

MILTON'S MONISTIC FAITH

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Tradition and Translation

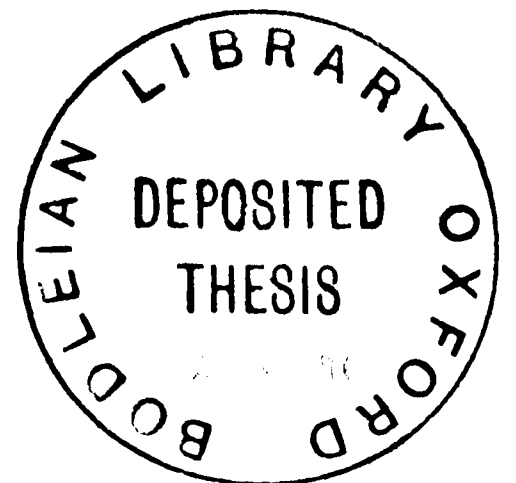
in the Minor Poetry

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ABSTRACT

Faith for Milton is primarily a matter of man's access to God. Such access entails God's involvement in mankind. Faith is that which guarantees that God is accessible to men and also that God actively participates in the lives of his people. Milton's work exhibits a preoccupation with such a concept of faith, and wavers through the course of his life between dualist and monist formulations. Monistic faith suggests that God is directly accessible to man, while dualistic faith means that God may only be accessible in a mediated way.

In the course of his career, Milton proceeded from an early dualistic faith to the declared monism of De Doctrina Christiana. This thesis examines the monistic impulse within Milton's poetry, focusing on the poems written during his mid-career (c. 1637-1653) when his outlook on faith turned. The thesis finds that although Milton expresses his monism in increasingly clear terms, he is never quite able to eliminate dualistic implications or tendencies from his faith.

The thesis focuses on two strategies which Milton employs in his attempts to define a monistic world view and a monistic faith, namely, tradition and translation. These strategies represent points of confrontation between dualism and monism. They both assert monistic continuity in the face of dualist disjunction. Tradition attempts to overcome the disjunction perceptible between two remote events in time. It incorporates both the recovery of lost history as well as geographical and linguistic translation. Translation (taken as separate from tradition) attempts to overcome the disjunction between languages. It manages, however unsuccessfully, to carry meaning over from a source text to a target text while simultaneously altering every single word in the source text.

Both these strategies thus provide textual and linguistic means for examining Milton's faith or his sense of divine access. This thesis examines Milton's deployment of tradition by means of a close consideration of Lycidas as well as several other early poems. It examines his 1648 and 1653 psalm translations and the unique manner in which they reveal Milton's understanding of faith. The thesis concludes that Milton's monistic faith never quite breaks free of the dualist tendencies against which it struggles.

Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world: Both low and high, rich and poor, together. My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.

Psalm 49:1-4

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PART ONE

DUALISM, MONISM AND FAITH

CHAPTER I

"The Letter Killeth but the Spirit Giveth Life:" Milton and the Problem of Faith

The subject of this thesis is Milton's monistic faith. Milton grew up in an environment which accepted theological dualism in one form or another as a given, and it is only during his middle to late career that his monism becomes evident. The dualistic belief that a human being is made up of two inseparable and yet entirely different entities, an immortal incorporeal soul and a mortal body, had been a corner-stone of Christian thought ever since the early Councils of Nicea, Ephesus and Chalcedon decreed the various early forms of monism to be heretical.¹ Whether one tended towards the Platonic, the Aristotelian or the Pauline form,² dualism dominated Christian thought throughout the middle ages. The seventeenth century saw an increased interest in monism with illustrious names such as Hobbes and Descartes engaging it head-on.³ When he wrote De Doctrina Christiana Milton declared his monism, but excused himself from the consequent charge of heresy by insisting that his monism had nothing to do with his faith. His monistic heresies, he insisted, were not heresies at all, being matters of opinion and

¹The Arian, Nestorian and Monophysite heresies dealt with respectively at these ecumenical councils are all strongly monistic.

²These forms of dualism have had various expressions as they have been adopted by different theologians and philosophers throughout history. So by Platonic dualism, I refer primarily to the neoplatonic view that souls descended from the realm of the immutable forms to be unhappily trapped in matter. By Aristotelian dualism, I am referring to the dualism of the formal cause and the material cause. By Pauline dualism, I refer to the belief that dead matter is animated by a vital soul. It may be seen that there is a continuum of increasing subtlety from Platonic, through Aristotelian to Pauline dualism. The distance separating the soul from the material body in each version becomes smaller and smaller, but the two remain distinctly discontinuous.

³While Descartes is usually associated with the dualism of extensive matter and intensive mind, much of what he had to say about extension resonates very well with monistic arguments, such as that of Hobbes.

not of faith. The fact, however, that the De Doctrina Christiana lay unpublished and hidden in a government archive for a hundred and fifty years is clear evidence that he did not have much faith in his own apology and that others certainly would not have tolerated it. Given that Milton attempted to hold his faith and his monism apart, this thesis asks whether his monism did, after all, affect his faith, and if so, it considers what consequences his monistic beliefs may have had upon the constitution of his faith.

In his early career, Milton held an unequivocally dualistic concept of faith. An example of his dualism may be seen in his early poem, "At a Vacation Exercise," in which he describes language and the use to which he aspires to put it.

I have some naked thoughts that rove about
 And loudly knock to have their passage out;
 And weary of their place do only stay
 Till thou hast decked them in thy best array;
 That so they may without suspect or fears
 Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears;
 Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,
 Thy service in some graver subject use,
 Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,
 Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound:
 Such where the deep transported mind may soar
 Above the wheeling poles, and at heaven's door
 Look in (ll.23-35).

The dualism implicit in Milton's "deep transported mind" is underpinned, in this passage, by an overtly dualistic conception of language itself. As we shall see, the constitution of faith is contingent, to a large extent, upon the way in which one understands language to operate.⁴ Even later on, in the middle of his career, Milton describes his sense of faith in strongly dualistic terms. In Of Reformation, Milton seems as yet unaffected by the monism which was to emerge only a couple of years later in his divorce tracts of 1643-4.

⁴This will be discussed in greater detail in chapter III.

He begins his first pamphlet (in 1641) by bewailing the state of unreformed religion which he believes is not spiritual enough.

Sad it is to thinke how that Doctrine of the Gospel, ... Faith needing not the weak, and fallible office of the Senses, to be either the Ushers or Interpreters of heavenly Mysteries, save where our Lord himselfe in his Sacraments ordain'd; that such a Doctrine should, through the grossnesse, and blindnesse, of her Professors, and the fraud of deceivable traditions, drag so downwards, as to ... stumble forward ... into the new-vomited Paganisme of sensuall Idolatry, attributing purity, or impurity, to things indifferent, that they might bring the inward acts of the Spirit to the outward, and customary ey-Service of the body, as if they could make God earthly, and fleshly, because they could not make themselves heavenly, and Spirituall: they began to draw downe all the Divine intercourses, betwixt God, and the Soule, ... till the Soule by this means of over-bodying her selfe, ... shifted off from her selfe, the labour of high soaring any more, forgot her heavenly flight, and left the dull and droying carcas to plod on in the old rode and drudging Trade of outward conformity.⁵

When Milton speaks of the soul, under unreformed religion, having "overbodied herself" and become overly earthly, he seems to be specifically attacking a kind of monism which he himself could be accused of. The impressive strength of the invective here seems perhaps to protest a little too much. Indeed, as this thesis will proceed to demonstrate, Milton's monism may have affected his faith from as early as 1637, but, even so, never seems to have broken entirely free of dualistic constraints and problems. The real problem that Milton faced as he contemplated an increasingly monistic notion of faith as his career progressed, was the very difficult problem of the source of faith. The more he relied on scripture as this source, and the more literal his notion of scriptural interpretation became, the more were the problems his monism needed to solve.

Milton's monism has received a good deal of recent critical attention. In his

⁵The Complete Prose Works of John Milton, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), vol.I, pp.519-22.

unpublished doctoral dissertation, Jeffrey Padgett sets out to demonstrate that Milton's four major heresies (his antitrinitarianism, creatio ex deo, mortalism and monism) form a logical system developed in accordance with his monistic conception of the cosmos.⁶

While Padgett convincingly demonstrates the monistic basis of the Miltonic heresies, he fails to comment upon the consistency of Milton's theological beliefs in general. Padgett makes no attempt to explain whether the heresies are essential to Milton's thought or to gauge the depth of their influence upon the rest of his work. Whether Milton's poetry is significantly monistic is one of the questions which this thesis addresses.

The vocal centrality of Milton's monism in his theological treatise has attracted other more prominent critics. Stephen M. Fallon and Jason P. Rosenblatt have both published recently on this question. Each has characterized Milton's monism in a different way by placing it within two very different seventeenth-century traditions, and by interpreting (and re-interpreting) his poetry according to the resulting illumination that such placing provides.

In his book, Milton among the Philosophers,⁷ Stephen Fallon characterizes Milton's particular kind of monism as an "animist monism." He places Milton's "animist monism" firmly within the contemporary philosophical tradition of the seventeenth century, unlike earlier critics who had argued that Milton's heretical monism had been

⁶Jeffery Lynn Padgett, "The Monistic Continuity of the Miltonic Heresy," Doctoral Dissertation, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, 1987. It must be noted that "monism" is used by Padgett, and in this thesis, in two senses. It refers both to the specific Miltonic heresy of the consubstantiality of body and soul, and, more generally, to all of the Miltonic heresies which are based upon a monistic cosmology.

⁷Stephen M. Fallon, Milton among the Philosophers: Poetry and Materialism in Seventeenth-Century England, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

inspired by his ancient and patristic readings.⁸ His point is thus that Milton's formulation of monism represents a particular philosophical response to the major challenges of the seventeenth-century philosophical debate. Fallon's characterization of Milton's monism emerges out of the seventeenth-century mechanist debate. Mechanism threatened such beliefs as the freedom of the will and the immortality of the soul by insisting exclusively upon causal necessity and the sole existence of matter. In a universe governed by necessity there could be no free choice, and where matter only exists there can be no immortal soul. Fallon includes within the contemporary seventeenth-century philosophical tradition such names as Descartes, Hobbes, the Cambridge Platonists (of whom Henry More and Ralph Cudworth are representative), William Harvey and Anne Conway.⁹

⁸For example, the following critics have made various arguments for different ancient or patristic influences on Milton's conception of his monism. Denis Saurat, Milton: Man and Thinker (New York: Dial Press, 1925), traces Milton's monism to the Zohar and to the cabbalistic theories of Robert Fludd; William Hunter, in "Milton's Materialistic Life Principle," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 45 (1946), 68-76, links Milton's monism with Gregory of Nyssa; A.S.P. Woodhouse, "Notes on Milton's View of the Creation: The Initial Phases," Philological Quarterly, 28 (1949), 211-36, links Milton with Eusebius, the Stoics and Fludd; Harry F. Robbins, If This Be Heresy: A Study of Milton and Origen, Illinois Studies in Language and Literature no. 51 (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1963), links Milton to Origen; J.H. Adamson, Bright Essence: Studies in Milton's Theology (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971), pp.81-102, links Milton to the ex Deo tradition including: Plotinus, Gregory of Nyssa, Pseudo-Dionysius, Scotus Erigena, Meister Eckhart, Nicholas of Cusa and Jacob Boehme; John Peter Rumrich, Matter of Glory: A New Preface to "Paradise Lost" (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1987), pp.147-66, links Milton to Duns Scotus.

⁹Much of the writing of this tradition was published during Milton's maturity. Descartes' Discourse on Method was published in 1637, the year in which Milton wrote Lycidas; Hobbes published his Leviathan in 1651; Henry More published his The Immortality of the Soul in 1659; William Harvey published his two Anatomical Disquisitions on the circulation of the blood addressed to John Riolan in 1649 and Anne Conway's The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy was published in 1690 (11 years after her death). Fallon points out that while there is no way of knowing whether Milton had read these books (Conway's, clearly, in particular), the arguments set down by these thinkers had in fact inhabited informal philosophical discourse long enough for Milton to be well aware of them even before many of them had published. Marjorie Nicolson, in "The Spirit World of Milton and More," Studies in Philology, 22 (1925), 433-52, in "Milton and Hobbes," Studies in Philology, 23 (1926), 405-33, and in "Milton and the Conjectura Cabbalistica," Philological Quarterly, 6 (1927), 1-18, too, ties Milton's monism to the contemporary philosophical debate, but unlike Fallon, Nicolson associates Milton with Henry More and

Viewed from the perspective of the middle of the seventeenth century, Milton's views on the soul's relation to the body broke ranks with the [mainstream orthodox] defense against the materialist Hobbes, who denied free will and the natural immortality of the soul. Descartes, Cudworth and More viewed the existence of a separable, incorporeal soul as an essential pillar of the free-will defense and of the metaphysical warrant of immortality. Milton, on the other hand, was willing to drop natural immortality and was confident that freedom could be defended by other metaphysical means.¹⁰

Fallon argues that Milton's "animist monism" is precisely the reason why he is prepared to drop natural immortality. Fallon describes Milton's monism as "animist" because matter for Milton is alive. This is Milton's main departure from Hobbes for whom matter remains dead. For Milton, matter is continuous with the living God himself. For this reason, Milton's "animist monism" is almost a pantheism. However, Milton avoids pantheism by distinguishing God from matter. The two, Milton insists, are not identical. It would seem that dualism threatens to encroach upon Milton's monism at this point. Despite this problem (which will be discussed at greater length later in this chapter), the philosophical advantage in conceiving of the natural condition of matter as already and always vital is that Milton avoids the resulting deadness which results from dropping the soul as an immortal life principle.

Jason P. Rosenblatt, in his recent book, Torah and Law in Paradise Lost,¹¹ describes Milton's monism in terms of his textual hebraism. Rosenblatt thus casts Milton's monism into a purely theological debate (as opposed to Fallon's mainly philosophical one) which focuses mainly on the relationship between the Old Testament

contrasts his monism with that of Hobbes.

¹⁰Fallon, Milton among the Philosophers, pp.98-9.

¹¹Jason P. Rosenblatt, Torah and Law in Paradise Lost (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1994).

and the New. Rosenblatt places Milton firmly within a burgeoning hebraic tradition whose primary seventeenth-century exponent was John Selden (who Rosenblatt refers to as "Milton's chief rabbi").¹² For Rosenblatt, Milton's monism becomes Milton's "hebraic monism," a term which he uses primarily to expunge Pauline dualism from what he considers to be Milton's most forceful and passionate work (namely, the 1643-5 prose tracts and the middle books of Paradise Lost). In his chapter entitled "Milton's Hebraic Monism," Rosenblatt states the thrust of his argument:

Milton's Hebraic monistic texts - particularly the prose tracts of 1643-5 and the middle books of Paradise Lost - are entirely incompatible with the Pauline epistles, which are among the most dualistic of Western texts. The monistic prose texts employ a specific comparatist historical-philological exegesis to demonstrate the vitally fluid unity of natural law, the Mosaic law, and a gospel from which Paul's devaluation of the law has been excised.¹³

Milton's "hebraic monism" is thus a direct result of Milton's "comparatist historical-philological" exegetical method which he took directly from the scholarship of John Selden. For Rosenblatt, Milton's monism is an expression of his desire to valorize the Hebrew scripture,¹⁴ a desire which resists the New Testament's tendency towards supersession. Rosenblatt concentrates on a particularly textual manifestation of Milton's monism, namely that natural law, Mosaic law and the Gospel are united in a way which

¹²Rosenblatt's book reworks and expands much of what he had already said in his article, "Milton's Chief Rabbi," Milton Studies, 24 (1988), 43-71.

¹³Rosenblatt, Torah and Law in Paradise Lost, p.73.

¹⁴George N. Conklin, in his book, Biblical Criticism and Heresy in Milton (New York: King's Crown Press, 1949), argues that Milton's heretical beliefs in monism and mortalism are entirely dependent upon his interpretation of the Hebrew bible and in particular his translation of the two key terms בָּרָא (bara') in Gen i.1 and נֶפֶשׁ (nephesh) in Gen ii.7. Harold Fisch, in his chapter on "Milton and his Heresies" in Jerusalem and Albion (London: Routledge, 1964), demonstrates that Milton's heresies emerge out of the seventeenth-century hebraic tradition. Thus Rosenblatt's argument is not entirely innovative. What is new, however, is the precision with which he describes the seventeenth-century hebraic tradition and his elucidation of the relationship between John Selden and Milton.

is diametrically opposed to the Pauline (or dualist) relationship of supersession.

Paul's Epistles as well as Hebrews, the principle sources of the postlapsarian books, can be read only with reference to the Old Testament in a hermeneutics of supersession, but Genesis 1-2, the source of Milton's paradise, and, not coincidentally, of his most forceful monistic arguments on the indivisibility of soul and body, can be understood without reference to the dualistic and hierarchical oppositions that constitute Pauline interpretation (p.79).

Although Rosenblatt's argument for Milton's hebraic monism is not at all tentative, he is the first to admit that such "hebraic monism" does not pervade all of Milton's thought. Indeed, Rosenblatt draws our attention to the fact that within the very text where he declares his monism, the De Doctrina Christiana, and in which we expect to observe it at its most consistent, Milton invokes Pauline dualism. Milton bases his chapter "Of the Gospel, and Christian Liberty,"¹⁵ upon Pauline duality. What emerges from Rosenblatt's fascinating study is that Milton was finally unable to reconcile the Law with the New Testament's hostility for it, even though this was precisely the task he set himself in the 1643-5 prose tracts.

Rosenblatt's argument points us towards a contradiction in Milton's literal view of scripture, as will be come more apparent later on in this chapter. His argument leads us to question how Milton read scripture and consequently how he derived his faith from it. For if Milton took scripture as literally and authoritatively as he claims in De Doctrina Christiana, then how indeed does he cope with a scripture so openly hostile to itself as Rosenblatt indicates - how indeed does Milton's hebraism integrate with his sense of

¹⁵Chapter 27. References to the De Doctrina Christiana are taken from The Complete Prose Works of John Milton, trans. John Carey (Hew Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), throughout.

Christian liberty? These questions lie at the heart of the problem of understanding Milton's monistic faith. It is the view of this thesis that Milton became increasingly monistic while struggling against a pervasive dualism throughout his lifetime in a similar but reverse way to St. Augustine who struggled to achieve his dualistic faith in the face of the Manichean materialism which haunted him over a thousand years before.

Already as a student at Cambridge, at least thirty years before completing the De Doctrina Christiana, Milton takes a playfully materialist view while scoffing at Platonic dualism. In his De Idea Platonica quemadmodum Aristoteles intellexit, Milton asks the Muses to tell him

who was that first being in whose image skilful Nature has modelled the human race: the first, eternal, incorrupt, single yet universal being, as old as the heavens, the pattern used by God?¹⁶

Stephen Fallon argues that Milton's youth may be characterized by a Platonic dualism which he demonstrates by pointing his readers to numerous examples in the early poetry which all scorn the flesh.¹⁷ It is the depth of the scorn, which Fallon perceives in the early poetry, that convinces him of Milton's Platonic hankering after a separate soul. However, in De Idea Platonica,¹⁸ it is the Idea which is scorned. After observing that no one (not even mythical characters, who should know) is able to locate or even describe the form or pattern used by God, Milton accuses Plato (the one "responsible for introducing these monsters into philosophical discussions") of being the "greatest

¹⁶I have cited John Carey's translation taken from John Carey (ed.), Milton: Complete Shorter Poems (London: Longman, 1971), p.68.

¹⁷See Stephen Fallon, Milton among the Philosophers, pp.79-82.

¹⁸Although there is some controversy over the dating of this poem, it is definitely an early work. Carey suggests that the poem was composed in 1628, Parker suggests 1632.

fictional writer" of all the poets expelled from his Republic. For the Aristotelian poet, the Platonic Form is absurd. However, the ironic tone of this short poem complicates the conflict between the literal-minded monistic attitude of the poet and the Platonic dualism which the poet ridicules. The irony renders it difficult to place Milton himself with respect to the two views expressed in the poem, by making it difficult to decide whether the mockery is directed at the absurdity of the Platonic Idea or at the confining monism of the mocking poet. John Carey points out that this poem was most probably composed for use in a highly contrived philosophical disputation at the Cambridge Commencement, and it is thus impossible to know anything of Milton's personal feeling on the matter debated. However, that the debate addresses the conflict between monism and dualism here is significant. Much later in Milton's life he declares himself unambiguously to be a monist in the careful decidedly unironic prose of De Doctrina Christiana. And yet even there his formulation is not free from the conflict which he so playfully expresses in the De Idea Platonica. It is as if the conflict between the two arises of necessity.

We must begin with Milton's understanding of faith as expressed in his theological treatise. In Book I, Chapter 20 of De Doctrina Christiana, Milton declares what he understands faith to be. For him it is

the firm persuasion implanted in us by the gift of God, by virtue of which we believe, on the authority of God's promise, that all those things which God has promised us in Christ are ours, and especially the grace of eternal life.¹⁹

In explaining this formulation Milton denies that Christ is the true object of faith. He declares, "the ultimate object of faith is not Christ, the Mediator, but God the Father."

¹⁹De Doctrina Christiana, p.471.

This is why, as Milton explains, there are lots of Jews and Gentiles who are saved even though they believe in God alone and know nothing of Christ's revelation. This is a radical departure from Christian orthodoxy and explains Milton's relative philosemitism. Hobbes, for example, is totally clear about the inadmissibility of Milton's conception of faith as distinct from Christ.

The (Unum Necessarium) Onely Article of Faith, which the Scripture maketh simply Necessary to Salvation, is this, that Jesus is the Christ.²⁰

Hobbes emphasizes that faith without Christ can bring salvation to no one. This is, of course, the view of reformed orthodoxy. Calvin, who may be taken as a standard of such orthodoxy, identifies Christian faith with faith in Christ:

we are justified by faith, inasmuch as by it we apprehend Jesus Christ the Mediator given us by the Father.²¹

Milton focuses his conception of faith directly on God and even by-passes the Son. It is for this reason that Milton says, towards the end of his brief chapter, that "faith is, as it were, a receiving of God and an approach to God." Faith is not a way of approaching Christ; rather, faith is itself a mediation between man and God the Father - God bestows the gift of faith, and man approaches Him by means of this miraculous gift.

Characteristically, Milton demotes Christ in relation to God the Father. He demotes Christ, here, by removing the necessity of his active role from the working of faith. Surprisingly, Christ the Mediator (as Milton terms him) plays no role in the relationship between man and God as it is mediated by faith. It is this concept of faith

²⁰Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, ed. Richard Tuck, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991), p.407.

²¹John Calvin, "Brief Confession of Faith," in On the Doctrine and Worship of the Church, trans. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1849), rpt. 1958, pp.132-3.

as itself a mediator which is interesting in the Miltonic context. Faith, for Milton, is in a way, parallel to Christ because both Christ and faith mediate between God and man. Faith and Christ, however, mediate in different ways. In Book I Chapter 15 of De Doctrina Christiana, Milton defines the mediatorial office of Christ.

His mediatorial office, for which he was chosen by God the Father, is the office by virtue of which he willingly performed, and still performs all those things through which peace with God and eternal salvation for the human race are attained.²²

Christ's mediation is the action which, as it were, purchases salvation for humanity regardless of whether one is actually aware of this or not. Faith, however, divorced from the action of Christ, is parallel to and in some respects analogous with Christ. The precise relationship between the kinds of mediation represented by faith and by Christ, for Milton, may be demonstrated in an indirect manner, by considering the relationship between faith and hope. Milton defines hope as follows.

Hope has its origin in faith: by hope I mean a completely confident expectation of those future things which, through faith, are already ours in Christ ... Hope differs from faith as effect from cause. It differs also in its object, for the object of faith is the promise; the object of hope, the things promised.²³

The cause and effect relationship between faith and hope bears some similarity to the relationship between faith and Christ. Christ is the means whereby those future things which we hope for are guaranteed to us now. Faith is the means whereby we know that those future things which we hope for are guaranteed to us now. Both Christ and faith can be considered to be causes of hope. Christ is the cause of hope in a very physical or objective sense. It is because of the physical reality and action of Christ that there is

²²De Doctrina Christiana p.430.

²³De Doctrina Christiana, p.476.

cause for hope. Faith, on the other hand, is a cause for hope in a mental or subjective sense. It is because of a subjective mental act that faith causes hope. Thus Milton connects the mediation of faith with knowing God the Father and not the Son. He says,

faith springs from a true knowledge of God, though this may at first be imperfect. Then faith progresses towards good from this beginning. It may be deduced from this that the seat of faith is not really the intellect but the will (DDC, 476).

The true knowledge of God cannot be intellectual; for Milton it can only be an act of the will, an act of choice.

What is interesting about Milton's separation of Christ and faith is that a dualist distinction between mind and matter seems to be taking place. And what is surprising is that Christ seems to occupy the place of matter in the dual structure. God can be approached in two different ways, according to Milton, or so it seems from the above argument. God can be approached mentally, in the absence of Christ, by Christian and Gentile alike, by means of an act of will, of true knowledge, which begins and ends with God the Father himself. On the other hand, God may be approached in a physical sense by means of the salvation He offers through the mediation of Christ. The salvation offered by Christ's mediation is meant in the most literal and physical of terms. It is Christ's physical incarnation and redeeming sacrifice which begins his mediation and it is his judgement of the righteous and the wicked which ends it. After Christ's physical mediation, men and God will be physically united in Paradise without the need for mediation in eternity.²⁴ This salvation, being of an essentially physical nature, occurs in the absence of faith because faith is not required for its operation. It is provided by the

²⁴Milton's conception of Christ's mediation as beginning with his first coming and terminating with his second coming is described in the De Doctrina Christiana in the final chapter of Book 1, pp 624-6.

mediation of Christ, through his incarnation and his redeeming sacrifice, whether one has faith or not. (Of course, whether one gets to enjoy the salvation thus purchased is definitely a matter connected with one's faith in God the Father. Exactly how it is connected with faith may vary with doctrine). The mediation of Christ, for Milton is thus a bodily mediation, of faith, a mental one. Thus, if we are to understand Milton's monistic faith, it will have to be in terms of this mental access to God.

A problem which arises from considering faith as a mental mediation, as a mental appreciation of and approach toward God, is the question of how this mental condition is attained. It is most certainly not something which we are all born with, because there are all too many who lack it. It is puzzling indeed to consider exactly how one can enter into the state of having faith. Milton gives us a clue when he says that faith is a matter of the will (of choice) and not of the intellect. It is certainly helpful to consider faith in terms of will rather than of intellect because the intellect balks, quite naturally, at the miraculous enigma of faith. How, indeed, are we intellectually to cope with the promise of salvation and resurrection and judgement and of unity with God, when these things occupy a realm beyond experience and beyond even imagination?

Milton makes it quite clear that God himself is the origin of faith. Faith, he has said, is a God given gift. As he says in his introductory Epistle to De Doctrina Christiana,

I decided not to depend upon the belief or judgement of others in religious questions for this reason: God has revealed the way of eternal salvation only to the individual faith of each man, and demands of us that any man who wishes to be saved should work out his beliefs for himself (118).

If God has revealed the way of eternal salvation to the individual faith of every man, then

why should it be necessary at all to work out one's beliefs for oneself? The passive role of receiving faith and the active one of developing one's own beliefs are markedly contrasted in this passage. In fact Milton goes on to emphasize the diligence and exertion that he puts into precisely this project of working out his own beliefs.

So I made up my mind to puzzle out a religious creed for myself by my own exertions, and to acquaint myself with it thoroughly. In this the only authority I accepted was God's self-revelation, and accordingly I read and pondered the Holy Scriptures themselves with all possible diligence, never sparing myself in any way.²⁵

Faith is certainly not as easily obtained as a freely given gift from God. As is evidenced by Milton's own commitment to the task, it is attained by means of intense individual effort. The object of this effort is God's self-revelation in Scripture. The intellectual effort is necessary because, although God's gift is freely given, it is not transparently available to every individual. Rather, it is mediated through Scripture. The mental act of faith, which is an act of the will, is thus based upon an intellectual grappling with a written text. Milton expresses the clash between the active and passive views of faith in his sonnet, "When I consider how my light is spent." The first half of the sonnet describes Milton's sense of how it is up to man freely and spontaneously to develop his faith. He presents this on the model of the parable of the talents, "And that one talent which is death to hide, / Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent / To serve therewith my maker." The second half of the sonnet presents a strongly Calvinistic passivity of the will, "who best / Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best." Instead of resolving these two approaches to faith the sonnet, finally, only lays them side by side,

Thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait.

²⁵De Doctrina Christiana, p.118.

Milton has been careful to mark the distinction between the roles that intellect and will play with respect to entering into faith, but clearly faith cannot be entirely removed from any action of the intellect. In the preface to chapter 5 of De Doctrina Christiana, in his famous apology for "heresy," Milton tries to emphasize the distance between human intellect and faith.

I am one of those who recognize God's word alone as the rule of faith; so I shall state quite openly what seems to me much more clearly deducible from the text of scripture than the currently accepted doctrine...I take upon myself to refute, whenever necessary, not scriptural authority, which is inviolable, but human interpretations.²⁶

Thus Milton asserts that the role of the intellect is to determine and to argue matters of doctrine. Faith, however, begins, as stated in this passage, to take on a slightly different definition from the one offered at the beginning of this chapter. Faith is no longer simply God's gift, but is in effect God's word as expressed in Scripture. The moment faith shifts from being the immediate gift of God to being mediated by God's word, intellect and interpretation begin to encroach upon it, as Milton feels the need to refute certain interpretations and to affirm others. Thus, even though Milton tries to keep interpretation (or doctrine) and faith apart, the line between the two becomes very thin and blurry.

The textual base for faith in Scripture brings problems of its own. The main problem is really a recurrence of the problematic relationship between faith and Christ which has already been touched upon. Here this problem has the following form. Milton refers to Scripture, which is the rule of his faith, as the word of God. Now Christ is the Word made flesh, and is thus also the Word of God. Clearly Christ and Scripture are not

²⁶De Doctrina Christiana, pp.203-4.

the same things, yet we need to draw the distinction precisely so as to avoid any confusion which might arise out of the sharing of this term 'the Word of God.' Referring to John 1:14, Thomas Hobbes attempts to clarify the ambiguity of this phrase. He tries to separate the Word (meaning Christ) from any linguistic attachment.

