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Blake and Milton Reactionary and Revolutionary

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In their own rather different political contexts, Milton and Blake each adopted republican and revolutionary positions. In taking a stance on religion each has integrated their own ideas on the nature of republican government while simultaneously being bound by the fetters and constraints of the time. Both *Paradise Lost* by Milton and *Milton* combined with *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* by Blake form a concept of freedom that is constrained by the conceptual ideas of the authors while equally extending knowledge of freedom and society.

Republican and Revolutionary

Epic poetry has been used for political purposes throughout much of the history of Western literature.¹ From the epic poetry of Homer and the *Odyssey* through to the *Aeneid* by Virgil, ancient crafters of poetic epics have sought to both encapsulate and guide the political structure of the day. Narrative poems in the grand style followed by Dante in the *Divine Comedy*² and other great Italian works, including *Jerusalem Liberated* by Torquato Tasso³ and *Orlando Furioso* by Ariosto.⁴ The reception of the Italian works opened up the literary scene for French and English writers of the Renaissance seeking to match their contemporaries overseas.

The allegorical romance of Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene* (1590-1609), introduced the epic form into English, writing the metaphorical references to Queen Elizabeth I presented a world of undeniable loveliness in Spenser's technically perfected style.⁵ Yet, while unfinished, the verse equally lacked the power and characteristics that would be fulfilled in the production of Shakespeare's works. At this point, Milton understood that the English epic remained to be written. Thus, while Milton can be perceived to owe Spenser a debt, it is in a calling that drove him towards this end. In the essay, "*The Reason of Church Government*", Milton stated some of his reasons autobiographically for creating his work.⁶

¹ Quint, David, James Chandler, and Lionel Gossman, *Epic and empire: politics and generic form from Virgil to Milton*, Vol. 1. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).

² Dante, Alighieri, *The divine comedy*, (Athens: Aegitas, 2017).

³ Tasso, Torquato, *Jerusalem Delivered*, (Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

⁴ Molinaro, Julius A., "Sin and Punishment in the Orlando Furioso." *MLN*, vol. 89, no. 1, (Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), pp. 35–46, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2907774>.

⁵ Spenser, Edmund, *Spenser's Faerie queene*. Vol. 2. (J. and R. Tonson in the Strand, 1758).

⁶ Milton, John, and Thomas Birch, *A Complete Collection of the Historical, Political, and Miscellaneous Works of John Milton: Correctly Printed from the Original Editions. With an Historical and Critical Account of the Life and Writings of the Author*, Vol. 1. (UK: A. Millar, 1738).

In this, Milton stated that “I in my proportion with this over and above of being a Christian, might doe for mine own Citizens throughout this Iland in the mother dialect”.⁷ Through this and over decades, it became clear to Milton that it is an epic poem that he must write. When he began, it was a national epic and not that which later spanned religious proportions. In an early Latin poem, *Epitaphium Damonis*, Milton discussed plans to write the equivalent of the Aeneid or the British people arguing that he had a “theme of Trojans cruising our southern headlands”, integrating Arthurian legends into what he saw would become an English epic.⁸

In the course of his life, the political and religious foundations that underlay many of Milton’s beliefs changed throughout England. As an unreconstructed Puritan, Milton found himself writing in a Stuart monarchy with an Established Church that many saw as symbols of corruption.⁹ The change in scene away from a work of nationalistic pride into something based on biblical writings was equally audacious but cautious. Milton understood that an epic requires a majestic theme. To this end, the poet decided on the fall of man through creation and redemption. Before Milton, Tasso argued that the epic poem must also be historical to provide at least a semblance of truth.¹⁰ To Milton, this required that it embrace true religion and Christianity rather than the pagan stories that had come before.¹¹

Milton justified his choice at the start of book IX *Paradise Lost*¹²:

⁷ Richardson, Jonathan, *Explanatory Notes and Remarks on Milton's Paradise Lost*, (England: James, John, and Paul Knapton, 1734).

⁸ Milton, John, *Poems Upon Several Occasions: English, Italian, and Latin*. (England: J. Dodsley, 1785).

⁹ Hayley, William, *The Life of John Milton: With Conjectures on the Origin of Paradise Lost, By William Hailey, Esq.* (James Decker. Strasburgh: sold by FG Levrault, 1799, passim).

¹⁰ Supra Tasso (note 3).

