> As when Alcides from Oechalia Crown'd
> With conquest, felt th' envenom'd robe, and tore
> Through pain up by the roots Thessalian Pines,
> And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw
> Into th' Euboic Sea.
>
> (II.539-546)

Frenzied, uncontrolled action forced on them through their own pride leads to madness and frustration as noted in the simile of Tantalus (II.613-614).

At the meeting of Satan and Death, Satan becomes

> Incens't with indignation . . .
> Unterrifi'd, and like a Comet burn'd,
> That fires the length of Ophiucus huge
> In th' Artic Sky, and from his horrid hair
> Shakes Pestilence and War.
>
> (II.707-711)

This is no ordinary comet: it represents the serpent-

bearer that causes war and pestilence--a fitting way to describe Satan and the mischief that he causes. A similar use of the comet is found in other books. Death and Satan prepare for a battle to the finish: "Each cast [s] at th' other [a frown], as when two black Clouds / With Heav'n's Artillery fraught, come rattling on" (II.714-715).

Satan pursues his journey through Chaos as eagerly

> As when a Gryfon through the Wilderness
> With winged course o'er Hill or moory Dale,
> Pursues the Arimaspian, who by stealth
> Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
> The guarded Gold.
>
> (II.943-947)

The comparison, however, has twisted the facts; God, the "Arimaspian," has not stolen anything from Satan, the "Gryfon," but Satan intends to steal from God. In future similes he will be lowered to the status of a common thief and even to a pruriently prying person.

The fable has progressed from the depths and "darkness visible" of Hell in Book I through the machinations of Book II and now ascends to the heights of Heaven in Book III. In each of these books the similes set the tone, thereby uniting and crystalizing the central figure. In Book I Satan and his followers are aggrandized; in Book II the tone of deception is set and executed; in Book III light

is the central figure sustained through the use of the similes.

Light is the dominating figure of Book III for several reasons. First, the setting of the book is positioned in two places of light, Heaven and the sun. Secondly, God and the Son are introduced as main characters in the fable. Thirdly, the Son volunteers to redeem God's creation and crush the power of Satan. And, fourthly, attention focuses on a contrast between Heaven and Hell, Christ and Satan, and the kingdoms of light and darkness. This contrast is found not only in the similes but in the paralleling of passages in Books I and II with passages in Book III. Both Books I and II open with an invocation, which in Book I states the purpose of Paradise Lost and the epic cause, and which in Book III acts as a transitional device and as a statement of poetic purpose. The invocation in the books is immediately followed by a description and positioning of the ruler of Heaven and the ruler of Hell.

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

> Stood thick as Stars, and from his sight receiv'd
> Beatitude past utterance.
>
> (III.56-62)

God the Father sits in the light of Heaven viewing all that is good and beautiful of his making. His angels surround him in the brightness and clearness of stars. In contrast with this passage is that describing Satan.

> . . . hee with his horrid crew
> Lay vanquisht, rolling in the fiery Gulf
> Confounded though immortal: But his doom
> Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
> Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
> Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes
> That witness'd huge affliction and dismay
> Mixt with obdurate pride and steadfast hate:
> At once as far as Angels' ken he views
> The dismal Situation waste and wild,
> A Dungeon horrible, on all sides round
> As one great Furnace flam'd, yet from those flames
> No light, but rather darkness visible.
>
> (I.51-63)

Satan is prostrate, vanquished in the "darkness visible" caused by his own pride. His eyes see nothing but horrors. Each section containing one short simile which reflects the tone of the passage. Heaven is as clear as the stars while Hell is as murky as the light of furnace fire.

The parallel passages which contrast each other continue in the subsequent lines. In Heaven, on the right side of God, "The radiant image of his Glory sat, / His only

Son" (III.63-64). In Hell, Satan discerns "welt'ring by his side / One next himself in power, and next in crime"--Beelzebub (I.78-79). In Heaven God, foreseeing the future, speaks to his Son.

> Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
> All Heav'n, and in the blessed Spirits elect
> Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd:
> Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
> Most glorious, in him all his Father shone
> Substantially express'd, and in his face
> Divine compassion visibly appear'd.
> (III.135-141)

In Hell, Satan seeing only hate and revenge in the future, although "rackt with deep dispair" (I.126) boasts of his plans to Beelzebub.

In each book a conversation between the principal characters ensues. The one is filled with love and compassion; the other with hate, despair, and revenge. At the conclusion of the heavenly dialogue God asks for a volunteer to redeem man:

> He ask'd, but all the Heav'nly Choir stood mute,
> And silence was in Heav'n: on man's behalf
> Patron or Intercessor none appear'd,
> . . . . . .
> And now without redemption all mankind
> Must have been lost, adjudg'd to Death and Hell
> By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
> In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,
> His dearest mediation thus renew'd.
> (III.217-226)

The action of Hell is prolonged while Satan rouses the fallen angels, Pandemonium is built, and the Great Council is convoked. At the conclusion of the three declamations, Beelzebub requests a volunteer to scout God's new creation.

> . . . but all sat mute,
> Pondering the danger with deep thoughts: . . .
> . . . . . .
> . . . none among the choice and prime
> Of those Heav'n-warring Champions could be found
> So hardy to proffer or accept
> Alone the dreadful voyage: till at last
> Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd
> Above his fellows, with Monarchal pride
> Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake.
> (II.420-429)

It is Christ who speaks and acts in love and humility, when

> . . . as a sacrifice
> Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will
> Of his great Father.
> (III.269-271)

God speaks, extolling his Son, and when he ceases,

> The multitude of Angels with a shout
> Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
> As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heav'n rung
> With Jubilee. . . .
> (III.345-348)

The scene radiates and flashes light from the pavement that "like a Sea of Jasper shone" (III.363) to the harps "that

glittering by thir side / Like Quivers hung" (III.366-367). Satan in the pride of his position extols himself and forbids any others to participate in this adventure. The fallen angels, fearing him more than the adventure, rise to honor him "as the sound / Of Thunder heard remote: (II.476-477). They praise and rejoice in him,

> As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds
> Ascending, while the North wind sleeps, o'erspread
> Heav'n's cheerful face, the low'ring Element
> Scowls o'er the dark'n'd lantskip Snow, or show'r;
> If chance the radiant Sun with farewell sweet
> Extend his ev'ning beam, the field revive,
> The birds thir notes renew, and bleating herds
> Attest thir joy, that hill and valley rings.
> (II.488-495)

The parallelism which exists between Books I and II combined and Book III is a part of the technique used by Milton to create the insidiousness of Hell and the simplicity of Heaven. A book and a half are devoted to the action in Hell while only a half book is devoted to similar action in Heaven. The length of the passage is affected by what Greene calls the "stark simplicity" of the language of Heaven in contrast to "the jagged syntax, deceptive similes, . . . and withering irony of the language of hell. In heaven, Milton would have us see the truth that makes us free, but in hell darkly the confusion which enslaves

us."[14] Although, as Ferry maintains, "tradition and a reverent sense of decorum inspired Milton to avoid similes in his description of Heaven,"[15] he does use the short simile.

To emphasize the parallel structuring in the passages of the books, Milton places the similes in corresponding positions. God is surrounded by angels thick as stars while Satan is surrounded by angels thick as fallen leaves. Christ, as the sacrifice, complies with his Father's will, while Satan with pride takes all the glory to himself so that the fallen angels rise to honor him with the sound of "Thunder heard remote." Christ is honored with joyful sound and glorious flashes of light; Satan is honored, not with the glorious light of Heaven, but with the clouded light of a stormy day which makes one last attempt in a sudden nostalgic glow of the setting sun to bring joy to creation.

Light as the predominant image of Book III is used in other ways than that of contrast with Books I and II. In three similes Milton uses light as a boundary in a seeming juxtaposition of the normal position of darkness as a

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[14] Greene, p. 384.

[15] Anne Davidson Ferry, Milton's Epic Voice; The Narrator in "Paradise Lost" (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 70.

boundary. Light

> . . . at the voice
> Of God, as with a Mantle didst invest
> The rising world of waters dark and deep.
> (III.9-11)

The passage from Heaven to Earth is as wide "where bounds were set / To darkness, such as bound the Ocean wave" (III.538-539). God can be seen only when he

> . . . shad'st
> The full blaze of [His] beams, and through a cloud
> . . . a radiant Shrine,
> Dark with excessive bright [His] skirts appear.
> (III.377-380)

The sun "in splendor likest Heaven / Allur'd" Satan (III.572-573). This is one of the rare instances in which Heaven is used as a point of comparison. The sun is then described in a simile-cluster. Whether the sun is composed of stone or metal is unimportant; what is important is that in all parts it is "inform'd / With radiant light, as glowing Iron with fire" (III.593-594). If composed of metal, part glows as gold and part as silver; if composed of stone, it must be precious stone, such as the "Twelve that shone / In Aaron's Breastplate" (III.597-598). Since Aaron was the high priest appointed by God to offer sacrifice, this reference forms a point of cohesion with the fact that it is

in this book that Christ offers himself "as a sacrifice" (III.296). Or, the stone may be compared to the philosopher's stone so long sought in many devious ways. If the sun is able to produce here on the dark Earth "so many precious things / Of color glorious and effect so rare" (III.611-612), who can question the possibilities of its composition and beauty. Satan is "undazzl'd" by the sight and gazes "far and wide" his vision unobstructed by obstacle or shade until he sights one who can direct his course to Earth. The brightest time of the day is noon at which time the rays of the sun strike the equator most directly. In this description of the sun before the fall of man, Milton implies that the sun is meant to be constantly shining its brightest on Earth, "all Sun-shine, as his Beams at Noon / Culminate from the Equator" (III.616-617).

In Book XII God has the sun change its course in order to bring about the change in seasons as part of the punishment of man. Moreover, Satan is directed toward Earth at high-noon and it is at high-noon that he successfully tempts Eve. Preceding the simile-cluster is a simile in which Satan is compared to a spot on the sun

> . . . like which perhaps
> Astronomer . . .
> Through his glaz'd Optic Tube yet never saw.
> (III.588-590)

This simile minimizes his stature; and before the conclusion of Paradise Lost, Satan does lose his heroic stance. He is the small spot through which corruption comes.