Our Saviour is there called the Word, not because he was the promise, but the thing promised. They that taking occasion from this place, doe commonly call him the Verbe of God, do but render the text more obscure. They might as well term him the Nown of God: for as by Nown, so also by Verbe, men understand nothing but a part of speech, a voice, a sound, that neither affirms, nor denies, nor commands, nor promiseth, nor is any substance corporeall, or spirituall; and therefore it cannot be said to be either God, or Man; whereas our Saviour is both.²⁷

Hobbes clearly wants to distinguish the Word of God from the word of God as having no meaning in common. The one is a very meaningful, real, physical substance and the other is mere wind. The strategy that Hobbes employs, however, is problematic. It must always be problematic for the unique meaning of any word to insist that it is not a linguistic entity. To do so is to deny that such a word is a word at all. To insist that the Word is a thing and in no sense a word like any other word is bizarre.

Nigel Smith suggests that the two decades, 1640-60, covered in his book, Perfection Proclaimed, may be characterized by the debate around the dualism of the Word/word.²⁸ He argues that radical Puritans became more and more inclined to equate the Word with the word, thus increasingly blurring any distinction between language and the divine. The declining distinction between Word and word taken to its logical conclusion turns the dualism which Hobbes sought to defend into a linguistic monism.

²⁷Hobbes, Leviathan, p.289.

²⁸See the Chapter "Theories of Divine Signification" in Nigel Smith, Perfection Proclaimed: Language and Literature in English Radical Religion 1640-1660 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp.268-307.

John Saltmarsh and John Webster, for example, both tended to deny the dualism of Word and word, rendering Scripture transparently divine. This equation of Word and word had a profound impact on the way scripture was read. It did not argue for a pedantically faithful reading of the letter of scripture because the Word, being a spiritual entity, was accessible in one's own heart. Thus the equation of Word with word tended to devalue Scriptural authority. More orthodox Puritans, like Thomas Hall and Samuel Fisher, tended to retain the dualism between the Word and the word. The debate between the radicals and the orthodox was really about the exact relationship between the letter of scripture and the spirit of interpretation - between literal language to be taken at face value and figurative language to be interpreted. For the radicals, there was no distinction between letter and spirit, and consequently no distinction between what is written in scripture and what is written in the heart. The radicals thus spiritualized language in such a way that it no longer had a face value. The orthodox insisted on a sharp distinction between letter and spirit and emphasized the difference between literal and figurative language thus limiting the individual's freedom to interpret and expound the Truth.

The problematic relationship between letter and spirit was crucial in the seventeenth-century religious debate precisely because faith looked to written scripture for its authority. The fundamental biblical text in this debate is II Cor. 3:6. In this characteristic attack upon the Hebrew scripture St. Paul speaks enigmatically of the interiority of the New Testament. Paul's description of this interiority makes use of reading and writing as images for something spiritual which ultimately tries to do away with the letter altogether:

Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: ... ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us,

written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart... the new testament; not of the letter but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.²⁹

This passage devalues the written law, the Old Testament, precisely because it is a written law. The "tables of stone" are quite clearly the stone Mosaic Tables with the Ten Commandments or Words (דברות) carved into them by Moses' hand. Although the writing of the Words may be taken as one of God's miraculous interventions in human history, these Words of God are clearly not the same as the Word in John 1:14. Even though Paul devalues these Words in the strongest terms, it emerges, from many other places in Scripture, that it is not exactly the Ten Words that the New Testament wishes to reject. Several of the Ten Words are actually endorsed by the New Testament.³⁰ It is rather the whole burden of the written Hebrew law (to which the stone tables refer synecdochically), which the New Testament intends to supersede, replacing the old law

²⁹2 Cor. 3:2-6. The Authorised Version of 1611 is cited here. It must be noted, however, that the bible of Puritan England was the Latin version of Franciscus Junius and Immanuel Tremellius and was the text Milton cited throughout his *De Doctrina Christiana*. Theodore Beza's Latin version of the New Testament, usually published alongside the Junius-Tremellius version, was sometimes preferred by Puritans because it was based upon the Greek text while the Tremellius version was based upon the Syriac New Testament. Despite this, I have cited the Authorized Version (the version preferred by Episcopal Orthodoxy), since, in this instance, it disagrees neither with the Greek text nor with the Junius-Tremellius or Beza versions. The agreement of these versions indicates the ecumenical nature of the biblical problem under discussion here. Slight differences in the Latin and Greek texts are, however, interesting here. Verse 6 in the Greek text ends as follows: οὐ γράμματος, ἀλλὰ πνεύματος· τὸ γὰρ γράμμα ἀποκτείνει, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωοποιεῖ. While Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1979), tr. Arndt and Gingrich, notes that γράμμα frequently refers specifically to the Old Testament; it is only capable of this because it also refers to textuality in general. Bauer also notes that πνεῦμα is always distinct from matter, even though, here, πνεῦμα is written on the fleshly heart (καρδίας σαρκίνας). In the Junius-Tremellius Bible verse 6 is rendered, non in Scriptura, sed in Spiritu. Scriptura enim occidit, Spiritus autem vivificat. The use of scriptura suggests that all of Scripture kills while the Spirit gives life. Junius and Tremellius defend against this suggestion in their annotation upon their use of scriptura: Id [in scriptura] est, In Lege Mosis, secluso Evangelio; they go on to identify the Gospel with the spirit of Christ: Id [in Spiritu] est, in Evangelio conjuncto cum spiritu Christi. Beza's translation uses the safer word litera (as does the Vulgate): non Literae sed Spiritus, nam litera occidit, Spiritus autem vivificat.

³⁰e.g. in Luke 18:18-21 Jesus lists five of the ten commandments as necessary to be obeyed.

with what has been termed "Christian liberty."³¹ Although this freedom from the old law tends to breed considerable contempt for it, the text of the Old Testament has always been of great importance to the fundamental Christian concepts of renewal, renascence and resurrection.³² The sharp distinction between the New Testament and the Old, between the scripture of the spirit (life) and the scripture of the letter (death), which Paul draws here, ironically binds the two texts tightly to one another. Renewal, renascence and resurrection are only possible given a prior death and thus the New Testament can never rise above its foundations in the Old, no matter how high it leaps.

Christianity has developed a hermeneutic strategy designed to cope with the chasm which paradoxically divides and binds the two texts. This strategy may be termed Typology, as distinct from allegory. Barbara Lewalski explains how the two were distinguished in medieval times.

Allegory was understood to involve the invention of fictions, or the

³¹For biblical reference to this point see 2 Cor.3:17 (cited on p.23 below), as well as Gal.2:4, τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἡμῶν ἣν ἔχομεν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, and Gal.2:16. On the implications this liberty has for Puritanism, see also John S. Coolidge's The Pauline Renaissance in England: Puritanism and the Bible (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970).

³²Indeed, 2 Corinthians 3:2-6 takes its cue from Jeremiah 31:31-33. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they break... But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." Both Paul's "epistle of Christ" and Jeremiah's "law" are internal as opposed to external, written in the heart as opposed to written on stone or parchment. The difference between Paul and Jeremiah, however, is that Jeremiah makes no radical distinction between internal and external, while Paul does. Jeremiah uses the word תּוֹרָה (torah) to refer to the new covenant (ברית חדשה), the same word which refers, throughout scripture to the covenant which was "made with their fathers in the day that I ... [brought] them out of the land of Egypt." The clear implication is that the law, the torah, itself undergoes no change in the process of being made internal, and thus the old and the new remain continuous. For Jeremiah, the internalizing of the law is most probably a metaphoric expression of a greater intimacy which will be realized in the future. Paul, by distinguishing between γράμμα and πνεῦμα, is clearly making a qualitative distinction between the old and the new covenants, and thus he reads the internality of Jeremiah in a more radical way than Jeremiah does himself. It is ironically as if Paul reads Jeremiah more literally than I have just done.

contrivance of other systems of symbols, to represent underlying spiritual truth or reality. Typology by contrast was recognized as a mode of signification in which both type and antitype are historically real entities with independent meaning and validity, forming patterns of prefiguration, recapitulation, and fulfillment by reason of God's providential control of history.³³

Thus the Old Testament type is just as real as the New Testament antitype in a historical sense. The difference between the two is that the type foreshadows the antitype which fulfils it. Such a cyclic view of history bestows a symbolic meaning upon the Old Testament which can only be realized in the knowledge of the New Testament. The effect on the Old Testament of such a realization is that its literal meaning becomes translatable into another meaning entirely, a meaning which is governed by the New Testament. It is precisely this government which Rosenblatt terms the Pauline tendency toward supersession.

The Old Testament, under a typological reading, becomes a dualistic text. Governed by the dualism of the Pauline Epistles and of Hebrews, the Old Testament may be read twice yielding a different understanding, a literal and a spiritual, each time, and yet it seems that the New Testament has only a single and literal meaning whose sole role is to interpret the text which it now supersedes. The paradox in this will become clearer with a discussion of an instructive example.

For textual evidence of Typology, Lewalski directs us (among several alternatives) to the third chapter of 2 Corinthians, to the continuation of the passage cited

³³See Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, "The Biblical Symbolic Mode: Typology and the Religious Lyric," Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth Century Religious Lyric (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1979), p.111.

on page 19 above.

Itaque, quia est nobis haec spes, magis revelato oculo nos gerimus: Et non sicut Musche, super cuius faciem positum erat velamen, ne intuerentur filii Israjel in finem ejus quod aboletur. Sed excaecati sunt in mentibus sui: nam usque in hodiernum diem, quando Testamentu[m] vetus legitur, illud ipsum velamen manet super eos, neq[ue] discooperitur, quonia[m] per Christu[m] aboletur. Et in usque hodiernum diem, quum legitur Musche, velamen super cor eorum positum est. Et quum aliquis ex eis conversus fuerit ad Dominum, auferitur ab eo velamen. Dominus autem, ipse est Spiritus: & ubi est Spiritus Domini, libertas est. (Junius-Tremellius version).

Therefore, because this is our hope [that the glory of the New will be greater than the glory of the Old], we [the disciples of Christ] conduct ourselves, in greater measure, with unveiled eyes: And not as Moses, upon whose face a veil was placed, lest the children of Israel look to the limit of that which is taken away: but they are blinded in their minds, for until this very day, when the old Testament is read, this same veil remains upon them, and it is not taken away, but it is abolished in Christ. And until this very day, when Moses is read, the veil is placed upon their heart. But when someone turns away from them towards the Lord, the veil is taken away from him. Now the Lord is that Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.³⁴

The Mosaic veil to which this passage refers is described in Exodus 34 where Moses ascends Sinai for the second time and writes down the law of the covenant. When he returns to the children of Israel gathered about the foot of the mount his face is seen to be gloriously radiant, which provokes the nation's fear. The fear, it would seem, is based upon the notion that the divine radiation would cause instant death, since God warns, "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live." (Exod. 33:20). Moses responds to the fear by putting a veil (velamen) over his face, obscuring the terrible radiation with an essentially protective gesture.³⁵ Paul's interpretation of the

³⁴Lewalski directs us to verses 13 and 14. I have cited verses 12 to 17 for the purpose of providing a wider context so that we may interrogate the Typological method in its relationship to the problem of letter and spirit.

³⁵Jewish legend attributes the radiation not to God's divine rays, but to the ink from the pen used to write the holy Torah. Louis Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews, tr. Paul Radin, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968), vol 3, p.143, tells us that when Moses finished writing the Torah,

purpose of the veil is, surprisingly, the opposite of this. For Paul, the veil does not hide the divine glory on Moses' face, rather it hides a shortcoming, the fact that the law (which Moses has just written and perhaps wears like a phylactery on his forehead) is transitory, that its seeming clarity is to be rendered obscure by a later plainer truth, by the new dispensation,³⁶ and, ironically, this plainer truth, this unveiled light, will not bring death, as Exodus warns, but life. Thus the veil which remains "when the old Testament is read" but which is then "abolished in Christ" is the very emblem of Typology. To read typologically is to read twice, once with the veil in place and once again with it removed. But how, precisely, is this to be done? Indeed, what exactly is the object of the reading in each instance?

In answering this, the above passage shifts the veil three times: from Moses' face, to the minds of those who are "blind," and finally to their hearts. After this shifting, the veil no longer obscures the object that the people are looking at, but it now occupies not only their minds but also their hearts. During this shift from exterior to interior, the veil changes its nature. It no longer interferes with the object of perception (Moses' face), but it has entered the perceiving subject (the minds and hearts of the "blind"). The advantage of this alteration in the veil's nature is that the perceiving subject gains a potential power over the veil. For if the veil is internal then the subject may find power enough from

he wiped his pen on his forehead, and thus his face shone. This legend suggests that the veil obscures the penetrating brightness of the original Mosaic script, which unattenuated is too much to bear. Aside from suggesting a humble awe for the law, this legend is compatible with Christian typological interpretation. The suggestion in this legend of an intention to obscure, albeit protectively, will be discussed in more detail with respect to Jesus' parabolic method (see page 27). The obscurity of parabolic method, being part of God's revelation, can have no association with Typology, since the parabolic method is inscribed entirely within the New Testament.

³⁶See J.H. Bernard's commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians in The Expositor's Greek Testament (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1903), p.56.

within to shift it aside. The passage asserts in seeming simplicity that "when someone turns away from them [those who are blind in both mind and heart] towards the Lord, the veil is taken away from him;" or, in other words, when the literal heart of the Hebrew (who is concerned with objective externals) turns to the spiritual one of the Christian (who is concerned with subjective interiors), there is no longer any veiled obscurity.³⁷ However, the actual process of this miraculous turning occurs out of sight, behind the veil, in that moment just before it disappears. This miraculous turning is an act of translation. It occurs prior to the revelation, and is indeed what makes the revelation possible. What enables the translation to take place remains simply miraculous.

We must not forget that this passage has been describing the process of reading scripture. At some point the letter (which is dead, external, and veiled) of one's reading is translated into something which is alive, internal and unveiled. This translation takes place behind the veil covering one's heart. It occurs by sleight of image, for the change

³⁷Gershom Scholem, in his The Messianic Idea in Judaism, (New York: Schocken, 1971), p.1, suggests that the most fundamental difference between Christianity and Judaism (and thus, indirectly, between the New and the Old Testaments) is that each religion locates the realm of redemption differently. Judaism locates it in the public domain, on the stage of history, while Christian redemption is an event in the spiritual and unseen realm - it effects an inner transformation and need not correspond to anything outside. Gabriel Josipovici, in The Book of God: A Response to the Bible, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), pp.271-5, both concurs with and expands this notion. He says that the New Testament's (NT) driving inward of events from the Old Testament (OT) is characteristic of the NT's hermeneutic colonisation of the OT. The insistent message of the OT, according to Josipovici, is "Remember!," while that of the NT is "Know!" The difference is between an orientation of mind toward the exterior and toward the interior. C.S. Lewis, in his The Allegory of Love (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), pp. 321-4, discusses a similar difference between Catholicism and Protestantism. The root out of which all other differences between the two religions grow, says Lewis, is that "the one [Catholicism] suspects that all spiritual gifts are falsely claimed if they cannot be embodied in bricks and mortar, or official positions, or institutions: the other, that nothing retains its spirituality if incarnation is pushed to that degree and in that way... Hence Plato, with his transcendent Forms, is the doctor of Protestants; Aristotle, with his immanent Forms, the doctor of Catholics" (p.323). Lewis' point is that Catholicism is fundamentally committed to the embodying of spiritual truths in images, institutions or bricks and mortar, while Protestantism is particularly suspicious of this form of expression. Taking Scholem and Lewis together, it seems that the three religions can be placed on a descending scale of expressive realism, from the realism of Judaism through the allegory of Catholicism to the highly problematic spiritualism of Protestantism.

in one's heart is opaque to all those who remain "blind." It is only visible to those who already have "unveiled eyes." In this sense, it is impossible to learn from the above passage how to read correctly, because in order to understand its message, one must already know what the message is. Thus it is impossible to learn from it what it means, or how one is practically to read in the freedom of the spirit. The veil in Paul's passage obscures the very conversion, or translation, which the hermeneutical strategy of Typology requires to be plainly visible if it is to be learned and mastered as a practical method. Paul does away with the exteriority of the written word and drives it towards the interior by means of a particularly mysterious process of translation, a translation which is ungraspable since it depends purely upon a fillip of faith.

To suggest that reading in the freedom of the spirit is simply to read the New Testament as the fulfilled anti-type of the Old, is far too simplistic and, perhaps, even absurd. This will soon become evident. From what has been said above, it would appear that the Old Testament is incurably literal; it, on its own, allows no possibility of a typological reading. Furthermore, it would appear that the New Testament embodies "the spirit," since it empowers typology. And yet, when we shift our perspective away from identifying with the disciples listening to Christ and actually try to read typologically as a faithful Christian, it becomes clear that it is the New Testament which we have to take more or less literally, for it is to the New Testament, in all its plainness or literality, that the Old Testament mysteriously or typologically points. For the faithful Christian reader the New Testament seems to equate its own literal meaning with the spiritual meaning which lies occluded within the Old. This suggests that, from the perspective of the New Testament, there is no difference between the word and the Word, which has been already

identified as a monistic position. By extension, the Old Testament, having both a literal and a spiritual reality, is dualistic.

The problem which emerges from this pattern of dualism and monism is that it assumes that the New "monistic" Testament has no separation between spirit and letter within its own limits. However, that there is a distinction between letter and spirit in the New Testament, becomes evident in Jesus' parabolic method. In Mark 4, Jesus exposes this method while explaining the parable of the sower:³⁸

Unto you [the disciples] is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them. And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?³⁹

Jesus makes a distinction between those who are already converted and "know the mystery of the kingdom of God" and those "without" who are outside this in-group and who have none of the in-group's spiritual knowledge. It is clear from this passage that the parabolic method, surprisingly, seems to be designed for the purpose of excluding those "without," of keeping them out: "that seeing they may see, and not perceive."⁴⁰ In

³⁸The full parable may be found in Mk.4:1-20. I have cited here only verses 11-13 which lie at the very heart of the parable, in between the parable and Jesus' interpretation of it.

³⁹I have cited the Authorized Version here since there are no significant differences between it and any of the more Puritanical versions. See note 44 for a more detailed comparison of the various versions of this passage.

⁴⁰This interpretation depends upon a purposive reading of ἵνα in: ἐκείνοις δὲ τοῖς ἔξω ἐν παραβολαῖς τὰ πάντα γίνεται ἵνα βλέποντες βλέπωσι, καὶ μὴ ἴδωσι... There is considerable argument, as to whether ἵνα in this passage has a final or a consecutive sense. Clearly, if ἵνα is consecutive rather than purposive, then it would be difficult to argue that the parabolic method is intended to exclude. The Latin translations of Junius, Tremellius and Beza throw little light upon how seventeenth-century puritans would have interpreted ἵνα, because they render it ut...non, which can, of course, be either purposive or consecutive. (Indeed, Latin differentiates between the negative form used for the purposive sense, ne or ut ne, and that used for the consecutive, ut non. However, as Gildesleeve's Latin Grammar points out, ss. 545 note 2, ut non is used for the purposive sense when only a specific word

a particularly illuminating chapter of his book, The Genesis of Secrecy, Frank Kermode discusses this surprising purpose of exclusion.⁴¹ He lists a long tradition of resistance to this purpose, a tradition, beginning with St. Matthew, which is unable to reconcile this purpose of exclusion with Jesus's supposed didactic intention. Matthew, for example, substitutes the word ὅτι for Mark's ἵνα yielding, "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not" (Matt.13:13). This interpretation of Matthew's diffuses the surprising exclusionary purpose in Mark by turning the parable out of obscurity into revelation. Mark's excluding Jesus is distinguished from Matthew's including Jesus:

hina and hoti distinguish them. One says the [parable is] obscure on purpose to damn the outsiders; the other ... says that [the parable is] not necessarily impenetrable, but that the outsiders, being what they are, will misunderstand them anyway. (p.32)

And yet, Kermode reminds us, despite the resistance, ἵνα remains "a silent proclamation that stories can always be enigmatic, and can sometimes be terrible. And Mark's gospel ... is ... enigmatic and terrible" (p.33).

Having established his exclusionary purpose, Jesus begins to undermine himself

and not the whole clause, as in this case, is negated). Walter Bauer, in his Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, sets out the problem of Mark 4.12 (and of other contentious instances of ἵνα): "In many cases purpose and result cannot be clearly differentiated, and hence ἵνα is used for the result which follows according to the purpose of the subject or of God. As in Jewish and pagan thought, purpose and result are identical in declarations of the divine will" (p.378). Thus Bauer seems to opt for the consecutive reading of ἵνα. However, "the result which follows according to the purpose of the subject" gives the consecutive a concomitant purpose. It is for this reason that Bauer concludes, "the ἵνα of Mk.4:12..., so much in dispute, is surely to be taken as final" (p.378). Furthermore, Gerhard Kittel, in his Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, tr. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Eerdmans, 1966), argues that the consecutive reading makes no theological sense: "In the κοινή, ἵνα can take on consecutive and even causal significance. In the NT, however, this shift of meaning is less common, and it is of no theological importance. The main passages which can be adduced for consecutive or causal significance, Mk.4:11 f. etc., are robbed of their σκάνδαλον, but also of their σοφία, by this weaker interpretation. They display their ultimate theological seriousness only when they are understood as final clauses in the strictest sense" (p.323).

⁴¹See his chapter entitled, "Hoti's Business: Why Are Narratives Obscure?" in The Genesis of Secrecy (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1979), pp.23-47.

in the two rhetorical questions which immediately follow as well as in the interpretation which he then proceeds to elaborate. By suggesting that his disciples (the in-group) do not actually understand this nor, indeed, any other parable, and that they are in fact outsiders when they were insiders before, these questions begin to alter our understanding of what it means to be "without." Furthermore, Jesus' interpretation of the parable as a simple analogy between seed and word diffuses our sense of surprise and mystery since this interpretation is incapable of excluding even the dullest wit.⁴² It now seems that the exclusion principle no longer applies. It is worth puzzling why Jesus talks against himself here; why he defines the in-group, and then re-defines it; why he promises to exclude, and then includes. The self-referential content of the parable is relevant here. Jesus describes the different fates of seeds sown by a sower. The seeds fall on different soils and sprout in different ways. He then goes on, after reflecting on the nature of the parabolic method (in the cited passage), to provide the interpretation that the seeds of which he had spoken are the word of God. Thus their differing fates in the different soils are analogous to the differing fates of the word of God in different groups of people. Describing the word of God as a seed which may or may not metamorphose into a bloom, depending upon where it grows, makes the word of God into a classificatory principle which includes and excludes. This abets his exclusionary purpose.⁴³ Again, these

⁴²The relationship between seed and word has been fruitfully described by Jacques Derrida. See his Disseminations (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1981).

⁴³On the classificatory aspect of the exclusionary purpose of the parabolic method, see Gerhard Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Eerdmans, 1966), p. 327, where he discusses the dual effect of revelation: "Where no faith is kindled, unbelief is hardened by the very same act or word of revelation. For the Word and work of Jesus put an end to secret uncertainty in the world. They bring on a crisis of decision for or against him. From the very first the twofold goal of His mission is to bring about faith or hardening according to the predestined decision of God. Hence ἵνα clauses must be taken in a final sense no less when the reference is to hardening than to the awakening of faith: ἐν παραβολαῖς τὰ πάντα γίνεται ἵνα βλέποντες βλέπωσι, καὶ μὴ ἴδωσι...μήποτε ἐπιστρέψωσι, καὶ ἀφεθῆ ἑαυτοῖς. (The Greek citation is Mark, iv.12-13). Thus, it is a matter of how the word of God is taken: if one translates it correctly one's faith is kindled, if not, one is hardened. The

different groups of soils/people may be divided into two: those who know how to take the seed/word of God and those who do not. It seems that Jesus is saying that only those who already know how, who are naturally suited, will understand it, will see the seed bloom. And yet Jesus makes this point in a didactic effort to teach precisely that which must already be known for the teaching to be meaningful. The key to this puzzle lies in the double meaning of the word "without." "Without" can refer to exteriority in two ways: publicly, as outside a particular group, and personally, as outside one's spiritual self.⁴⁴ It seems that as we read the parable from beginning to end we are required to move from the first meaning of "without" to the second. The disciples begin the parable as those within and end it as those without, and yet they cannot be the same as the first group of outsiders.⁴⁵ What distinguishes the disciples from "those without" is that they know that Jesus' narrative is a parable with a hidden meaning, that it is not to be taken literally as the old law, presumably, is. What the disciples do not know is what the

problem inherent in this is, of course, how one is to know how to translate correctly.

⁴⁴ The doubleness of "without" is supported by the Greek which has ἐκεῖνος δὲ τοῖς ἔξω for "but unto them that are without." According to Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p.279, the adverb ἔξω, when used with the article as a substantive, refers to the public meaning. However, ἔξω remains undeclined retaining its adverbial meaning differentiating outer from inner. Thus ἔξω sustains both public and personal reference. The double reference of "without" is supported by Beza and by Junius and Tremellius. Beza renders, iis autem qui foris sunt and explains, in his annotation to foris, that it means both exteris and alienis et non nostris. Junius and Tremellius translate the whole phrase in the single word extraneis, which according to White and Riddle (Latin-English Dictionary) may be taken both ways.

⁴⁵Morton Smith, in his book The Secret Gospel, provides a fascinating interpretation of what it means to "know the mystery of the kingdom of God," and thus throws light upon what it means to be "without." Knowledge of the mystery, Smith suggests, is the result of a secret baptism conducted by Jesus upon select disciples. By being baptized into the knowledge of the mystery, the disciples become insiders in a very close in-group. The puzzle in this parable, however, is why those in the in-group require an interpretation of the parable as if they were outsiders. Smith suggests an arrangement of the groups into three concentric circles: an inner circle of disciples who know because they have been initiated; an outer circle of uninitiated disciples who require interpretation; and an outermost circle of non-believers who will never attain the knowledge of the mystery. It makes little difference to the problem of how the mystery is to be communicated in words, whether there are two inner circles, as Smith suggests, or only one in which there are two different kinds of consciousness. This is to say that there is little difference whether division is made between different disciples or between different parts of the same disciples' minds.

hidden meaning is. Jesus, interpreting, makes the simple connection between seed and word of God, thus revealing the hidden meaning. And yet, far from bathing the whole parable in clarity, this interpretation only serves to deepen the mystery, to darken the obscurity. For, by interpreting, Jesus provides a literal alternative for the parable which all the disciples knew from the first to point towards the non-literal. Jesus' interpretation seems to place us back where the disciples began. We learn that the parable is about the Word, but what the Word actually is, it does not seem to say. It is as if in telling us something, Jesus has said nothing. We never find out literally what the Word is, only that it represents something spiritual. The parabolic method, then, seems to point to a spirituality beyond any words that it may use in order to indicate the way. Thus, the gospel is by no means as clear and transparent as light is itself. It, too, suffers from obscurity. It too requires a revelatory act.

The possible reason why Jesus goes through such convoluted manoeuvring in his exposition is that he is at pains to describe an internal and subjective process of translation by means of language which is necessarily external and objective. The disciples were only insiders in the first place because they denied the literal and desired a spiritual look inward, and yet the moment this inward look is rendered in language the interior spirituality slips back out to the exteriority of the merely literal. The moment something is formulated in language it becomes external and lost to the interior. It takes on a rigid resistance to the inner translation of faith. The "letter" is indeed dead, but more than this it kills the spirit. This is why Jesus expounds the parable about the Word of God, but never seems to say precisely what it is. He has been trying to colonise by means of language something which is ultimately closed off to it. Jesus' method in this

supremely difficult task is to set language against itself (by defining and then contradicting the definition, by positing a purpose which he immediately fails to observe) in the hope that it will dislodge people from their dependence upon the letter and encourage their faith in the spirit.⁴⁶

The problem which Typology and the parabolic method seem to be engaging is the dualistic nature of language. Both try to provide a way for language to reach beyond itself, to break its literal limits and provide access to the spiritual realm which faith thrives upon. However, both Typology and the parabolic method are deserted at the very last minute. The letter is able to define its own limits but it seems unable to draw the non-literal into its own domain.

It is with this unwritten, unwritable, spiritual faith, or divine inspiration as he alternatively may have called it, that John Milton takes issue in his theological treatise De Doctrina Christiana. Milton is aware that access to the Word is through the word of Scripture and that the dualism which this implies pushes the Word beyond the realm of linguistic comprehension. Milton avoids taking an extreme view of either absolute literalism or absolute spiritualism in the matter of finding a way of speaking about

⁴⁶The above argument is repeated in contracted form in Mk.4:33-34. These two verses contradict each other spectacularly, again insisting on an unmentionable realm beyond language. Beza renders, Et talibus multis parabolis loquebatur eis sermonem Evangelii: prout poterant audire. Absq[ue] parabola vero non loquebatur eis: privatim autem discipulis suis explicabat omnia. [And he told them the word of the Gospel with many such parables, according as they were able to hear. Indeed, he did not speak to them without a parable: but he explained everything to his disciples privately]. The use of the adverb privatim amplifies the argument since it suggests that Jesus not only explained in private but also privately. The mode of explication is rendered less problematically by Junius and Tremellius as inter se et illos. The question, nevertheless, obtrudes why Jesus bothers to talk to the outsiders at all if they never will have any hope of inside knowledge. Indeed, even the disciples require interpretations of the parables. Clearly, the process of encryption and subsequent revelation to the disciples seems to indicate an attempt to speak beyond language.

Christian faith. He struggles with a rather contorted middle way.⁴⁷ Milton discusses the problems of how the written scriptures relate to that which lies beyond in two places in his theological treatise. In Book I Chapter 2, he discusses what has become known as "the theory of accommodation," and in Book I Chapter 30 he discusses Holy Scripture.