¹¹ Milton, John, *Paradise Lost. A Poem in 12 Books*, (England, Strahan, 1778)

¹² Supra Hayley (note 9).

... Sad task, yet argument

Not less but more heroic than the wrauth

Of stern Achilles on his Foe pursu'd

Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage

Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd,

Or Neptun's ire or Juno's, that's a long

Perplex'd the Greek and Cytherea's Son;

If answerable style I can obtaine

Of my celestial patronage, who deignes

her nightly visitation unimplor'd,

And dictate to me slumbering, or inspires

Easie my premeditated Verse:

Since first the Subject for Heroic Song

Pleas'd me long choosing, and beginning late

Not sedulous by Nature to indite

Warrs, hitherto the onely Argument

...

To person or to Poem. Mee of these

Nor skilld nor studious, higher Argument

Remaines, sufficient of itself to raise

That name, unless an age too late, or cold

Climat, or Years damp may intended wing

Deprest, and much they may, if all the mine,

Not Hers who brings it nightly to my Ear.¹³

Milton's task was in itself epic. Two encapsulated the story of creation, the fall and redemption of man whilst embracing abstract concepts, immaterial beings and the story from biblical sources, something far more difficult than the epic of the First Crusade by Tasso.¹⁴ Milton's biblical tragedy sought to incorporate the infinite and omniscient power existing beyond the sphere of time and space.¹⁵ While seeking to create something less mythical and the Greco-Roman myths, incorporating angels and rebellious spirits introduced the story with a foregone conclusion while simultaneously keeping the reader engaged.¹⁶

The primary event within *Paradise Lost* centres on eating the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil by Adam.¹⁷ The biblical references to the story are comparatively

¹³ Ibid. p. 205.

¹⁴ Hasell, Elizabeth Julia, *Tasso*, Vol. 9. (England: JB Lippincott, 1882).

¹⁵ Hill, John Spencer, *Infinity, faith, and time: Christian humanism and renaissance literature*, (CA: McGill-Queen's Press-MQUP, 1997).

¹⁶ Massimilla, Stephen, *Myth, anti-myth, post-myth: On Western and Eastern myth and allusions to antiquity in Irish British, expatriate American, local American, and postcolonial modernist poetry (Yeats, Eliot, Williams, Moore, Lorca, Walcott)*, (USA: Columbia University, 2006).

¹⁷ Supra. Milton (note 11), p. 221-2.

terse in only twenty-four verses.¹⁸ In expanding this to twelve books, Milton abandons historical accuracy for allegorical effect fusing his story with pagan illusions and his own creation. The story of Satan and his cohorts as rebellious angels or demons is vividly expounded upon. None of this occurs within the original biblical story and even sections of the book of Revelation. The identification of the snake with Satan is itself a later interpretation of Genesis.¹⁹

In going past his Protestant and Puritan adherence to the biblical word, Milton associated devils with pagan gods in the ancient Christian tradition while extending into the various arguments for and against power.²⁰ At the start of the books, the archspirit of all that is perverse stands magnificent and indomitable in failed rebellion.²¹ Milton has Satan cry aloud,

... What though the field be lost?

All is not lost; the unconquerable Will,

And study of revenge, immortal hate,

And courage never to submit or yield:

And what is else not to be overcome?

¹⁸ Genesis 3.

¹⁹ Farrar, Thomas J, "The devil in the general epistles, part 3: 1 John." (USA: Dianoigo 2014). p. 13.

²⁰ Harding, Pitt, "Milton's Serpent and the Birth of Pagan Error." *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 47.1 (USA: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007): 161-177.

²¹ Lewalski, Barbara Kiefer, "" Argument Heroic Deem'd": The Genres of the Satanic Heroic Mode." *Paradise Lost and the Rhetoric of Literary Forms*, (USA: Princeton University Press, 2014). 55-78.