The corruption of man will also bring change to the rim of the universe where Satan walks like a vulture in solitude. It is here

> . . . like Aereal vapors flew
> Of all things transitory and vain, when Sin
> With vanity had fill'd the works of men.
> (III.445-447)

The comparison is apt in its development: "Dislodging from a Region scarce of prey / To gorge the flesh of Lambs or yeanling Kids" (III.433-434), he flies to hills where they are fed but on his way lights "on the barren Plains / Of Sericana, where the Chinese drive" wind-wagons (III.437-438). Adam and Eve, the innocent lambs, are duped by Satan but redeemed by Christ on the hill. By incorporating an allusion to the Chinese the sense of sin is evoked because Milton has been consistent in relating sin with the Orient.

Satan's journey takes him to the stair to Heaven which is forbidden him. "The Stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw / Angels ascending and descending" (III.510-511). Of all the biblical characters Jacob is the only one who is twice mentioned in Paradise Lost. He is the figure of

Christ through whom man is saved, Christ the "second root" (III.288). In Jacob the convenant between God and man is renewed and from him descend the twelve tribes of the Chosen People. Fleeing into exile, Jacob is strengthened by the vision of the angels ascending and descending the heavenly stairway. On his return home, Jacob wrestles with God in the same place and undergoes a spiritual change that makes him a worthy ancestor of the Messiah. Although the way to God is forbidden to Satan it is opened wide to man.

> Wider by far than that of after-times
> Over Mount Sion, and, though that were large,
> Over the Promis'd Land to God so dear,
> By which, to visit oft those happy Tribes,
> On high behests his Angels to and fro
> Pass'd frequent, ...
>
> (III.529-534)

After the crossing of Satan the passage between Heaven and Earth will narrow.

Satan is not distracted from the purpose of his journey. He now wings his way past planets and stars, "happy Isles, / Like those Hesperian Gardens fam'd of old" (III.567-568). These and any other distraction are ignored as he travels on to the Garden.

Another aspect of comparison is that involving the occupation of man. Satan, upon viewing the entirety of the

world, is compared to a scout seized with wonder:

> . . . As when a Scout
> Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
> All night; at last by break of cheerful dawn
> Obtains the brow of some high-climbing Hill,
> Which to his eye discovers unaware
> The goodly prospect of some foreign land.
> (III.543-548)

This mission lowers the heroic and authoritative position of Satan as commander-in-chief of the fallen angels. The role of the scout is continued in the fable as he spies on Adam and Eve in an attempt to seduce them.

Book III is a book of contrast from beginning to end. The invocation introducing the book is addressed to "Light, offspring of Heav'n first-born" (III.1) but mingles blindness and darkness in its flow. Heaven, the realm of light, is contrasted with Hell, the realm of darkness. Christ, the sacrifice, is contrasted with Satan, the vulture. The forces of good are marshalled to oppose the forces of evil as God, "By his permissive will," (III.685) allows "evil that walks / Invisible" (III.683-684). The action of the epic has been precipitated; the remairder of the fable is the logical outcome of the structure prepared in the first three books of the epic.

Book IV completes the dramatic setting and presenta-

tion of characters in Paradise Lost. Although Adam and Eve are introduced for the first time, their role is still minor in comparison with that of Satan. This is the last book in which he appears as the protagonist: he is now portrayed in a less flattering manner and his eventual disappearance from the limelight of action is anticipated.

The similes effect a meaning of fall and redemption while preparing for the demise of Satan. To accomplish this purpose, Milton places the main characters in the proper perspective. Similes describing Eve employ mythological characters indicative of her role in the fall. Satan is made to appear more evil because the similes depict Adam and Eve as innocent victims. The similes describing Satan range from human through animal to the inorganic world. He is compared to a sneaking thief, a proud steed, a savage tiger, a prowling wolf, a squat toad, a devilish engine, and an explosive powder. There is a noticeable lack of similes applied to Adam. This lack of similic attribution diminishes the heroic energy of Adam. The Garden, as a remote place, contributes the proper atmosphere.

The similes operate in and interlock three areas: the Garden, Satan, and Eve. The Garden is a place remote from all that has been imagined. Satan has traveled distances

beyond imagination, and, as if this fact is not sufficient, once he reaches the vicinity of the Garden he finds

> . . . th' ascent of that steep savage Hill
> . . . . . .
> . . . so thick entwin'd
> As one continu'd brake, the undergrowth
> Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplext
> All path of Man or Beast that pass'd that way.
> (IV.172-177)

Undaunted by the formidable task of scaling the steep ascent, Satan successfully reaches the Garden. Milton now uses a simile-cluster to complete the effect of danger and remoteness. To quote Lewis again,

> Paradise is compared to the field of Enna, one beautiful landscape to another (IV, 268). But, of course, the deeper value of the simile lies in the resemblance which is not explicitly noted as a resemblance at all, the fact that it is both these places the young and the beautiful while gatherine flowers was ravished by a dark power risen up from the underworld. A moment later Eden is compared to the Nyseian Isle and to Mount Amara. . . . If only we read on, asking no questions, the sense of Eden's secrecy, of things infinitely precious, guarded, locked up, and put away, will come out of the similes and enrich what Milton is all the time trying to evoke in each reader--the consciousness of Paradise.[16]

The entire simile-cluster is introduced and interconnected with the negative nexus, "not that--nor that," which emphasizes the unique quality of Paradise. The Garden is "wide

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16 Lewis, p. 42.

remote" from all other gardens. It is "Not that fair field / Of Enna" (IV.268-269), "nor that sweet Grove / Of Daphne" (IV.272-273), nor "that Nyseian Isle" (IV.275) where "Lybian Jove, / Hid Amalthea and her Florid Son" (IV.277-278), nor "where Abassin Kings thir issue Guard, / Mount Amara" (IV.280-281).

Enna is that field

> . . . where Proserpin gath'ring flow'rs
> Herself a fairer Flow'r by gloomy Dis
> Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain
> To seek her through the world.
> (IV.269-272)

Time and the seasons are a part of the redemptive cycle as exemplified in this simile. The condition on which Proserpina is returned to Ceres is that she will return to Dis for six months of the year. During these six months the world undergoes the winter season. While Proserpina is with Ceres the world enjoys the productive seasons of spring, summer, and autumn. Ferry states:

> In the mortal world, as the speaker's similes repeatedly illustrate, nature's changes bring conflict, loss, confusion, danger. . . . These are the fruits of man's fall, which in the poem we witness happening to Adam and in our own lives share with the blind bard. . . . Proserpina's story is compared to Eve's not only because it tells of innocence threatened, but because it appeals to the narrator's concern with the

seasons and their melancholy change.[17]

Sequence of time is also followed through some of the similes. As Satan views the exterior of the Garden the sun begins to set.

> . . . the Sun more glad impress'd his beams
> Than in fair Evening Cloud, or humid Bow,
> When God hath show'red the earth.
> (IV.150-152)

The implication seems to be that the very presence of Satan causes night, which is consistently associated with him and his actions. After the Deluge the sign of God set in the heavens was the "humid bow," the rainbow, a sign of love and forgiveness.

Adam smiles on Eve

> . . . with superior Love, as Jupiter
> On Juno smiles, when he impregns the Clouds
> That shed May Flowers.
> (IV.499-501)

Spring, the time of fruition, is swiftly to give way to harvest and the desolation of winter.

Uriel hastens to the Earth to warn Gabriel of the escape of an evil spirit. His passage is as

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[17]Ferry, p. 79.

> . . . swift as a shooting Star
> In Autumn thwarts the night . . .
> . . . . . .
> . . . and shows the Mariner
> From what point his Compass to beware
> Impetuous winds.
>
> (IV.556-560)

Ostensibly the point of comparison is speed, but actually it is warning. Satan, the night, is to be thwarted in his plans and will never reap the autumn harvest he believes to be so firmly in his grasp.

Disputing with the Angelic Squadron, Satan and the angels become enraged; they

> . . . began to hem him round
> With ported Spears, as thick as when a field
> Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
> Her bearded Groce of ears, which way the wind
> Sways them.
>
> (IV.979-983)

The simile is developed with a logical digression in which

> . . . the careful Plowman doubting stands
> Lest on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves
> Prove chaff.
>
> (IV.983-985)

In the parable of the sowers and the reapers Our Lord directs his helpers to allow the chaff to grow with the wheat. Their time of separation will come at harvest when the chaff

will be bound and burned in the fire. But for a direct sign from God Satan would be bound by the angels and returned to Hell. This is not yet his harvest time but it is to come.

Time and seasons are very much a part of Paradise Lost just as they are a part of man's understanding of the redemptive cycle in which the resurrection is set in the spring of the year, the time of new life. The harvest is a sign that Proserpina is soon to return to Dis; Eve is soon to fall to the temptation of Satan. Only in the spring of the year, in the resurrection of Christ, will the life of grace be once more restored to mankind.

Because the Fiend senses that Eve is the weaker of the human pair, it is she he first tries to influence. The similes structure the effect that Eve by her wilfulness will be an easy prey for Satan. She is early introduced in the similes describing the Garden. The first physical description is that of her hair which she wears dishevelled "as a veil" (IV.304). The veil is the traditional symbol of virginity and submission. The simile found in the next line diminishes the strength of this meaning. Her hair

> . . . in wanton ringlets wav'd
> As the Vine curls her tendrils, which impli'd
> Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway.
> (IV.306-308)

It is at Eve's insistent objection to Adam's urgent request to remain together that they separate and Eve falls prey to Satan. Then, when the guilt of their actions becomes apparent, "innocence, that as a veil / Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone" (IX.1054-55).