The discussion of "accommodation" centres around the anthropomorphism of God in scripture. He begins by saying that

when we talk about knowing God, it must be understood in terms of man's limited powers of comprehension. God, as he really is, is far beyond man's imagination, let alone his understanding... God has revealed only so much of himself as our minds can conceive and the weakness of our nature can bear... It is safest to form an image of God in our minds which corresponds to his representation and description of himself in the sacred writings... Indeed he has brought himself down to our level expressly to prevent our being carried beyond the reach of human comprehension, and outside the written authority of scripture, into vague subtleties of speculation.⁴⁸

This would seem to authorize a very literal conception of God since "he has brought himself down to our level." This places God, and indeed any other aspect of the eschata, legitimately within the grasp of language and poetry. Language, it would seem, manages to be successfully monistic, in that there is no such "beyond" to which it points and cannot itself encompass. However, Milton finds himself in trouble with this formulation because it is immediately obvious that in certain places in scripture God is described in unacceptably anthropomorphic ways. Milton here refers specifically to passages

⁴⁷Milton's earlier struggles with the relationship between Christian liberty and the letter of the law has been well noted in his divorce tracts of 1643-45. Ernest Sirluck, in his introduction to the second volume of the Yale edition of The Complete Prose of John Milton (1959), describes Milton's dilemma of wanting to uphold the Mosaic defense of divorce while sanctioning the Gospel's higher status and seemingly antagonistic stance. (See pp.153-8 especially). The resolution of this dilemma involves Milton in finding a way of reading both testaments literally, imparting a higher status to the old "letter" and implicating the "spirit" in a new literalness.

⁴⁸De Doctrina Christiana, pp.132-6.

describing God's "anthropopathy."⁴⁹ This word sticks in Milton's throat because it suggests that God truly feels human emotions, and that in bringing "himself down to our level" God has undergone a change in nature. This is a descent which Milton is unwilling to allow. He dismisses it with "this is a rhetorical device thought up by grammarians to explain the nonsense poets write about Jove." Milton, here, shies away from the anthropomorphism which his literalist argument seems to require by trying to take a step outside language and into dualism. He seems to require a kind of poetic licence which admits that God is something more than the language He uses to describe Himself. Such licence allows Milton to think of Godly emotions which are entirely different from human ones, even though the two kinds are described by means of the same words, such as "anger," "repentance" or "fear."⁵⁰ Clearly, this creates a problem of signification, as the Godly emotions are not what they are described to be. Thus the gap between language and divine knowledge which Milton seemed to have closed earlier begins here to open once again.

And yet Milton cannot dismiss the anthropopathic passages in the Bible, quite simply because they are there. So he proceeds,

if God attributes to himself again and again a human shape and form, why should we be afraid of assigning to him something which he assigns to

⁴⁹Milton refers to Gen.6:6, "he grieved in his heart," Exod.31:17, "[God] rested and was refreshed," and Deut.32:27, "[God] feared his enemy's displeasure," etc. See De Doctrina Christiana, p.135.

⁵⁰Milton argues in De Doctrina Christiana, "if Jehova repented that he had created man, Gen.vi.6, ... let us believe that he did repent. But let us not imagine that God's repentance arises from lack of foresight, as man's does, for he has warned us not to think about him in this way" (p.134). When God describes himself in scripture as having seemingly human emotions, says Milton, we are to take God at his word "provided we believe that what is imperfect in us is, when ascribed to God, utterly perfect and utterly beautiful" (p.136). Thus, when thinking about God, we are to translate human emotions beyond their realm, in a typological sort of way. And yet it seems impossible, to me at least, to imagine what complete and fulfilled and perfect anger might be, other than a supremely intense form of the anger we know.

himself, provided we believe that what is imperfect and weak in us is, when ascribed to God, utterly perfect and utterly beautiful?... Let there be no question about it: they understand best what God is like who adjust their understanding to the word of God, for he has adjusted [accommodated] his word to our understanding, and has shown what kind of an idea of him he wishes us to have. In short, God either is or is not really like he says he is. If he really is like this, why should we think otherwise? If he is not really like this, on what authority do we contradict God?

In a rather convoluted fashion, Milton binds himself even tighter than before to God's written word and thus to a monistic view of language. We are to take Him at His word even if His words describe something uncomfortably human, because "he has adjusted his word to our understanding." However, this adjustment or accommodation is highly problematic, since it requires us to take God at His word, and yet to propose accommodation is already to have violated this requirement.⁵¹ Far from dealing with the problem of divine description, accommodation intensifies it, forcing us to ask how we are to gain access to what is beyond language if the only authoritative descriptions that we have of this "beyond" never manage to break free of their shackles in the literal.

Michael Lieb, in his article, "Reading God: Milton and the Anthropopathic Tradition," recognizes the literalism produced by Milton's theory of accommodation. Citing Paradise Lost III:383, Lieb tries to explain how this literalism does not in effect bring God down to earth and to the level of the human by interposing Christ as the agent of accommodation.

As the visible manifestation of God's embodying of himself in discernible form, the Son represents the way in which the deity as the author of all being is also the author of all meaning. Implicit in the Son's presence is that categorical imperative by which the Father authorizes himself in the text. In the self-consciously literary (as well as theological) terms that the

⁵¹See A.D. Nuttall's comments on this duplicity in Overheard by God (London: Methuen, 1980), p.99.

language adopts, the Son accordingly becomes a "Divine Similitude."... In him is embodied all that is otherwise unknowable in God. If such is true of God's essential ineffability, it is especially true of his passible nature. In this respect, the Son is a primary vehicle for the expression of theopatheia.⁵²

For Lieb, it is the Son who feels human emotions; for God, it is the Son who feels anger, repentance and fear. It is the Son who may be encompassed in language on behalf of the Father; it is the Son who is accommodated. But in order for this to acceptably provide us with any knowledge of God, the Son must be equal with the Father; the Son must be the Father accommodated. It is in this sense that Lieb cites Milton's words, "Begotten Son, Divine Similitude." However, the problem of anthropopathy is not quite so easily solved. Although he makes a strong case for the Son's equal status with God the Father as his "Divine Similitude," Lieb neglects Milton's famous denial that the Son is part of the deity at all, in chapter 5 of De Doctrina Christiana. If the Son is not part of the deity, and thus not equal with God, then the Father's passibility cannot be conveniently passed on to the Son. Indeed, it is in order to redeem the sins of man that the Son is incarnated, and not to justify the "sins" of the Father.

Milton tackles the problem of monistic literalism and dualistic spirituality with even greater vigour in his chapter "Of the Holy Scripture" in De Doctrina Christiana.⁵³ He finds it necessary to argue in favour of a double scripture in order to embrace both poles of the problem, the literal and the spiritual. Again, Milton is constrained to make his point in convoluted fits and starts. He begins, "what we are obliged to believe are the

⁵²Michael Lieb, "Reading God: Milton and the Anthropopathic Tradition," Milton Studies, 25 (1989) p.234.

⁵³See pp.574-93.

things written in the sacred books, not the things debated in academic gatherings." This assertion of scriptural authority Milton undermines only one paragraph later,

every believer has the right to interpret the scriptures, and by that I mean interpret them for himself. He has the spirit, who guides truth, and he has the mind of Christ.

It is not the individual right to interpret which undermines his argument for scriptural authority, but rather the authority which he cites in support of this right: "the spirit...and the mind of Christ." Milton is thus committed to two authorities as he later states explicitly:

We have, particularly under the gospel, a double scripture. There is the external scripture of the written word and the internal scripture of the Holy Spirit which he, according to God's promise, has engraved upon the hearts of believers, and which is certainly not to be neglected.

The implication here is clearly that the internal scripture has less authority than the external as it is merely "not to be neglected." But now Milton goes on to assert the primacy of the internal scripture:

The pre-eminent and supreme authority for our faith ... is the authority of the Spirit, which is internal and the individual possession of each man. ... the external scripture...has often been liable to corruption and is, in fact corrupt. This came about because it has been committed to the care of various untrustworthy authorities, has been collected together from an assortment of divergent manuscripts, and has survived in a medley of transcripts and editions. But no one can corrupt the Spirit which guides man to truth, and a spiritual man is not easily deceived. ... Thus ... on the evidence of scripture itself all things are eventually to be referred to the Spirit and the unwritten word.

Milton's shift from taking the external scripture to taking the internal as his primary authority has far reaching implications. Regina Schwartz points out,

it seems that Milton cites the Bible in order to authorize it and in order to be authorized by it, and the more insistently Milton cites the Bible, the

more it becomes clear that he appropriates that authority he also grants.⁵⁴

Schwartz, here "exposes" the very obvious relativity in Milton's argument. For her, Milton authorizes the Bible in the name of the Spirit and in turn accepts its authority as the literal word of God. Schwartz goes on to wonder why Milton himself refused to acknowledge the relativity of his own argument, why he apparently believed in the logical cogency of basing a "higher" authority upon a "lower." Milton makes no mystery of his agenda in De Doctrina Christiana:

If I were to say that I had focused my studies principally upon Christian doctrine because nothing else can so effectually wipe away those two repulsive afflictions, tyranny and superstition, from human life and the human mind, I should show that I was concerned not for religion but for life's well being.⁵⁵

His dubious move of appropriating the authority he grants serves his polemic in the name of liberty. He has a number of heterodoxies to justify,⁵⁶ and in order to accomplish this he requires the powerfully persuasive authority of the written word of scripture. But if there is any freedom to be granted in one's interpretation of scripture, one needs to invoke an authority even higher than that. Milton's well intended spiral of alternating authorization is really but one strategy of coping with the problem we have been discussing. By showing the letter and the spirit as authorising one another, a link is

⁵⁴ "Citation, Authority and De Doctrina Christiana" in D. Loewenstein and J.G. Turner (eds.) Politics, Poetics and Hermeneutics in Milton's Prose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 231-2.

⁵⁵ See the Epistle in the Yale edition, 1973, p.118.

⁵⁶ It is interesting to note, here, that Milton's project in Paradise Lost, to "justify the ways of God to men," must have been shocking to seventeenth-century readers. A.D. Nuttall, in his Openings: Narrative Beginnings from the Epic to the Novel (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), p.83, notes this suggesting that Protestants would have expected any talk of justification to relate to God's justification of mankind, not the reverse. By using the term in its secular sense ("to explicate") Milton is able to avoid an outright accusation of heresy. But the highly charged theological debate, at the time, about the meaning of justification would have tended to keep the theological meaning ("to make just") uppermost in the mind. The "double-take" that the reader feels impelled to make upon encountering Milton's justification of God, is analogous to the effect that his authorization of the Bible has.

tacitly forged between the two. The dualism is ostensibly tamed and the movement from letter to spirit begins to seem graspable. However, the link seems to elude our grasp, since the moment a stable connection between the letter and the spirit seems to be made, one is forced to reverse it.

The preceding discussion of Milton's faith and the implications of its double basis in scripture and in the "Mind of Christ" has identified two locations of conflict between monism and dualism. The philosophical contest takes place over the issue of materialism while the theological contest takes place over the interpretation of scripture. The theological debate is clearly rooted within language itself with the dualism of Word and word, or of Spirit and Letter, at its centre. The philosophical debate is not entirely based in language itself. However, in this thesis, the two merge because the source of both Milton's theology and philosophy is scripture (whether it be the written or the unwritten scripture). The difficulties we have been experiencing in trying to pin down Milton's faith arise out of Milton's double sense of Scripture. He argues eloquently for a monistic literalism in reading Scripture but is constrained to puncture this literalism with subtle moments of spiritualism. In an impressively convoluted conclusion Milton shows his desire to embrace the two incompatibles in a bold declaration of conciliation.

Thus the scriptures are, both in themselves and through God's illumination absolutely clear. If studied carefully and regularly, they are an ideal instrument for educating even unlearned readers in those matters which have most to do with salvation. (578-9). [My emphasis].

There are two sides to the clarity of scripture - what it says in itself, and what God illuminates. Clearly, what is at stake for Milton is the accessibility of faith itself. Milton wants desperately to found his faith upon scripture. The extent to which scripture may be literally (and therefore, clearly) understood is also the extent to which it may be

trusted as an authority for faith. When scripture is interpreted, when it is taken to be figurative, when it is authorized by the Spirit, the limits of its meaning are by no means easy to determine. When interpretations proliferate one needs some assurance, other than the unstable material under interpretation itself, that one is on the right track. Milton tries to evade this demand for certainty by embracing a liberating monism and yet finds himself from time to time confronted with a dualism that simply will not go away.

Milton's attempts at defining a liberating monism and his confrontations with an ever encroaching dualism may be seen in his formulation of his heretical beliefs in mortalism, materialism and antitrinitarianism. In his discussion of mortalism, Milton describes what he believes to be the death of both body and soul. First, he refutes the claim of Protestant orthodoxy that death means the separation of the dead body from the living soul:

The death of the body, as it is called, is the loss or extinction of life. For the separation of body and soul, which is the usual definition of death, cannot possibly be death at all. What part of man dies when this separation takes place? The soul? Even those who adhere to the usual definition deny that. The body? but how can that be said to die which never had any life of its own? This separation, then, cannot be called the death of man.⁵⁷

Having thus rejected orthodoxy, Milton goes on to demonstrate with numerous citations that "the whole man dies," this "whole man" being "made up of body, spirit and soul, whatever we may think about where one [of these] starts and the other leaves off."⁵⁸

⁵⁷De Doctrina Christiana, p.400.

⁵⁸Book I, Chap. 13, pp.400-1. George N. Conklin, in his book Biblical Criticism and Heresy in Milton (New York: King's Crown Press, 1949), argues that Milton's proof for his entire argument essentially depends upon his translation of the Hebrew bible's נפש (nephesh) in Gen.ii.7. Translated into English in his psalm translations Milton has "soul" for nephesh, but Conklin insists that Milton means this to be taken in the Hebrew sense of the word, inclusive of both body and soul. Conklin points out that, philologically, Milton's understanding of nephesh is unquestionable. Indeed, all the major lexicographers of the period,

Norman Burns places Milton in the company of Thomas Browne, Richard Overton and Thomas Hobbes, under the banner of the "interregnum mortalists." These mortalists were immortalists at bottom since they believed in the eventual resurrection of the soul along with the body, at some point after death. While their belief in the death of the soul along with the body is based upon both philosophical reasoning and upon scripture, says Burns, their belief in resurrection is based upon the claims of scripture alone.⁵⁹ Thus, according to Burns, the everlasting life that the "interregnum mortalists" hoped for, is entirely dependent upon what scripture may literally describe. The mortalists' basis of resurrection in the letter of scripture is interesting because it denies the commonly assumed spiritualism that the soul persists after the death of the body. The resurrection thus takes on a worldliness which is thoroughly monistic. Indeed, one may well wonder, in the face of the literal claim for resurrection, in what sense the "spirit giveth life."

Mortalism is indeed a harsh belief. It does not allow for any form of survival after death. Only at the resurrection do they admit a second life. For Milton there can be no life in between death and resurrection. This cannot prove consoling when compared with the dualist belief that soul and body merely separate at death and reunite at resurrection. The consolation which dualism contemplates is the absence of extinction, while Milton and the mortalists stare extinction in the face. With a belief in mortalism,

Schindler, Buxtorf and Leigh, support Milton's translation of $\psi\upsilon\chi$ as being both body and soul together. However, Milton was fully aware that another interpretation of nephesh was current at the time and thus insisted in De Doctrina that "there are plenty of texts which prove that the soul also suffers both natural and violent death, whether we take the term soul to mean the whole human make-up, or whether we take it as synonymous with spirit" (p.404).

⁵⁹In Christian Mortalism from Tyndale to Milton (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1972), p.149.

even the resurrection itself lacks a fully satisfying consolatory force. A mortalist cannot rely completely upon resurrection at the second coming of Christ for consolation, because, once both body and soul die, one has the terribly difficult task of explaining what the connection is between the man that has died and the man that will be resurrected.⁶⁰ The whole thrust of Christian consolation lies in the promise of presence in the face of a very palpable absence. Mortalism conceives of a dead person only as having been present in the past or as still to be present in the future. The actual continued presence, now, of a dead person, is incompatible with a belief in mortalism. For the dualist, of course, the dead person continues now by surviving as a disembodied soul.

Another way of stating the mortalist dilemma is by asking in what sense the dead man and the resurrected one are one and the same. For resurrection to have any meaning or for it to hold any promise whatsoever, Milton must insist on the identity of the dead and the risen person. But the internal tendency of mortalism is to break the substantial continuity of the subject upon which the efficacy of consolation depends. If the person who dies is not the person who rises, how then is the first to be consoled by something available only to the second? Thus mortalism dispels the consolatory force that a belief in resurrection offers because it undermines the very continuity that the consolation depends upon. Mortalism raises the problem of what may be termed the "intermediary state."

⁶⁰This problem is touched upon in St. Paul's discussion of the resurrection in I Cor. 15:40-44: καὶ σώματα ἐπουράνια, καὶ σώματα ἐπίγεια ... εἰ ἔστι σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἔστι καὶ πνευματικόν. [There are both heavenly bodies as well as earthly bodies ... if there is an animal body, there is also a spiritual one]. Paul seems to insist upon the great difference between earthly and heavenly bodies, between before and after resurrection. This reinforces the terrible sense of disjunction that a mortalist must feel when faced with the need to explain just how the fallen and the risen are one and the same.

Although mortalism cannot ultimately escape this enormous problem of discontinuity, it does have a slight poetic advantage over the orthodox view that body and soul separate at death. By insisting that body and soul are really one entity, inseparably united, Milton is able to eliminate the problem of having to juggle two entirely separate realms, the physical and the spiritual. In fact, the elimination of this dualism argues for a continuity between the physical and the spiritual and, by extension, between the literal and the spiritual. Indeed, the belief that the united body and soul of the earthly dead is identical to that of the heavenly risen, renders heaven no different in kind from earth, and thus enables the two no-longer-different realms to be described in similar terms without involving any hermeneutic gymnastics. It would seem that the problem of accommodation and of God's anthropopathy has been solved by this monistic belief in the inseparable unity of the physical and the spiritual.

However, the advantage which mortalism seems to offer cannot prevent a dualistic recurrence from emerging in a new form. Although dualism has been eliminated with respect to the nature of earthly and heavenly men, it creeps back into the picture when we ask in what form the two are physically linked, in what form a person exists during the time between death and resurrection. Although the man who dies on earth will be the same as the one resurrected in heaven, there is a worrying time-lag wherein this man has no presence, no existence at all. More orthodox Puritans such as Calvin, have a ready dualism which deals with this problem. Their argument runs something like this. The man dies, the body decomposes and the soul flies off to be with Christ immediately. Milton answers this dualistic onslaught and glosses over the time-lag of nothingness in a single argument. He says that the immediacy of the soul's union

with Christ is only a perceived immediacy and invokes the Aristotelian theory that "there is no time without motion." He explains,

Aristotle illustrates this (Phys 4.11) by the story of those men who were said to have gone to sleep in the temple of the heroes and who, on waking, thought that they had gone to sleep one moment and woken up the next, and were not aware of any interim. It is even more likely that, for those who have died, all intervening time will be as nothing, so that to them it will seem that they die and are with Christ at the same moment. (409-10).

In this passage, Milton both insists upon the existence of the time-lag and tries to deny its worrying relevance by appealing to the absent consciousness of the dead person. The Aristotelian simile that Milton uses drives him dangerously close to a belief in psychopannychia (soul sleeping) which he contemptuously rejects.

The lifeless body ... does not sleep, unless, that is, you could say that a piece of stone, for example, sleeps. (406).

Milton's argument, however, does not eliminate the implicit dualism that enters with the time that a person spends as nothing, in between the grave and resurrection.

The problem of continuity raised here by Milton's mortalism is in some measure addressed by his accompanying doctrine of materialism.⁶¹ Milton believed, in opposition to orthodox Christian doctrine, that God did not create the world ex nihilo but ex deo, out of a divine sort of matter:

it is apparent that God could not have created this world out of nothing. Could not, that is, not because of any defect of power or omnipotence on his part, but because it was necessary that something should have existed previously, so that it could be acted upon by his supremely powerful active efficacy. Since, then, both the Holy Scriptures and reason itself suggest that all these things were made not out of nothing but out of

⁶¹See Christopher Hill, Milton and the English Revolution (London: Faber & Faber, 1977), pp.324-33, Stephen Fallon, Milton among the Philosophers, pp.79-110, and George N. Conklin Biblical Criticism and Heresy in Milton, pp.67-74, for discussions of this subject.

matter, matter must either have always existed, independently of God, or else originated from God at some point in time. That matter should have always existed independently of God is inconceivable.⁶²

This materialism, which undermines the essential distinction between God and his creation, argues for a heretically monistic cosmology. The dualism of orthodoxy required God to be utterly distinct from his creation. Milton's materialism, of course, does not hold God to be indistinguishable from his creation. Indeed, in the monistic view, God has a distinct person, even though he and his creation share the same substance. Milton distinguishes God's person from his creation in Book I, Chapter iii of De Doctrina Christiana by opposing God's internal efficiency to his external. His decrees are internal, his acts external. The fact that monism requires God's acts to be performed on himself by no means makes those acts internal.

That God created the world out of himself suggests a slightly different kind of monism from the one which emerges from Milton's mortalism. The monistic man of inseparable body and soul, which emerges from Milton's mortalism may now be inserted into a wider monistic cosmology which renders the separation between heaven and earth merely spatial. Stephen Fallon has argued that the most important aspect of Milton's materialism, which rendered him unique among the materialists of his day, was that his was a pantheistic, vitalistic materialism.⁶³

For Milton, soul, and the life which springs from it, are not anomalies in a dead

⁶²De Doctrina Christiana, p.307. Part of the reason why Milton is so certain that there had to be some matter for God's creative power to act upon, argues Conklin, Biblical Criticism and Heresy in Milton, p.68, is that the Hebrew word for "create," ברא (bara), means, according to Leigh's Critica Sacra, to create ex praejente materia.

⁶³Fallon suggests that Milton's vitalism may have been derived from that of Francis Bacon and William Harvey (p.111). He also draws interesting parallels between Milton's animist materialism and that of Anne Conway (pp. 117-23).

material world; instead, life is the usual condition of matter. Milton gladly strips the soul of its special status - and ... of its natural immortality - in order to celebrate the vitality of all matter. It is as if he is saying that the deadness of the material world is too great a price to pay for the immortality of a separable soul.⁶⁴

Thus, it would seem that Milton's mortalism and materialism are, necessarily, to be taken together, and that, together, they successfully eliminate the dualism which arose while we were discussing mortalism. It would seem that the problem of the "intermediate state" which was implicit in Milton's mortalism has been put to rest by his materialism, for Milton's vitalistic materialism now enables us to trace a real continuity between the dead and the risen during that time of extinction in which they had previously completely disappeared.⁶⁵

Perhaps the most disturbingly heretical of all of Milton's heresies is his antitrinitarianism. In chapter 5 of De Doctrina Christiana Milton insists, on the basis of his interpretation of scripture, that Christ is not coessential, or coeternal with God. In fact, Milton thinks of the Son, in a very literal and natural sense, to be the Son of God.

To Adam, formed out of the dust, God was creator rather than Father; but he was in a real sense Father of the Son, whom he made of his own substance. It does not follow, however, that the Son is of the same essence as the Father. Indeed, if he were, it would be quite incorrect to call him Son. For a real son is not of the same age as his father, still less

⁶⁴Milton among the Philosophers, p.107.

⁶⁵Several critics have argued over the nature of Milton's mortalism and materialism. Denis Saurat, Milton: Man and Thinker (New York: Dial Press, 1925); George Williamson, "Milton and the Mortalist Heresy," Studies in Philology, 32 (1935), 553-79; Marjorie Nicolson, "The Spirit World of Milton and More," SP 22 (1925), 433-52, "Milton and Hobbes," Studies in Philology, 23 (1926), 405-33, and "Milton and the Conjectura Cabbalistica," Philological Quarterly, 6 (1927), 1-18; Nathaniel H. Henry, "Milton and Hobbes: Mortalism and the Intermediate State," Studies in Philology, 48 (1951), 234-49, have argued whether Milton's mortalism and materialism formed part of an Epicurean atomist tradition, were derived from Kabbala, were consistent with or contrary to Hobbes' views on matter and the soul, or had anything to do with the Cambridge Platonists. It seems to me that by far the most valuable study of this subject is Norman Burns' Christian Mortalism from Tyndale to Milton (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1972), in which he places the mortalist debate within the context of Christian dissent, in the context of the sectarian biblicism and Scriptural debate.

of the same numerical essence: otherwise father and son would be one person. (209).

The Son shares the same substance with God, but Milton is quick to point out that this does not mean they are of the same essence. Indeed, as we have seen from Milton's materialism, the entire creation shares God's substance, for God creates ex deo. For this reason, the distinction between Adam as created and the Son as begotten is a little unclear. The problem here is not that Milton claims a difference between the natures of Adam and the Son, but that the distinction between them is based upon the issue of substance. The Son is of God's substance, while Adam is of dust, which is also God's substance. But this is not a point upon which we should become stuck. There is only need to remark that it demonstrates how problematic it is for Milton to take the Father - Son relationship literally and to stick consistently to his materialist view of creation.

Chapter 5 of De Doctrina Christiana is a forcefully argued polemic against anyone who would interpret scripture as arguing for a triune God. Milton waxes incredulous,

Who can believe that the very first of the commandments was so obscure that it was utterly misunderstood by the Church for so many centuries? Who can believe that these two other persons could have gone without their divine honours and remained wholly unknown to God's people right down to the time of the Gospel? (215).

He systematically disposes of the most seemingly cogent readings of scripture which claim the equality of Father and Son, and places the Son in a secondary relationship with the Father.

It is the Father by whom and from whom and through whom and in whom all things are, Rom. xi.36, Heb. ii.10. The Son is not he by whom but only through whom all things are - all things, that is, which were made, John i.3, but with this exception, all things except him who subjected all things to him. I Cor. xv. 27. Evidently, then, through whom in through whom all things are must be understood to mean "by whose secondary and delegated power." Evidently, also, the preposition through, when

referring to the Father, indicates the prime cause ... and when referring to the Son indicates the secondary and instrumental cause. (217).

This passage clearly shows the Son his place with respect to the Father. Indeed, the Son's place is so thoroughly subsumed by the Father that it is a wonder that there is any necessity for the Son at all. Milton neatly clears up this problem by assuring us, in fact, he insists, that the Son is not the product of any necessity. He is rather created by a free act of the Father's will. The Son's role as mediator between the Father and his creation is designated here by through whom. This through whom seems to make the Son into a sort of conduit through whom the whole of creation passes from God. The Son, then, is that which (unnecessarily) separates God from his creation.

For all the humbling secondariness that the Son suffers under Milton's pen, he still provides a useful service. He is the point of access to the invisible God. Even though the Son is an unnecessary point of access, this is how God has structured things. Indeed, Milton makes use of this access and looks to the Son in order to understand what the Father is. He takes John i.18 as his authority for this, "no one has ever seen God: the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he has revealed him to us" (214).

A problem arises with respect to Milton's formulation of his faith. As we have seen earlier in this chapter, Milton's faith is directly focused upon God the Father, to the exclusion of the Son, His mediator. This is consistent with Milton's materialist view of the cosmos. Since God created ex deo, it follows that creation is continuous with God and that the true knowledge of God (faith) is directly accessible. But the question remains, what about the Son? Where does the Son fit into the relationship between men

and God? The answer which immediately pops into mind, that the Son redeems the sin of man and satisfies divine justice, does not have much impact on Milton's sense of faith.

Milton notes,

the ultimate object of faith is not Christ, the Mediator, but God the Father. Theologians have been forced to acknowledge this by the clear evidence of the Bible. So it does not seem surprising that there are a lot of Jews, and Gentiles too, who are saved although they believed or believe in God alone, either because they lived before Christ or because, even though they have lived after him, he has not been revealed to them. (475).

Although Christ redeems mankind, he does not seem to be the point at which man accesses God.

The way in which faith operates has been discussed at some length in this chapter. It has been seen that Milton's attempts at defining a monistic faith seem unable to free themselves from recurrences of dualism. Although Milton claims that faith approaches God without any intermediary, the way in which faith is attained remains highly problematic. It may be attained, on the one hand, as a direct gift from God, and on the other, by means of an individual's diligent study of scripture. If faith is to be attained as a direct gift, it would seem that mankind may achieve direct access to God. The problem with this is, quite simply, that it is not demonstrable. However, if faith is to be attained through scripture, it may threaten to become bogged down in a limiting literalism which seems to lack spirituality. Strategies such as typology, the parabolic method, accommodation, and the doctrine of a double scripture all seem to fail in their attempt at reconciling the letter and the spirit. Milton's monism seems to favour a scriptural and literal approach to faith but never fully opts for this. In the chapters which follow, this thesis will demonstrate how Milton attempts to reconcile the spirit with the letter of faith through his monistic interpretation of the bible. Chapter II will first deal with this in

terms of the pastoral-elegy tradition, focusing mostly on Lycidas. This poem attempts to deal with a crisis of faith brought on by the tragic death of Milton's colleague, Edward King. It stares into an abyss of divine disjunction, and attempts to reason it away and reclaim faith by means of monistic strategies. Chapters III-VI will deal with Milton's attempt to reconcile letter and spirit in terms of translation, focusing on Milton's psalm translations of 1648 and 1653.

CHAPTER II

DEATH, RESURRECTION AND TRANSLATION IN LYCIDAS: MODES OF MONISM AND DISCONTINUITY

Lycidas, Milton's famous pastoral-elegy, written in 1637 in response to the death of Edward King, a fellow student of Milton's at Cambridge, is naturally preoccupied with death. It raises the difficult question of how the Christian world view may deal with the death of a young virtuous man who had decided to dedicate his life to God. King, as it happens, had been on his way to taking up a ministerial position in Ireland when the ship he was sailing in sank with all aboard. Milton's poem does not indulge a personally felt grief but strains against the theological implications of this seemingly futile death. The poem tries to deal with the disjunction that King's death raises in its broadest implications. Much of Milton's poetry is organised around a perceived disjunction and a gallant effort to find continuity. Indeed, Milton's stated object in Paradise Lost, to "justify the ways of God to men," expresses Milton's desire to find a theological and poetic continuity in the most fundamental disjunction, the fall of man.