That Glory never shall his wrath or might

*Exhort from me.*²²

Milton's Satan is a creature of rebellious pride.²³ In stating, "Better to rein in Hell, then serve in Heav'n", Milton captures the destructive concept of an individual who refuses to be part of a right order. In his rebellion, Milton has Satan see freedom from Dominion, insisting that:

the mind is its own place, and in it self

*Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.*²⁴

However, this freedom is short-lived in that Satan cannot remain in contentment, and rebellion carries the struggle towards God and providence. Yet, Milton constructs an omnipotent God who creates a world with the temptation that is too great to be refused.²⁵ In this, man is created eternal and happy, but in losing knowledge of good and obtaining that of evil, man is:

Happier, had it suffic'd him to have known

*Good by itself, and Evil not at all.*²⁶

This move from bliss to happiness reflects the later *Utilitarianism* of John Stuart Mill.²⁷ In moving from ignorance to knowledge, we see that "It is better to be a human being dissatisfied

²² Supra. Milton (note 11), p. 2.

²³ Saunders, Jeanne, "The problem of Satan in Milton's Paradise lost" (Richmond: 1966). *Master's Theses*. 926. <https://scholarship.richmond.edu/masters-theses/926>

²⁴ Supra. Milton (note 11), p. 255.

²⁵ Fish, Stanley Eugene, *How Milton Works*. (USA: Harvard University Press, 2001): 10

²⁶ Supra. Milton (note 11), p. 275.

²⁷ Mill, John Stuart, "Utilitarianism (1863)." *Utilitarianism, Liberty, Representative Government* (USA: 1859): 7-9.

than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, are a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question.”²⁸ Through this, we see the birth of something more complete than the original ignorance that innocence would foster. To Milton in *Areopagitica*, this is expressed as a symbiotic relationship where “Good and evil we know in this field of this world grow up together almost inseparably...” (17) It is this transfiguration after the fall that takes Adam’s original virtue as “a fugitive and cloister’d virtue, unexercised and un-breezed, never sallies out and sees her adversary” (18) and transforms it into the basis of true human virtue.²⁹

In what would become a later Republican ideal, Milton paints the fall not as a horrible doom repeated throughout *Paradise Lost* but as the glorious opportunity and foundation that creates man's moral education³⁰ and sets the stage to advance to the perfection of man’s humanity.³¹ Adam in Eden is neither perfect nor virtuous and is far from rational or free.³² Yet, it is only through the challenges and experience of the world and temptation that is held here that Adam may obtain knowledge and rational thought through effort and tribulation.³³ In this, Milton

²⁸ John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism* (1863)

²⁹ Milton, John, *Areopagitica*, (England: Clarendon Press, 1878).

³⁰ See: Stocker, Margarita, "Feminist approaches." *Paradise Lost*. (Palgrave, London, 1988): 50-58. It is important to note that while Milton was discussing humanity, mankind is referenced differently to that of the female and the use of saving “man” is an important terminology in this aspect of critical analysis. In Milton's conceptualisation of male and female, the female was divided from man and thus something separate. *Supra*. Milton (note 11), p. 198, 231, 238, 255 & 265.

³¹ Bennett, Joan S, *Reviving Liberty: Radical Christian Humanism in Milton's Great Poems*, (USA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

³² Duncan, Joseph E, *Milton's Earthly Paradise: A Historical Study of Eden*, Vol. 5. (USA: U of Minnesota Press, 1972).

³³ Ulreich, John C, "A Paradise Within: The Fortunate Fall in *Paradise Lost*." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 32.3 (USA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971): 351-366.

presents a path to man's moral education and the process that could lead to the perfection of our humanity.³⁴

The contrast presented by Blake is one of revolution. Early Christianity was an apocalyptic faith.³⁵ From this, Blake creates a self-alienation in his Satan.³⁶ This Gnostic exploration of religion is done in a truly anti-Gnostic manner through the self-evaluation of God in a form that we later see in the work of Nietzsche.³⁷ This nihilistic vision creates the ultimate nothing in Satan while simultaneously creating a reversal that demonstrates the essential nature of Satan to redemption. While Milton's Satan devolves into lower and lower animals from the highest powers, Blake's epiphany creates Satan as the absolute creator in absolute solitude.³⁸

Blake endeavours to return Christianity to the apocalyptic faith that it was in the beginning.³⁹ This revolutionary vision reverses the reactionary spirit of both Dante and Milton by introducing a Satan, who is indispensable to redemption.⁴⁰ The annihilation of God through his own action simultaneously transfigures judgement into grace.⁴¹ This concept completely transfigures the vision of God as grace incarnate presented by both Dante and Milton. Blake's

³⁴ Ibid. 351.

³⁵ Altizer, Thomas JJ, "The revolutionary vision of William Blake." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 37.1 (USA 2009): 33-38.