The similes Eve uses in her narration are simple: the waters are a mirror "pure as th' expanse of Heav'n" (IV.456); the smooth lake "to me seem'd another Sky" (IV. 459). Those that Milton relates to her are not so simple, such as the following which are set in negative and in comparative form. The nuptial bed is in a bower "more sacred and sequested" than that in which Pan or Silvanus ever slept, even feigning, "nor Nymph / Nor Faunus haunted" (IV.707-708). The poet consistently relates the gods and goddesses of mythology to Eve. The place of Adam and Eve's more private moments becomes associated with those of the pagan wood gods. When Adam smiles at Eve he does so as "Jupiter / On Juno smiles" (IV.499-500). Eve, escorted by Adam to the nuptial bower, is

> . . . in her naked beauty more adorn'd
> More lovely than Pandora, whom the Gods
> Endow'd with all thir gifts . . .
> . . . . . .
> . . . she ensnar'd
> Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd
> On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.
> (IV.713-719)

All the signs of the role Eve is to play have been carefully placed, and Milton never waivers from the point that she is the lovely, wilful queen who is to be the downfall of mankind.

Satan, the protagonist, is presented figuratively as a despicable character. Approaching the Garden with set purpose, he is suddenly assailed with doubts and "like devilish Engine back recoils / Upon himself" (IV.17-18). His doubts recoiling foreshadow the backfiring of all his plans, which at this time he does not anticipate. Later, discovered at the bedside of Eve, he starts "As when a spark / Lights on a heap of nitrous Powder" which has been stored in preparation "Against a rumor'd war" and "With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the Aire" (IV.814-818). Doubt, surprise, and shock are imaged in the recoiling of a cannon and the firing of an explosive, both of which are appropriate figures applied to Satan as instigator of confusion and conflict. Threatened by Gabriel, Satan reacts in an opposite manner. He stands "Like Teneriffe or Atlas unremov'd: / His stature reach'd the Sky" (IV.987-988). But Gabriel scoffs at this mountainous stature of stability; he threatens to trample him "as mire" (IV.1010).

In Book II, 636-642, Satan, flying through Chaos,

is compared to a fleet of spice-ships seen in the distance. In Book IV this simile is completed and attention is turned to the people aboard the ships. Satan, approaching Paradise, is as delighted by the pure and odoriferous air as those

> . . . who sail
> Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
> Mozambic, off at Sea North-East winds blow
> Sabean Odors from the spicy shore
> Of Araby the blest, with such delay
> Well pleas'd they slack thir course.
> (IV.159-164)

Across this statement is dragged the odor of evil with the biblical allusion to Asmodeus, who was driven from the wife of Tobias "with the fishy fume" (IV.168) and was "with a vengeance sent / From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound" (IV.170-171). The implication seems to be that although Satan will allure others, in the end he will be vanquished and punished by God.

When Satan enters the Garden it is

> . . . As when a prowling Wolf,
> Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
> watching where Shepherds pen thir Flocks at eve
> . . . . . .
> Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the Fold.
> (IV.183-187)

And,

> . . . As a Thief bent to unhoard the cash

> Of some rich Burgher, whose substantial doors,
> Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault.
> (IV.188-190)

In both similes he is compared to one who will unlawfully take something that is considered safe and secure. This trait is in keeping with the simile-cluster which presents the Garden as a place remote where precious things are kept securely guarded. Satan is the thief who successfully "assaults" the Garden and wins the treasure; only from it he derives no pleasure.

The Fiend stalks Adam and Eve

> . . . as a Tiger, who by chance hath spi'd
> In some Purlieu two gentle Fawns at play,

and with patient watch chooses

> . . . his ground
> Whence rushing he might surest seize them both
> Gript in each paw.
> (IV.403-408)

Adam and Eve are the treasure, the lambs, and now the fawns whose very existence is placed in jeopardy by his threatening presence. Their innocence increases his wickedness. However, when he finally reaches the ear of Eve and attempts to introduce illusions into her dreams, he is compared to a toad, a hateful thing. This small, insignificant, ugly

creature is hardly a bed-fellow in the nuptial bower where "other Creatures . . . durst enter none; / Such is thir awe of Man" (IV.703-705). Satan evidently has no awe of man or angel. When apprehended and taken before the Angelic Guard,

> The Fiend repli'd not, overcome with rage;
> But like a proud Steed rein'd, went haughty on,
> Champing his iron curb.
> (IV.857-859)

A little color is added to the narration in the form of two simple similes. The floor of the bower of Adam and Eve is described as a tapestry. Flowers "Broidered the ground, more color'd than with stone / Of costliest emblem" (IV.702-703). The Angelic Guard in their circuit of Paradise part "As flame . . . / Half wheeling to the Shield, half to the Spear" (IV.784-785).

Book IV prepares the battleground for the struggle between good and evil in which Satan and Eve are the main characters. Here the similes are used to bring about a meaning of fall and redemption as well as to diminish the heroic stature of Satan. Milton singularly refrains from using similes when referring to Adam. Greene comments: "To Adam by art or accident, Milton denies the 'divine vitality' of Raphael, the Messiah, and Satan."[18]

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[18] Greene, pp. 403-404.

The similes in the first four books can be grouped around a central figure or figures in each book. In Book I it is through the magnification of Satan that the similes structure a bond of unity. Deceit in terms of falseness and hollowness predominate in Book II, and to this central concept the similes contribute unity. In Book III the contrast between light and dark, good and evil is supported by the similes. And, in Book IV the similes, gravitating around the three figures of the Garden, Satan, and Eve, effect a strengthening bond of unity. Thus the similes are an integral part of each book, supporting, structuring, setting the tone and thereby uniting the structure.

CHAPTER III

VOICE IN THE SIMILES OF BOOKS V-VIII

The similes of Books V, VI, VII, and VIII are characterized by brevity and simplicity. It is in these books that Raphael instructs Adam, and Adam, in turn, relates his experiences to Raphael. Since Adam's knowledge is necessarily curtailed by his inexperience, the similes used by Adam and Raphael are simple. Only the narrator has full freedom of expression.

Anne Davidson Ferry notes a distinct use of the simile in each of the three voices, Adam's, Raphael's, and the narrator's. She says that the extended similes

> . . . are a means of characterizing the narrative voice, of enriching his tone, of insisting on his presence and enlarging his role as our interpreter and guide. The similes elaborate and sustain the pattern of contrasts between the world of "things visible to mortal sight" and our fallen world which controls the mood and meaning of the poem. . . . They are a distinctive mark of his manner of speaking and of the ways in which his style expresses a vision different from that of his characters.[1]

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[1] Anne Davidson Ferry, Milton's Epic Voice; The Narrator in "Paradise Lost" (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 69.

Few of the similes of the middle four books of Paradise Lost are in the voice of the narrator. In these books Raphael has assumed the role of narrator, and consequently, there is a scarcity of extended similes. In fact, Ferry points out that the style used for Raphael in these books and for Michael in Book XII differs from that used by the narrator chiefly in the avoidance of the extended simile.[2] Raphael tells Adam that he has knowledge by intuition whereas Adam has knowledge mainly by discourse. He proceeds to explain to Adam that he will instruct him by setting forth "Great things by small," (VI.311), the unknown by the familiar:

> Raphael's similes reveal the nature of his vision and also of Adam's, for they are intended to help Adam's understanding and so must draw comparisons from within his experience. Of necessity they are therefore much simpler than the speaker's similes, because Adam has almost no experience. . . . [he] has only Eve, the animals, and the angels to contrast with himself. He can realize differences because he recognizes hierarchy, degrees of existence leading up to God, and he he knows the book of creatures, but that is the range of his unfallen experience.[3]

Raphael not only aids the understanding of Adam but

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[2]Ferry, p. 70.

[3]Ferry, p. 71.

"he emphasizes the character of the unfallen world, the purity of the angelic vision, and the innocence of man's first condition." And the similes, through which this condition is expressed, by their "relative brevity and simplicity . . . express in form the directness of understanding, the unclouded and undistracted vision of unfallen nature."[4]

This chapter considers the voices in which the similes have been placed. According to James Craig LaDriere "reference to a voice or voices and implication of address . . . is a part of the meaning and a frame for the rest of the meaning, for the interpretation of which it supplies an indispensible control."[5] The particular aspect under consideration is the repetition of analogous similes in the three different voices. I believe that Milton has strengthened and united Books V-VIII by limiting a range of comparison and by placing like comparisons in all three voices or, at least, in two of the three voices.

In organizing and synthesizing the seventy-four similes contained in these books, I have found that the majority are in the voice of Raphael and the minority are

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[4]Ferry, p. 73.

[5]James Craig LaDriere, "Voice and Address," in Dictionary of World Literature, ed. Joseph T. Shipley (Paterson, New Jersey, 1962), p. 442.

in the voice of Adam. Comparisons using food and size as the vehicle are found in all three voices. Comparisons pertaining to appearances are also found in all three voices; but this category can be further refined into comparisons involving terms of time, concrete objects, mythology, and royalty. Similes using sound, movement, and force are also found in the three voices but with diversity of meaning. Only four similes, which are found in the voice of Raphael, seem to have no particular relation to the similes found in the other two voices.

The act and pleasure of eating is familiar to both Adam and to the narrator but not to the angel Raphael. However, when he comes to Adam and Eve he eats with them just as Christ ate with His Apostles after the resurrection. The narrator comments that there is no more cause for wonder that an angel can eat than there is for belief that

> . . . if by fire
> Of sooty coal the Empiric Alchemist
> Can turn, or holds it possible to turn
> Metals of drossiest Ore to perfet Gold
> As from the Mine.
> (V.439-443)

Adam has no knowledge of this, but then, the narrator is not directing the comment to him as the addressee. Adam's knowledge is compared to

> . . . one whose drouth
> Yet scarce allay'd still eyes the current stream,
> Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites.
> (VII.66-68)

Raphael is the "current stream" who excites Adam to a greater desire for knowledge. The Angel, however, cautions him,

> But Knowledge is as food, and needs no less
> Her Temperance over Appetite, to know
> In measure what the mind may well contain.
> (VII.126-128)

Adam accepts the rebuke, and, at the completion of his and Raphael's conversation, compliments him on the sweetness of his discourse. It is sweeter

> Than Fruits of Palm-tree pleasantest to thirst
> And hunger both, from labor, at the hour
> Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill,
> Though pleasant, but thy words with Grace Divine
> Imbu'd, bring to thir sweetness no satiety.
> (VIII.212-216)

The three similes contain the kernel idea that the pursuit of knowledge can lead to curiosity and lack of control. The desire for unnecessary knowledge and its pleasures is what finally brings about the fall. Raphael, who has been sent by God to bring to Adam the knowledge of his danger, warns him that too much knowledge, like too much food, "soon turns / Wisdom to Folly, as Nourishment to Wind" (VII.129-

130).