(i) Death and Mortalism in Lycidas

Before we may identify even a hint of either mortalism or materialism in Lycidas, we have to acknowledge that there has been considerable critical controversy as to whether these heresies appear anywhere in Milton's writing outside the De Doctrina Christiana. It would be natural to expect to find some evidence of them in Paradise Lost since it was written just after Milton had completed his theological treatise. Maurice

Kelley wrote his whole book, This Great Argument: A Study of Milton's 'De Doctrina Christiana' as a Gloss upon 'Paradise Lost,' upon this common-sensical expectation. It is generally with surprise that we read of any resistance to such common-sense.¹ And yet C.A. Patrides resists Kelley's argument that mortalism is present in Paradise Lost. Kelley and Patrides differ over the interpretation of a single passage. In Book X, Adam, coming to terms with his punishment, tries to think through the meaning of death:

... Yet one doubt
Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die,
Lest that pure breath of life; the spirit of man
Which God inspired, cannot together perish
With this corporeal clod; then in the grave,
Or in some other dismal place who knows
But I shall die a living death? O thought
Horrid, if true! But why? It was but breath
Of life that sinned; what dies but what had life
And sin? The body properly hath neither.
All of me then shall die: let this appease
The doubt, since human reach no further knows. (ll.782-93).

Kelley is satisfied that this passage quite clearly comes down in favour of mortalism and a monistic view of the nature of man.² For him, what stands out in this passage clearly is "All of me then shall die." C.A. Patrides, however, argues that Adam in this speech is "ironically ignorant" of the exact meaning of death. For him, Adam's conclusion that "all of me ... shall die" is ironically qualified by the lines that immediately follow it, "let this appease / The doubt, since human reach no further knows." Patrides goes further, placing the above passage in a wider context in which "the doubt" refuses to be appeased.

Only a few lines later, Adam quakes,

¹William B. Hunter recently found the relationship between Paradise Lost and De Doctrina Christiana so wanting that he was moved to write a ludicrous article denying Milton's authorship of De Doctrina Christiana altogether. See "The Provenance of the Christian Doctrine" Studies in English Literature, 32 (1992), p.129. Barbara Lewalski treats this surprising article with a characteristically thorough refutation in the same issue.

²This Great Argument (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941), p.154.

ay me, that fear
 Comes thundering back with dreadful revolution
 On my defenseless head; both death and I
 Am found eternal, and incorporate both.³

The thundering return of his fear, its persistence, especially after it had been so neatly appeased only a few lines earlier, seems to argue eloquently for the perpetuity of suffering, for the "deathless death," which Adam's mortalist argument had hoped to allay. That mortalism is at least mentioned in the poem is clearly indisputable. The Kelley-Patrides controversy really seems to be about two different modes of religious thinking. Kelley fastens onto Adam's rational speculations which lead to mortalism, Patrides onto his superstitious fear. It seems to me that there is no need at all to resolve the controversy, but rather it is necessary to acknowledge Milton's poetic achievement here. I am sure that neither Kelley nor Patrides would disagree that their controversy merely acts out the psychomachia which Milton wrote into Adam's rational but suffering mind. Indeed, it will be observed again and again throughout this thesis that Milton himself was not immune to a similar psychomachia, with respect to dualist and monist interpretations of theological principles.

The question of whether mortalism and materialism are to be found in any of Milton's works written before De Doctrina Christiana is a great deal more difficult to resolve. There is no independent evidence that Milton was indeed a mortalist or a materialist before he had unequivocally declared himself in De Doctrina. It seems to be common-sense to assume that these heresies would not have made their appearance in

³X.813-6. Patrides makes this argument in two slightly different ways; see his Milton and the Christian Tradition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), p.266; and "Paradise Lost and the Mortalist Heresy" Nores & Queries n.s. 4 (1957), 250-1.

Milton's poetry until he had first formulated them in prose. I would, however, suggest that, on the contrary, to assume that Milton first thought of these doctrines only moments before he committed them to the leaves of De Doctrina would also be naive especially since, as Maurice Kelley has shown (in his introduction to the Yale edition of De Doctrina), Milton spent a great deal of time thinking about his theological system, composing the treatise over a period of twenty years. Kelley, helpfully, tries to narrow down this twenty year period of possible heresy hatching by dividing it into three stages. The early stage, which consisted of the preparation of a "Theological Index" and what Edward Phillips described as "A Perfect System of Divinity" (both now lost), was composed in the later 1630s and early 1640s. The second stage began when Milton started to tackle diffuse volumes of divinity on controversial heads of faith and ended when he began to write his own system based on this study. Kelley dates the limits of this stage at approximately 1645-55. The final stage, the actual writing of the theological system, Kelley places in the late 1650s.⁴ Although Kelley's stage divisions are based upon remarkable erudition, his suggestion that Milton interested himself in controversy only in the second stage, and actively engaged in controversy himself only in the third, is pure conjecture. The protracted twenty-year process of preparation and formulation of De Doctrina Christiana makes it impossible to estimate with any more conviction than that of a wild guess, precisely when Milton first thought about any of the actual doctrines which he finally set down in the treatise. For, indeed, even though Kelley suggests that Milton only began to research disputed heads of faith after 1645 (approximately), there is no way of knowing how much Milton already knew and what he already had a

⁴Kelley's dating may be found in his "Introduction" to The Complete Prose Works of John Milton (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), vol.VI, pp.15-27.

predilection for concerning these disputes.

It is necessary to grope for hints in Milton's wider writings in the hope that they, with perhaps more pin-pointable dates of composition, might satisfy our desire to know precisely when (if not how) Milton's thought evolved. Milton's polemical pamphlets provide a lot of useful evidence. Indeed, Stephen M. Fallon claims to be able to locate the beginnings of Milton's monism between 1641, when he wrote Of Reformation, and 1643-5, when he wrote his divorce tracts. As we have seen in chapter I, Milton seems to be stridently dualistic in the opening of his Of Reformation, but as we noted there, his polemic seems to protest a little too much.⁵ By the time Milton came to write his divorce tracts, his monism, or at least an immature version of it, had begun, Fallon avers, to become apparent. The following citations are two of several that Fallon believes clinch his argument that Milton was visibly (if not finally) a monist in the early 1640s: the "Metaphorical union of two bodies into one flesh, cannot be likn'd in all things to ... that natural union of soul and body into one person," and "the deed of procreation ... of itself soon cloies, and is despis'd, unless it bee cherished and re-incited with a pleasing conversation."⁶ Fallon hopes to show, in these citations, that Milton believed in the "natural union of soul and body into one person" and that love must involve both body and mind. Fallon's evidence is not entirely unproblematic. In the first case, the statement that body and soul are united in one person says nothing about whether the two separate after death. Indeed, both dualists and monists alike agree that a person is both body and

⁵See page 4.

⁶These citations may be found in volume II, on p.734 and p.740 of the Yale edition of the Complete Prose, respectively. For Fallon's entire discussion see Milton among the Philosophers, pp.83-98.

soul. It is the manner in which these are united that differentiates each from the other.

In Fallon's second piece of evidence, it is difficult to imagine just where the soul comes into the picture. Clearly, Milton is arguing for a commitment of both body and mind to the "deed of procreation." In order to argue that mind and soul are the same, as Fallon seems to be doing, one would have to choose a more weighty moment than "a pleasing conversation" in which to merge them. By their very nature, the divorce tracts cannot contribute much to the task of pin-pointing the onset of Milton's mortalist and materialist thoughts, since they are not so much concerned with mankind's relationship with God as with the separate question of the nature of conjugal love and human intercourse. That conjugal love may involve both body and soul does not mean that body and soul are continuous or that they are of the same substance. Thus, Fallon's evidence for monism in the divorce tracts may just as well be taken as evidence for dualism.

It would seem then, from the above discussion, that the divorce tracts and Of Reformation provide suggestive evidence but are by no means conclusive about precisely when Milton began thinking about mortalism or materialism. It is not surprising that this should be our conclusion as these tracts were not written with a view to making statements about these heresies. Indeed, Of Reformation reproaches episcopalian faithlessness, while the main thrust of the argument in the divorce tracts, as Ernest Sirluck tells us in his introduction to the Yale edition of The Complete Prose, is to redefine the relationship between the Old Testament and the New, between the dead letter of the law and the live spirit of Christian liberty. Sirluck adds that Milton's final argument in the divorce tracts forges no new synthesis between the two Testaments, but that "any interpretation of either Testament is wrong which contradicts the secondary law

of nature as that is ascertained by the light of reason; and conversely that this law is the best positive guide of scriptural interpretation."⁷ The argument of the divorce tracts centres about the question of how the decrees of Scripture should be read, and has little to say about either resurrection or cosmology. The evidence provided by these two polemical pamphlets seems only to prove that the monistic heresies of mortalism and materialism are very susceptible to dualist infiltration.

Norman Burns finds no evidence of monism in any of the poetry before Paradise Lost.⁸ William Parker similarly finds no evidence of monism in the poetry, and is only able to suggest that Milton was a mortalist at "some time" before 1658, when he began writing De Doctrina Christiana and Paradise Lost.⁹ There are few who argue for an earlier onset. William Kerrigan argues that mortalism is present in Samson Agonistes (which was written between 1648 and 1653, according to William Parker and John Carey, but according to Mary Ann Radzinowicz, and many others, between 1667 and 1670). Kerrigan locates the hint of mortalism in Manoa's last speech (ll.1721-44) in which he refuses to lament Samson's death, but rather basks in its glory. The mortalism, says Kerrigan, is visible towards the end of the speech when Manoa describes the honours that will be accorded Samson's dead body:

I with what speed the while...
Will send for all my kindred, all my friends
To fetch him hence and solemnly attend
With silent obsequy and funeral train
Home to his father's house: there will I build him

⁷ The Complete Prose Works of John Milton, vol. II, pp.145-58.

⁸N.T. Burns Christian Mortalism, p.168.

⁹See Parker's Milton, p.496.

A monument, and plant it round with shade
 Of laurel ever green, and branching palm,
 With all his trophies hung, and acts enrolled
 In copious legend, or sweet lyric song,
 Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
 And from his memory inflame their breasts
 To matchless valour, and adventures high:
 The virgins also shall on feastful days
 Visit his tomb with flowers, only bewailing
 His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
 From whence captivity and loss of eyes. (ll.1728-44).

Manoa describes a ritualized process of mourning. As Kerrigan points out, the mourning in this passage is not grief-stricken. It is optimistic and empowering. The positive enjoyment of the proposed rite coupled with the very palpable absence of Christian conventions of consolation suggest a hint of mortalism, according to Kerrigan. Whether one is willing to indulge Kerrigan's argument or not, one must admit that Manoa's speech describes a very unorthodox approach to burial. Indeed, Protestant orthodoxy took a very dim view of prayers for or any form of dotage upon the dead.

Barbara A. Johnson has suggested that mortalism is visible even earlier than this, in Lycidas. She notices that by describing Lycidas visiting the bottom of the monstrous world, having his bones hurled in unknown parts, and laving his oozy locks in a pastoral heaven, all in the present tense, Milton seems to be asserting the simultaneity of these events. There seems to be no transition between the dead and lost Lycidas who is washed by the waves and the found resurrected Lycidas who washes his hair in heaven. In an attempt to explain how Lycidas can physically be both on the ocean floor and in heaven at the same time, both "sunk low, but mounted high," Johnson invokes mortalism. She argues that Milton's mortalism abolishes any intermediate state and thus no transition

between the two locations is required.¹⁰ This understanding of mortalism is surprising and erroneous, because, as we have seen, mortalism is characterized by the very presence of the problematic "intermediate state." By explaining the poem's odd simultaneity in terms of the abolition of the intermediate state between death and resurrection, Johnson takes the perspective of the dead Lycidas, who perceives the time between death and resurrection as immediate. This perspective is only possible if one also believes that the immortal soul and the body separate at death. It thus argues against mortalism rather than supports it. It requires the dead person to have a sense of death in death, which is only possible if one's soul survives death. Johnson's mistake is to look for evidence of mortalism in simultaneity rather than in disjunction. Dualism, although it is governed by a monistic relationship between body and soul, is in fact highly disjunctive when the timing of death and resurrection is taken into account.

It would appear that there is scant evidence for the claims of critics such as Kerrigan and Johnson that mortalism is present in Milton's poetry earlier than Paradise Lost. However, that Milton may have struggled with an incompletely formulated form of mortalism has not been excluded. It has been impossible to demonstrate in any definitive manner precisely when Milton began thinking about mortalism. On the evidence of dating alone, it has been shown that Milton could have entertained these ideas throughout the twenty year period of his engagement with systematic theology. Indeed, there is no good reason to believe that these heresies were not playing on his mind as early as the latter half of the 1630s, when he first began work on his theological system. It is true that the contemporary debate about mortalism only reached its full

¹⁰See Johnson's "Fiction and Grief," p.73.

blown height in the mid-1640s after Thomas Browne and Richard Overton had declared their beliefs in published pamphlets (though, in the case of Browne, this declaration took the form of an abrogation of the mortalism of his wild youth). However, that mortalism must have been discussed and debated throughout the 1630s is clearly evident in the repetitive refutations directed against it from as early as 1635. Alexander Gill published his Sacred Philosophie of the Holy Scripture in 1635, providing both a taxonomy of mortalism (dividing the heresy between thnetopsychists and psychopannychists), as well as a refutation.¹¹ Although Thomas Browne's Religio Medici was first published in 1642, Browne claims that he had written it seven years earlier. So his mature abrogation of the heresy was penned in 1636, dating the mortalism of his youth even earlier.¹² George Wither published his translation of Gesenius' The Nature of Man in 1636. Gesenius, in Wither's translation, suggests one may believe that man was initially created, before the fall, neither wholly mortal nor entirely immortal but somewhere between the two.¹³ This clearly implies that both body and soul share the same fate. It is reasonable to assume that Milton was familiar with these writings. He was a close friend and student of Alexander Gill's. He may well have read Wither's Gesenius in his research for his "Perfect System of Divinity" during the late 1630s. It is possible too, that he had come across Sir Thomas Browne's unpublished manuscript, since it was widely circulated among London's intellectuals between 1636 and 1642, when it was published.

¹¹See Alexander Gill, Sacred Philosophie of the Holy Scripture (1635), pp.190-200.

¹²In his prologue 'To the Reader,' Browne explains that the work was written seven years before its publication, and in Section 7 he describes three heresies, all relating to death, of which he had with difficulty managed to rid himself. The three are mortalism, God's mercy for the damned, and prayers for the dead.

¹³See George Wither (trans.), The Nature of Man (1636), pp.23-6.

Even if, unlikely as it seems, Milton was unaware of these documents from his own reading, he must have heard discussions and refutations of mortalism from tub and pulpit. Norman Burns has ably and convincingly demonstrated that Richard Overton's Mans Mortalitie (the first unequivocal affirmation of the heresy to appear in print for a hundred years) of 1643 could not have been Milton's first encounter with mortalism.

According to Burns,

Milton and Overton both drew ideas from the lively discussion of mortalism that was conducted first among the sects and then, as the orthodox preachers tried to combat the idea from their pulpits, more generally among Christian Londoners as they tested against Scripture what was told them from tub and pulpit. The oral tradition of soul sleeping in Interregnum England did not depend on Mans Mortalitie.¹⁴

Burns adds that although mortalism was not defended in print from Tyndale to Overton, the opinion must have been current enough in oral form to elicit continual refutations from orthodoxy.

If we are willing to accept the possibility that, if not yet a mature mortalist, Milton was at least aware of the debate as early as the late 1630s, it is reasonable to assume that the heretical doctrine may well have played on Milton's mind enough to have had a modifying effect on the imagery and perhaps the time-structure of his early poetry, especially those poems which are preoccupied with death. For mortalism brings home the full threat of death. By interposing itself between one's life in the present and one's future life in heaven, death interrupts or destabilizes the smooth continuity between the two. This sense of death isolates one from one's Christian destiny; it undermines it, even cuts one off from it. Even though one's united body and soul have an essential similarity

¹⁴Norman Burns, Mortalism, p.169.

in one's life and in one's destiny, the connection, the way in which one gets from the one to the other, is clearly broken by mortalism. It is this broken connection, this sense of alienation from one's future destiny, which is evident in Lycidas and compels one's reading of the poem.

But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with th' abhorred shears,
And slits the thin spun life. (ll.73-76).

The image of one's life as a thread of material which is slit, drives home the disquieting sense of death as a discontinuity, as a break. Of course, the image of the Fates spinning out, weaving and then cutting the thread of one's life is well developed in the classical tradition, and it is often used to describe death. Milton's use of the word "slits" gives this image of discontinuity a particularly sinister, disquieting, even murderous tinge. The image as a whole, intensified by this word, suggests death as discontinuity rather forcefully. Death figured as slitting a thread, as interrupting its continuity, as separating it from the tapestry of which it has become part, certainly has a different texture from death figured as an utter end, or, with finality, as the completion of the tapestry of life. While this image figures death as a discontinuity, it also hints at a potential continuity. The thread, being material, cannot simply disappear and may perhaps be reintroduced to the weft at a later time. Thus the image, if not a declaration of mortalism, is at the very least consistent with it. It is the discontinuity, the alienation from one's ultimate destiny, that must be overcome if we are to feel consoled by the poem. The poem must indicate how the dead Lycidas may maintain some form of continuity with his future salvation, if we are to take any consolation from it. Thus the problem of consolation in the poem is not merely a matter of giving adequate vent to grief, but a matter of great theological

urgency.

This urgency is strengthened if we turn to the matter of Lycidas' resurrection. The simile of the setting and rising sun in the poem both attempts to conceal but nevertheless insistently reveals the central problem of discontinuity, and thus of mortalism.

So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore,
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high (ll.168-72).

Lycidas' death is likened to the waning day-star, which disappears into the sea at the end of the day. His resurrection is likened to the rising sun, which, as we all know, reappears out of the sea again the following morning. Lycidas' death and resurrection, then, are cast by this simile into the time frame of an evening, a night, and a morning. What is most striking about this simile, however, is that it entirely omits any mention of the night-time between sunset and sunrise. Indeed, according to the word "anon," it would seem that the sun immediately "repairs his drooping head." This immediacy suggests that the sun does not actually go down at all, and that day-time is perpetual. While this abolition of the night powerfully suggests Lycidas' immortality, it nevertheless goes against the structure of the simile, for the simile requires the existence of night (no matter how brief) in order to distinguish between sunset and sunrise. The idea that there must be some delay between sunset and sunrise is supported, paradoxically, by the very word which seemed to argue for their immediacy. "Anon," ambiguously, also has a sense of delay inscribed within it, much in the same way as the word "presently" signifies both

immediacy and delay.¹⁵ Indeed, the next lines talk of "new spangled ore" and "morning sky." These terms insist that time has passed after the sinking of the day-star. They insist upon an interposing night-time. By sleight of image, Milton deftly avoids mentioning the night, and yet "new spangled ore" and "morning sky" are meaningless without it.¹⁶ In so far as the night is, so to speak, successfully suppressed in the simile, these words may be held to be consistent with the orthodox view that there is no mortalism in this poem. But because the suppression is in fact only imperfectly successful (because it is natural that sunset and sunrise can only happen before and after an intervening night), a sense of a dividing darkness is introduced by these lines. The suppression of night in these lines explains why critics have read Lycidas as a poem expressive of an orthodox theology. However, even if one is unwilling to acknowledge the delay between sunset and sunrise, or, in other words, the gap between the moments of death and resurrection, on the evidence of this simile, one finds this delay or gap palpably in evidence the moment the "genius of the shore" is mentioned. For, as will be explained in detail in section iii of this chapter, the "genius of the shore" occupies this delay. It fills the gap.

¹⁵Milton makes use of the word "presently" in a similarly ambiguous way, to the use of "anon," in Of Reformation, in The Complete Prose Works of John Milton (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p.519: "after the story of our Saviour Christ, suffering to the lowest bent of weaknesse, in the flesh, and presently triumphing to the highest pitch of glory, in the Spirit, which drew up his body also." Indeed, this passage can be taken as a paraphrase of the Lycidas simile; it makes use of the same notions of lowness and highness which are separated by the ambiguous "presently." Clearly, here, too, the key word carries a double burden: of immediacy (even simultaneity) and of delay.

¹⁶Milton's declared unfinished poem, "The Passion," in which he attempts to deal with the death of Christ, is interesting in this context. The absent night of Lycidas is all too present here. He describes his joy being swallowed up in "long out-living night" (l.7), and as he begins his lament proper, he invokes night as his muse, "Befriend me night best patroness of grief" (l.29). First, his joy perishes in what ironically is called "long out-living night," and then he plunges his whole poem into night. It is in deep night that Milton abandons this poem, being at a loss, perhaps, to find his way to break of day.

(ii) Revival in the Pastoral Elegy Tradition

The notion of revival is symptomatic of the whole period during which Milton wrote. The two major movements in European intellectual life, the Humanist Renaissance and the Reformation, magnified the problem of continuity, which we have been glancing at, to an impressive intensity. Three domains (relevant to this thesis) in which the intense debate on the issue of revival took place emerge: literae humaniores, church tradition, and individual salvation. The Renaissance looked back upon the death of literae humaniores, and indeed all arts, during the dark Middle Ages, and saw itself as their glorious rebirth.¹⁷ The Reformation of the Church provoked intense debate around what Milton called "deceivable tradition," the idea of a false continuity with the past. Indeed, the reformed churches saw the Papacy as Antichrist and as the death, even, of the early apostolic church of which they themselves were the glorious revival. Milton refers to this in his 1645 epigraph to Lycidas in which he mentions "our corrupted clergy" by which he specifically means the Laudian episcopality, but it, of course, also refers to the broader notion of church tradition in general. Milton believed the episcopal church to have had a direct traditional link with the hated Papacy, and turned much of his polemical energy against this "deceivable tradition." In Of Reformation Milton describes how this "deceivable tradition" almost entirely alienated the reformed churches from their origins.

But to dwell no longer in characterizing the Depravities of the Church, and how they sprung, and how they tooke increase; when I recall to mind at last, after so many darke Ages, wherein the huge overshadowing traine of Error had almost swept all the Starres out of the Firmament of the Church; how the bright and blissfull Reformation (by Divine Power) strook through the black and settled Night of Ignorance and Antichristian

¹⁷See T.M. Greene's The Light in Troy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982) for an excellent discussion of this nostalgia, which he calls "humanist pathos."

Tyranny, me thinks a soveraigne and reviving joy must needs rush into the bosome of him that reads or heares; and the sweet Odour of the returning Gospell inbath his Soule with the fragrancy of Heaven. Then was the Sacred BIBLE sought out of the dusty corners where profane Falshood and Neglect had throwne it, the Schooles opened, Divine and Humane Learning rak'd out of the embers of forgotten Tongues, the Princes and Cities trooping apace to the new erected Banner of Salvation; the Martyrs, with the unresistable might of Weaknesse, shaking the Powers of Darknesse, and scorning the fiery rage of the old red Dragon.¹⁸

"Deceivable tradition" had gone through so many ages of error and was so "overshadowing" that the reformed churches were completely alienated from their apostolic roots, completely enveloped in the "black and settled Night." An interesting parallel with Lycidas may be seen here in the deathly image of "Night." In Lycidas, as we have just seen in the image of the setting and repairing sun, death, figured as night, is anxiously but imperfectly suppressed by the insistence that evening is immediately followed by dawn. Here, however, "the black and settled Night" is "strook through" by the dawn light of the Reformation in a kind of mortalist resurrection of the apostolic church. The exaltation of the dawning light of the Reformation revival gives way a little later in the pamphlet to disappointment at England's lagging behind, at its persistent resistance to revival, to light. The debate about how the church should look upon its tradition, its origins and heritage, also led to intense argument over the nature of the soul, an argument within which, as we have seen, Milton formulated his strongly heterodox views, mortalism and materialism. Indeed, as will be seen in this section, the problem of continuity in tradition is closely analogous to the theological concept of mortalism, both in its problematic formulation and in suggested solutions to these problems. The revivals of Latin and Greek culture, of the apostolic church, and of the dead at

¹⁸See Milton's Of Reformation in The Complete Prose of John Milton (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), vol.I, pp.524-5.

Judgement, raise the question of continuity, or of the "intermediate state," in closely analogous ways. But while the renaissance of literae humaniores and the Reformation need to deal with a predominantly retrospective sense of continuity, the question of individual salvation must, of course, deal with a predominantly prospective continuity. The problem of continuity may thus be seen, because of these three domains, as double edged. Both the past and the future lie similarly cut off from the present. Underlying Lycidas, in which all three of these domains intersect, is the double challenge, then, of finding continuity with both the past and the future.

In the passage from Of Reformation, cited above, Milton offers two ways (both enabled "by divine power") in which the reformed churches forged their links with the true undeceived past, thereby overcoming the sense of alienation from the past that reformation implies. The enabling "divine power" is mysterious and eludes analysis. It leaves what was manifestly achieved by human labour to the hand of God. This "divine power" empowers two human agencies, textual revival and political action. Clearly, the first sustains the second. Texts provide the fortitude and the faith of martyrs. Textual revival gathers up the past which supplies the martyr with a stable and certain point from which to fling himself into the instability of political change. Indeed, the martyr's certainty of where his salvation will lie rests firmly on a revived past, the past of the early apostolic church. By searching out the bible, opening schools and raking out divine and human learning from the embers of forgotten tongues, Milton refers to the revival not only of scripture but also of classical texts. Translations of the bible into the vernacular as well as vernacular imitations of the classics abounded during the Renaissance, in a broad effort to revive the past which had wandered almost out of reach over a thousand

years of error.¹⁹ Indeed, Milton spent a great deal of energy reviving scripture. His translations of the Psalms and his treatise on Christian doctrine are clear monuments to his efforts. His revival of classical pagan texts is a little more diffused, appearing only in allusions and imitations within his poetry. It is, however, ironic that his puritanical mistrust of all tradition other than scripture should lead him into conflict with the traditions of pagan antiquity which are richly represented in his works. Indeed, he has a similarly ambivalent attitude to the scriptural tradition. At times he clearly favours the liberty of the Gospels and reads the law in this light. But at other times, the law asserts itself in his thought. In reclaiming the past Milton is unwilling to jettison either the Old Testament or the pagan past. Indeed, his efforts at textual revival may be summarized in the double strategy of biblical translation and classical imitation. His psalm translations will be discussed at length in part 2 of this thesis. In this part, his problematic relationship with the pagan past will be discussed.

As will be seen in what follows, Milton makes use of retrospective glances at the classical (pagan) pastoral-elegy tradition, in Lycidas, as a context in which to effect a Christian or prospective consolation. Classical tradition and scriptural revival intertwine in the poem. The classical invades the scriptural, as Samuel Johnson noticed, to produce the famous generic splits of Lycidas. However, the generic splits are, perhaps, only one way of looking at the interaction of classical tradition and Christian prophecy in the poem, for the two may be seen as essentially similar with respect to the problem of continuity. Indeed, prophecy, or prospective consolation, may in some respects be

¹⁹Thomas Greene, in The Light in Troy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), describes the Renaissance sense of "historical solitude." He describes both the pathetic alienation that this involved as well as the classical imitation that it engendered.

considered retrospective as the following example may illustrate.

The epigraph with which Milton heads his poem provides insight into his views on prophecy and the continuity of history.

In this monody the author bewails a learned friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish Seas, 1637. And by occasion foretells the ruin of our corrupted clergy then in their height.

I have emphasised the second sentence in this epigraph because it was absent from the poem's first publication in 1638 and was added only in the 1645 Poems. The added sentence identifies the poem as a prophecy and introduces the notion of the "corrupted clergy." There is a compelling political reason why this sentence was omitted in 1638. In 1638 the "corrupted clergy" were "in their height" and any unequivocal attack on them would no doubt have been damaging to the author. However, the word "then" clearly measures the distance between 1638 and 1645. Great changes had taken place in English society between the two publications of the poem. Milton's addition in 1645, with the benefit of comfortable hindsight, insists not only that the poem is prophetic, but also that the poem's prophecies have been realised. It seems that what may have been wishful thinking in 1638 has become fulfilled prophecy by 1645. This is merely to say that prophecy can only properly be validated from the perspective of hindsight. But when there can be no hindsight, as in the case of Christian faith, one's hope for the truth of a prophecy can only rely upon a strong sense of past continuity, upon one's faith that this powerful continuity may carry over into the future. This may be observed in the structure of many psalms which catalogue the past interventions of God in human history only to call on him to intervene again. Milton's selection of psalms which he translated in 1648 provides several examples of this. Psalm 85:1-4 is representative.

- 1 **Thy land to favour graciously**
 Thou hast not Lord been slack,
Thou hast from hard captivity
 Returned Jacob back.
- 2 **The iniquity thou didst forgive**
 That wrought **thy people woe,**
And all their sin, that did thee grieve
 Hast hid where none shall know.
- 3 **Thine anger all thou hadst removed,**
 And calmly didst return
From thy fierce wrath which we had proved
 Far worse than fire to burn.
- 4 **God of our saving health and peace,**
 Turn us, and us restore,
Thine indignation cause to cease
 Toward us, and chide no more.²⁰

The psalmist spends three verses appealing to God's past mercy in the hope that a merciful continuity may be established now and in the future.

Milton's psalm translations will be dealt with in detail in part two of this thesis. In what follows here we will see how Milton's often remarked upon imitations, or, indeed, translations, of Theocritus and Virgil²¹ establish continuity with the past and provide enough momentum to gesture toward the future. The imitation of both Theocritus' and Virgil's pastoral elegies in Lycidas focuses the reader's attention upon a whole tradition of death and salvation.²² Indeed, Richmond Hathorn has indicated that the entire pastoral genre owes its origin to a ritual of death and salvation. Hathorn

²⁰See also Ps.80:8-16 which asks God to tend his vine as he once did, and Ps.83:9.ff. which asks God to repeat now the kinds of things he did previously to the enemies of Israel.