³⁶ Altizer, T. J. (2017). *The Absolute Heterodoxy of William Blake*. In *Reading Heresy* (pp. 51-60). (USA: De Gruyter).

³⁷ Horyna, Břetislav, "The history of the dead God: the genesis of the death of God in philosophy and literature before Nietzsche." (Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University English Čeština: 2020): 1-17.

³⁸ Schock, Peter A, "Romantic Satanism." *Myth and the Historical Moment in Blake, Shelley and Byron* (USA: Palgrave 2003): 41-47.

³⁹ Supra. Altizer (Note 36).

⁴⁰ Frye, Northrop, *The double vision: Language and meaning in religion*. (CA: University of Toronto Press, 1991).

⁴¹ Spain, Sara Elizabeth, "Heaven in a Wild Flower: William Blake's Spirituality of Imagination, Mysticism, and Apocalypse (thesis)." (USA: Washington and Lee University, 2020).

revolution is the introduction of an absolute atonement through an absolute death and hence absolute sacrifice.⁴²

Milton was a Renaissance thinker starting to embrace the enlightenment concepts of a Puritan Reformed Church and humanist ideas that would lead to the enlightenment.⁴³ Blake was a romantic who saw the failings in enlightenment concepts and sought to return to a Rousseau ideal of nature.⁴⁴ At the same time, Blake notes that he was deeply influenced through the works of Milton and goes as far as to say that “Milton lov’d me in childhood and shew’d me his face”⁴⁵, he equally rejects the concepts from the Age of Enlightenment that Milton started to build upon returning full-circle to the beginning of an apocalyptic Christianity.⁴⁶

Johnson’s *Life of Milton* provides an alternative view of the poet that often contrasts the romanticised vision of Blake.⁴⁷ In this view, Johnson can be seen to represent the pinnacle of enlightenment teaching that stands for the moralists against the romanticised ideas of nature poetry that would come to replace this era.⁴⁸ Through this, we see the revolution as late rejects the concepts of authors such as Johnson, who stated, “if I have Milton against me, I have Socrates on my side. It was his [Socrates] labour to turn philosophy from the study of nature

⁴² Supra. Altizer (Note 36).

⁴³ Norbrook, David, *Poetry and politics in the English Renaissance*. (UK: Oxford University Press on Demand, 2002).

⁴⁴ Schneider, Joanne, *The age of Romanticism*, (Santa Barbara, USA: Greenwood publishing group, 2007).

⁴⁵ Bentley Jr, G. E, "Flaxman in Italy: A Letter Reflecting the Anni Mirabiles, 1792–93." *The Art Bulletin* 63.4 (USA: Taylor & Francis: 1981): 658-664.

⁴⁶ Sklar, Susanne M, *Blake's' Jerusalem' as Visionary Theatre: Entering the Divine Body*, (England: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁴⁷ Johnson, Samuel, *The Lives of the English Poets: and a Criticism of Their Work*. (England: R. Dodsley, 1779).

⁴⁸ Carroll, Richard Allen, *Johnson's Lives of the poets and currents of English criticism, 1750-1779*, Diss. (USA: University of Michigan, 1997).

to speculations upon life; but the innovators whom I oppose are turning off attention from life to nature” (84).⁴⁹

Equally, Blake remained in two worlds. While he attempted to rebel against enlightened ideas and played with the romanticised concepts of the coming age, he was not the nature poet that Wordsworth would be.⁵⁰ To Blake, nature was only a shadow when a reflection of the eternal world that would be and as a consequence, like Milton, looked beyond our world into another.⁵¹ To Blake, Wordsworth was a pagan that had regressed beyond the limits of nature. The poet stopped short of going down the path of worshipping natural forces as would be instigated in the nineteenth century with those who followed the concept presented earlier by Rousseau.⁵² Both Blake and Milton share simplistic personal views of theology and a love of liberty during revolutionary times.⁵³

However, authors such as Johnson embrace a deeper concept of the Age of Enlightenment, arguing that:

Milton's republicanism was, I am afraid, founded in an envious hatred of greatness, and a sullen desire of independence; inpetulance impatient of controul, and pride disdainful of superiority. He hated monarchs in the state, and prelates in the church; for he hated all whom he was required to obey. It is to be suspected, that his predominant desire was to destroy rather than

⁴⁹ Supra, Johnson (Note 47).