The need to measure seems to be an integral part of man. Since God is infinite, he has no need of measuring; but man, because he is finite, seems to feel security in knowing size, number, distance, and duration. Raphael explains size in terms of Adam's experience just as Adam expresses size in terms of contrast and comparison. The narrator is the first to relate the size of the universe to that of the earth. When Raphael embarks on his journey to earth he stands at the gates of heaven and scans the universe, like Galileo, who, "less assur'd, observes / Imagin'd Lands and Regions in the Moon" (V.262-263). The earth is at such a distance that it is indistinct, as indistinct as "a cloudy spot" (V.266) seen by a pilot navigating through the danger of the Cyclades.

Adam's belief that the earth is stationary and that the universe is in motion around it leads him to exclaim that when he beholds heaven and earth and computes "Thir magnitudes, this Earth a spot, a grain, / An Atom, with the Firmament compar'd" (VIII.17-18). And he continues with

> . . . reasoning I oft admire,
> How Nature wise and frugal could commit
> Such disproportions.
> (VIII.25-27)

Raphael uses a similar comparison to describe the vast regions over which the fallen angel legions passed on their journey from God. They are

> . . . Regions to which
> All thy Dominion, Adam, is no more
> Than what this Garden is to all the Earth,
> And all the Sea, from one entire globose
> Stretcht into Longitude; . . . .
> (V.750-754)

By the use of the negative nexus and by stretching the land and seas into one long line, a measurement of such magnitude is achieved as to stagger the senses. When Raphael describes the terrain over which the good angels travel, he does so in more concrete terms.

> . . . over many a tract
> Of Heav'n they march'd, and many a Province wide
> Tenfold the length of this terrene.
> (VI:76-78)

Raphael uses a third simile to picture the courts of God to Adam; they are ". . . wider far / Than all this globous Earth in Plain outspread" (V.648-649).

Other similes denoting size are much more simple. Each of these is in the voice of Raphael. The leviathan, largest of the animals, is "Stretched like a Promontory . . . / And seems a moving Land" (VII.414-415). Raphael

explains to Adam that the moon's "spots thou seest / As Clouds" (VIII.145-146), may be rain clouds that soften the ground so that crops may be raised. The distance is too great for accurate knowledge.

The inability to perceive the true function of a thing is seen again. This time, however, it is not due to distance but to lack of experience. Raphael narrates the reaction of the angels to the cannons invented by the fallen angels: ". . . for like to Pillars most they seem'd, / Or hollow'd bodies made of Oak or Fir" (VI.573-574). When struck by the cannon balls the angels, who had previously stood "as Rocks, . . . fell / By thousands" (VI.593-594). These last similes are not measures of size but of experience and ability, and, as such, are justifiably included in this category.

The third category is that of appearance. Raphael tells Adam that the Father and the Son appeared in the midst of the angelic hosts "as from a flaming Mount, whose top / Brightness had made invisible" (V.598-599). There is a play on words involved here. Hell and Satan have been described in terms of darkness visible; now God is described in terms of brightness visible.

Furthermore, when Raphael describes Satan's appearance before the angelic fall, he does so in terms of

brightness. Previously called Lucifer, Satan was "brighter once amidst the Host / Of Angels, than that Star the Stars among" (VII.132-133). The allusion here to the sun is repeated in Raphael's attempt to explain to Adam the brightness of the sun and moon. The sun "as a Star" (VIII.142) enlightens the moon by day as the moon enlightens the earth by night. Satan had journeyed to the earth by way of the sun. However, he in his fallen condition is not associated with terms of brightness but with terms of darkness. When the sun appears in the morning the stars are eclipsed in brightness and seem to disappear. Satan "as the Morning Star that guides / The starry flock, allur'd" (V.708-709) the angels. As shepherd of his flock he should have led them to safety, but he and they are overthrown "as a Herd / Of Goats or timorous flock" (VI.856-857). Milton's careful choice of words is noteworthy in calling the fallen angels "goats," the term used by Christ in explaining the separation of the good from the evil in the last judgment. Consistent in applying the word "stars" to Satan, Raphael explains that the host of fallen angels is as "Innumerable as the Stars of Night" (V.745). The stars shed no light on earth either in day or night, and neither do the Satanic hosts shed a beneficent light on mankind. They are always

the "stars of night" who disappear before the brightness and love of Christ. They are "Stars of Morning, Dew-drops, which the Sun / Impearls on every leaf and every flower" (V.746-747), but which evaporate in the heat of the sun.

Raphael and the narrator also use stars to describe heavenly things. Raphael tells Adam that the pavement of Heaven is of gold and stars, "as Stars to thee appear / Seen in the Galaxy" (VII.578-579) which each night "as a circling Zone thou seest" (VII.580). Raphael's wings "Girt like a Starry Zone his waist" (V.281). The simplicity of these similes is in keeping with the general language pattern intended for Heaven.

This same simplicity is found in the similes used by Adam. Before the noon of deception, there is the morning of love and freshness found in the following similes. Adam, awakening Eve from her troubled dream, bids her "to be more cheerful and serene / Than when fair Morning first smiles on the World" (V.123-124). He tells Raphael that he led Eve "To the Nuptial Bow'r / . . . blushing like the Morn" (VIII.510-511). Adam calls Eve's attention to the approaching Raphael, who "seems another Morn / Ris'n on mid-noon (V.310-311). He, as the emissary of God, outshines even the brightness of the sun and comes as a threat to the noon-day

devil. Raphael explains that the Messiah "onward drove, / Gloomy as Night" (VI.831-832) on the Satanic hosts. "Gloomy" can have the connotation of threat, which is what the Messiah is to the angels of night. He scatters Satan and his followers as the sun scatters the night and the things of night.

Other similes that describe appearance are those that have royalty as their subject. Eve walks through the Garden "as Queen" on whom "A pomp of winning Graces waited still" (VIII.60-61). Since every queen has a royal guard, Adam tells Raphael that her loveliness creates "an awe / About her, as a guard Angelic plac't" (VIII.558-559). He, with his native purity and perfection, is "More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits / On Princes" (V.354-355) accompanied by a long dazzling retinue. Because Adam and Eve are the royalty of God's creation, the Earth is the royal palace. As the habitat of royalty, the Earth "without least motion, . . . receives, / As Tribute" (VIII.35-36) the motion of the other bodies of the universe.

Milton placed the previous category of similes in the voices of Adam and the narrator. The following group, which has mythology as its subject, has been placed only in the voice of the narrator. Obviously there was no history of

mythology to which either Adam or Raphael could have alluded. One simile appears in the voice of the Invocation in Book VII. Praying to Wisdom to guide him, the voice cites the example of Bellerophon, who in his rash eagerness for knowledge, angers the gods and "from a lower Clime / Dismounted, on th' Aleian Field" (VII.18-19), where he wandered crazed and blind until death. The other six similes have as their tenor Eve and Raphael.

Throughout the books Eve is alluded to in terms of mythology. Adam awakens Eve from her nightmare in a manner as mild "as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes" (V.16). This simile in which Flora receives the loving attention of Zephyrus is followed by a passage which imitates the Canticle of Canticles. Here Adam plays the predominant role, but after the fall, when he and Eve bicker, it is she who wins him with her loving petition for forgiveness. In three closely-related similes Eve is compared to Pomona, to the Wood-Nymph, and to Venus. Adam lead Raphael to their woodland lodge "that like Pomona's Arbor smil'd / With flow'rets deck't and fragrant smells" (V.378-379). It was in an arbor that Eve fell prey to Satan. Eve, like Adam, not clothed with anything but "herself," is "more lovely fair / Than Wood-Nymph" (V.380-381). She is even more lovely than Venus,

"the fairest Goddess feign'd / Of three that in Mount Ida naked strove" (V.381-382). The three contenders were the goddesses Juno, Venus, and Athene. Paris awarded the golden apple to Venus who in turn promised him the most beautiful wife. The fulfillment of this promise precipitated the Trojan War. Eve, more beautiful than Venus, by accepting the apple from Satan precipitated man into the war between good and evil.

The similes describing Raphael also have a symbolic and proleptic overtone. Raphael, like Mercury, "Maia's son . . . stood, / And shook his Plumes, that Heav'nly fragrance fill'd" the universe (V.285-286). Raphael, as God's messenger, is compared to swift Mercury, who likewise was the gods' messenger. Moreover, he is compared to the Phoenix, that singular bird, who "When to enshrine his reliques in the Sun's / Bright Temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies" (V.273-274). The Phoenix figure has a long history in which it is identified either as a messenger from the gods or as a departed soul. Greene has summarized these ancient beliefs and comments thus:

> In any case the phoenix became an obvious symbol for a new age and for collective or individual renewal. . . . Vida had applied it to the resurrected Christ. . . . And when in Paradise Lost God predicts the end of the fallen world, he uses language which recalls the

> phoenix legend: "The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring New Heav'n and Earth . . . " III.344-345. Raphael's discourse to Adam will record the end of that earlier age which closed by the angel's revolt, as well as the beginning of the new in the majestic allegresse of creation. His descent is vitalized by the sense of fresh and hopeful life springing from a great cosmic renewal.[6]

In this next group of similes, sound, water, and motion are the subject and have been placed in the voices of Adam and Raphael. Raphael instructs Adam in the creation of the world and the fall of the angels, after which Adam relates his experiences to Raphael. Milton in constructing Raphael's account of creation has closely followed the Bible. Accordingly, God created the world out of absolute nothingness. This absolute nothingness, as Reverend Joseph A. Grispino states, "is a limitless mass of dark agitated water" over which "the power of God" hovered "with the intention of producing life and establishing order."[7] The Hebrew concept of creation is pre-scientific and has as its aim to teach that God made everything. To the Hebrews the sky or firmament in which the heavenly bodies are located is "an

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[6]Thomas M. Greene, The Descent from Heaven: A Study of Epic Continuity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 399.