²¹See James Holly Hanford, "The Pastoral Elegy and Milton's Lycidas" in C.A. Patrides (ed.) Milton's Lycidas: The Tradition and the Poem (New York, 1961), and J.M. Evans, "Lycidas, Daphnis, and Gallus," in J. Carey (ed.) English Renaissance Studies (Oxford, 1980).

²²The consolatory preoccupation of the pastoral elegy tradition has been well noted. Joseph Wittreich, citing Thomas McFarland, says that the pastoral elegy "always strives to diminish, to soften, the fact of death." See Wittreich's "The Genres of Lycidas," p.66.

describes what Theon, the scholiast, called the "true account" of the origin of pastoral.

After a factional strife in the city state, or according to another version, after a plague either of beasts or men, Artemis Lyaea was given credit for bringing the catastrophe to an end; and a festival was instituted in thanksgiving. The manner of its celebration was as follows: crowds of rustics would flock to the theatre and engage in singing-contests.²³

There is no resurrection of the dead in this account. Indeed, there is no actual death in it. It describes the defeat of death, and the thanksgiving, which is the prototype of the pastoral tradition, gives this defeat a mystical tinge. The ritualistic thanksgiving for the end of a plague, in this case, represents the beginning of a trend which pushes further and further towards the prophecy of resurrection.

Theocritus' first Idyll laments the passion of Daphnis (τὰ Δάφνιδος ἄλγεα) who begins to take on a semi-divine status.²⁴ Daphnis dies when he is entirely consumed by the river. He never reappears. And yet there are two factors in the idyll which hint ever so slightly at resurrection. While arguing with Kypris, Daphnis mentions "seasonal Adonis" (ὠραῖος... Ἀδωνίς, l.109) as someone who has resisted love, just as Daphnis does. Daphnis thus alludes to the seasonal death and resurrection of Adonis the agricultural deity. Furthermore, the river in which Daphnis disappears, besides traditionally representing flux, also may carry a hint of continuity. The river Arethusa becomes the muse of pastoral poetry as the tradition develops. Indeed, Arethusa does not only represent traditional continuity, but she also guarantees translation as will be seen below. Thus, Theocritus' first idyll admits death and begins to hint at resurrection in two

²³In "The Ritual Origin of Pastoral," *TAPA* 92 (1961), 236-7.

²⁴David M. Halperin, in "The Forebears of Daphnis," places Daphnis squarely in the Near-Eastern tradition of gods and demi-gods who are destroyed by a goddess who represents the generative principle in nature: Dimmuzi, Tammuz, Adonis, Attis, Anchises, Gilgamesh. All of these become the objects of ritual mourning and some of them are resurrected.

ways: through the immortality of apotheosis, and through the continuity of the river.

The two glimpses of resurrection in this idyll may be neatly distinguished in terms of dualism and monism. The suggested apotheosis tends towards dualism because there is a clear ontological disjunction between mortal humans and immortal gods. Indeed, Daphnis is not Adonis, no matter how allusively they may be linked. The river, on the other hand, is thoroughly monistic, since Daphnis fades into it (ἔκλυσε δῖνα). Adonis' apotheosis as the seasonal deity is developed more fully in a later poem in the pastoral-elegy tradition, Bion's Lament for Adonis. There, it involves an initial interruption in the natural realm, even though "seasonal Adonis" is essentially natural. Just before Bion's poem closes, the Fates make an abortive attempt at calling Adonis back to life.

χαί Μοῖραι τὸν Ἄδωνιν ἀνακλείουσιν Ἄδωνιν,
καί νιν ἐπαείδουσιν· ὃ δέ σφισιν οὐχ ὑπακούει·
οὐ μὰν οὐκ ἐθέλει, Κώρα δέ νιν οὐκ ἀπολύει. (94-96)

[And the Fates weep for Adonis, calling up Adonis; they cast him repetitive spells, but he makes no answer to them. He is not unwilling; the Maid will not free him.]

The defeated call of the Fates suggests the impossibility of resurrection. It places Adonis firmly in the domain of Persephone (Κώρα). And yet the final two lines of the poem call upon Cytherea to stop her mourning, for she will weep again and mourn again, come another year (δεῖ σε πάλιν κλαῦσαι, πάλιν εἰς ἔτος ἄλλο δακρῦσαι). The promise that the mourning will have to be repeated in another year is a clear reference to "seasonal Adonis," to a resurrection in nature. Thus Adonis is alternately absent then present, in Hades, then in nature.

Moschus' Lament for Bion makes an even more insistent denial of resurrection

than Bion's poem initially makes. The poem makes a very vigorous case against the very possibility of resurrection. It draws a sharp distinction between the death of men and the death and rebirth cycle of vegetal life (ll.99-104). And yet, even in this bleak poem, there is the faintest suggestion that Bion may nevertheless live on. Singing, it seems, may bring him back. In the last lines of the poem, Moschus entreats the dead Bion to sing a pastoral song to Persephone so that

χώς Ὀρφέϊ πρόσθεν ἔδωκεν
 ἀδέα φορμίζοντι παλίσσουτον Εὐρυδίκειαν,
 καὶ σὲ Βίων πέμψει τοῖς ὄρεσιν. εἰ δέ τι κήγῶν
 συρίσδων δυνάμαν, παρὰ Πλουτέϊ κ' αὐτὸς ἄειδον. (123-26).

[as she once gave back Eurydice to Orpheus when he played the phorminx sweetly, so also will she send Bion forth to the mountains. And if I too could play the syrinx, I too would play, myself, in Pluto's house.]

It is music, only, which may hope to achieve the return of Bion. If Bion's own singing in Hades fails, then Moschus' singing for him will surely succeed. It would seem that playing the syrinx may, ironically, not only effect Bion's escape from death, but also Moschus' entrance into Hades. The closest that Moschus comes to an idea of resurrection is the very weakest form of revival that imitation or even translation affords. It is as if Bion is carried across the borders of Hades by Moschus' song. Translation literally means "carrying across." Thus Moschus' song, literally, translates Bion out of Hades. In the pastoral-elegy tradition this revival through translation (through what is literally "carried across") is represented in the myth of the river Arethusa.

Virgil picks up the idea of the river as that which carries across in his tenth eclogue. Arethusa, here, travels under the sea from Theocritus' Sicily to Virgil's Italy.

In doing so, Arethusa carries Sicily across to Italy.²⁵ This eclogue, however, does not describe an actual death, only a struggle with death. We must thus look to Eclogue V for resurrection. In this eclogue Mopsus laments Daphnis' death: "Extinctum Nymphae crudeli funere Daphnin/ flebant" [The Nymphs mourn dead Daphnis with painful funeral rites] (l.20). But by the time Menalcas is able to reply, Daphnis has been resurrected in the stars: "Candidus insuetum miratur limen Olympi/ sub pedibusque videt nubes et sidera Daphnis" [Shining Daphnis is unusually admired at the gate of Olympus; beneath his feet he sees stars and clouds] (l.56). Not only has he been resurrected, but he has become a god, "deus, deus ille." Virgil, following the lead of first Bion and then Moschus, develops the two hints at resurrection from Theocritus separately in two different eclogues. The river as that which translates is developed in Eclogue X and the deity, in Eclogue V. Although it is difficult to impute motives to Virgil, it is not surprising that these two different kinds of resurrection or revival should be developed in different poems, since they are so different as to be practically irreconcilable. When they both emerge in the same poem, as they do in Lycidas, we shall see their problematic clash.

Lycidas, like Theocritus' Daphnis, disappears in the flood. Like Virgil's Daphnis, he is resurrected as a kind of god. Although Milton invokes the rivers of antiquity twice, these do not play a highly developed role in Lycidas' revival, since he dismisses them in

²⁵Written in the late 1630s, roughly at the same time that Milton wrote Lycidas, Sir Thomas Browne's Religio Medici (published in 1642) gives a beautiful description of tradition in terms of Arethusa: "like the river Arethusa, though they [opinions] lose their current in one place, they rise up again in another ... for as though there were a Metempsychosis, and the soule of one man passed into another, opinions do finde after certaine revolutions, men and minde like those that first begat them ... every man is not onely himselfe, ... men are lived over againe, the world is now as it was in ages past, there was none then, but there hath been some one since that parallels him, and is as it were his revived selfe" (Sect. 6).

despair.²⁶ However, Milton, developing Virgil, resurrects Lycidas in two ways. He is resurrected bodily, in a pastoral heaven, and, with a surprising incorporeality, as the genius of the shore. These two aspects of Lycidas' resurrection develop out of the earlier prototypical resurrections in the tradition.

The two ways of encapsulating death and resurrection which emerge from the Theocritus-Bion-Moschus-Virgil-Milton tradition will be discussed further in section iii of this chapter. However, before this can be done, the tradition of the river needs further elaboration. The idea that the river carries in its flood both death and continuity, even resurrection, has its locus classicus (if not in the Milesian philosopher Thales) in Plato's Phaedo. More specific to the present discussion, Plato's Phaedo also represents the first appearance of the idea of the underground river from which the Arethusa myth descends. Towards the end of this dialogue about the immortality of the soul, Plato places the immortal soul within a mythical geography; he provides a topography for the progress of the soul from life to death and back again. He begins his myth by submerging humanity in water. Human life thus has the reassuring continuity of a river eternally flowing in upon itself. Any apparent discontinuity is explained away by the fact that the river which humanity inhabits disappears into great chasms and flows underground only to reappear at another place. He compares our existence in this river of a world with that

²⁶Milton makes particularly powerful reference to the idea of translation which is inherent in the reference to the streams of antiquity in the invocations of his two Latin poems which deal with poetic survival, Ad Patrem and Epitaphium Damonis. Ad Patrem opens with a particularly somatic version of this continuity; the streams are called to flow through Milton's heart and lips: Nunc mea Pierios cupiam per pectora fontes/ Irriguas torquere vias. totumque per ora/ Volvere laxatum gemino de vertice rivum [Now I would like the Pierian founts to turn their irrigating channels through my heart, and their entire expanded stream to roll from the twin slopes through my mouth]. (ll.1-5). Epitaphium Damonis makes a less personal invocation, calling river deities of the Himera forth to inhabit the Thames in a gesture towards what was called the translatio studii: Himerides nymphae...Dicite Sicelicum Thamesina per oppida carmen [Himeridean nymphs ... sing your Sicilian song through Thames-side towns].

of fish who live their lives in their watery element oblivious to the fact that there is another entire world of air above the surface of the water. The world which souls occupy in alternate carnate and incarnate form is the submerged watery one. It consists of four great streams which all flow into the great axial chasm, Tartarus. In carnate form the souls occupy the river called Okeanos, which accords well with the fish simile.²⁷ After death the disembodied souls occupy any one of three other rivers, Acheron, Pyriphlegathon or Kokytos, depending upon their deeds during life. What is interesting here is that the living and the dead are only separated spatially in the world; they merely occupy different rivers. The continuity between the rivers leaves open the possibility of translation between them. Plato does not dwell upon any difference in essence between life and death; indeed, they are essentially similar. Both living and dead inhabit rivers which ultimately join one another enabling continual cross-over from the one into the other. Thus, Plato provides a picture of the earth in which life and death and rebirth are merely alternating states in a continuous water-cycle. This picture is essentially monistic in nature. For although Plato divides people into bodies and souls, these bodies and souls are only spatially (not ontogenetically) separable.

A complex discontinuity, however, seems to enter the picture in the description of those souls who somehow manage to escape, or transcend, the continuous alternating cycle. With this discontinuity comes platonic dualism. The souls of the exceptionally good are delivered from this alternating carnate and incarnate flux of their fellows' watery existence.

²⁷This fish simile is not lost upon the Gospel tradition where Jesus declares that he will make his disciples, Peter and Andrew, fishers of men (Matt.4:18-19). They will draw men out of this world into the next as they draw fish out of the water.

But as for those who are found to have lived exceptionally holy lives, it is they who are freed and delivered from those regions within the earth, as from prisons, and who attain the pure dwelling above, and make their dwelling above ground. And among their number, those who have been adequately purified by philosophy live bodiless [ἄνευ...σωμάτων] for the whole of time to come, and attain to dwelling places fairer even than these, which is not easy to reveal [ἄς οὐτε ῥᾶδιον δηλῶσαι], nor is the time sufficient at present (114B-C).²⁸

The transcendent existence which Plato describes here is interesting. He seems to be describing two different transcendent realms, one which is inhabited by those who have lived exceptionally holy lives, and another, which itself transcends this first transcendental realm, and which is inhabited by the bodiless (ἄνευ...σωμάτων) souls of pure philosophers. The implication in this stepwise transcendence is that as one moves up the ladder one becomes less bodied (i.e. more and more separated from the body in an ontogenetic sense). And, indeed, as one becomes less bodied (or more transcendent) the harder it becomes for Plato to speak (ἄς οὐτε ῥᾶδιον δηλῶσαι). Plato has attempted to construct a sort of continuum of realms, in his multilevel geography, with each realm relating to the one below in analogous fashion to the way in which the one above relates to it. Four realms are evident: Tartarus, the four rivers, the true world of the exceptionally good, and the true heaven reserved for bodiless philosophers.²⁹ And yet, for all his insistence to the contrary, these four realms are fundamentally discontinuous. This puzzling simultaneous sense of continuity and discontinuity becomes clearer when we consider Plato's hypothetical method, which he describes a

²⁸I have cited David Gallup's translation of the Phaedo (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975). It is a particularly close translation of Burnet's Oxford Classical Text (1900).

²⁹Plato has particular difficulty describing Tartarus as a distinct realm. On the one hand it is part of the river system which is in eternal flux, and on the other, it has a remarkable stasis about it. The inhabitants of this region are unlike those in the river system; the souls of the incredibly bad are confined to this place, never to flow out of it in any stream. The incredibly bad seem to have descended a level into Tartarus, into an eternal static parody of the uppermost and "truest" level, within the multilevel errancy of souls.

little earlier on in the dialogue.³⁰ This hypothetical method, or geometrical analysis,³¹ demonstrates a curious continuity between different hypothetical realms. Plato first hypothesises, presumably by means of an intuitive leap of the intellect, and then verifies his intuition by demonstrating that all the possible derivatives of this hypothesis are consistent with one another. He then repeats the procedure. The two routes, the upward hypothetical way and the downward derivative way, are, Plato insists, to be kept distinct. The process of hypothesising comes to an end when he reaches "something adequate" (ἕως ἐπί τι ἰκανὸν ἔλθοις). In the case of the Phaedo myth, he reaches up to the "dwelling places fairer even than these" - the utterly pure, utterly bodiless place of Ideal Forms. Although Plato is constrained to make his upward route to this τι ἰκανὸν by discontinuous leaps and bounds of his hypothesising mind, the downward route from the τι ἰκανὸν is surprisingly smooth and continuous.

The difficulty of his disjunctive upward route is evident in his repeated apologies for his mythical mode of discourse. He begins his myth tentatively by saying, "if it is proper to tell a tale..." (110B1) (εἰ γὰρ δεῖ καὶ μῦθον λέγειν) and ends with a strangely assured apology:

Now to insist that these things are just as I have related them would not be fitting for a man of intelligence: but that either this or something like it is true about our souls and their dwellings, given that the soul evidently is immortal, this, I think, is fitting and worth risking, for one who believes that it is so - for a noble risk it is - so one should repeat such things to

³⁰David Gallup translates 100A and 101D-E: "this was how I proceeded: hypothesising on each occasion the theory I judge strongest, I put down as true whatever things seem to me to accord with it, ... and whatever do not, I put down as not true. ... and when you had to give account of the hypothesis itself, you would give it ... hypothesising another hypothesis, whichever should seem best of those above, till you came to something adequate."

³¹Kenneth Sayre locates the root of this theory in Pappus' mathematical method which Sayre calls Geometrical Analysis. See Plato's Analytical Method (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969).

oneself like a spell [ἐπέδειν]; which is just why I have so prolonged the tale. (114D) [The italics are mine].

Plato here grapples with the problem that has been our subject all along. He is aware that there is a problem in insisting that his hypothetical realms are literally extant. Faced thus with a disintegrating monism and an encroaching disruptive dualism, he suggests a surprising solution. Plato relies on the incantatory (ἐπέδειν) effect of his mythical language to do the trick. One almost hears Plato chanting the credo in a Roman Catholic mass. By chanting his myth as if it were a spell (ὥσπερ ἐπέδειν), Plato hopes to reduce by magic the risk of failing in his project. The nature of this magic is a little obscured by Gallup's translation. The Greek which Gallup translates as "which is just why I have so prolonged the tale" is διὸ δὴ ἔγωγε καὶ πάλαι μηκύνω τὸν μῦθον. Gallup translates καὶ πάλαι μηκύνω as "I have so prolonged" even though the verb μηκύνω is in the present tense. It is because of καὶ πάλαι, presumably, that he renders it perfect. However, καὶ πάλαι could be translated more literally, "as well as long ago." The phrase could thus be rendered, "which is why even I, as well as [those] long ago, prolong the tale."³² καὶ πάλαι μηκύνω thus suggests both a repetitive incantation or spell and tradition itself.³³ Thus, Plato authorises his counter-inductive method, which

³²There are two difficulties with this translation. The first has to do with the meaning of πάλαι. Liddell and Scott list it as meaning both "a long time ago" and "a short while ago." They cite a number of texts which use πάλαι as equivalent to ἄρτι (just now). They point out, however, that Plato uses πάλαι as the opposite of ἄρτι referring us to Theaetetus 142A as the definitive example. (It is of incidental interest that the word πάλαι is used in its adjectival form to distinguish the Old Testament from the New: ἡ παλαιὰ διαθήκη). The second difficulty in this translation has to do with the use of both γε in ἔγωγε and καὶ: γε suggests Plato alone, καὶ may suggest others too. It is unclear whether Plato is referring to his own repetition since ancient time (which is a little puzzling) or to the repetition of ancients. Liddell and Scott's Lexicon notes the usage οἱ πάλαι, meaning "the ancients." It is not unlikely that καὶ πάλαι should refer to the ancients as well.

³³Benjamin Jowett translates the italicized sentence as follows: "the venture is a glorious one, and he ought to comfort himself with words of power like these, which is why I lengthen out the tale." See The Dialogues of Plato, vol.I, p.474. This translation, like Gallup's, argues simply for a long tale, making no appeal to tradition. Indeed, Jowett's translation is even more hostile to the idea of tradition than Gallup's because it translates ἐπέδειν as "to comfort oneself with words of power." Gallup's translation of this

is paralleled in his Phaedo myth as a reaching out to (or a prophecy of) the future, by means of a traditional spell.

The appeal to tradition is, of course, evident where Plato talks of this watery corrupt world. His geography is derived from Homeric epic. He even cites Zeus' terrible threat of casting anyone who defies him down into "the deepest pit beneath the earth," Tartarus (Iliad viii.14). The four rivers, Okeanos, Acheron, Pyriphlegethon, and Kokytos, are all described by Circe when she directs Odysseus on his descent into Hades (Od.x.512-4). Furthermore, the notion of alternation between the carnate and incorporeal immortal soul has its roots in a combination of Orphic and Pythagorean traditions.³⁴ The appeal to tradition is perhaps more difficult to follow when Plato launches into his ideas of an utterly transcendent future for philosophers and a partially transcendent one for the exceptionally good. There is no literary precedent for this. This is because it is a projection into the future and can only be seen to be continuous with literary tradition from the vantage point of the future looking back. This is what Plato's Analytical, or Hypothetical, Method tries to validate. It bestows provisional truth upon an hypothesis from which everything which is already known may be reasonably derived in a retrospective sort of way. This Analytical Method relates to tradition, to the past, by projecting into the future an end-point (τι ἰκάνον) from which history in its entirety may be found to be continuous in retrospect.³⁵

word as "spell" carries with it a suggestion of tradition, as spells are always repetitive and therefore traditional.

³⁴See R.S. Bluck's commentary in Plato's Phaedo (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955), p.127.

³⁵It is worth noting that, besides this retrospective sort of continuity that Plato gives his Ideal World with this corrupt one, he insists upon a material link between the two. In the long list of perfections of the "True Earth" as opposed to the corruptions of this earth, Plato seems to be creating an unsurpassable divide

This retrospective kind of continuity may be seen most provocatively in the "motto" (as John Carey terms it) of the volume of poems dedicated to the memory of Edward King, Justa Edvardo King Naufrago, in which Lycidas first appeared in 1638. The "motto," attributed to Petronius Arbiter is taken from the Satyricon and is embedded in a highly challenging context.

Si bene calculum ponas, ubique naufragium est. At enim fluctibus obruto non contingit sepultura. Tanquam intersit, periturum corpus quae ratio consumat, ignis an fluctus an mora. Quicquid feceris, omnia haec eodum ventura sunt. Ferae tamen corpus lacerabunt. Tanquam melius ignis accipiat; immo hanc poenam gravissimam credimus, ubi servis irascimur. Quae ergo dementia est, omnia facere, ne quid de nobis relinquat sepultura? [The line in italics is the cited "motto."]

If you reckon well shipwreck is everywhere. And, indeed, those whelmed by the flood never reach a proper burial [or a funeral pyre]. As if it makes any difference what consumes our dying bodies, fire or water or time. Whatever you say, these all come out the same. Beasts will still tear your body to pieces. Would fire treat it any better? -when we are angry with our slaves, we believe fire to be the greatest punishment. What madness is it then to do all this [i.e to bury the dead], for the grave relinquishes nothing!³⁶

The speaker of these lines, Encolpius, makes a bitter attack on funeral rites, heaping scorn and derision upon anyone who imagines any value in them. He thus questions the very conception of the anthology in which Lycidas appears. Encolpius voices the well rehearsed cynicism that death is death and resurrection is but naive fancy, which is anathema to Christian thought. Milton and his colleagues in Justa, clearly, pick up the gauntlet so contemptuously cast down by Encolpius. By making Lycidas into the "genius

between the two, and yet he says, "it is from these [the beautiful, transparent, smooth stones of the "True Earth"] that the little stones we value, sardinian stones, jaspers, emeralds, and all such, are pieces" (112d-e).

³⁶The translation, or paraphrase, is my own interpretation. It should be noted that the "motto" of Justa Edvardo King Naufrago has the word recte instead of the word bene. This is the difference between "rightly" and "well." Using recte can only serve to reinforce the power of the nihilistic challenge, which the anthology tries to answer.

of the shore" who "[shall] be good/ To all that wander in that perilous flood," Milton acknowledges Lycidas' place in the watery world (in Plato's Okeanos) of flux. The "perilous flood" is obviously a reference to Lycidas' watery death, but the word that in "that perilous flood" makes it also an epideictic reference to Encolpius' fluctus, which proclaims utter annihilation in death. Encolpius does not only deny the possibility of anything cheating the grave. He also challenges the very meaning of the funeral rite which besides burial includes obsequies.

The compilers of Justa Edvardo King, in citing Encolpius' challenge, defeat him because it is just such citation that Encolpius insists is futile. Encolpius' "motto" has itself cheated the grave, being cited and animated in a new context. Precisely what this new context is needs to be clarified. By appearing as the motto in Justa, Encolpius' discontinuous flux attains a sense of continuity, and begins to correspond with Plato's continuous flux. In Milton's poem there is also a sense of utter loss, of hopeless flux. Indeed, Lycidas' loss has a worrying finality about it.

Whilst thee the shores, and sounding seas
 Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled,
 Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides
 Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
 Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
 Or whether thou to our moist vows denied,
 Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
 Where the great vision of the guarded mount
 Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold...
 (ll.155-63)

The proliferation of guessed locations only undermines our hope that he may be found. And yet Milton says, "Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore," raising Lycidas ever so slightly out of the watery flux, which both he and Plato hold in contempt. Milton

raises him to the surface, which, in terms of Plato's Phaedo, represents something worth dying for. (Indeed, Socrates was willing to drink poison because of his desire to reach this surface.)

We are unable to pass through to the summit of the air; for were anyone to go to its surface [$\epsilon\pi' \alpha\kappa\rho\alpha$], or gain wings and fly aloft, he would stick his head up and see - just as here the fishes of the sea stick their heads up and see the things here, so he would see the things up there: and if his nature were able to bear the vision, he would realize that this is the true heaven, the genuine light, and the true earth. (Phaedo, 109E-110A).

And yet to place Lycidas, as genius loci, at the platonic surface ($\alpha\kappa\rho\alpha$), at the threshold which separates worlds proves a little problematic. For although Lycidas as "genius of the shore" is bodiless, as are Plato's philosophers, Milton seems to insist that Lycidas is in nature at the literal interface between sea and air, and not at the platonic limit at the very edge of the world. For all his affinity with the platonic geography of flux Milton seems to drag the platonic limen back down into the very midst of the world. Milton does not employ Plato's analogic mode of narration, and makes no apology for his own straightforwardly declarative mode. Milton is bafflingly literal where Plato reassures us with allegory. "The genius of the shore" is literally incorporeal within a literally natural world.

(iii) The Resurrections of Lycidas

The climactic tenth verse paragraph of Lycidas contains Lycidas' resurrection and apotheosis. It contains the crux of our discussion of the conflict between dualism and

monism.

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
 For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
 Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor,
 So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
 And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
 And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore,
 Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
 So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
 Through the dear might of him that walked the waves;
 Where other groves and other streams along,
 With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
 And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
 In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
 There entertain him all the saints above,
 In solemn troops, and sweet societies
 That sing, and singing in their glory move,
 And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
 Now Lycidas the shepherds weep no more;
 Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore,
 In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
 To all that wander in that perilous flood. (ll.165-85)

What is most striking in these twenty one lines is that Lycidas is resurrected twice. He is resurrected into a pastoral heaven where he attends the "unexpressive nuptial song" of the marriage feast of the Lamb, but he is also resurrected into a future of benevolent service in an apotheosis as "the genius of the shore." Critics have often failed to differentiate adequately between these two resurrections and have seen them as different poetic manifestations of the same thing.³⁷ However, it is evident that these two cannot be so easily superimposed, because they clearly differ in their material substance and occupy different realms and different times. In the pastoral resurrection Lycidas has a palpable body which may be luxuriously "laved." Lycidas washes himself in a sort of

³⁷See Douglas Bush's review and commentary on the resurrection passage (ll.165-85), especially his comments on the "genius of the shore," in Merritt Hughes (general ed.) A Variorum Commentary on the Poems of John Milton, vol.2 part 2, p.730. He indicates that modern criticism focuses upon the continuity suggested by "the genius of the shore." The disjunctive quality of this figure was only concentrated upon by early critics.

heavenly baptism. Significantly, the scene is described in the present tense. The "genius of the shore" is bodiless; it inhabits the earth and is described in the future tense. The two resurrections differ in time, in place and in substance. Dualist as well as monist consequences flow from these differences.

With respect to the times of the two resurrections, it would appear that a sort of progression takes place. Lycidas is described first as he is now in heaven, and then as he shall be on earth. This reverses the orthodox Protestant view which holds that body and soul separate at death, with the soul then going to heaven, salvation and eternal life. It is surprising, in the light of this reversal, that some critics, William Kerrigan especially, have argued that Lycidas is Milton's most conventionally orthodox poem, perhaps even his only one within the Puritan main-stream.³⁸ It would be foolish to try to salvage an orthodox reading of the poem by insisting that the two resurrections merely trace the two separate fates of the separated body and soul. Such an argument fails to explain why Lycidas as "the genius of the shore" is both on earth and bodiless. If "the genius of the shore" referred to the resurrection of the dead at the eschaton then it should be bodied. If it referred to the survival of a separate soul it should be in heaven.

However, the tenses of the consolatory passage in Lycidas are not as simple as the above analysis implies. The whole passage, with both present tense and future tense sections, is thrown into the past by the line immediately following it, "Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills" (l.186). This gives the entire passage preceding this

³⁸See Kerrigan's article "The Heretical Milton: From Assumption to Mortalism" English Literary Renaissance, 5 (1975), 137.

line a peculiar existence in time. As one reads the poem and comes upon this sentence, one is forced to adopt a different sense of what is actually present, past and future in the passage. What had been present and what had been future are shown now to have been sung in the past. Thus with respect to one's own perspective as one reads "thus sang the uncouth swain," what had only a moment previously been in the future tense should now actually be taking place in the present, and, it would seem, that what had been present should now be extinct and gone. It is quite reasonable to allow the future to slip into the present in this manner and the present into the past, for, after all, this is how time flows. But the present tense in which Lycidas in the pastoral heaven laves his oozy locks and listens to the "unexpressive nuptial song," is no ordinary present tense. It is impossible to imagine that this picture should be abolished in the sense that we have moved beyond it in time. The very idea of Lycidas' resurrection, and thus the poem's Christian consolation, would thus be abolished. Lycidas would thus have to be read as a poem of utter theological despair.³⁹ Clearly, we have to find an alternative explanation if heaven and salvation are not to slip into the past and disappear. A possible alternative which preserves Lycidas' resurrection is that there is a sense of timelessness, of being out of history, in Milton's present tense pastoral vision. The optimism in "weep no more, woeful shepherds weep no more,/ For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead" carries with it a sense of eternity. And, indeed, as "all the saints above ... wipe the tears for ever from his eyes," it feels that we are staring at eternity, even while we (as readers) occupy a different time frame. Furthermore, the fact that there are no markers of sequential time organizing Lycidas' activities in heaven (laving his locks, hearing the nuptial song, being

³⁹If one were to insist that the presence of Lycidas in heaven is abolished, and that, as the poem comes to an end, Lycidas' only presence is as a diffuse, bodiless "genius of the shore" awaiting bodily resurrection, then one would have no alternative but to read this as a mortalist poem.

entertained by the saints, and having his tears wiped away), suggests that these activities take place with a simultaneity of effect, which is only conceivable under eternal conditions.

In the Christian tradition in general, there is powerful precedent for using the present tense to figure eternity. This may be demonstrated in the way that Exodus 3:14 has been understood. This verse is significant in the tradition because it both initiates and promises the exodus, which becomes the traditional archetype of God's promise of salvation. When God calls upon Moses to be his messenger, Moses asks whom he shall say has sent him. In reply, God names himself.