⁵⁰ O'Brien, Karen, *Narratives of Enlightenment: cosmopolitan history from Voltaire to Gibbon*. No. 34. (England: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Beer, John, *William Blake: a literary life*. (USA: Springer, 2005).

⁵³ DiSalvo, Jackie, *War of Titans: Blake's Critique of Milton and the Politics of Religion*. (USA University of Pittsburgh Pre, 1984).

establish, and that he felt not so much the love of liberty as repugnance to authority .

It has been observed, that they who most loudly clamour for liberty do not most liberally grant it. What we know of Milton's character in domestick relations, is, that he was severe and arbitrary. His family consisted of women; and there appears in his books something like a Turkish contempt of females, as subordinate and inferior beings. That his own daughters might not break the ranks, he suffered them to be depressed by a mean and penurious education. He thought woman made only for obedience, and man only for rebellion. (120)⁵⁴

Unfortunately, many aspects of arguments, such as that by Johnson, fall into various logical fallacies. For example, in attacking Milton's character or relationship with family, Johnson is undertaking an ad hominem argument and compounding this with the genetic fallacy to attack the source of the argument and not the content.⁵⁵

Milton's God is omniscient and hence would have beheld and known of the meetings in hell. God knew the desires and plans of Satan and the evil angels.⁵⁶ Further, even though Satan used various disguises to hide himself as a beast as he made his way to earth and Paradise, God knew of Satan's plan to acquaint Adam and Eve with the Tree of Knowledge, which was forbidden.⁵⁷ In sending Raphael to convince Adam that God created curiosities that are too

⁵⁴ Supra, Johnson (Note 47).

⁵⁵ Woods, John Hayden, *The death of argument: Fallacies in agent based reasoning*. Vol. 32. (USA: Springer Science & Business Media, 2004).

⁵⁶ Grossman, Marshall, and Biancamaria Fontana, *Authors to Themselves: Milton and the Revelation of History*. (England: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

⁵⁷ Supra. Milton (note 11), p. 85, 203, 226, 229.

difficult for him to understand, God created the very scenario that led to the fall. Through this, Blake argues that “Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of angels and God”.⁵⁸

However, Blake takes Satan and his subsequent fall to change him from a character that can be despised into one that entreaties “incomparable mildness;... with the most enduring love ... Soft and treated loss to give him Palambrons station.”⁵⁹ Here, Satan is betrayed as a soft and caring, loving family man.⁶⁰ Again, this contrasts deeply with Milton’s sometimes heroic and sometimes villainous devil. Further, some authors have gone as far as to present an argument that Satan is the true hero of the poem.⁶¹ The indomitable character of Satan is one with a tragic flaw who fails ultimately, but yet, it remains God who triumphs and who triumphs ultimately. Equally, other researchers have noted that Adam fulfils the role of hero.⁶² While he is the human figure of the story, it is difficult to see how Adam displays the virtues, resourcefulness, or courage of other epic heroes such as Aeneas.⁶³

At best, Adam fails to express the vivid characteristics and deeply flawed pride of Satan. In this, the generic prototype of humanity can only be said to achieve human characteristics after the fall. In some ways, this may be seen as the heart of why Blake argued that Milton was in fetters. Equally, Shelley saw Satan as superior to God. In the essay, *A Defence of Poetry*, Shelley defended the strikingly depicted form of Satan, arguing that “nothing can exceed the

⁵⁸ Noud, Jennifer, "Blake's and Shelley's Reader Responses to Milton's Satan in Paradise Lost." (USA: FL State University, 2013) http://purl.flvc.org/fdu/fdu_migr_uhm-0234.

⁵⁹ Blake, William, *The Portable William Blake*, (USA: Penguin, 1977). 158.

⁶⁰ Mitchell, Tom, and Reinhold Kramer, "5. My Downfall." *Walk Towards the Gallows*. (CA: University of Toronto Press, 2019). 76-104.

⁶¹ Steadman, John M, "The idea of Satan as the hero of " Paradise Lost". " *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 120.4 (USA: 1976): 253-294.

⁶² Corbett, Martyn, *Byron and Tragedy*. (USA: Springer, 1988).