[7]The Old Testament of the Bible, introduction and commentaries by Rev. Joseph A. Grispino (New York, 1965), p. 5, (Notes 1 and 2).

overturned bowl supported by columns." The land mass is "a disc floating upon the world-sea." Beneath this is "Sheol," home of the dead. The superior waters are located above the firmament and superseding all is the home of God.[8] By establishing this background, one can conclude that it is appropriate for a number of similes to have water as a subject.

The similes of water depend upon the similes of sound. Adam tells Raphael that "Harmony to behold in wedded pair / More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear" (VIII.605-606). Raphael's words are more delightful to Adam than when "Cherubic Songs by night from neighboring Hills / Aereal Music send" (V.547-548). Not all sounds are pleasing, but, with Adam's limited knowledge and experience, Raphael faces a problem in interpreting the commotion caused in Heaven by the battle. He handles it through a supposition. The commotion is such that

> . . . to set forth
> Great things by small, if Nature's concord broke,
> Among the Constellations war were sprung,
> Two Planets rushing from one aspect malign
> Of fiercest opposition in mid Sky,
> Should combat, and thir jarring Spheres confound.
> (VI.310-315)

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[8]Grispino, p. 9 (Note).

Twice Raphael mentions the noise in Heaven. The "Infernal noise" is so great that "War seem'd a civil Game / To this uproar" (VI.667-668).

Where Satan is struck down by Michael the force of the blow and the amazement of the angels is recorded in another simile of supposition:

> . . . as if on Earth
> Winds under ground or waters forcing way
> Sidelong, had pusht a Mountain from his seat
> Half sunk with all his Pines.
> (VI.195-198)

Satan addresses the angels, urging them to disobedience: "and, as the sound of waters deep / Hoarse murmur echo'd to his words applause" (V.872-873). This is a repetition of the simile in Book II in which the angels' applause is "as when hollow Rocks retain / The sound of blust'-ring winds" (II.285-286); it is the sound that wearies the seaman and lessenes his awareness of danger.

The Son of God stands on the shore of Chaos viewing

> . . . the vast immeasureable Abyss
> Outrageous as a Sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
> Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
> And surging waves, as Mountains to assault
> Heav'n's highth, and with the Centre mix the Pole.
> (VII.211-215)

The absolute confusion of Chaos is mixed with the threat of

evil. Perhaps Milton meant only to express size by his use of "mountains," but he could have been alluding to the war in heaven and to the war of the gods. In the war of the gods, as recorded in mythology, mountains were heaped on mountains to enable one group to assault the other. In the angelic battle the same thing occurs and calls forth the intervention of the Messiah. The Messiah comes "with the sound / Of torrent Floods" (VI.829-830): Evil "Driv'n back redounded as a flood on those / From whom it sprung" (VII.57-58).

It an attempt to explain to Adam that the sun is the source of all light, Raphael says: "as to thir Fountain other Stars / Repairing, in thir gold'n Urns draw Light" (VII.364-365). Simple, everyday terms serve to picture the brilliance of the heavens. The same thing occurs when he explains the "haste" of the waters responding to God's command. They roll "As drops on dust conglobing from the dry; / Part rise in crystal Wall, or ridge direct" (VII.292-293). It is an impossibility for man to see everything at once. Perhaps this is why Milton chooses to have Adam see creation, not in the panoramic scene of Chaos, but in drop "conglobing" on dust. The "crystal walls" of the water is an echo of the "crystal walls" of heaven.

From time to time Milton includes a reminder that Raphael is addressing Adam. In explaining the "haste" of the waters, Raphael has Adam draw this comparison:

> . . . such flight the great command impress'd
> On the swift floods: as Armies at the call
> Of Trumpet (for of Armies thou hast heard)
> Troop to thir Standard, so the wat'ry throng,
> Wave rolling after Wave, where way they found.
> (VII.294-298)

Another category of the simile involves motion. God's words and acts are "more swift / Than time or motion" (VII.176-177), but the human act of speaking and understanding is slow, so Raphael tells Adam. Time and motion are repeated in the explanation of light and darkness in heaven, which alternates "like Day and Night" (VI.8) on earth. Light and motion are the subject of the simile in which Raphael describes the speed with which the angels run for the new weapons: "Light as the Lightning glimpse they ran, they flew" (VI.642).

Once in each of Books V, VI, and VII Raphael employs a simile with dance as its subject. Greene makes this interesting comment:

> The nature [of the Garden] is vital, energetic, robust, dynamic, possessed of a Baroque joy in living movement. Such is the nature of the world whose creation is described in Book Seven. The creation is the

> setting in movement of a dance, the dance of a jocund universal praise, wherein nothing is inert or heavy and nothing seems to rest. Its poetry is a poetry of verbs.[9]

In Book V Raphael describes the mystical dance of the angels which closely resembles "yonder starry Sphere / Of Planets and of fixt in all her Wheels" (V.620-621). The dance and music are so harmonious that they delight the ear of God. This calls to mind Adam's statement that Raphael's discourse is more pleasing than Cherubic song. Dance expressing joy is reversed when the fallen angels, observing God's hosts dodging the cannon balls, mock them. Satan calls out in derision:

> . . . into strange vagaries fell,
> As they would dance, yet for a dance they seem'd
> Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps
> For joy of offer'd peace.
> (VI.614-617)

The joyfulness of the dance reappears in the creation scene. Also to be noted is that the simile in each of the following examples is preceded by a form of the verb "rose," or its equivalent. The trees "Rose as in Dance" (VII.324); the wild beast "out of the ground rose / As from his Lair" (VII.456-457); "the Libbard, and the Tiger, as the Mole /

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[9]Greene, p. 403.

Rising, the crumbl'd Earth above them threw" (VII.467-468); the flocks "bleating rose / As Plants" (VII.472-473); "The Tawny Lion, pawing to get free / His hinder parts, then springs as broke from Bonds" (VII.464-465); and, the insects "as a line thir long dimensions drew" (VII.480). Creation certainly has been, to quote Greene, "a poetry of verbs."[10]

Two short identical similes are placed in the voices of the narrator and Adam. The narrator describes Adam's emergence from his reveries after Raphael's discourse "as new wak't" (VIII.4). Adam repeats the simile to explain his first conscious moments after creation: "As new wak't from soundest sleep / Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid" (VIII.253-254). He uses a similar figure to explain his state of exhaustion after speaking to God:

> Hee ended, or I heard no more, for now
> My earthly by his Heav'nly overpower'd,
> Which it has long stood under, strain'd to the highth
> In that celestial Colloquy sublime,
> As with an object that excels the sense,
> Dazzl'd and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
> Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd
> By Nature as in aid, and clos'd mine eyes.
> (VIII.452-459)

The last group of four similes is expressed only in

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[10]Greene, p. 403.

the voice of Raphael. He explains to Adam that the angels can neither die nor receive a mortal wound "no more than can the fluid Air" (VI.349). To express love "Easier than Air with Air, if Spirits embrace, / Total they mix, Union of Pure with Pure" (VIII.626-627). Raphael in commenting on the beauty of earth says that it "Seem'd like to Heav'n, a seat where Gods might dwell" (VII.329). And to Adam's request for more information, Raphael replies:

> To ask or search I blame thee not, for Heav'n
> Is as the Book of God before thee set,
> Wherein to read his wond'rous Works, and learn
> His Seasons, Hours, or Days, or Months, or Years.
> (VIII.66-69)

Milton unites these four books in two ways through the simile. He restricts and repeats the subject material of the simile. In all, there are five main areas of comparison: food, measurement, appearance, sound, and movement. He places analogous similes in either the three voices of Adam, Raphael, and the narrator, or in two of the three voices. Of the five subject areas, three--food, measurement, and appearance--are placed in the three voices. The other areas are placed in two of the three voices. A strengthened and unified structure results from such tight control of subject and voice.

CHAPTER IV

CENTRAL FIGURE IN THE SIMILES OF BOOKS IX-XII

The similes of the last four books deal primarily with human qualities. Adam and Eve fall and must face the consequence of their actions. The needs of the body, the interaction of personalities tainted by sin, and the shame felt in facing God and self become a paramount importance. Of over seventy similes contained within these four books only twenty-three have as their vehicle non-human things. Those similes using human qualities, characteristics, and needs as their vehicle range from parental aspects, physical features, senses and emotional responses through those of historical, biblical, and mythological origin.

A unifying effect is achieved not only by the subject matter but also by the placement of these similes throughout the four books. There are more extended similes contained within these four books than were contained within the preceding four, but not as many as in the first group. The voice in which the similes are used is mainly that of the narrator, although similes are also placed in the voices of Christ, Adam, and Michael. There are no similes in the

voice of Eve.

Perhaps the most human quality of man is his love and care for his children. Adam acknowledges himself, "mee only, as the source and spring / Of all corruption" (X.832-833). As he views mankind destroyed by the Deluge, his sorrow is "as when a Father mourns / His children" (XI.760-761). He is comforted by Michael, who tells him that "Man as from a second stock [will] proceed" (XII.7). Earlier in Book III Christ has been alluded to "as a second root" (III.269); now Noe is the second stock. It would seem that the Christ allusion is to spiritual nature whereas the Noe allusion is to physical nature. The stock can come forth only from the root, which is Christ spiritually and Adam physically. To further the father-image, when Christ sees the nakedness of Adam and Eve, "As Father of his Family he clad / Thir nakedness with Skins of Beasts" (X.216-217). Later, when Adam and Eve stand as suppliants before the throne of God, they are compared to Deucalion and Pyrrha, mythological parent-figures whose petition to the gods to restore mankind is heeded (XI.10-14).