And God said unto Moses; I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. (Authorized Version).

Dixit Deus ad Moysen: EGO SUM QUI SUM. Ait: Sic dices filiis Israel: QUI EST, misit me ad vos. (Clementine Vulgate).

Dixit itaque Jehova Moschi, Eheje, qui sum: dixitq[ue], ita dices filiis Jisraelis, Eheje misit me ad vos. (Junius-Tremellius Bible)

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־מֹשֶׁה אֲהִיָּה אֲשֶׁר אֲהִיָּה וַיֹּאמֶר כֹּה תֹאמַר לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
אֲהִיָּה שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֵיכֶם

The above four versions differ in the way in which they translate God's name, אֲהִיָּה.

The Hebrew version is in the "imperfect" tense and is thus very open to interpretation.⁴⁰

The Authorized Version and the Clementine Vulgate render this present ("I am that I am" and ego sum qui sum). Both thus assert that the nature of God's being is present, and by

⁴⁰There are only two verb tense forms in biblical Hebrew. According to E. Kautzsch's Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar (Oxford, 1910), Hebrew tenses refer to the aspect of the verb rather than to the sequence of events that they describe. Kautzsch's "perfect" thus refers to what has been completed (or past), while the "imperfect" refers to what remains open (or non-past). The imperfect thus incorporates a very wide spread of time.

this presence they imply an ever-presence. The Junius-Tremellius Bible, however, retains a transliterated "Eheje" as God's proper name, but also supplies the translation, qui sum. While the Authorized Version and the Vulgate translate אהיה אשר אהיה fully into the present, the Junius-Tremellius version only translates half of the epithet into the present. They annotate "Eheje" pointing out that this name proceeds out of God's eternal essence which is a proper interpretation of the Hebrew imperfect tense.⁴¹ Despite their minor differences, these translations unanimously recognize that this passage refers to God's eternal presence. Milton takes up the Junius-Tremellius version in his De Doctrina Christiana, in his discussion of the meaning of God's name.

[Exod.] Cap. iii.14 אהיה Ehie qui sum vel ero, et persona prima in tertiam affinis verbi mutatur Iehovae, qui est vel erit idem quod Iehova ut quidam putant ... sed nomen Iehovae non modo naturae, verum etiam promissionum eius existentiam, id est, impletionem, significare videtur.

[Exod.] ch.3:14: "Ehie that I am" or "I will be;" the first person changes in the next verse into the third person of the word Iehova, "he that is" or "he that will be" is the same as Iehova, as some think ... But the name may be seen to signify not only the nature of Iehova but also the existence of his promises, that is, their fulfilment.⁴²

Milton, following Junius and Tremellius, retains the Hebrew transliteration, but he translates it as well, rendering both present and future.⁴³ Clearly, the double tense of the

⁴¹ The annotation on Eheje reads: "hoc nomine se cognoscendum proponit ab aeterna essentia sua, qua ab omnibus quae sunt in caelo terra & infra terram discernitur: quod explicatur Heb.13.8 & Apoc.1.8. qui est fuit & futurus est, heri & hodie in perpetuum ... Hebraeum autem Eheje tamquam proprium retinimus, quia ut propriu[m] nomen eodum ver. paulo post subjicitur. (He proposes that he should be known by this name proceeding from his eternal essence, which is distinguished from all that is in heaven on earth or below: as is explicated in Heb. 13.8 & Apoc.1.8. which is, was and shall be, yesterday and today for ever ... We have retained the Hebrew name Eheje as a distinguishing characteristic, because only a little later [in the next verse] it is underlined by the same word as the proper name [יהוה]).

⁴²This is my own translation of De Doctrina Christiana taken from The Works of John Milton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933), Book I, Chap. 2, pp.38-40.

⁴³Such combination of two tenses in one word is one of the problems of the richly overdetermined tetragrammaton. It has often been suggested that it is a combination of יהיה (yiheyeh, he will be present) and הוה (howeh, he is present).

tetragrammaton encourages Milton's belief that this characterizing name is the very essence of prophecy, since it signifies both the existence of his promises now and their future fulfilment. Thus, Milton's belief in אהיה or יהוה and the promise that these names guarantee, authorizes the use of the present tense to refer prophetically to what timelessly inhabits both present and future, the ever-present.

Thus, even though the pastoral resurrection in Lycidas is offered in the present tense, we may read it as an ever-present tense. Joseph Wittreich suggests that this ever-presence describes an apocalyptic prophecy when he comments, "like all prophecy ... Lycidas is written in the future tense." Wittreich must know that in fact the verbs in Lycidas are in the present tense. He must therefore be assuming futurity in ever-presence. This ever-presence, which may have no beginning and no end as far as God is concerned, most certainly has a beginning for Lycidas. Lycidas spends most of the poem lost "beneath the watery floor" like the sun during the night. Like the absent sun, like the underground river of the Phaedo, and like Arethusa, Lycidas rises again, but only after a delay. Thus the beginning of Lycidas' ever-presence lies in the future at the apocalypse. Milton's rather odd use of the present tense in his pastoral vision describes something which is located both in the past (because it has prophetically been seen and sung by the uncouth swain) and in the remote apocalyptic future. Embedded in the past, Milton's present seems also to leap over history into the eternity beyond.

Milton's present tense pastoral heaven, which is really both in the past and the distant future, neglects the more immediate future, the future which describes the time stretching from now until the end of time. This actual or ordinary futurity is mentioned

in the last three lines of the prophetic passage in Lycidas:

Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

The present tense art, here, is controlled by henceforth, and it is thus flung forward into the immediate future. Because of this, it has a different status from the present tense verbs of the pastoral vision discussed above. These three lines clearly refer to ordinary futurity. Indeed, the only verb phrase which is inscribed in the future tense in the whole prophetic passage, "shalt be good," is in perfect temporal agreement with the present tense art governed by henceforth. These lines describe what Lycidas' existence will be from now on up to the end of time, what it will be during that delay, that night-time (which we have already noted), between sunset and sunrise, between death and Judgement. Thus the two different uses of the present tense verb form distinguish between the two ways in which Lycidas is found. He is found in a pastoral paradise inhabited by "all the saints above" who sing and who, singing, "wipe the tears for ever from his eyes." But he is also found as "the genius of the shore" where he will be good "to all who wander in that perilous flood" during that perilous night after the sun has set and before it has risen again.⁴⁴

Besides operating in two different kinds of prophetic future-time, the two resurrections of Lycidas seem to occupy two entirely different worlds. The first (which is ever-present only after Judgement) is a pastoral paradise. Lycidas is described washing

⁴⁴Barbara A. Johnson, in "Fiction and Grief: The Pastoral idiom of Milton's Lycidas," Milton Quarterly (1984), 69-76, struggles to explain why Milton presents Lycidas floundering somewhere in the flood simultaneously in the present tense with his bliss in the pastoral heaven. Johnson fails to notice the rich ambiguity in the present tense which Milton uses and that these moments, although both described in the present tense actually occupy entirely different times. Johnson's misunderstanding of the tenses also leads her to misconstrue Milton's mortalism in this poem, as has already been pointed out (p.58).

his hair and relaxing in the heavenly musical otium, which is little different from the naive pastoral of the poets' youth.⁴⁵ Indeed, they are both filled with moist scenery and music. The only difference between the pastoral paradise of Lycidas' resurrection and that of his idealised youth is that the revived pastoral paradise is secure in a way that the idealised pastoral of Milton's youth is not. What characterises Milton's youthful pastoral is its vulnerability to "the heavy change" brought about by Lycidas' death. The youthful pastoral is vulnerable to rupture in a way that the revived paradise never is. The relationship of the two pastoral gardens in Lycidas is very much like that of Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained. The one is ruptured, the other is invulnerable to such disjunction. Besides this crucial difference, the two pastoral worlds of Lycidas are substantially the same.

The second world into which Lycidas is resurrected is that of the genius loci. It is by no means heaven, but rather, it is very much within the realm of nature. As the "genius of the shore" Lycidas undergoes a metamorphosis, a radical change. This is very different from Lycidas' essentially conservative resurrection into the pastoral paradise. As the genius loci Lycidas bears no resemblance to his former self at all. This metamorphosis corresponds with the pagan idea of resurrection which is visible in Virgil's stellar Daphnis in Eclogue V, and even in the vegetal Adonis of Theocritus I and of Bion's Lament. It is also the very thing we find throughout Ovid's Metamorphoses.⁴⁶

⁴⁵Described in lines 25-36.

⁴⁶See Ovid's Metamorphoses, especially Book V, where the metamorphosis of Arethusa is related. This metamorphosis is of crucial importance to the pastoral elegiac tradition, as has been mentioned, and as will be seen again in the course of this chapter.

Although he describes two resurrections similar to those of Revelation 20:4-5 (one in history and one after Judgement), Milton's double resurrection has a terribly heretical feel. A subtle mortalism arises out of the juxtaposition of the two Christian pastorals, and a glimmer of materialism is visible in the blatantly pagan metamorphosis of the genius loci. Indeed, the substantially identical pastorals of Milton's youth and of Lycidas' salvation are powerfully suggestive of Milton's mortalism which requires the man who is resurrected in eternity to be substantially the same man as the one that died. Furthermore, the idea that Lycidas undergoes a pagan metamorphosis and lives on as an animated coast, as a genius loci, corresponds entirely with Milton's pantheistic materialism. It is no doubt these hints of mortalism and materialism which Samuel Johnson recognized when he complained of Lycidas' "irreverent combinations" of trifling pagan fictions with "the most awful and sacred truths." Johnson, with a bizarre mixture of orthodox indignation and tolerant indulgence, condemns Lycidas ferociously but attenuates his criticism with a surprising magnanimity. "Such equivocations," he says of the poem's "irreverent combinations,"

are always unskilful; but here they are indecent, and at least approach to impiety, of which, however, I believe the writer not to have been conscious.⁴⁷

I do not believe that Johnson would have been quite so generously indulgent had he had the De Doctrina Christiana to confirm his worst suspicions about the author of Lycidas. Because the De Doctrina was still languishing suppressed and unpublished, Johnson, I believe, allowed the rest of Milton's more smoothly orthodox work to move him to leniency. Although Johnson was reluctant to brand the poem with the heretical terms of mortalism or materialism, his astute eye did not miss the "irreverent combinations" or

⁴⁷See The Lives of the English Poets, p.164.

"equivocations" which these heresies effect upon the poem.

The "irreverent combinations" that Johnson perceived in Lycidas may now with hindsight be seen to arise out of what Johnson saw as an infelicitous clash between the Christian pastoral paradise and the pagan metamorphosis of Lycidas' two resurrections, which correspond to Milton's mortalism and pantheistic materialism, respectively. And yet, in a different sense, the Christian and pagan resurrections may be seen to complement one another. The mortalism implicit in the Christian pastoral resurrection leaves a disquieting gap, or time-delay, or discontinuity, between Lycidas' pastoral life on earth and his eternal one in paradise after Judgement. The materialism implicit in Lycidas' metamorphosis into the "genius of the shore," suggests a reassuringly neat filler for this gap. Despite the fact that the metamorphosis of "the genius of the shore" seemed terribly pagan to Johnson, we know, after reading De Doctrina Christiana, that Milton had a Christian (though unorthodox) justification for his seemingly pagan metamorphosis. Thus it would seem that an acknowledgement of the way in which Milton's mortalism and materialism articulate answers Johnson's sense of "irreverent combinations" in Lycidas, because the two have a sort of continuity.

But Johnson's criticism reasserts itself in a new form. The problem which confronts us immediately is that the "genius of the shore" is insubstantial and spiritual. Indeed, the very term genius loci, "spirit of the place," is an oxymoron in which the spiritual and the physical confront one another. Lycidas, as genius loci, has a place on earth ("the shore"), but it is impossible to imagine precisely what this "genius" or spirit might realistically be, other than some natural principle equivalent to what a scientist

might call a law of nature. Although Lycidas, as "the genius of the shore," may be "good / To all that wander in that perilous flood," this can be of little comfort to a believing, faithful Christian, such as Milton. For confronting resurrection as some scarcely animate insubstantial and impersonal principle of nature can be little different from staring into the mouth of death itself. Indeed, the "shore" is a particularly appropriate location for Lycidas as "genius." It is an in-between place, where sea, land and air meet; it is the threshold which lies between the Lycidas who is "sunk low" and the one which is "mounted high." It is a threshold very similar to the limit of the world of water at its interface with the world of air described in Plato's Phaedo. It is entirely appropriate that Lycidas should occupy this place between the time of his death and of his final resurrection. But what is entirely inappropriate, is that it is in the form of a spirit that Lycidas occupies this place. It is impossible to say precisely how Lycidas occupies the material shore as an insubstantial spirit: the materiality of the place and the spirituality of the "genius" are irreconcilable. While there is nothing to maintain their irreconcilability in theory, they are strongly felt to be so because resurrection as a genius has no consolatory force for any believing Christian.

Milton's genius loci inverts the orthodox Protestant belief that the insubstantial soul inhabits heaven until Judgement by suggesting that the insubstantial spiritual Lycidas inhabits the earth, "the shore," during this time. So although this resurrection supplies the theoretical continuity which the other resurrection patently lacks, it turns out to be an empty gesture, threatening itself to dissociate into disparate matter and spirit.

The problem of an insubstantial spiritual resurrection is raised again in Milton's

later pastoral-elegy, Epitaphium Damonis. In this poem, a double resurrection is also described, but here the two are not so clearly distinguished as they are in Lycidas. After bewailing Damon's death at some length, Thyrsis brings his own keen sense of loss abruptly to an end.

Tu quoque in his,⁴⁸ nec me fallit spes lubrica Damon,
Tu quoque in his certe es, nam quo tua dulcis abiret
Sanctaque simplicitas, nam quo tua candida virtus?
Nec te Lethaeo fas quaesivisse sub Orco,
Nec tibi conveniunt lacrymae, nec flebimus ultra,
Ite procul lacrymae, purum colit aethera Damon,
Aethera purus habet, pluvium pede reppulit arcum.

You too are among these [holy minds and the forms of the gods], I am not tricked by false hope, Damon, you too are certainly among these, for where could your sweet and holy simplicity have gone, for where could your shining virtue have gone? It would be wrong to search for you beneath Lethan Orcus, tears do not go together with you, I shall cry no more, get away tears! Damon dwells in the pure ether; pure he inhabits the ether; he turns the rainbow back with his foot. (ll.198-204)

Thyrsis locates Damon in heaven, in the ether, among the gods, in an apotheosis which recollects Virgil's Ecl.V.56-7 which has Daphnis at the threshold of Olympus viewing rainclouds beneath his feet. Damon in the ether, turning the rainbow back with his foot, also recollects Lycidas as the "genius of the shore," since Damon's apotheosis also makes him a local deity. Damon is the spirit of the rainbow, the spirit responsible for its parabolic curve. He stands at its apex and turns the ascendant rainbow back to earth with his foot. Thyrsis' anxiety about the insubstantiality of this apotheosis is witnessed by his immediately preceding ecphrasis on the two cups (pocula bina), upon which a twin argument has been engraved (et circum gemino caelaverat argumento). The antecedent

⁴⁸The antecedent of his is ostensibly mentes sacrae, formaeque deorum (l.197), but the antecedent may also refer to the scene of the first ecphrasis. This will be discussed in due course.

of his in tu quoque in his, is not entirely clear. There are two possibilities. His may refer to either or both of the twin arguments. The first argument describes an idealized pastoral setting, with river and forest, where dawn rises over the sea, above which the Phoenix glides on multicolored wings. The other design is of Olympus from which Amor (Cupid) shoots his darts upwards. The first part of the twin argument is clearly visible to the imagination because Thyrsis has described, albeit in idealized form, a naturalistic scene, a sort of earthly paradise. One can almost see Damon as the deity of the multicolored rainbow where the Phoenix glides. The second part is difficult to picture since Amor shoots his darts into an ill defined realm of spheres inhabited by holy minds and divine forms.⁴⁹ These holy minds and divine forms are not represented on the cup. It would be impossible to draw them. It is difficult enough to imagine what these might be. Amor shoots his arrows up off the cup into the unknown beyond. It is also into this unknown, among holy minds and divine forms, that Thyrsis places Damon in the passage cited above. It would seem that Amor's arrows represent some kind of link between what is visible on the cup and what may only be represented beyond the cup in words. The vague insubstantiality of Damon as deity is brought home by this image. The two scenes are clearly intended to be equivalent, since even though they are different, they are described as twins. The twinned idealized pastoral and vague mythic Olympian designs are subtly identical in a manner which only becomes clear later on, when the double resurrection is described.

Quin tu coeli post iura recepta
Dexter ades, placidusque fave quicumque vocaris,
Seu tu noster eris Damon, sive aequior audis

⁴⁹cf. Plato's pure philosopher. Also see Sanford Budick's The Dividing Muse (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), which argues that this difficulty to picture is characteristic of Miltonic style in general.

Diodatus, quo te divino nomine cuncti
Coelicolae norint, sylvisque vocabere Damon.

So you rightly go up to heaven after having received justice: gently give grace whatever you are called, whether you be my Damon, or whether you prefer to hear Diodatus, by which divine name all the gods know you, though you are called Damon by the woods. (ll.207-11).

Thyrsis seems to be giving his departed friend a choice of identity in resurrection, a choice between the god given Diodatus and the pastoral idealized Damon, between a heavenly and an earthly identity. But whatever the choice, the effect ultimately amounts to the same thing. The thrust of this passage is to merge Damon and Diodatus in the execution of their identical office, which is to give grace gently. And, indeed, the twin arguments are equally graceful. The office of Damon/Diodatus is the same as that of Lycidas who as "genius of the shore ... shal[l] be good/ To all that wander in that perilous flood." The twinning of the designs on the cups, the twinning of the forms of resurrection, and the merging of the benevolent office in resurrection, all amounts to the assertion that the two modes of being, the pastoral and the spiritual, are really the same, even though they appear different. Thus Milton, in Epitaphium Damonis, tries to forge a connection, an identity, between the earthly and the heavenly, the literal and the spiritual.

However, the two resurrections of Lycidas are too different from one another to be twinned in the way Milton suggests in Epitaphium Damonis. Furthermore, Epitaphium Damonis does not suffer from the generic splits of Lycidas. Although the two resurrections of Lycidas articulate well in terms of time, in terms of substance and genre they diverge radically. The problem of Lycidas which we have been discussing,

namely the insubstantiality of the "genius of the shore" (or the earthly yet spiritual resurrection), may be demonstrated in terms of tradition, which comprehends an analogous concept of resurrection. As Milton has claimed in Of Reformation, tradition is a resurrection of sorts.⁵⁰ But this resurrection is at best highly cerebral or spiritual and is thus difficult to grasp. An examination of Milton's poem with respect to its place in the pastoral-elegy tradition of Theocritus and Virgil will indicate how Lycidas, the poem itself, provides, or attempts to provide, a material continuity, at least in terms of tradition.

Pastoral elegy, a mixed genre, contains a sweet, serene, idyllic pastoral song mixed in with a sharp, truncated, plangent elegiac. Elegiac poetry originally differed from pastoral in ancient Greece and Rome not so much in mood as in rhythm. Elegy consisted of distichs combining a line of hexameter with one of pentameter. Pastoral had hexameter throughout.⁵¹ Thus, in terms of rhythm, elegy can be looked upon as truncated pastoral, and as such it represents a kind of pastoral loss. It is this sense of a pastoral cut short which characterizes the elegiac moment within pastoral elegy. In terms of the mixed nature of the genre, then, Lycidas can be looked upon as a conflict between the serene plenitude of the pastoral moment and the threatening loss which intrudes in the form of the elegiac moment. This clash has precedent in the pastoral-elegy tradition (which has already been mentioned in section ii above). The pastoral moment tends toward an encompassing plenitude of voice, while the elegiac tends towards the loss of voice, towards silence. The elegiac trend towards silence is confirmed in Lycidas by the

⁵⁰See the discussion of this on page 65.

⁵¹See Georg Luck, The Latin Love Elegy, (London: Methuen, 1959), p.18-22.

identification of death as loss of voice: "Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear" (l.49). The loss of a poet's voice in Lycidas may be better understood in comparison with Theocritus' Daphnis and Virgil's Gallus. Lycidas is similar in certain respects to both of these characters. Daphnis and Gallus are both described in the process of passing or melting away,⁵² while Lycidas is already dead from the outset. While Daphnis actually passes away in the course of Theocritus' poem, Gallus lingers, dying, throughout Virgil's.

Daphnis like Lycidas dies a watery death; both slip away into nothingness in a perilous flood. However, Daphnis apparently slips away of his own volition. Daphnis' apparent insistence upon his own dissolution deserves scrutiny. Thyrsis first describes Daphnis as melting away. In this condition he is visited by a procession of mourners who are unable to move him to speak despite their determined appeals. His silence is only broken after Aphrodite accuses him of having been overturned by love. She taunts him with the fact that he had boasted that he would himself overturn love. It is difficult to know precisely what the circumstances are of this boast and the reason why it is overturned.⁵³ But viewing this from Daphnis' perspective as a singer of pastoral songs, it is clear that if he were stricken by love his pastoral otium would be shattered and his song would no longer be pastoral, but elegiac. Neither would he be free to mix pastoral and elegy as does Thyrsis who is able to switch back and forth between the two with the sweetness of his song never faltering. The goatherd says of him at the outset,

ἄδιον ὦ ποιμὴν τὸ τεὸν μέλος ἢ τὸ καταχῆς
τῆν' ἀπὸ τᾶς πέτρας καταλείβεται ὑπόθεν ὕδωρ.

⁵²"Indigno cum Gallus amore peribat" (Ecl.X.10); ὄκα Δάφνις ἐτάκετο (Id.I.66).

⁵³See Gregory Crane, "The laughter of Aphrodite In Theocritus, Idyll 1," Harvard Studies in Classical Philology 91 (1987) 161-184 for a discussion of this indeterminacy.

[you pour down your song, o shepherd, as sweetly as the
waters pour down onto the rocks.]

And when Thyrsis has finished singing, the goatherd says,

πλήρες τοι μέλιτος τὸ καλὸν στόμα Θύρσι γένοιτο

[may your beautiful mouth, Thyrsis, be filled with honey.]

Thyrsis' sweetness of voice contrasts heavily with the bitter love (πικρὸν ἔρωτα) Daphnis bears. Daphnis bitterly holds back his voice and when he speaks it is only to make acerbic comments to Aphrodite and to say his farewells. While Thyrsis' voice is as sweet as water falling upon rocks, Daphnis goes into the stream to silence. The contrast between Thyrsis and Daphnis thus lies in the different ways in which their voices relate to the stream. Thyrsis' voice is likened to the sweetness of the stream while Daphnis' voice is engulfed by it. Thyrsis sings in an a memorable and enabling manner about the disappearance and failure of another poet's voice. Thus, Thyrsis' song, like the river, both establishes and abolishes its object, Daphnis. The figure of the river thus expresses a truth about tradition itself. Tradition simultaneously marks a continuity as well as a break with a past voice.⁵⁴

Daphnis' apparent suicide, going to the stream (ἔβα 'ρόον), may be seen as the ultimate description of loss of voice. Indeed, Daphnis, the pastoral singer, stricken by love, finds that his voice is no longer his own. The bitter catalogue of inversions that he wishes upon nature at the very end proves this. So, after giving his syrinx up to Pan, Daphnis allows himself, his voice, to be washed away into oblivion. Thyrsis, however,

⁵⁴Harold Bloom and Thomas M. Greene express the theoretical aspects of this point exhaustively. See, especially, Bloom's chapter, "The Dialectics of Poetic Tradition," in *A Map of Misreading* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), and Greene's chapter, "Historical Solitude," in *The Light in Troy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

survives to reassert his sweet pastoral voice.

ἐγὼ δ' ὑμῖν καὶ ἐς ὕστερον ἄδιον ἄσῶ. (l.145)

[I will sing you a sweeter song hereafter.]

Virgil's tenth Eclogue also contrasts two voices. Gallus, unlike Daphnis, finds that his voice is all too much his own. Although he covets pastoral otium (as he describes at length) and has every intention of framing his voice in the pastoral mode,

Ibo et Chalcidico quae sunt mihi condita versu
carmina pastoris Siculi modulabor avena, (ll.50-1),

[I will go and modulate the songs that I have composed in
Chalcidic verse to the Siculian shepherd's pipe,]

Gallus finds himself disabled, a thrall to love:

Omnia vincit Amor et nos cedamus Amori. (l.69)

[Love conquers all, we all fall for Love.]

While Gallus covets the traditional Theocritean pastoral mode and yet finds love disabling him, the narrator not only sings an exemplary pastoral,

vos haec facietis maxima Gallo,
Gallo, quous amor tantum mihi crescit in horas
quantum vere novo viridis se subicit alnus, (ll.72-4),

[may you [muses] make this [my singing] great for Gallus' sake,
for Gallus, for whom my love grows hourly as when the green
alder tree grows in early spring,]

but he also sings for Gallus (neget quis carmina Gallo?). Thus, like Theocritus' Idyll, Virgil's Eclogue represents two different kinds of voice, a mixed pastoral voice, which is successfully traditional, and a lone elegiac voice, which strains to breaking point. The pastoral in both poems is shown to flow with ease, while the elegiac strains against itself, ending in silence in the Theocritean case, and despair in the Virgilian.

Milton calls these voices to mind in Lycidas when he invokes Arethuse, Mincius and Alpheus as muses.

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens...

Throughout the poem, the smooth-sliding traditional pastoral voice is continually thwarted by puzzling disjunctions. The passage cited here is particularly interesting in this respect. At the very moment that he invokes the rivers of the Theocritean and Virgilian pastoral tradition, Milton's verse registers two disjunctive jolts. First, Milton declares that he has heard a strain "of a higher mood." What this "higher mood" can be referring to is unclear, for it most certainly does not refer to Arethuse and Mincius. It seems unlikely that it refers back to Phoebus' speech, which immediately precedes the apostrophe.⁵⁵ For if it did, we must explain why Milton first interrupts this speech with the invocation and then immediately returns to it, why the invocation should interrupt the flow between Phoebus' speech and what Milton subsequently has to say about it. That it refers to Phoebus' speech seems even more unlikely when we consider that Milton has nothing to say about it and that this "reference" dangles absurdly between the invocation and Triton's speech. It seems more likely that the strain "of a higher mood" which Milton has heard refers to the plangent, bitter, tones of elegy within pastoral elegy. Indeed, what he has heard before the invocation and what he continues to hear after it are elegiac voices. The second jolt arises out of the fact that his own pastoral "oat" proceeds not by playing its own pastoral tune, but by listening. What his "oat" listens to is not the sweet

⁵⁵That it refers to Phoebus' speech is suggested by John Carey, Milton: Complete Shorter Poems (London: Longman, 1971), p.246.

voice of Theocritean or Virgilian pastoral, even though these have just been invoked, but the defiant, despairing and bitter voices of Triton, Damoetas and the Galilean Pilot. Indeed, Milton's invocation of Arethuse and Mincius does not fit smoothly into the rough flow of his surrounding verse. When Milton proceeds beyond the speech of the Galilean Pilot,

Return Alpheus, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams....,

he mythically rescues Arethuse and Mincius, who are isolated in a "sea" of elegiac voices. The geographical locations of the three rivers are significant here. Both Arethusa and Mincius are separated from Alpheus by sea, Alpheus being in Arcadia, Arethuse in Syracuse and Mincius in Italy. The return that Milton encourages is a reference to the mythological passage under the sea of Alpheus to Syracuse to join his loved Arethuse, who originally had fled in terror from his love. But now, after his return, as the myth has it, they mix their waters. Milton refers to this version of the myth in Arcades: "Divine Alpheus, who by secret sluice,/ Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse" (ll.30-1). The idea that rivers may have underground or under-sea continuity with places which are distant and seemingly isolated on the surface, begins with Plato's Phaedo myth, as we have seen, and reaches way down in a long and rich tradition which includes Coleridge's Alph in "Kubla Khan." The rescue is effected by the idea that Alpheus and Arethuse can be connected with one another by flowing under the sea without becoming brine. The myth denies that rivers invariably end when they flow into and mix with the sea. Metaphorically then, the briny sea of bitter elegy which would consume the sweet-water voices of pastoral is mythically bypassed. By flowing under the sea Arethuse and Alpheus overcome the disjunction which flowing into the sea would normally mean, and

thus establish a sweet continuity.

Lycidas is a pastoral elegy because it too tries to contain the tense juxtaposition of the genre's two conflicting modes. The voice of Lycidas is entirely absent in the poem, and he thus may be said to represent the extreme form of that tendency to silence which Daphnis and Gallus represent in their respective poems. Like Daphnis, Lycidas "has gone to the stream." Lycidas' absence is described by Milton as a loss of voice, which is the direct focus of the poem's lament: "Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear" (l.49). The three poems are alike in that the sweetness of a pastoral singer is repeatedly intruded upon by a bitter elegiac voice, whether this takes place as a sort of struggle within the narrative voice (as it is in Lycidas) or whether it is represented by the intrusion of a character within the narrative (as in Theocritus and Virgil). Indeed, Lycidas opens with just such an intrusion.

I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is dead... (ll.3-7)

This is the Et in Arcadia ego, death intruding upon the pastoral. And yet, ironically, this is the occasion for the poem; this is what forces Milton into pastoral verse. As has been seen in Theocritus and Virgil, the elegiac threatens to silence the pastoral, insisting on its inadequacy in the face of powerful emotion. Later on in Lycidas, too, the elegiac almost overwhelms the pastoral by bitterly berating its futility and by suggesting an alternative life of silent or speechless, but passionate physical indulgence.

Alas! What boots it with uncessant care
To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,

And strictly meditate the thankless muse,
 Were it not better done as others use,
 To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
 Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair? (ll.64-9).

The alternative of erotic hedonism expressed here ultimately entails death. For such hedonism entails giving up the muse, and the silence, or loss of voice which ensues (as the tradition suggests) is equivalent to death.