⁶³ Bond, Christopher. *Spenser, Milton, and the redemption of the epic hero*. (USA: University of Delaware, 2011).

energy and magnificence of the character of Satan as expressed in *Paradise Lost*. It is a mistake to suppose that he could have ever been intended for the popular personification of evil".⁶⁴ But strikingly for Milton's Satan is the betrayal of individuality.⁶⁵

Satan is depicted as a free individual who uses rational thought in place of obeying Scripture, Canon Law, the church, or God. It was the quest for freedom and autonomy that led to the beginning of the war with heaven. Despite the cost, Satan continued to fight for his freedom which led to Shelley's arguments for Satan to be the true hero of *Paradise Lost*.⁶⁶ An argument presented by Shelley is that Prometheus exhibited many of the same qualities as those expressed by Satan.⁶⁷ Yet, Shelley's Prometheus grows and progressively sheds its negative qualities to come to save humankind.⁶⁸ Through this, Satan can be seen as more complex than merely being pure evil and delivering a message that we can reform and recreate ourselves by replacing malevolence would love.⁶⁹

The same sympathy for Satan that Shelley shared is expressed in both Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Milton*.⁷⁰ Through each of these tales, Blake expands on the concepts presented first in *Paradise Lost* and builds both on the concept of redemption and provides an argument that good and evil are not as absolute and different as many have us believe. Further, each is in its own way necessary. It is this character the Johnson would have us see as the

⁶⁴ Shelley, Percy Bysshe, and H. F. B. Brett-Smith, *A defence of poetry*. (England: Haldeman-Julius, 1969): 27.

⁶⁵ Werblowsky, Raphael Jehudah Zwi. *Lucifer and Prometheus: a study of Milton's Satan*. (USA: Routledge, 2013).

⁶⁶ Supra. Steadman (Note 61).

⁶⁷ Supra. Werblowsky (Note 65).

⁶⁸ Shelley, Percy Bysshe. "Prometheus unbound." *Legacy Collection Digital Museum* (1820).

⁶⁹ Supra. Steadman (Note 61).

⁷⁰ Mulvihill, James, "Blake's the Marriage of Heaven and Hell." *The Explicator* 56.3 (USA: Taylor & Francis, 1998): 124-126.

flawed aspect of Milton.⁷¹ But equally, this aspect of rational thought and understanding that Blake presents provides a strong argument that “attraction and repulsion, reason and energy, love and hate, are necessary to human existence”.⁷²

To those who Johnson argues Milton rejected, the churchmen of Stuart England, Blake would argue that Hell, while seeming a place of torment, is in actuality a place where freethinkers may delight and savour in the extensive experience of existence.⁷³ Like Milton, Locke embraced the concept of both religious freedom and early modern liberalism. Binney argues that these natural law thinkers went beyond looking for inward authority to analyse critical thinking into an ultimate “appeal to heaven” (35) in seeking “right reason”.⁷⁴ Equally, the call to a limitless community of God provides limitations even to the monarch that then places a society in republican form as a higher ideal. While in this, the hierarchical structure of society has been argued to be necessary;⁷⁵ it is also formed under the consent of those within it who may leave when the system is not to their moral liking.

However, while Blake has argued the need for both good and evil,⁷⁶ Milton’s Satan loses all that is good and seeks the destruction of that he cannot control:

... *This new Favourite*

⁷¹ Supra, Johnson (Note 47).

⁷² Blake, William. "The voice of the devil." *News of the universe: Poems of twofold consciousness chosen and introduced by Robert Bly* (1793): 40.

⁷³ Gilchrist, Alexander. *Life of William Blake, "pictor Ignotus", with Selections from His Poems and Other Writings*. Vol. 1. (USA: Macmillan, 1863).

⁷⁴ Milton, Locke and the early modern framework of cosmopolitan right Binney

⁷⁵ Peters, B. Guy, and Jon Pierre, "Multi-level governance: a Faustian bargain?." *Multi-level governance* (2004): 75-89.

⁷⁶ Swinburne, Algernon Charles. *William Blake: a critical essay*. John Camden Hotten, 1868.