The ancient Greek explanation of the world was that there was a union of heaven and earth from which all on earth originated. Twice this allusion is employed. Adam, in lamenting his fate, wishes to die and be turned back into

Earth: "How glad would [I] lay me down / As in my Mother's lap!" (X.777-778). Again, in referring to death, Michael uses the same simile. He tells Adam that if he lives temperately he will live "till like ripe Fruit thou drop / Into thy Mother's lap" (XI.535-536). Michael also says that the death of a believer is "like sleep, / A gentle wafting to immortal Life" (XII.434-435).

Four simile allusions are made to prayer. Adam and Eve's sincere prayer for forgiveness wings to heaven with "speedier flight / Than loudest Oratory" (XI.7-8). God hears the prayer of the contrite of heart more readily than those uttered more with sound than sincerity. Christ, in drawing God the Father's attention to the sincere prayer of Adam and Eve, likens it to "fruits more pleasing" since they are sown with the seed of contrition rather than produced by the toil of Adam "ere fall'n / From innocence" (XI.29-30). This one simile uttered by the voice of Christ points attention to the happy fall that could have merited such a redeemer. The culmination of the last books is the acceptance by Adam and Eve of their guilt and punishment. Probably, the simile is not a statement meant to justify the prayer but to rationalize a meaning for the fall. It is the meaning which unites the last books; Adam and Eve fall by

eating the forbidden fruit but now their actions become even more effective when the seed of contrition flourishes. Adam acknowledges the irrevocable will of God in the simile that to pray against God's decree "No more avails than breath against the wind / Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth" (XI.312-313). The fourth simile has already been acknowledged: it is that of Deucalion and Pyrrha supplicating God with a contrite heart. All the similic terms except the mythological ones are those that would have been known to Adam and Eve. Adam's use of breath, Christ's use of fruit, and the narrator's use of loud oratory indicate the need of contrition as the essential element of the approach to God.

In Book XI are found four similes of physical features. The watchful Cherubim guarding the gates of Paradise have four faces, "like a double Janus" (XI.129). The allusion to the Roman deity is appropriate since this deity was acclaimed as the guardian of doors and gates and of the beginnings of events. The Cherubim guarding the gates have eyes "more numerous than those / Of Argus," (XI.130-131) who had been commissioned by Juno to watch Io. However, the Cherubim are more wakeful than Argus and are not lulled by "the Pastoral Reed / Of Hermes, or his opiate Rod" (XI.132-133). Satan had managed by subterfuge to enter the

Garden and had brought about the fall of Adam and Eve, but, since these angels are more vigilant than the mythological beings, no one will leave or enter without their knowledge. As has been previously shown, Milton has made use of the double faces and the numerous eyes to show alertness to danger.

The North-wind is pictured as "blowing dry / Wrinkl'd the face of Deluge, as decay'd" (XI.842-843). There are several interpretations that could be placed on this simile. First, the powers of evil are said to live in the North. When Satan and the fallen angels retreat, it is to the North. Secondly, God sent the Deluge to punish mankind; the decay on the face of the Deluge could mean the evil destroyed. Thirdly, by combining the elements of good and evil found in man from the time of his fall, this simile underscores the meaning of the entire twelve books. But God does not leave man defenseless against the powers of evil. He promises a redeemer and renews that promise of which the rainbow is the sign: Adam sees the rainbow "Distended as the Brow of God appeas'd" (XI.880). The face of the flood is wrinkled, but the rainbow is distended, stretched free of wrinkles. This play on the balance of meaning is a subtle use of the similes to create unity.

The next group of similes to be considered is that in

which man is used as the subject of the simile. First to be considered is man's emotions. The builders of Babel rage much to the amusement of the angels: "As mockt they storm" (XII.59). Adam is so overcome by God's goodness that when Michael completes the story of salvation he cries with joy "as had like grief been dew'd in tears" (XII.373). Eve so humbly begs the pardon of Adam that finally, "As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost" (X.945). Satan, moreover, is noted as being tormented "as from the hateful siege / Of contraries" (IX.121-122).

Secondly, certain characteristics of man are used as the point of comparison in the similes, the majority of which refer to Satan. He, "As one who long in populous City pent" delights in the smell, sight, and sound of the countryside (IX.445-454), follows Eve secretly and admiringly. As she walks through the Garden he glides up to her "as one who sought access, but fear'd / To interrupt" (IX.511-512). He works his way toward her "As when a Ship by skillful Steersman wrought / Nigh River's mouth" (IX.513-514). He varies his approach skillfully to lure her eye. Once she notices him he begins to tempt her without success at first. Then, using all the art, motion, passion, "As when of old some Orator renown'd / In Athens or free Rome" (IX.670-671) speaks, he addresses the tree itself and by his false

eloquence dupes Eve into believing him. By relating Satan to man, Milton has presented a picture of his cunning and perfidy that can be readily understood and accepted. By projecting Satan in this manner, Eve can be viewed in a much more sympathetic light. She becomes the innocent victim of Satan's insidious plan. In the meantime Adam, while waiting for the return of Eve, plaits a garland for her "As Reapers oft are wont thir Harvest Queen" (IX.842). But the harvest that is reaped is not that which he anticipates; the garland, not merited by Eve is dropped unnoticed to the ground.

Other clothing similes follow. In Book IV Eve's hair is worn "as a veil." Clothing then was not necessary because she and Adam were both innocent of carnal desires: now, "innocence, that as a veil / Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone" (IX.1054-55). She and Adam gather leaves, "broad as Amazonian Targe" (IX.1111), with which to cover themselves. Adam falls in order not to be separated from Eve; now they both wear leaves broad as the targets of the Amazons, women warriors who dominated their men. Thus clad, "Columbus found th' American so girt" (IX.1116); Adam and Eve sit down to weep. "As Father of his Family" Christ clothes "Thir nakedness with Skins of Beasts" (X.216-217). When Michael approaches Adam he comes, "as Man / Clad to meet Man" (XI.239-240), in purple livelier than that "worn

by Kings and Heroes old / In time of Truce" (XI.243-244). This simple statement, which seems to relate only to the garments worn by Michael, actually points the purpose of his coming. This is a time of truce in which he, as the emissary of God, will prepare Adam to meet and accept his punishment. As Satan escapes back to Hell Adam is fortified with God's promise of the Redeemer.

One last example to be considered in the "man category" of similes is that which describes Noe's preaching to his neighbors "as to Souls / In Prison under Judgment imminent" (XI.724-725). Adam is appalled at the outcome, as he envisions his descendants who will inherit his fallen nature. Only by trusting and believing in the goodness and mercy of God do Adam and Eve finally achieve peace of heart and the courage to face life outside of the Garden.

To consider another aspect of the simile, figures from the Bible, from history, and from mythology become the vehicle. Adam and Eve, experiencing shame for the first time, are described in these terms.

> . . . So rose the Danite strong
> Herculean Samson from the Harlot-lap
> Of Philistean Dalilah, and wak'd
> Shorn of his strength, They destitute and bare
> Of all thir virtue.
>
> (IX.1059-63)

In another simile, Adam, seeing Michael from a distance, is compared to Jacob meeting the angels in Mahanaim, "where he saw / The field Pavilion'd with his Guardians bright" (XI.214-215). It was here that he wrestled with the Lord and was spiritually strengthened. Named Israel, from him came the twelve tribes. Michael, an emmissary of the Lord, has come to aid Adam. In cooperating with him, Adam realizes peace, and takes his place as father of mankind. Michael and the angels are also compared to that group of angels who protected the prophet Elisha from the wrath of the Syrian king: "Assassin-like [he] had levied War, / War unproclaim'd" (XI.219-220) against the Israelites. Elisha warned the king and would have been assassinated by the Syrians if God's angels had not "on the flaming Mount appear'd / In Dothan, cover'd with a Camp of Fire" (XI.216-217). Although Adam had been warned of the danger by Raphael he had not fully comprehended his vulnerable position. Satan had attacked assassin-like and mankind would have been vanquished except for the intervention of God.

The three direct allusions to figures of history outside of the Bible deal with Satan, Sin, and Death. The building of the bridge from hell to earth by Sin and Death is compared to the bridge built across the Hellespont by Xerxes, who thought to conquer Greece. But Xerxes' effort

was slight compared to that of Sin and Death: "if great things by small may be compared, Xerxes . . . Europe with Asia join'd" (X.306-310). Xerxes' army and navy were defeated by the Athenians who out-thought and out-maneuvered them. Neither will the unholy three win in their struggle with the Holy Three. When Satan returns to Hell in triumph, he finds the gates unguarded and all his angels gathered close to Pandemonium. This situation is compared to the retreat of "the Tartar from his Russian Foe" (X.431) or the retreat and waste made by "Bactrian Sophi from the horns / Of Turkish Crescent" (X.433-434). Satan's forces have retreated into the inner recesses of Hell to await him; and when he reports to them all the glory of his victory will have turned to ashes. The three historical figures are those of personages who were thwarted in victory.

Several mythological allusions have already been cited in other categories of similes; such as, that of Deucalion and Pyrrha, Argus of many eyes, Hermes of lulling sleep, and Janus of the double face. I have grouped in this section the other mythological passages which describe either Eve or Satan. The narrator, in introducing Book IX, laments that he must now speak of sad things. His is a

. . . Sad task, yet argument

> Not less but more Heroic than the wrath
> Of stern Achilles on his Foe pursu'd
> Thrice Fugitive about Troy Wall: or rage
> Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd,
> Or Neptune's ire or Juno's, that so long
> Perplex'd the Greek and Cytherea's Son.
> (IX.13-19)

In each of these cases the person named was either unjustly persecuted by the gods or was unjustly persecuting another.