The three poems we have been discussing are also alike in that they each celebrate the pastoral over the elegiac. In each the pastoral manages to contain the elegiac. And it is an increasingly bitter and increasingly threatening elegiac which needs to be contained. Theocritus' Thyrsis simply asserts his own sweet voice by outlasting Daphnis. This kind of containment worries Virgil as the loss of Daphnis remains very palpable in the poem. Virgil's narrator differs from Thyrsis in that he sings for Gallus (neget quis carmina Gallo?). Singing for may be taken both as "singing instead of" or "in place of" as well as "singing as a kind of offertory gesture."⁵⁶ By singing for Gallus, Virgil is able to supply the deficiency of voice that Gallus suffers from. Thyrsis' and Daphnis' voices are contrasted in Theocritus' poem, whereas in Virgil's the two voices (the narrator's and Gallus') are brought together in that the one self-consciously contains the other by singing for (in place of) it. Although Virgil's singing for Gallus may be understood as a successful merging (or containment) of the two voices, singing for Gallus may also be understood as eliminating him altogether, as singing "instead of" him. Taken positively, however, singing for Gallus means that he does not melt away in the stream as Daphnis does.

⁵⁶Virgil may have got the idea of singing for Gallus from Moschus' Lament for Bion. See page 73.

Milton is different from both the Virgilian narrator and Thyrsis in that he combines elements from both. He too sings for Lycidas ("Who would not sing for Lycidas?") in the way that Virgil does, and yet Lycidas is utterly and disturbingly lost in the flood as is Daphnis. Lycidas' watery death means that his voice is engulfed in the flood. Milton learns from Virgil's innovation, but he radicalizes the problem by disallowing Virgil's solution (Lycidas' voice is never cited as is Gallus'). Milton, in doing this, throws the Virgilian solution into the future, into a sense of resurrection. Rather than the mere containment of a bitter voice which is the accomplishment of pagan pastoral, Milton turns to prophecy. He turns to a Christian pastoral which, like the "unexpressive nuptial song," overcomes all disjunctions.

Virgil's pastoral narrator is able to integrate pastoral and elegy in a way that Gallus is unable. By singing for Gallus, Virgil's narrator contains him within the pastoral poem he makes, just as he "weaves a basket of slender marshmallow stems." In Milton's poem, Lycidas is already lost. He begins where Daphnis ends. The faltering elegiac voice in this poem is Milton's own which continually disrupts the smooth flow of his own pastoral. Milton's task, therefore, is more radical than Virgil's. He has to convince himself of Lycidas' continued existence, or else he has to accept his own vocal impotence with respect to the task he has set himself. Milton brings Lycidas into poetic existence by singing the poem Lycidas. When Milton sings for Lycidas he is not preventing his death (as Virgil is for Gallus); he is retrieving him from the dead.

This is rather an audacious claim for a Christian whose faith is in God's salvation, and yet it is banal for a humanist because it invokes the literary commonplace of the

immortality of the written text. Ovid, in the last line of his Metamorphoses, gives memorable expression to this: "siquid habent veri vatum praesagia, vivam" (x.879), [if any prophecies of the poets have truth, I shall live]. Milton sings Lycidas into immortality by singing him into his pastoral poem, by giving him an existence in a pastoral paradise. Milton demonstrates how such immortality operates poetically when he calls forth Daphnis, Thyrsis and Gallus. However, although the truth of this immortality cannot be doubted, it cannot offer much consolation. For, as I have said, the banality of the immortality of the text cannot persuade us that Lycidas is actually alive, in nearly so emphatic a way as Milton asserts in the consolatory passage quoted earlier in this essay. Walter Ong pin-points our dissatisfaction with textual immortality in his book Interfaces of the Word:

we can note that in a certain way writing ... perdures into the future and in this sense lives. Writing obviously outlasts speech. It will remain. But the kind of life writing enjoys is bizarre, for it is achieved at the price of death. The words that "live" are inert, as no real words can ever be. They are no longer audible, which is to say they are no longer real words, but only marks on the surface which can signal those who know the proper codes how to create certain real words or groups of real words. In this sense writing "lives" only posthumously and vicariously, only if living people have the skills to give it a share in their lives. When they do this, the words read off are made to enter into an historical situation other than that in which they were first "set down."⁵⁷

Lycidas then has an inert immortality in this sense. Wittgenstein makes a similar observation in a brief but enigmatic paragraph of his Philosophical Investigations:

Every sign by itself seems dead. What gives it life? - In use it is alive.
Is life breathed into it there? - Or is the use its life?⁵⁸

Wittgenstein seems to be asking us to differentiate between two possible ways in which

⁵⁷Interfaces of the Word: Studies in the Evolution of Consciousness and Culture (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), p.234.

⁵⁸G.E.M. Anscombe trans. (Oxford, 1953) ss. 432.

use and life can be related. These two ways depend upon whether or not an agent is necessary in the use. Applying this to Lycidas, we would ask if Lycidas lives when we read it, or because it may be read.⁵⁹ It would seem, as will be demonstrated in the following paragraphs, that Lycidas "lives" somewhere between these two possibilities.

Lycidas is not only a text, it is also a song. Clay Hunt, in his fascinating book Lycidas and the Italian Critics, shows us that the term Milton used to describe Lycidas in the 1645 edition of his poems, "monody," has a felicitously double meaning. It refers both to a "narrative poem of lamentation for the dead, which is sung by a single actor," and to "a musical declamation in stilo recitativo for a solo voice, usually with instrumental accompaniment."⁶⁰ As such a "monody," Milton's poem is both a text as well as a potential verbal performance.⁶¹ This meaning of "monody" is curiously similar to another poetic genre which contains serene and bitter voices - the Psalms. Milton's eighty-sixth psalm exhibits an insecurity of voice which sings itself into an assured confidence in God.

- 1 **Thy** gracious ear, **O Lord, incline,**
 O hear me I thee pray,
 For I am poor, and almost pine
 With need, and sad decay.
- 2 **Preserve my soul, for I have trod**
 Thy ways, and love the just,
 Save thou thy servant O my God
 Who still in thee doth trust.

⁵⁹cf. Plato's idea that a myth approaches truth when it is repeated spell-like many times: καὶ χρὴ τὰ τοιαῦτα ὡσπερ ἐπάδειν ἑαυτῷ, διὸ δὴ ἔγωγε καὶ πάλαι μηκύνω τὸν μῦθον. (Phaedo, 114D). The repetition gives it an existence which it did not have before.

⁶⁰Clay Hunt, Lycidas and the Italian Critics (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p.163

⁶¹Indeed Lycidas has been set to music and was even performed in the eighteenth century. (See Wittreich, p.154).

- 3 **Pity me Lord for daily thee**
I call; 4 O make rejoice
Thy servant's soul; for Lord to thee
I lift my soul and voice,
- 5 **For thou art good, thou Lord art prone**
To pardon, thou to all
Art full of mercy, thou alone
To them that on thee call.

The sung monody or psalm is not after all entirely inert in its immortality as Ong's comments about textuality would have us believe. The very act of singing a psalm brings about a change and affirms the singer's faith. St. Augustine both suggests this is the case and demonstrates its efficacy when he paraphrases Ps.22:26 at the beginning of his Confessions.

I shall look for you, Lord, by praying to you and as I pray
 I shall believe in you.

The fact that Lycidas has the potential for verbal performance written into its structure gives the poem a potential which as merely a text it would not possess. By singing for Lycidas, Milton creates a kind of liturgical "psalm," a "psalm" which resonates with a chorus of previous pastoral-elegies and which functions as a self-fulfilling prophecy looking forward to Lycidas' resurrection. By singing Lycidas, we repeat the "psalm" giving it a mysterious sort of truth as Plato gave his Phaedo myth. Thus, Lycidas "lives" on. All he needs is someone to sing for him, and who would not?⁶²

⁶²This argument relies rather heavily upon the distinct natures of written poetry and sung poetry. I have suggested that Milton's line, "Who would not sing for Lycidas?" could be profitably read with the most literal interpretation of the word "sing." The question of how this word was actually interpreted during the Renaissance has not been raised. Indeed, there is plenty justification for the assumption that Renaissance writers used the word "sing" and its cognates merely to designate poetry in general whether it was sung or not. The idea of singing was merely an equivalent alternative to the idea of metricality. Evidence for this lies in the Medieval notion that there was no difference between the world and the text; indeed, as Gabriel Josipovici has said, the world was a book for medieval man. (The World and the Book (London, 1979)). This identity gradually broke down during the Renaissance and later, according to Josipovici. Another interesting way of approaching this problem is in the peculiar differences and similarities between the Greek μίμησις and the Latin imitatio. Both these words mean one and the same thing, and yet their usages are quite distinct. μίμησις is generally used to specify the imitative

(iv) Lycidas and Translation

Even though the bodilessness of Lycidas as "the genius of the shore" can never be forgotten, it is clear that "the genius" mysteriously represents the middle step in the translation of Lycidas' body from earth to heaven. Indeed, the very idea of translation itself carries within it many of the contradictions that keep arising as we try to grasp Milton's monism. Translation, just as in a mortalist resurrection, involves a problematic relationship between two supposedly identical texts separated in time and consisting of entirely different words. The question of continuity (namely, in what sense the dead person is the same as the risen) is duplicated in the problematic relationship between original and translation. It is common knowledge that a translation alters every single word of the original and yet remains professedly identical with it.

In Lycidas, translation may be seen as both continuous and disjunctive. Milton translates a passage from Theocritus which has also been translated by Virgil. He translates perhaps the most threatening passage in the whole of the pastoral elegiac tradition:

Where were ye nymphs when the remorseless deep
Clos'd o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,

relationship between texts and the world, while imitatio is used to specify the imitative relationship between texts. (D.A. Russell comments on this peculiar double possibility in the notion of imitation in "De Imitatio" in D. West and T. Woodman (eds.) Creative Imitation and Latin Literature (Cambridge, 1979)). As long as the world was a book, μίμησις and imitatio could not differ. The moment the world ceases to be a book, μίμησις and imitatio begin to drift apart. The question which concerns us is precisely when this drift began. For if there was no difference between singing and written poetry when Lycidas was written, then "who would not sing for Lycidas?" should not be taken to mean "sing" as opposed to write. Only if there was a difference could singing be treated as a separate category from poetry.

Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
 Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream:
 Ay me, I fondly dream!
 Had ye been there... for what could that have done?
 (Lycidas, 50-57)

Quae nemora aut qui vos saltus habere, puellae
 Naides, indigno cum Gallus amore peribat?
 nam neque Parnassi vobis iuga, nam neque Pindi
 ulla moram fecere neque Aonie Aganippe.⁶³
 (Ecl.X.9-12)

πᾶ ποκ' ἄρ' ἦσθ', ὄκα Δάφνις ἐτάκετο, πᾶ ποκα Νύμφαι;
 ἦ κατὰ Πηνειῶ καλὰ πέμπεα, ἦ κατὰ Πίνδῳ;
 οὐ γὰρ δὴ ποταμοῖο μέγαν ῥόον εἶχετ' Ἀνάπῳ,
 οὐδ' Αἴτνας σκοπιάν, οὐδ' Ἄκιδος ἱερὸν ὕδωρ.⁶⁴
 (Id.I.66-69)

All three authors describe the failure of the Muses to do anything about the death of a poet. The Muses, which can be taken as symbols of poetic continuity, fail at the discontinuous moment of death. And yet, at this point of discontinuity, both Milton and Virgil, as translators, are at their most continuous. Both translators follow the original Theocritean passage closely with respect to the question being framed, but both deviate from the original in their choice of place names. This deviation can be looked upon as translation in a slightly different sense from the purely textual, in the sense of the translatio studii. Not only do Virgil and Milton translate Theocritus' Greek text into Latin and English, but they also translocate it - 'carry it over.' Although transported, the places that they each choose are nevertheless similar in nature to the Theocritean: mountain slopes and peaks, river valleys and springs sacred to the Muses. Virgil

⁶³Which glades or what woodland did you haunt, Naiad girls, when Gallus was pining with an undeserving love? For you were not on the peaks of Parnassus nor of the Pindus nor did you tarry at Aonean Aganippus.

⁶⁴Where were you, Nymphs, when Daphnis was melting away, where were you? Was it about the beautiful valleys of Peneus or about Pindus? For you did not haunt Anapus' great stream nor Etna's slope, nor Acis' holy water.

translates the Sicilian place names in Theocritus to mainland Greece, thereby crystallising the sense of Arcadia. Milton translates the Sicilian or Arcadian names into British ones, thereby placing Britain on the pastoral map. By translocating as well as translating, Milton and Virgil suggest that the English and Arcadian landscapes are identical to the Sicilian landscape in the same manner as the English and Latin translations are identical to the Greek original. Of course, it is obvious also that the translations and translocations neither make the texts nor the landscapes physically or materially the same. There is some mysterious genius at work, bodiless and ungraspable, which accounts for the continuity between the three texts and landscapes. This genius, the very mystery of translation, is analogous to the "genius of the shore," which translates Lycidas to heaven. The idea of translation, then, provides a means for talking about both physical disjunction and spiritual continuity, and will prove enormously useful in the following chapters as we try to describe the mysterious relationship between "letter" and "spirit."

PART TWO

MILTON AND THE TRANSLATION OF FAITH

CHAPTER III

DUALISM AND MONISM IN BIBLE TRANSLATION AND TRANSLATION THEORY

The preface of any translation of the Bible has much to answer. It needs to explain how it can alter every single word in the holy text without altering any part of the true and unalterable word of God. It also needs to acknowledge the existence of deviations as one language is rendered into another and to justify why these deviations, which the translator accepts as unavoidable, may nevertheless be acceptable. The prohibition of translations of the Bible into English by the Provincial Council at Oxford in 1408, which was prompted by the Wycliffite translations two decades earlier, makes clear why translators need be apologetic.

it is a perilous thing, as the Blessed Jerome testifies, to translate the text of Holy Scripture from one idiom into another, inasmuch as in the translations themselves it is no easy matter to keep the same meaning in all cases, like as the blessed Jerome, albeit inspired, confesses that he often went astray in this respect. We therefore enact and ordain that no one henceforth on his own authority translate any text of Holy Scripture into the English or other language ... Whoever to do the contrary to be punished in like manner as a supporter of heresy and error.¹

If even the divinely inspired translator, Jerome, by his own admission, is unable to translate the bible with the requisite accuracy, how much less would any modern translator succeed? Indeed, where Jerome himself escapes the charge of heresy by the grace of God, any lesser translator would naturally have to answer this charge.

Over a hundred years after the Oxford Provincial Council's prohibition, and in a very much more turbulent context, Thomas More reinforces its point with a sharper polemic. William Tyndale's translation of 1525 had not only violated the prohibition of

¹Alfred W. Pollard, Records of the English Bible: The Documents Relating to the Translation and Publication of the Bible in English, 1525-1611, (London: Oxford University Press, 1911), pp.80-1.

the Provincial Council, but also propounded a strongly anti-catholic ideology. More warns that

like as a trew sylver grote a fals coper grote is neuer the lesse contrary thogh yt be quyk syluered ouer, but so mych the more false in how mich it is counterfeted the more lyke to the trouth, so was the translacion so mich the more contrary in how mich it was craftely deuysed like, and so mych the more peryllus in how miche it was to folke vnlearned more hard to be dissemid.²

Amazingly, More argues against even a very true and accurate translation (which Tyndale's must be credited as being) because the more closely it approximates to the truth the more insidious and dangerous it becomes. An accurate translation, for More, is like a counterfeit coin because it skilfully attempts to hide its real nature and aims to deceive. What is most peculiar about More's abnegation of translation is that the more accurate the translation is, the worse it is for him. This is wholly unlike the prohibition of the Oxford Council which was concerned with the very difficult problem of accuracy. More's metaphor of the counterfeit coin introduces the idea that a translation may appear exactly accurate and true and yet nevertheless be false. Clearly, for More something more is required than merely being true to the word of Scripture. Accuracy, for More, does not mean that the translation has been successful. The problem with translation for More is clearly one of authorization.

Having established the need for the Bible translator's apologetic mode it will serve us well to examine a few prefatorial passages in this light. Miles Coverdale's 1535 translation of the Bible includes a prologue which seems to be directed precisely as an answer to More's passage above. Coverdale makes use of two arguments, the universal

²Alfred W. Pollard, Records of the English Bible, p.127.

belief in God (despite differing languages), and an archery metaphor.

Seynge that this diligent exercyse of translatynge doth so moch good and edifyeth in other languages, why shulde it do so euell in ours? Doutles lyke as all nacyons in the dyuersite of speaches maye knowe one God in the vnyte of faith, and be one in loue: euen so maye dyuerse translacyons vnderstonde one another, and that in the head articles and grounde of oure most blessed faith, though they vse sondrye wordes. wherefore me thynke we haue greate occasyon to geue thanks vnto God, that he hath opened vnyo his church the gyfte of interpretacyon and of prynting, and that there are at this tyme so many, which with soch diligence and faithfulness interprete the scripture to the honoure of god and edefyenge of his people, whereas (lyke as whan many are shutynge together) euery one doth his best to be nyest the marke. And though they can not all attayne therto, yet shuteth one nyer then another, and hyteth it better thaen another, yee one can do it better then another. who is now then so vnreasonable, so despytefull, or enuyous, asto abhorre him that doth all his diligence to hytte the prycke, and to shute nyest it, though he misse and come not nyest the mark? Ought not soch one to be commended, and to be helped forward, that he may exercyse the more therin?³

Unlike More, who tries to preserve the Latin Bible, Coverdale's lengthy apology for the translator assumes the multiplicity of languages as its starting point. While More doubts that any language, unless divinely authorized, can accurately represent the word of God, Coverdale seems to take the Babelian confusion of languages as no bad thing. If, as Coverdale asserts, the church may be united in its faith and love of God despite the multiplicity of languages, then translation cannot lead anyone astray. The conflict between More and Coverdale is really the conflict between Latin as the universal unifying principle in religion and the vernaculars which rely on some other unifying principle than language. The conflict clearly rests upon a crisis of confidence in translation. For More translation is impossible, while for Coverdale it is most certainly possible.

³Pollard, Records, pp.204-5.

The metaphor which Coverdale suggests in opposition to More's counterfeit coin, is that of a shooting contest. While a counterfeit coin must always be false because its very materials are not authentic, an archery contest assumes the possibility (no matter how difficult it is in actual fact) of striking the mark. The key difference between the two metaphors lies in the different kind of visibility depicted in each. The counterfeit coin may look exactly like the authentic coin and yet be false. While, on the other hand, the target and the mark everyone is aiming for is clearly visible to all even if no one actually hits it. From this difference it may be deduced that the crucial problem for More is the fear that a translation will usurp the place of its original. (Indeed, the Latin version of Jerome had succeeded the "original" Greek and Hebrew versions in just this manner). This is related to the conflict between the dead letter and the living spirit. The letter is visible while the spirit is not. This, clearly, disturbs More. Coverdale solves this problem with the assertion that the translation will always be recognizable as a translation, and the original as the original, just as the distance between arrow and mark in the metaphor is clearly visible. More's attitude to translation is clearly motivated by a fundamental doubt. For him, the Bible requires the constant authorization of God, and such authorization is only available through the Church. Thus, More can never trust the Bible as an authority in itself, while Coverdale, in a naive but empowering way, can. For More any new translation of the Bible, if it were authorized by the Church, would become the original (indeed, more original than the previous version).

More's fears about any new translation replacing the "original" are answered in a different way by the translators of the Authorized Version. Although the Authorized Version had been authorized by the supreme head of the English Church, its translators

still felt it necessary to explain why this version did not entirely negate any other version. The translators were working within an already established tradition of authorized biblical translation. The Great Bible of 1539 and the Bishops' Bible of 1568 preceded the King James version and the translators had to explain why a new version was replacing these approved authorized and supposedly accurate translations. Did not a retrospective improvement of these translations imply that they had corrupted the word of God and thus led those who had used them astray? Indeed, this is implied in the charge made by More. The translators of the Authorized Version extend an extraordinarily gracious tolerance. Only those who enjoyed the support of the king could have deluded themselves into actually believing in such tolerance - this was, after all, the only translation authorized by the king.

wee do not denie, nay wee affirme and avow, that the very meanest translation of the Bible in English...containeth the word of God, nay, is the word of God...though it bee not interpreted by every Translator with the like grace... A man may bee counted a virtuous man, though he have made many slips in his life ... also a comely man and lovely, though hee have some wartes upon his hande, yea, not only freckle upon his face, but also skarres. No cause therefore why the word translated should be denied to be the word.⁴

In defending the accuracy of all translations, the writers of this preface relegate the obvious differences between translations (the annoying evidence that translation involves perversion) to mere variations of interpretation which have a triflingly cosmetic significance. The force of this argument is craftily backed up by the use of the metaphoric identity of man and word: a blemished man is as much a man as the translated word is the word. And such an identity could never be denied by any god-fearing Christian who believes in the doctrine of the Word become flesh, itself a doctrine of

⁴Alfred W. Pollard, Records of the English Bible (London: Oxford University Press, 1911). pp.362-3.

translation. Indeed, if one accepts that translation is possible at all then one must accept in a fundamental sense that every translation of God's word is God's word, no matter how badly translated. One has to recognize this just as one has to recognize a man as being a man whether he is terribly disfigured or not, just as one has to recognize the mark one is shooting at whether one hits it or not. But, of course, if one does not have such faith in translation, then the word of God translated must threaten to disappear.

While it is obvious that anyone undertaking a translation must believe in the possibility of the enterprise, the problem of the impossibility of translation does not simply disappear because translation (and Bible translation in particular) is a fact. An ambivalent attitude to translation emerges in the lengthy preface to the Authorized Version. The core of the translators' justification of the enterprise consists in a profusion of instructive metaphors:⁵

But how shall men meditate in that, which they cannot understand? How shall they understand that which is kept close in an unknown tongue...? ... Translation it is that openeth the window, to let in the light; that breaketh the shell that we may eat the kernell; that putteth aside the curtaine, that wee may looke into the most holy places; that removeth the cover of the well, that wee may come by the water, even as Jacob rolled away the stone from the mouth of the well, by which meanes the flocks of Laban were watered. Indeed, without translation into the vulgar tongue the unlearned are but like children at Jacobs well (which was deepe) without a bucket, or something to draw with.⁶

⁵The relationship between the concepts of translation and metaphor is instructive. Richard Lanham's A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) discusses metaphor and translatio in one breath under the same entry (pp. 100-1). Paul de Man, in his "Conclusions" printed in Yale French Studies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), points out enticingly that, "the German word for translation, ubersetzen, means metaphor. Ubersetzen translates exactly the Greek meta-phorein, to move over, ubersetzen, to put across" (p.36). It is a little curious, not to mention gratifying, to note that de Man, here, is able to bring himself to use the words "translates exactly," when so much of his essay argues for the impossibility of such accuracy (as will be seen in what follows).

⁶Alfred W. Pollard, Records of the English Bible, pp.349-50.

Translation, in this passage, is represented by two kinds of metaphors. Three of the four metaphors describe translation as that which enables, or empowers one by removing the barriers which prevent our seeing, eating or drinking. It provides immediate access to that which would satisfy our otherwise frustrated needs to see, eat or drink. But the final metaphor lacks the immediacy of the first three. This metaphor has translation remove the stone cover from the well so that we may get the water. However, as the biblical elaboration of this metaphor makes clear, the water is not immediately available. First translation removes the stone blocking the well; then it is the bucket or the "something to draw with." The "opening" metaphors in this passage suggest an immediacy of access once the barrier has been displaced by translation. The "drawing" metaphor, however, retains a sense of distance between the source and the target of translation. Translation does not only displace a barrier but also becomes the medium of transfer which draws water from the well and brings it up to ground level.⁷ The two kinds of metaphor in this passage thus expose an ambivalence in the way in which the translators of the Authorized Version interpret translation. Does translation displace a barrier (window, shell or curtain) in order to enable an immediacy of access, or does it throw itself between source and destination (water and surface) mediating access? The passage cited makes two mutually exclusive claims about translation rendering it difficult to understand precisely what it takes translation to mean.

A doubleness has been present in Bible translation since the very first. Werner

⁷The word draw is interesting precisely because it is often used in the titles of biblical translations to indicate that some license has been employed and that the translation in question is more properly a paraphrase. For example, the Sternhold and Hopkins translation of the Psalter has this word in the title of many of its editions.

Schwarz in his Principles and Problems of Biblical Translation has divided this doubleness into two separate traditions of biblical translation which he refers to as the "inspirational view" and the "philological view."⁸ Schwarz shows the two views of biblical translation to have been present at every major moment of bible translation. The very earliest translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, the Septuagint, was ordered by Ptolemy II Philadelphus for the library at Alexandria between 285 and 246 B.C. The story behind this early translation of the Hebrew bible is described with differing interpretations in what is known as the Aristeas Letter (c. 100 B.C.) and by Philo Judaeus in his De vita Mosis. Schwarz offers the Aristeas Letter's account of the translation of the Septuagint as exemplary of the philological view. The Letter describes how Ptolemy called upon Eleazer, the High Priest in Jerusalem, to select six translators from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The Letter goes on to describe how the seventy two translators selected for their great learning collaborated on the project. They studiously arrived "at an agreement on each point comparing each others' work." The collaborative and diligently comparative method mentioned in the Letter is characteristic of what Schwarz describes as the philological view.

Philo Judaeus' alternative account of the translation of the Septuagint is exemplary of what Schwarz calls the inspirational view of translation. Philo describes how the seventy two translators, selected for their great piety and devotion to God, withdrew into a mystic seclusion on the island of Pharos where they executed their commission. The translators

⁸Werner Schwarz, Principles and Problems of Biblical Translation: Some Reformation Controversies and their Background, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), pp.15-7.

became as it were possessed, and, under inspiration, wrote, not each several scribe something different, but the same word for word, as though dictated to each by an invisible prompter ... the Greek words used corresponded literally with the Chaldean, exactly suited to the things they indicated ... these writers, as it clearly appears, arrived at a wording which corresponded with the matter, and alone, or better than any other, would bring out clearly what was meant. The clearest proof of this is that, if Chaldeans have learnt Greek, or Greeks Chaldean, and read both versions, the Chaldean and the translation, they regard them with reverence and awe as sisters, or rather as one and the same, both in matter and words, and speak of their authors not as translators but as prophets and priests of these mysteries, whose sincerity and singleness of thought has enabled them to concur with the purest of spirits, the spirit of Moses. (Schwarz, p.21).

Philo describes a miraculous seventy-two fold simultaneous translation of the entire bible done by each of the translators separately. This is wholly different from the Aristeas Letter which describes a process of painstaking scholarly collaboration. The Septuagint produced in each case is necessarily very different. The seventy two translators in the Aristeas Letter produce a translation which is authorized by their scholarly skill and the success of their effort. For Philo, the Septuagint is authorized by divine inspiration, and the translation is thus no derivative of the Hebrew original but a new expression of God's Original Word. Under divine inspiration, translation seems to have access to the Original Word behind the Hebrew original. For the Aristeas Letter the translation is always at one remove from the original; for Philo the translation is as authentic as the original because both original and translation have the same direct access to God's Original Word. In fact, Philo's description resists the very idea of translation as we normally understand it, preferring to call the translators prophets. Because it eliminates translation as we normally understand it, Philo's description of the Septuagint may be aligned with Thomas More's view of the impossibility of translation. Both More and Philo consider translation to be primarily a matter of divine origination. For them God's authorization of any

translation is in fact the generation of an original. Alternatively, the picture drawn in the Aristeas Letter of the seventy two translators diligently collaborating and comparing their work adumbrates the collaboration of the translators of the 1611 Authorized Version.

Schwarz extends his divided analysis to the debate between St. Augustine and St. Jerome over the status of the Septuagint and consequently the status of the Latin translations based upon it. Schwarz insists that "only when his belief in the inspirational nature of this translation [the Septuagint] is taken into account, is Augustine's view of translation coherent and logical in all its details."⁹ In the De Civitate Dei (XVIII.42), Augustine tells his version of the miraculous translation, which is very similar to Philo's version.

The tradition is that the agreement in the words of their versions was marvellous, amazing and plainly inspired by God: so much so that although each of them sat in a separate place when engaged on the task - for Ptolemy decided to test their reliability in this way - they did not differ from one another in a single word, not even by a synonym conveying the same meaning; they did not even vary in the order of the words. There was such a unity in their translations that it was as if there had been one translator; for in truth there was the one Spirit at work in them all.¹⁰

Clearly, Augustine would accept Schwarz's inspirational view of Bible translation. But his emphasis on the amazingly miraculous achievement of the seventy translators betrays a very clear understanding of how treacherous ordinary translation normally is. Augustine, no doubt, could well understand why Jerome should have been worried by observed discrepancies between the Greek translation and the Hebrew "original." Jerome considered the Hebrew bible more authentic than the Greek translation for the very

⁹Werner Schwarz, Principles and Problems of Bible Translation, p.39.

¹⁰Augustine, Concerning the City of God against the Pagans, trans. John O'Meara, (London: Penguin, 1984), p.820.

reason that the Greek diverges from the Hebrew in many places. This was the conclusion that Augustine wanted to avoid. Schwarz suggests two motivations consistent with Augustine's inspirational view. Augustine, he suggests, wanted to preserve the authority of the Septuagint because of all the learned men who had relied upon its authority till then and because he feared for the unity of Christendom if the ecumenical Greek was replaced by the Hebrew text.¹¹

Schwarz suggests that the sixteenth-century debate over biblical translation was no different from what it was more than a thousand years before. Johann Reuchlin and Desiderius Erasmus, being translators of the Hebrew and Greek bibles respectively, both insisted upon using the original text as the source of their translations, and thus may be classified under the philological view. Reuchlin was primarily a linguist and Hebraist rather than a bible translator. Much of his work involved bringing the Hebrew language into greater currency. He published De Rudimentis Hebraicis in 1506, and in 1512, In Septem Psalmos Poenitentiales Hebraicos Interpretatio, which provided Hebrew texts of the penitential psalms for the purpose of language study. In a letter of 1488, Reuchlin compares translation to wine.