Of heav'n, this Man of Clay, son of despite,

Whom us the more despite his maker rais'd

*From dust: spite them with spite is best repaid.*⁷⁷

Both John Milton and John Locke seek to promote liberty.⁷⁸ However, there are contradictions in each author's work. For example, while Milton promotes concepts of freedom and presents a character that Blake seizes the hero through Satan, the top-down hierarchical system of control in heaven and the universe could also be seen to support the sovereignty of state and church.⁷⁹ However, Blake's imagining Satan as the hero even in Milton's work, and his argument that Milton was in fetters opens his own opportunity to remove the shackles that he saw binding the prior work.⁸⁰

Milton can thus be seen to stride two worlds. In reaching forward, he embraces an early modern Republican system of liberal ideas and freedom couched in concepts of natural law and civil rights. However, Milton simultaneously remains firmly positioned within a premodern Western perspective⁸¹ that stresses hierarchy under the moral compass of natural law in a form reminiscent of St Augustine's *City of God*.⁸² While Blake clearly saw this, he also strode two

⁷⁷ Supra. Milton (note 11), p. 210.

⁷⁸ Quinones, Ricardo J, "8. English Thought: John Milton, John Locke, and John Stuart Mill." *North/South*. (CA: University of Toronto Press, 2018): 92-112.

⁷⁹ James, John Patrick, *Made Future: The Political Ecology of William Blake's Milton*. (USA: Georgetown University, 2017).

⁸⁰ Landes, Richard, "Heaven on Earth." *The Varieties of the Millennial Experience*. (New York, 2011).

⁸¹ Goldie, Mark, and Robert Wokler, eds, *The Cambridge history of eighteenth-century political thought*. Vol. 1. (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

⁸² Augustine, Saint. *The City of God, Books VIII–XVI*. Vol. 14. (CUA Press, 2008).

worlds embracing many of the earlier concepts of apocalyptic Christianity while simultaneously and tenuously testing the waters of romanticism and nature while abandoning the more pagan concepts that others had embraced.⁸³

Milton provides an argument for a Christian community that is based on critical reason and knowledge.⁸⁴ The later ideas of John Locke in both a *Letter Concerning Toleration* and *Two Treatises on Government* (1689) express an early modern liberal framework of a Commonwealth based on reason.⁸⁵ Each of these authors emphasises the need for individual self-governance and the primacy of the individual in making decisions, whether in the failed rebellion of Satan or the seduction of Eve and temptation into eating the apple. Still, equally, Milton has Eve as a lone woman remained vulnerable without man:

... her rash hand in evil hour

Forth reaching to the Fruit, she pluck'd, she eat:

Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat

Sighing through all her works gave signs of woe,

*That all was lost...*⁸⁶

⁸³ Curran, Stuart, *Poetic form and British romanticism*. (England, Oxford University Press on Demand, 1986).

⁸⁴ Supra. Bennett (Note 31).

⁸⁵ Locke, John, *Two treatises of government and a letter concerning toleration*. (USA: Yale University Press, 2008).

⁸⁶ Supra. Milton (note 11), p. 227.

Milton has Eve sit “getting Death” and gratified in the promise of knowledge and wisdom that would make her beyond Adam. However, on eating, Eve then reflects on what she has done:

... But what if God have seen

And Death ensue? Then I shall be no more,

And Adam wedded to another Eve,

Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct:

A death to think. Confirm'd then I resolve,

Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:

So dear I love him, that with him all deaths

I could endure, without him live no life.⁸⁷

Following this and in response to Eve’s entreaty, Adam feels so bound that he will share Eve’s fate and unity as “one flesh”.⁸⁸ But, while having lost primitive righteousness, the enjoyment of lust brings about the consequences of original sin. Thus, man is exiled from perfection but equally gains the offer of an eventual redemption from the son who is Eve’s seed and second Adam.⁸⁹ Yet, equally, the only way that Christ is a son could come to exist and through this, the only way that creates the ultimate revolution and grandfather paradox.⁹⁰ Milton introduces

⁸⁷ Supra. Milton (note 11), p. 229.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Pecheux, Mary Christopher, "The Concept of the Second Eve in Paradise Lost." *PMLA* 75.4-Part1 (England: Cambridge University Press, 1960): 359-366.

⁹⁰ Frank, Joseph. *Dostoevsky*. (USA: Princeton University Press, 2009).

an omniscient God who already knows that the path to creating his son involves the successful temptation of his creation.