Eve is almost exclusively described in terms of the pagan deities. Withdrawing from Adam, she,

> . . . like a Wood-Nymph light,
> Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's Train,
> Betook her to the Groves, but Delia's self
> In gait surpass'd and Goddess-like deport,
> Though not as shee with Bow and Quiver arm'd,
> But with such Gard'ning Tools as Art yet rude,
> Guiltless of fire had form'd, or Angels brought,
> To Pales or Pomona, thus adorn'd,
> Likest she seem'd, Pomona when she fled
> Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her Prime,
> Yet Virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
> (IX.386-396)

The comparisons in this simile-cluster contribute to a pastoral scene. Pales was the Roman goddess of flocks and herds; Pomona the goddess of fruit; and Ceres the goddess of grain. Although Eve is identified with Delia, who was a huntress, she becomes the quarry rather than the huntress, as Pomona was the quarry of Vertumnus. Eve had already been compared to Ceres and Proserpina, Ceres' daughter who was abducted by Dis of the underworld (IV.268-272). This one

cluster seems to be a summary of the aspects already expressed about Eve. She is an innocent, beautiful symbol of nature; she is also the one pursued and the one through whom mankind will fall and be punished.

The following simile is one which might be considered as a link between those describing Eve and those describing Satan. When he, in the guise of a serpent, attempts to attract her attention, she is unmindful of his attempt since she is accustomed to the animals following her: the animals were "more duteous at her call, / Than at Circean call the Herd disguis'd" (IX.521-522). Circe, a sorceress, had the power to change men into swine that would fawn like dogs. The ostensible point of comparison is that the animals are obedient to Eve, but the placement of the simile at the first encounter between Satan and Eve gives it more import. Circe had the power to change men into swine; Eve, as mother of mankind, through the fall reduces man to a weakened condition in which he is susceptible to the power of Satan. Circe beguiled others, but Eve is beguiled by another. The careful placement of the simile, plus its implied meaning, contributes to a sense of continuity and unity within the books.

Eve, charmed by the beauty of the serpent, so little suspects his intentions that she becomes his victim.

Milton has painted a traditional picture of the magnificent beauty of the serpent by the integration of text and simile-cluster. Never was there any serpent

> Lovelier, not those that in Illyria chang'd
> Hermione and Cadmus, or the God
> In Epidaurus; nor to which transform'd
> Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen,
> Hee with Olympias, this with her who bore
> Scipio the highth of Rome.
>
> (IX.505-510)

Each of the four figures underwent a metamorphosis into a serpent form. In Ovid's story, Hermione and Cadmus were changed into serpents. Aesculapius, "the God in Epidaurus," is the deity of healing who even today is represented in serpent form. The last two figures allude to Jupiter, who, according to legend, assumed serpent form in his love-making with the mother of Alexander the Great and Scipio Africanus. Implicit in these similes, along with the all-important idea of the beauty of the serpent, is the concept of illicit love. The final and clinching argument made by the serpent to Eve appeals to her vanity. In his wily manner he turns her away from God and Adam to the love of self and evil. In this simile-cluster Satan has been presented as beautiful, but when he returns to Hell and is punished by being changed against his will into a serpent, he is portrayed as coarse.

Now Satan takes on the proportions of a dragon "larger

than whom the Sun / Ingender'd in the Pythian Vale on slime" (X.529-530). The other fallen angels share in his punishment as they swarm over one another thicker than "once the Soil / Bedropt with blood of Gorgon" (X.526-527) or "the Isle / Ophiusa" (X.527-528). In their frantic haste to escape their all-consuming thirst, they climb the trees and sit "thicker than the snaky locks / That curl'd Megaera" (X.559-560). A feeling of disgust and revulsion wells up at the sight of numerous snakes slithering, writhing, and curling together, caught in circumstances of their own making. This seems to be the feeling Milton is attempting to engender. Not only is the serpent to be repelled but all the evil for which it stands. With this scene Satan exits from the poem. From the lofty grandeur of the first books to the repulsive form of this book. Satan has descended from a hero status to that of the punished villain. As Maurice McNamee points out, "This is Satan's exit from the poem. This is the reward of his obdurate pride and steadfast hate."[1]

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[1]Maurice B. McNamee, S.J., Honor and the Epic Hero (New York, 1960), pp. 167-168. "This difficult ideal of obedience, humility, patience, temperance, and love, which Adam and Eve came to recognize at long last and after much disillusionment, is made even more emphatic by being contrasted throughout Paradise Lost with the disobedience, rebellious pride, and intemperate hatred and jealousy of Satan, and,

Among the basic appetites of man are those of sex and of eating. Both of these are good when they are under the control of man's reason. However, when man loses control he becomes animalistic. This danger is brought out in the food and sex similes contained mainly in Books IX and X. Satan, in the form of the serpent, tells Eve that at first his thoughts were abject and low, "As was my food, nor aught but food discern'd / Or Sex" (IX.573-574) until he ate the forbidden fruit. The odor of the tree first attracted him. It

> . . . more pleas'd my sense
> Than smell of sweetest Fennel, or the Teats
> Of Ewe or Goat dropping with Milk at Ev'n,
> Unsuckt of Lamb or Kid, that tend thir play.
> (IX.580-583)

First Satan lies to Eve; then he gives her an insight into his character as one who would steal from the young. However, it will be by the seed of the woman that he will be

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as both C. M. Bowra (From Vergil to Milton, pp. 227-31) and C. S. Lewis (Preface pp. 92-101) have pointed out, Milton underlines the contrast by consciously using the old pagan Aristotelian and Achillean concept of heroism raised to archangels and cosmic proportions as the framework for building up the character of Satan. But there is a sublime irony in Satan's success against mankind, which all culminates in his own complete humiliation and confusion as he returns to Hell to savor this triumph, only to hear himself hissed by the host of fallen angels turned to hideous serpents, all groveling before him as he falls."

crushed. Eve succumbs to the entreaties of Satan and gorges herself on the fruit until she becomes "heightened as with Wine" (IX.793). Adam's reaction is the same. Rather that lose Eve he eats his fill until both he and she "As with new Wine intoxicated both / They swim in mirth" (IX. 1008-09). After they fall by eating the forbidden fruit, their first pleasure is carnal.

As a result of their actions, God the Father tells the Son that Adam and Eve must leave the Garden because "As a distemper" (XI.53) they affect the Garden, attracting Sin and Death, who are already on their way

> . . . As when a flock
> Of ravenous Fowl, though many a League remote,
> Against the day of Battle, to a Field,
> Where Armies lie encampt, come flying, lur'd
> With scent of living Carcasses design'd
> For death, the following day, in bloody fight.
> (X.273-278)

Sin and Death have so altered the perspective that any mention of the honest appetite of eating is changed perversely. They come like vultures awaiting the battle and the feast. The serpent-devils, attempting to alleviate their thirst, eat the fruit of the trees only to be deceived in taste. The fruit is fair to see "like that which grew / Near that bituminous Lake where Sodom flam'd" (X.561-562). As they deceived Adam and Eve so are Satan and his followers deluded

even in the taste of victory. Furthermore, God commands the sun to change position so that man will be afflicted by extremes of heat and cold. The sun obeys as it did when Atreus served his brother Thyestes with the flesh of his sons: "At that tasted Fruit / The Sun as from Thyestean Banquet, turn'd" (X.687-688).

Only one simile seems to have no overtones: the sun pictured as evaporating the waters of the flood, "of the fresh Wave largely drew, / As after thirst" (XI.845-846). After the fall Adam and Eve can no longer claim supremacy over nature. They have violated the direct command of God and are punished in their own human nature and in the nature of the universe.

Milton capitalizes on the humanity of man in his subject matter of the similes of the final books. Adam and Eve are no longer the ideal man and woman created by God. Now they are easily identified as having the characteristics of subsequent fallen mankind. By reverting to the technique used in the first four books, that of placing most of the epic in the voice of a narrator, not as much attention is given to Adam and Eve's lack of experience. The important fact to be kept in mind is that the final point of the twelve books is not the mighty grandeur with which they have been introduced nor the beauty of Paradise nor many

of the other grand-scale concepts; but it is the final scene in which Adam and Eve, hand in hand, leave the Garden to find a place in the world, trusting, believing, and loving God. The entire story has been focused on the final act of the first man and woman walking through the gate from Paradise into the life of ordinary mankind.

Although the majority of the similes deal directly with the human condition, a number of them have inorganic nature as their subject. They can be divided roughly into four groups: similes of place, time, geometric figures, and cosmic forces.

In the category of places, a simile-cluster in Book IX prefaces the way for magnifying the Garden as a place better than certain gardens of mythological and historical fame. The Garden is a

> Spot more delicious than those Gardens feign'd
> Or of reviv'd Adonis, or renown'd
> Alcinous, host of old Laertes' Son,
> Or that, not Mystic, where the Sapient King
> Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian Spouse.
> (IX.439-443)

The first two gardens mentioned are "mystic" but that of Solomon, "not mystic." The figure of Solomon is fitting here. According to the Jewish law marriage was not to take place outside of the tribes, but Solomon, in order to

strengthen the kingdom, made marriage alliances with his pagan neighbors. In spite of all his materialistic machinations the kingdom was split and lost through his son. Adam and Eve, to please their vanity, lose the kingdom of God, but it is restored through a son, the Son of God.

Furthermore, the actions of Adam and Eve parallel those of Solomon. Though Solomon pleased God and had much that the world could offer, he fell from God's grace by dallying with temptation. The placement of the simile is well chosen as a prelude to the temptation scene. In accordance with the human theme of these final books, not only is a place described, but also the actions of the persons in that place.

Another location is designated--the hill to which Michael takes Adam so that he may see the entire hemisphere of the earth. The hill is

> Not higher that Hill nor wider looking round,
> Whereon for different cause the Tempter set
> Our second Adam in the Wilderness,
> To show him all the Earth's Kingdoms and thir
> Glory.
>
> (XI.381-384)

At the close of Michael's narration Adam is ready to accept his role as father of fallen mankind. At the close of the temptation scene Satan knows that he has met his supe-

rior in Christ. Self-knowledge is the end result of both scenes, and again, it is not the place but rather the actions of the persons within the place that are noteworthy.