Through this, Milton paves the way for Blake's Satan as redeemer.⁹¹ In the philosophical work detailing time by Nahin (338),⁹² God is argued to be constrained in *Paradise Lost* unable to act, or rather, if he does decide to act, it can only be to "do right".⁹³ However, in the form of the grandfather paradox, we see Milton's Satan rebelling against God for choosing the son who can only be born and exist through the action of the rebellion that later occurred.⁹⁴ Equally, in Blake's vision, the ultimate death is also the ultimate rebirth. In each of these, a cyclic system exists that requires the turning of Fortuna in full revolutions that repeat.⁹⁵

In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Blake presents angels as holier than thou apoplectic figures that lead to Satan.⁹⁶ But, equally, Blake portrays the fall as the split from unity through an eastern Mystic form, humanity rule returned to unity as Albion the eternal man becomes once again whole.⁹⁷ However, this could equally be argued to be an eternal man is an extension of the words of St Paul:

⁹¹ Johnson, Mary Lynn, "Recent reconstructions of Blake's Milton and Milton: A poem." *Nineteenth Century Contexts* 2.1 (USA: Taylor & Francis, 1976): 1-10.

⁹² Nahin P.J. (2017) Philosophers, Physicists, and the Time Travel Paradoxes. In: *Time Machine Tales. Science and Fiction*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-48864-6_4

⁹³ Supra. Milton (note 11), p. 215.

⁹⁴ Herrick, Andrea Margaret, *The nature of the tenfold God in William Blake's The book of Urizen: a thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in English at Massey University*, (NZ: Diss. Massey University, 1994).

⁹⁵ Martin, Catherine Gimelli. *The Ruins of Allegory: Paradise Lost and the Metamorphosis of Epic Convention*. (USA: Duke University Press, 1998).; Baker, Keith Michael, and Dan Edelstein, eds, *Scripting Revolution: A Historical Approach to the Comparative Study of Revolutions*, (USA: Stanford University Press, 2015).

⁹⁶ Storm, Natasja. *'That Old Serpent, Called the Devil': Exploring the Characterisation of the Devil in Romantic Literature*. MS thesis. 2010.

⁹⁷ Crouch, Jeffrey Martin, *Blake's "Milton": Living form regained*, DISS, (USA: The University of Texas at Arlington, 1990).

For the body does not consist of one member but of many.

If the foot should say, 'because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' that it would not make it any less a part of the body... If the hole were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were an ear, where would be the sense of smell?⁹⁸

Both Milton and later Blake conclude with a final union.⁹⁹ In *Paradise Regained*, Milton eventually has humanity rejoin in the heavens.¹⁰⁰ Blake alternatively concludes *Milton* with the final union of living and dead as Albion is reformed to the state of unity.¹⁰¹ Through this, Milton returns Christianity first to a state of early Pauline communities.¹⁰² Later, Blake integrates both Gnostic and anti-Gnostic concepts into an Eastern psychological structure of rebirth.¹⁰³ In each of these occurrences, the paradox of the cyclic wheel in constant revolution repeating the same structure to the same end can be seen. In each author's works, the limits and constraints of their times can be seen in the writing. From this, Blake argued that Milton remained in fetters; however, the self-imposed limits Milton restrained himself using were not the fetters of society but the fetters of self-will. Equally, Blake may be seen to handcuff himself through the implementation of limits but stopped short of the concepts followed by other Romantics.

⁹⁸ I Corinthians, 12:14 - 17.

⁹⁹ Hinkel, Howard H, "From Energy and Desire to Eternity: Blake's" Visions of the Daughters of Albion"." *Papers on Language and Literature* 15.3 (1979): 278.

¹⁰⁰ Milton, John, *Paradise Regained, Samson Agonistes, and the Complete Shorter Poems*, (USA: Modern Library, 2012).

¹⁰¹ Supra. DiSalvo (note 53).

¹⁰² Shoulson, Jeffrey, *Milton and the Rabbis*, (USA: Columbia University Press, 2001).

¹⁰³ Smith, Andrew Phillip, *A dictionary of Gnosticism*, (USA: Quest Books, 2014).

*To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the country to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his Providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to convert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which oftentimes may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost councils from their aim.¹⁰⁴*

In this, Satan sets himself up as the affected opponent to God and the one real adversary. However, as Blake demonstrates, in this, it can also be argued that Satan is doing good and the Republic of Satan's will becomes Blake's reborn body of what was always destined to be.

¹⁰⁴ Supra. Milton (note 11), p. 4.

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