The time element is of great importance to man--the day is ruled by the time proper to the performance of duties. Transcending the daily time-bond is the time-bond of life. Man is born and lives through the morning of life; he matures and lives through the golden daylight of life; and grows old and begins to live in the twilight. The story of the fall takes place within the time span of a day. Adam and Eve on awakening offer praise to God, discuss the work of the day, and then part each to his own duties with the promise to meet at noon. In the morning they are innocent of sin. Satan tempts Eve at noon; physically hungry as well as curious, she succumbs, causes Adam to succumb, and together they commit the second sin. Through fear they hide from God; Michael finds and instructs them. By evening they have found peace and are willing to accept their punishment. As the twilight deepens Adam and Eve leave Paradise. On the other hand, Satan is most active at night. It is under the cover of night that he re-enters the Garden and at midnight possesses the serpent. Night is consistently the time applied to Satan.

Originally there were only ten books in Paradise Lost.

When Milton revised the epic, dividing Book X into Books X, XI, and XII, he used a time simile as the transitional device. Michael pauses in his instructions

> As one who in his journey bates at Noon,
> Though bent on speed, so here the Arch-Angel paud'd
> Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd.
> (XII.1-3)

Time is not only an element of unity within these last four books but throughout Paradise Lost. Satan arrives on Earth at the time that the sun is "in his Meridian Tow'r" (IV.30). He debates with himself against his doubts but conquers these and journeys on to Paradise. He first sees Adam and Eve in the evening as they return home from their day's labor (IV.288-355). The sight of their superior qualities hardens his resolution and that night he attempts to seduce Eve (IV.800). Satan is accosted by the angels on guard, but Eve, impressed by the remembrance of this evil, is disturbed by it.

The time cycle, continuing its relentless passage, becomes of consummate importance in Book IX in which the fall takes place. Prior to the first noon of Satan's appearance on Earth, there is no disturbance. On the morning of the fall Adam and Eve behave in a normal manner. Noon becomes the crucial point after which "the world destroy'd

and the world restor'd" (XII.3) takes place. The world is destroyed after noon but Christ also restores it after noon. When Christ rises from the night of death he rises "fresh as the dawning light" (XII.423). When Adam and Eve finally leave Paradise it is evening. The Cherubim escort them into the world

> Gliding meteorous, as Ev'ning Mist
> Ris'n from a River o'er the marish glides,
> And gathers ground fast at the Laborer's heel
> Homeward returning.
>
> (XII.629-632)

Adam, who was created outside of Paradise (VIII.294-306) is now returning home.

Satan, stealing into Paradise, outwits the angelic guards by entering "involv'd in rising Mist" (IX.75) which takes him directly to the Tree of Life. His first act is to find an animal through which he can execute his plan. He is discovered by the Cherubim but returns once more; and this time the description of his entering is much more frightening and ominous. Entering Paradise "Like a black mist low creeping, he held on / His midnight search" (IX. 180-181) for the serpent. Three times the idea of mist has been employed; twice it has been involved with that portion of time which is identified with the main characters of the epic.

One other time-simile is expressed by Adam. Adam, lamenting his disobedience to God, wishes he could live in some obscure glade where high trees "spread their umbrage broad, / And brown as Evening" (IX.1087-88). He does not wish for midnight black in which to hide but for evening shadows of brown--a time appropriate to him.

In previous figures mist has been applied to Satan to create a feeling of stealthiness. Another deceptive element of nature attributed to him is swamp fire or "wand'ring fire." As Satan in serpent form leads Eve to the tree, his crest brightens with hope and joy

> . . . as when a wand'ring Fire,
> Compact of unctuous vapor, which the Night
> Condenses, and the cold invirons round,
> Kindl'd through agitation to a Flame,
> Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends,
> Hovering and blazing with delusive Light,
> Misleads th' amaz'd Night-wanderer from his way
> To Bogs and Mires, and oft through Pond or Pool,
> There swallow'd up and lost, from succor far.
> (IX.634-642)

The term "Night-wanderer" is appropriately applied to Eve because she is now wandering in the power of the serpent, the power of darkness, which will lead her astray.

Milton has also utilized weather elements, with Death and Sin building the bridge from Earth to Hell. The unholy two petrify and freeze the turbulence of Chaos:

> As when two Polar Winds blowing adverse
> Upon the Cronian Sea, together drive
> Mountains of Ice, that stop th' imagin'd way
> Beyond Petsora Eastward, to the rich
> Cathaian Coast.
>
> (X.289-293)

This is the first simile of a cluster which combines weather and mythology in order to present the stages involved in the building of the bridge. Each of the similes shows a rigorous forcing of material into a shape for which it was never intended.

> . . . The aggregate Soil
> Death with his Mace petrific, cold and dry,
> As with a Trident smote, and fix't as firm
> As Delos floating once; the rest his look
> Bound with Gorgonian rigor not to move,
> And with Asphaltic slime; broad as the Gate,
> Deep to the Roots of Hell. . . .
>
> (X.293-299)

The use of ice in a simile is repeated in Book XII. The heart of the Pharoah is as stubborn "as Ice / More hard'n'd after thaw" (XII.193-194). In rage at his own weakness in permitting the Israelites to leave, he pursues them and is drowned, while they escape "As on dry land between two crystal walls" (XII.197).

The remaining similes may easily be summarized in terms of meteorology. Satan in Books II and III has been presented in an aura of false glitter. The repetition of

this technique is found when he appears before the fallen angels:

> . . . as from a Cloud his fulgent head
> And shape Star-bright appear'd or brighter, clad
> With what permissive glory since his fall
> Was left him, or false glitter.
> (X.449-452)

The fall of Satan is seen by Jesus "like Lightning down from Heav'n" (X.184). The sword of the Cherubim guarding the entrance to Paradise

> . . . before them blaz'd
> Fierce as a Comet; which with torrid heat,
> And vapor as the Libyan Air adust,
> Began to parch that temperate Clime.
> (XII.633-636)

Adam reveals a knowledge of the natural source of fire when he explains to Eve that the fire caused by lightning, which "sends a comfortable heat from far" (X.1077), will be the fire for their use. The irony of the statement lies in the fact that Satan, already referred to in terms of lightning, has destroyed their home in Paradise and has estranged them from God with whom they are no longer comfortable except at a distance.

Further variation is achieved by stretching figures of meteorology into geometric lines. The sky just before the flood "Like a dark Ceiling stood" (XI.743)--straight

horizontal line. The Israelites escaped "between two crystal walls" (XII.197)--straight vertical lines. The sun extends its influence to the planets "As God in Heav'n / Is Centre" (IX.107-108)--hub of the circle. The following similes have as their basis the circumference of the circle. Michael's sword hangs by his side "As in a glistening Zodiac" (XI.247); the seven lamps burn before the Ark "as in a Zodiac" (XII.255); and Adam asks if the rainbow serves "as a flow'ry verge to bind / The fluid skirts of that same wat'ry Cloud" (XI.881-882).

The similes from Books IX through XII have been categorized into two large groups, those pertaining to human qualities and those pertaining to non-human things. Since the entire action of the last four books is the fall and the acceptance of punishment, it is appropriate that the human condition is highlighted through the similes. By consistently including the characteristics of fallen mankind in the similes, Milton has strengthened and unified the last four books.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This paper began with the premise that Milton used the simile as one of the unifying devices of Paradise Lost. This statement should be modified slightly. The simile as employed by Milton is structured in the text in such a way that it incorporates with other literary devices to accomplish total unity. Some, but not all, of these devices have been discussed.

The simile is united with or integrated in the sound pattern of the text. The final simile of Book XII, for example, has a repetition of the g, r, m, and d consonant and the ou vowel sound in the first two and a half lines. These connect the simile with the words of the context, "on the ground." The last line and a half introduce the h and f sounds to agree with the return to context, "High in Front." The r sound binds together the five lines.

> . . . on the ground
> Gliding meteorous, as Ev'ning Mist
> Ris'n from a River o'er the marish glides,
> And gathers ground fast at the Laborer's heel
> Homeward returning. High in Front advanc't.
> (XII.628-632)

I have divided line 631 in order to show the break in the sound pattern. It not only demonstrates the repetition but also summarizes the sound pattern. The first section begins and ends with the same word, "ground." The second section begins with "fast" and ends with "advanc't," which are closely connected by the final "st" and "ct" sound. This simile, chosen at random, demonstrates the care with which Milton firmly interlocks all elements of his poem.

Another aspect of unity that has not been discussed is that of the grammatical structure which underscores meaning. In the following simile Satan's form is compared to the sun. Both noun-subjects have similar verbs. Introduced by the negative "not" and "nor," "form" has the compound predicate "had lost" and "had appeared." "Sun" has the compound predicate "looks" and "sheds." The verbs "appeared" and "looks" are related in meaning. The other verbs with their objects evoke a similar meaning; "lost . . . brightness" and "sheds twilight."

> . . . his form had yet not lost
> All her Original brightness, nor appear'd
> Less than Arch-Angel ruin'd, and th' excess
> Of Glory obscur'd: As when the Sun new ris'n
> Looks through the Horizontal misty Air
> Shorn of his Beams, or from behind the Moon
> In dim Eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
> On half the Nations, and with fear of change
> Perplexes Monarchs.
>
> (I.591-599)

Milton was a careful, painstaking craftsman who utilized the techniques of the artist. When one concept, meaning, or word is found it is sure to be repeated in some other place close or far from the original. I have found that nothing seems to be solitary; nothing appears isolated or unrelated.

By means of this study I have tried to demonstrate that the similes unite the twelve books of Paradise Lost in a variety of ways. To show this variety, I have divided the books into three sections, each being handled in such a manner as to demonstrate a different technique. In each section the similes are grouped according to subject matter. By grouping and regrouping, I discovered that the general organization is very simple. For instance, in the middle section of books, I found that the seventy-four similes are organized into four large groups--not book by book but as a cross-section of the four books.

Moreover, the similes gravitate around a central figure in all the books. I demonstrated this only in the first four books because they each contain a great number of similes. The same technique can be shown in any of the other books, Book VI, for example. Since in this book Adam is instructed in the story of creation, the similes center

around the figures of water and knowledge. Chapter IV of this paper shows how a section of books can center around a dominant idea. In this case the dominant idea is the humanness of Adam and Eve.

In conclusion, in Paradise Lost there is found unity and variety within the unity. Milton has created a work of great art, carefully and artistically fashioned, to which the similes lend unity in structure and meaning.

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