Wine that is often drawn off the cask loses in splendour. The same applies to translations: the original language of every work is always sweetest.¹²

Reuchlin, like the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter and the Authorized Version's translators, uses the metaphor of "drawing off" to describe the process of translation.¹³

¹¹Werner Schwarz, Principles and Problems, p.39.

¹²Cited in Werner Schwarz, Principles and Problems, p.71.

¹³See page 119.

Erasmus' 1516 edition of the Greek bible is a significant moment in the history of bible translation, perhaps most notably for its influence upon Tyndale. As early as 1501 Erasmus had been astonished by the discrepancies between the Latin and Greek versions of the Psalter and reasoned that if the Latin diverged from the Greek, then the Greek most probably diverges from the Hebrew as well. Erasmus was never in a position to evaluate this conclusion as was Reuchlin, but his conviction that the original languages of the bible were most authentic never wavered. The crucial moment in Erasmus' work, which classifies him under the philological view, is his valorization of grammar as a fundamental tool in theological study. He says,

Neither do I think that Theology herself, the Queen of all Sciences, will hold it beneath her dignity to be attended and waited upon by her handmaid, Grammar; which if it be inferior in rank to other sciences, certainly performs a duty which is as necessary as that of any.¹⁴

Erasmus took up Jerome's antipathy toward the inspirational view which sees no difference between translation and prophecy. Citing Jerome, he says,

It is one thing to be a prophet and another to be a translator; in one case the Spirit foretells future events, in the other sentences are understood and translated by erudition and command of language.¹⁵

Erasmus' rather narrow understanding of prophecy is characteristic of his insistence upon philological accuracy and definition.

Schwarz describes Erasmus' method of biblical scholarship as basically comparative. Erasmus compares several Greek manuscripts in order to establish variants and then he compares the Vulgate and the Old Latin version with his findings from the

¹⁴Cited in Schwarz, Principles and Problems, p.135.

¹⁵Cited in Schwarz, Principles and Problems, p.136, citing Jerome's Praefatio in Pentateuchum, P.L. vol 28 col.151A.

Greek comparison in order to establish errors introduced by copyists. His comparative method corresponds with the way in which the Aristeas Letter describes the collaborative comparative translation of the Septuagint. In relating his linguistics to translation, Erasmus makes use of an interesting analogy.

Language consists of two parts, namely words and meaning which are like body and soul. If both of them are rendered I do not object to word-for-word translation. If they cannot, it would be preposterous for the translator to keep the words and to deviate from the meaning.¹⁶

Like the Aristeas Letter, Erasmus indicates that his main interest is in the meaning of the bible, and that, by implication, the meaning and the words are separable, just as body and soul are separable. Recalling our discussions of chapter I, it is clear that Erasmus's philological view of translation corresponds with a dualistic conception of body and soul, and by extension Letter and Spirit. Indeed, it will be seen, as this dissertation unfolds, that a translator's metaphysics and his theory of translation affect one another profoundly.

Martin Luther's distaste for the medieval schoolmen is different from that of Erasmus. Luther objected to their intrusion of human thoughts into godly things, while Erasmus objected to their ignorance of the original languages of scripture. In order to expunge human thoughts from godly things, Luther tended to oppose the medieval four-fold interpretation of scripture. This old four-fold interpretation derived various spiritual meanings from the literal sense. It was this literal sense which Luther attacked. Under the influence of Jacques Lefevre's Quintuplex Psalterium of 1509,¹⁷ which argues that the

¹⁶Schwarz, p.155, cites Erasmus' Contra Morosis, nos. 28-29.

¹⁷Besides his edition of the Psalter, Jacques Lefevre wrote influential commentaries on the Pauline epistles (1512) and translated the Vulgate into French (1530). His attitude may be described as that of a reformer on the eve of the Reformation.

literal sense is really a spiritual sense, Luther opts for a prophetic understanding of the psalms.¹⁸ In the light of this spiritualism of Luther's, Schwarz compares Erasmus' and Luther's methods of biblical exegesis.

Erasmus based his interpretation of the text on grammar and knowledge of philology; for Luther it was theology that governed grammar. Therefore the proof of his own word explanation lay in its agreement with his theological principles even though this might mean a forced interpretation. There was thus, in Luther's opinion, a connexion between the philological explanation and the theological contents. The theological meaning had to be known before grammatical considerations could be applied to the text. But there was no way from grammatical analysis to theological understanding.¹⁹

The crucial difference between the two is how they each arrive at their interpretations of the biblical text. For Erasmus grammar precedes and serves theology. For Luther Theology precedes and confirms grammar.²⁰

The confrontation between the philological view of translation expressed by the Aristeas Letter, St. Jerome, Reuchlin and Erasmus and the inspirational view expressed by Philo, St. Augustine and Luther is consistent with the conflict between Letter and Spirit as outlined in chapter I. However, there is a complicated twist in this consistency. While the philological view is decidedly literal in its practical focus, it nevertheless assumes a profound dualism. It works diligently to match a word in one language with

¹⁸As will become clear in the next chapter, the psalms were central in the debate about bible interpretation. This is because the Book of Psalms was central to both Jews and Christians alike and supported vastly different interpretations. Where the Jews understand the psalms to be retrospective as David's praises and prayers under his persecution by Saul, Christians see them as prophecies of Christ. This major interpretive discrepancy places an enormous interpretive burden on the psalms and it is not surprising that these biblical poems should figure so prominently in any debate over literal and spiritual interpretation.

¹⁹Schwarz, p.192.

²⁰A more detailed description of Luther's spiritual hermeneutics may be found in chapter VI, p.278.

the corresponding word in another. In its very literalism, this matching may appear monistic, but it is not. For the way in which this matching is effected is by extracting a separable meaning from the words in each language. Only when this separable meaning is identical can the words be considered to match and therefore translate. In order for the philological view to be at all tenable, it must suppose that words are separable from their meanings. If this is the case, then it is possible for a translator to read an original, comprehend its meaning and then represent that meaning accurately in another language with every single word altered. The separation of meaning from its material vehicle in translation is entirely consistent with the dualistic separation of Letter and Spirit in scripture. Thus, a translator adopting this assumption of separability is most likely to be a dualist with respect to his metaphysics.

While the inspirational view invokes a very spiritual efficiency and prefers to speak of prophecy rather than translation, it is thoroughly monistic. This is because it disallows any separation of meaning from word. For the inspirational view, words and meaning are one and the same. The oneness of word and meaning clearly defines monistic translation. The key to this view is that the word of the translation replaces and does not represent the meaning of the word of the original. All of the adherents to the inspirational view mentioned so far have preferred to refer to "translation" as prophecy. They thus tacitly agree that the term translation refers to dualism in their very rejection of it and their insistence upon a new term, prophecy. They avoid commenting about the identity of original and translation because this identity is meaningless for them. Indeed, Augustine describes how the Septuagint translators' versions, done in isolation, are identical with each other, but no mention is made of the Septuagint's accuracy with

respect to the original Hebrew. Thomas More's insistence upon the impossibility of translation and his vigorous denigration of any attempt to render the bible is consistent with this view, too. Translation, for the inspirational trend, is impossible. Only a rewriting of the text is possible providing that some form of divine inspiration authorizes the enterprise. The word translation may imply dualism if it is understood as the preservation of a constant meaning against the flow of words from language to language. However, for the inspirational view it is impossible to maintain the integrity of the text while every single word in it is altered in translation. It is for this reason that they prefer to use the term prophecy. Prophecy implies a miraculous divine involvement in the enterprise, and without this divine involvement God's word in the new language would not be God's word at all. In secular terms, the inspirational view really recognizes and emphasizes the differences between the "original" and the "translation," even as it authorizes the "translation" as a new original. It would prove fascinating to evaluate just how far these monistic translators go towards embracing a monistic metaphysics consistent with their monistic view of translation. An exhaustive evaluation of these translators is beyond the scope of this thesis, which focuses its attention on a single translator - John Milton.

What is ironic in the way that the philological and the inspirational views differ is that each view seems to flirt with the underlying principle of the other. While the inspirational view is monistic as I have indicated, it relies upon a secure belief in an Originary Spirit outside the text and trusts to this Spirit more than it does to the material words of the text which it is supposedly translating. The dualistic philological view, in reverse manner, looks to the material text without any expectation of a spiritual prompt

from outside the text. This complicated twist may be explained as follows. If we take the text to be a closed system, then quite simply the philological view is dualistic and the inspirational view is monistic. But if we take the text to be functioning within an open system (where the text is a part of a complex system larger than itself), the philological view may be termed monistic, and the inspirational view, dualistic. In this open system, the inspirational view assumes a dialogue between an authorial Spirit and the inspired text. The Spirit involved in each system is different. In the open system, the spirit is God; in the closed it is the meaning of the text. Clearly, then, the debate between philology and inspiration in translation hinges upon how God and text are related. Thus Schwarz's distinction between a philological view and an inspirational view of bible translation only takes a few tentative steps towards defining what may be considered dualistic and monistic approaches to translation. Although Schwarz tries hard to hold philology and inspiration apart, the integrity of these two approaches will always depend upon where one understands God to be accessible - whether He be inside or outside the text of Scripture. Whether God is accessible inside or outside Scripture has much to do with how one understands the relationship between the world and the Book.²¹

While Schwarz's historical classification of bible translators into philological and inspirational trends is convincing, any attempt to lay hold of the monistic or dualistic underpinnings of these trends seems contingent upon the metaphysics of the translators involved. It is thus necessary to look more directly at translation (while leaving its application to the bible aside) in a brief survey of more formal translation theory.

²¹See Gabriel Josipovici, The World and the Book: A Study of Modern Fiction (London: Macmillan, 1979), and The Book of God (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

Although translation was a well established practice throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and translators' prefaces abound during this period, translation as an enterprise only began to be theorized more formally towards the end of the seventeenth century. A quick survey of some of the more prominent moments in this more formally theoretical history will demonstrate how dualism and monism seem to emerge as distinct concepts which underlie theories of the process of translation. The survey will also demonstrate how dualism and monism seem to collapse into one another at certain points within these theories. It will be observed that while each theorist certainly has a clear bias towards the one or the other, there are, at least, elements of both dualism and monism embedded within each theory.

John Dryden attempts to define what translation is by making use of the very interesting and ironically revealing concept of "latitude."²² He divides translation into three categories by the way in which this term is deployed in connection with translation. "Metaphrase," he defines as "turning an Author word by word, Line by Line, from one Language into another." "Paraphrase," for Dryden, means "Translation with Latitude, where the Author is kept in view so as never to be lost, but his words are not so strictly followed as his sense, and that too is admitted to be amplified but not altered." And finally, "Imitation" is Dryden's term for when

The Translator (if now he has not lost that Name) assumes the liberty not only to vary from the words and sense, but to forsake them both as he

²²The etymology of "translation" and of "latitude" is interesting. Both are derived from the Latin root latus, but in different senses. Latus is the past participle of fero, meaning "carried" or "born" from which translation (or "carried over" or "across") is derived. But it also means "broad", "wide", "expansive", "broadly interpreted" (according to Riddle and White) from which "latitude" is derived. Dryden is clearly aware of the homograph latus and makes a felicitous connection in his preface. See Dryden's Preface to Ovid's Epistles Translated by Several Hands in The Works of John Dryden: Poems 1649-1680 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1956), vol.1, pp.109-19.

sees occasion: and taking only some general hints from the Original, to run division on the ground-work, as he pleases.²³

Translation for Dryden is conceived of metaphorically as the payment of a debt. The translator owes a debt to the original text. "Latitude," then, refers to the amount of liberty the translator takes in discharging his debt to the original.²⁴ However, Dryden warns, care must be taken not to over- or under-pay this debt. Two problems arise. Firstly, how is the debt to be paid? It cannot properly be paid in words, because two words in two different languages are entirely different from one another and cannot represent one another. Secondly, if the debt is to be paid precisely with no leeway for over- or under-payment, wherein lies the latitude? Dryden tries to solve these two problems by preferring paraphrase over both metaphrase and imitation. Central to this strategy is Dryden's principle that translation must preserve the sense of the original. He says, "the sense of an Author, generally speaking, is to be Sacred and Inviolable." He

²³Dryden takes his terms from the Greek metaphrazein ("to say across," or "to declare with difference or change"), and paraphrazein ("to say beside"), and from the Latin imitatio. For discussion of these terms see John P. Leavey in "Lations, Cor, Trans, Re, &c." in Hugh Silverman and Gary Aylesworth (eds.) The Textual Sublime: Deconstruction and its Differences (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), pp.191-202. Metaphrase and Paraphrase are simply anglicized versions of the Greek words, both of which may be translated into Latin as translatio, while Imitation is an anglicization of the Latin imitatio which is itself a translation of the Greek mimesis. It is interesting to speculate why Dryden did not use mimesis, having already used two Greek terms. Perhaps he avoided it because this word tends to be used to identify the relationship between world and text, while imitatio identifies the relationship between text and text. (Once again, one's beliefs about the relationship between World and Text seems to emerge in the theoretical discussion of translation - see note 21). The distinction between imitatio and mimesis is particularly useful because it enables Dryden to distance imitation from the very pedantic (metaphrastic) implications of mimicry in mimesis. The choice of this word, then, as well as his anglicizing of (as opposed to translating) the Greek and Latin terms, only goes to show that, while Dryden is in the process of valorizing paraphrase, he makes use of the most pedantic metaphrase.

²⁴Dryden refers to the difference between imitation and paraphrase analogically as the difference between receiving a present and the payment of a debt: "'tis not always that a man will be contented to have a Present made him, when he expects the payment of a Debt." See Dryden's Preface to Ovid's Epistles Translated by Several Hands in The Works of John Dryden: Poems 1649-1680 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1956) vol.1, p.117.

thus makes sense the universal cash equivalent which governs the process of word-exchange or translation. It is because metaphrase and imitation both distort the sense of the original that Dryden is unwilling to allow these terms to be used in association with translation. Indeed, it is only in his definition of paraphrase that Dryden actually makes use of the term "translation." In his definition of metaphrase he uses "turn" instead of "translate," and in the case of imitation he mentions the word only to question whether it has been rightly deployed. (The three terms are referred to generically as a group under the term "versions" - turnings - and not translation). For Dryden then, translation/paraphrase preserves sense. Sense is threatened by metaphrase²⁵ on the one hand, and by a fall into imitation or downright origination, on the other. If the translator's debt to the original is discharged by preserving the sense exactly, or at least, very nearly, then what does "translation with latitude" actually refer to? If the sense is to be followed, where can there be room for liberty? The "latitude" to which Dryden refers, then, relates primarily to the sense in the words. All three, metaphrase, paraphrase and imitation, alter the words of their originals, and in this sense are "versions" or "translations." But metaphrase and imitation take too much latitude with respect to the sense and thus forgo their right to be termed "translation proper," as far as Dryden is concerned.

Dryden clearly opts for a dualistic view of translation which establishes the fixity of sense in a fluid environment of words. However, he does recognize, even if he is somewhat dismissive, the circumstances under which translation becomes impossible. Under metaphrase translation is taken too literally and becomes impossible. The very

²⁵Dryden criticizes metaphrase as a "too faithful pedantry" which derives from "superstitions, blind and zealous." See Dryden's Preface to Ovid's Epistles Translated.

fact that metaphrase violates Dryden's all important fixed sense must mean that sense and meaning are not quite as separable as he would want them to be. What Dryden seems to be saying is that both original and translation point to the same sense which is not integrally tied to the words of either, and yet it is possible for words incorrectly chosen to violate the sense. As we have seen, Dryden's definition of paraphrase as translation proper both depends upon and affirms the sanctity and inviolability of sense even when the words themselves are both violated and profaned by the very nature of translation. The inviolability of sense in translation thus separates the sense from the words in a problematic slightly confused way. It is as if Dryden is like St. Paul who tries to keep the Spirit and the Letter distinct even though there are situations where the two seem to interfere with one another. More recent theories of translation have begun to struggle with this assured belief in the inviolability of sense by attacking its separability from the words that convey it. This recalls the ambivalence of the translators of the Authorized Version as to whether translation provides immediate or mediated access to the sense of the original.

The obvious question which arises out of Dryden's conception of paraphrase as translation proper, is that if the words and the sense are separable, wherein lies the sense? Roman Jakobson, in his 1958 article "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation,"²⁶ goes some way towards rejecting Dryden's view of sense being separate from the word:

For us, both as linguists and as ordinary word-users, the meaning of any linguistic sign is its translation into some further, alternative sign, especially a sign "in which it is more fully developed," as Peirce, the

²⁶Selected Writings (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), vol.II, pp.260-6.

deepest inquirer into the essence of signs, insistently stated.²⁷

Thus, for Jakobson, the meaning (or, in Dryden's terms, sense) cannot be thought of as separate from the words. He asserts that the meaning of one word is another word; it is a matter of the synonymy of words. But, Jakobson goes further than this because he says that meaning is translation. Sense, then, is always another word. This does not seem to contradict Dryden's inviolable sense. But it does not explain the puzzling addition, "in which it is more fully developed." Meaning being more fully developed in one particular sign than in another, of which it is also the meaning, suggests that some drift has taken place between the two words. Jakobson confirms, "synonymy, as a rule, is not complete equivalence," and adds, "there is ordinarily no full equivalence between code-units."²⁸ Meaning, for Jakobson, thus implies displacement and loss. And yet, having admitted this much, Jakobson still clings to a formulation of translation nostalgically reminiscent of Dryden's: "translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes."²⁹ Locating this equivalence in the two messages becomes the angel with which Jakobson wrestles. Like his patriarchal namesake, his victory is ambivalent: "equivalence in difference is the cardinal problem of language and the pivotal concern of linguistics."³⁰ Jakobson attempts to deflect our attention away from his agon by distinguishing between ordinary language, which he claims is translatable, and poetry, which is untranslatable.³¹ He presumably hopes that if he concedes that there is no equivalence in poetry, we will

²⁷Roman Jakobson, Selected Writings, vol.II, p.261.

²⁸Jakobson, p.261.

²⁹Jakobson, p.262.

³⁰Jakobson, p.262

³¹Jakobson, p.266.

grant him, by default, the possibility of equivalence in ordinary language. By trying to contain the wave of our objections within a small area of language, Jakobson perhaps believes he may hold back the sea. However, it is because of his difficulties that Jakobson elevates the problem of translation to a new prominence. By arguing that meaning, or sense, cannot be separate from words, and that the meaning of one word is an-other word, Jakobson destabilizes the complacency of Dryden's inviolable sense.

Clearly, the moment one rejects Dryden's principle of the inviolability of sense in translation, one can no longer speak of translation in the same way. For, if this is the case, translation can no longer be thought of as conservative and one will have to find a new way of describing the relationship between a translation and its original. Indeed, Dryden's categories would become confused; the distinction between translation/paraphrase and imitation (or texts even further afield) would begin to collapse. One is forced to begin to wonder whether we are able to talk of translation at all, since alteration and alterity have become its characteristic features. It is not very difficult to see how this leads directly to the radically sceptical belief that translation is impossible since there is nothing which stably connects a translation to its original. And yet common experience tells us that translation most certainly is possible, since we are in its empirical presence daily. This disjunction between theory and experience only means that we still have to find a sensible way of talking about translation, a way which is independent of a reliance upon a separable sense.

Willard van Orman Quine, in his fascinating book Word and Object, describes what he refers to as "radical translation," by which he means the translation of a language

hitherto completely unknown to speakers of any other language - a language which has never been translated before.³² He describes the situation of an anthropologist, clip-board and pen in hand, recording and trying to make sense of the as yet unintelligible utterances of a tribesman. He adopts this strategy, derived from the very empirical practice of anthropology, precisely because it is the empirical nature of language about which he wishes to theorize. Indeed, if the relationship between original and translation may be discovered in this radical case, Quine will certainly have gone a long way to closing the above-mentioned gap between experience and theory by describing a theory of experience. Quine's empiricism leads him to

consider how much of language can be made sense of in terms of its stimulus conditions, and what scope this leaves for unconditioned variation in one's conceptual scheme.³³

By "stimulus conditions" Quine means all the sensory events (which he sometimes calls "nerve hits") which seem to provoke an utterance and give one a means of interpreting it. In the case of radical translation, the work of the translator is to compare utterances in the unknown language with the sensory conditions which they accompany and which act as the context for those utterances. The translator is thus able to translate the unknown phrase into his own language by interpreting the stimulus conditions surrounding the unknown phrase. Thus the translator takes the stimulus conditions to be capable of conveying meaning independently, as a separate linguistic event from the actual utterance of his subject. The assumption at the base of this is that the unknown

³²W.V.O. Quine, Word and Object (New York: Technology Press of MIT and John Wiley & Sons, 1960), p.28.

³³W.V.O. Quine, Word and Object, p.26.

utterance is little more than a phonetic restatement of the conditions which stimulated it.³⁴

This assumption is really to say that, fundamentally, all language is always already a translation of sensory stimuli. "Words mean only as their use in sentences is conditioned to sensory stimuli, verbal and otherwise," says Quine (p.17).

Quine avoids talking about sense in the manner of Dryden by talking about sensation ("nerve hits," "sensory stimuli," etc.). Although sense and sensation are similar in that they are both separable from words, they differ in that Quine's sensation means literally what Dryden's sense can only gesture at metaphorically. Quine refers us to our five senses which empirically are the basis for translations into higher languages, while Dryden has us rely upon a theoretical sixth "sense," which is itself neither seen nor heard, as the base. Indeed, it is precisely because of the impalpability of Dryden's "sixth" sense that Quine's empiricism is of interest. Quine's empiricist assumption attempts to close the gap between theory and experience by making the central theoretical element of continuity in translation into that which we are able to sense. Having located the conserved element in translation, Quine takes a few steps back from the certainty that he seems to have found by pointing out that

manuals for translating one language into another can be set up in divergent ways, all compatible with the totality of speech dispositions, yet incompatible with one another.³⁵

This statement of Quine's "principle of the indeterminacy of translation" means that, even

³⁴Andrew Benjamin, in his chapter entitled "Psychoanalysis and Translation," in his Translation and the Nature of Philosophy: A New Theory of Words (London: Routledge, 1989), p.144, describes "the analyst as a translator and the activity of translation as moving from the language of fantasy to a general language." The translation of fantasy into a general language is similar to Quine's radical translation in that the analyst tries to discover the stimuli beneath the fantasy, except that these stimuli occur in the deepest recesses of the psyche and not in the Amazon jungle.

³⁵W.V.O. Quine, Word and Object, p.27.

if we agree that our stimulus conditions are common, there is always more than one way of making sense of them. This means that any one language (be it a sensory one, consisting of "nerve hits," or a verbal one) is translatable into all other languages in different ways.³⁶ He does not argue for the impossibility of translation, merely for its indeterminacy - the difference between the two is all the difference in the world. Indeterminacy does not make translation impossible; it merely gives it a proliferative quality: a language may be coherently translated into another language in a number of ways thereby loosening any single translation's hold on the original. This proliferation in translation, however, is never wild; it is always bound to a principle of coherence. Although Quine's radical translation is stably based upon the common experience of sensations (stimulus conditions), it begins to teeter when we consider that these stimulus conditions can themselves be conditioned by linguistic influences. Quine's theoretical radical translation seems to become limitless since the linguistic context within which the sensory stimuli occur can have an unpredictable influence upon the resulting utterance. Once again, the way in which the theorist understands the relationship between world and text seems to have asserted itself at a crucial moment in the theory of translation. Thus, even though Quine stabilizes the sensory ground upon which radical translation stands, this very ground is shaken by the flow of context.

It must be noted that Quine's understanding of the indeterminacy of translation in the extreme case of radical translation, may be taken as a translation, in Quine's own peculiar way, of the biblical story about the proliferation of languages at the origination

³⁶Psychoanalysis, once again, is close to Quine here. It recognizes that the unconscious fantasy may well be limitlessly translatable even though Freud insists upon a fixed manual of translation, namely the Oedipus Complex.

of translation, the story of the confusion of Babel. Jacques Derrida has demonstrated in his own translation of Babel that the origin of translation is a "double bind" - Babel both demands and forbids translation in an analogous way to Quine's formulation of indeterminate radical translation. But before we can deal with Derrida's theory of translation, we must examine the work of Walter Benjamin who forms the immediate source for Derrida's work. The relevant work is Benjamin's seminal essay "The Task of the Translator,"³⁷ which he published as the translator's preface to his translation of Baudelaire's Tableaux Parisiens in 1923.

Benjamin immediately distinguishes his essay from other prefaces by doing away with the idea that translation is meaningfully understood as the transfer of a conserved sense from one language to another.

Is a translation meant for readers who do not understand the original? This would seem to explain adequately the divergence of their standing in the realm of art. Moreover, it seems the only conceivable reason for saying "the same thing" repeatedly. For what does a literary work "say"? What does it communicate? It "tells" very little to those who understand it. Its essential quality is not statement or the imparting of information. Yet any translation which intends to perform a transmitting function cannot transmit anything but information - hence, something inessential. This is the hallmark of bad translators. (p.69).

For him, the essential part of a translation is not its information, its meaning, or its sense. In this respect Benjamin is entirely different from Dryden, Jakobson and even Quine. For Benjamin the connection between original and translation is no longer their shared sense. Opening thus, Benjamin shifts the discussion onto an entirely new footing. As Carol Jacobs comments,

³⁷All references, unless otherwise stated, will be to Harry Zohn's translation in Illuminations (London: Jonathan Cape, 1970). See pp.69-82.

what Benjamin's essay performs...is an act of translation. It is to begin with a translation of "translation," which then rapidly demands an equally violent translation of every term promising the key to its definition.³⁸

Benjamin's redefinition of translation is a little akin to Harold Bloom's redefinition of "trope."³⁹ Wandering thus from its rightful place, where is translation to go? Quoting Rudolf Pannwitz, Benjamin explains.

Our translations, even the best ones, proceed from a wrong premise. They want to turn Hindi, Greek, English into German instead of turning German into Hindi, Greek, English. Our translators have a far greater reverence for the usage of their own language than for the spirit of the foreign works...The basic error of the translator is that he preserves the state in which his own language happens to be instead of allowing his language to be powerfully affected by the foreign tongue...He must expand and deepen his language by means of the foreign. (p.80-1).

Translation should err (in the Latin sense of wander) in the direction of the foreign and not remain fixed within its own limits; it should wander abroad and not stay at home. Rather than languages appropriating one another's contents, they should rush forward to embrace one another in the aim of producing a mutual metamorphosis.⁴⁰ Milton's famous Latinic periodic epic style has certainly achieved such a metamorphosis, if not for Latin

³⁸In "The Monstrosity of Translation" *Modern Language Notes*, 90 (1975), p.756. In making this claim Jacobs uses the word translation in two different senses. She uses it in the verb form, without quotation marks, to mean "makes different", and in the noun form with quotation marks to mean what has traditionally been taken to be the meaning of the word, namely "making the same." Indeed, it is precisely because Benjamin translates "translation" that the most common strategy in writing about his essay has been to re-translate his translation of "translation." See, besides Carol Jacobs' "The Monstrosity of Translation," Jacques Derrida's "Des Tours de Babel" in Joseph F. Graham (ed.) Difference in Translation (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985); Paul de Man's "Conclusions" Yale French Studies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); and Andrew Benjamin's Translation and the Nature of Philosophy (London: Routledge, 1989).

³⁹See Bloom's A Map of Misreading (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), p.93: "To re-define, let me say that a trope is a willing error, a turn from literal meaning in which a word or phrase is used in an improper sense, wandering from its rightful place." For Bloom, the phrase "literal meaning" refers to established meaning or traditional meaning.

⁴⁰Benjamin follows Goethe here. See George Steiner's After Babel (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p.259.

(it being dead), then at least as far as the English language is concerned.⁴¹

Benjamin entitles his preface "The Task of the Translator." If the task is not to reproduce the sense of the original, what can the task [aufgabe] which involves being changed by the foreign be? Derrida comments that this word, "task", involves a debt, a duty; it suggests that a law is at stake, an injunction to which the translator is responsible; it also involves a fault, a fall, an error, even a crime.⁴² Paul de Man, who emphatically insists that translation is impossible, states that the German word aufgabe carries within it a sense of failure, of surrender. Gibt auf, de Man explains, literally means "give up," "surrender." For de Man the Task of the Translator means that "the translator has to give up in relation to the task of refinding what was there in the original."⁴³

However, de Man, insists to the point of perversion upon one particular interpretation of the word Aufgabe and excludes the other, dare I say, more usual interpretations. If it is not merely to surrender, to give up, to yield the sense or meaning of the original, what more can this task mean? It must be pointed out and stressed that it can never be claimed, if one wants to be believed and to be taken seriously, that a translation does not deliver a sense. It does; however, this is unessential for Benjamin. One may indeed read a translation, because one cannot read the original language, for its

⁴¹See C.S. Lewis' treatment of this in his chapter entitled "The Style of Secondary Epic," in A Preface to Paradise Lost (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp.46-8.

⁴²"Des Tours de Babel" Joseph F. Graham tr. in Graham's Difference in Translation, p.175.

⁴³"Conclusions" in Yale French Studies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), p.33. De Man uses the fact that words in one language carry several different meanings together, a quality which cannot be reproduced in another language, to show that translation is impossible. This adds nothing new to the oldest of translators' prefaces, and, in fact, it says a good deal less, since de Man makes no effort to talk about what is possible.

information, but this would be to miss the essence of what one was reading. In fact, to do this would be to deny that one was reading a translation at all. Benjamin tells us, tantalizingly, what the essential task of the translator is.

Translation...ultimately serves the purpose of expressing the central reciprocal relationship between languages (p.72).

Benjamin refers to this reciprocal relationship as the "kinship of languages." For Benjamin, unlike de Man, translation does not express the relationship between translation and original in terms of an identity of sense, but in terms of the difference between languages. He says,

If the kinship of languages manifests itself in translations, this is not accomplished through a vague likeness between [translation] and original. It stands to reason that kinship does not necessarily involve likeness (p.73-4).

Benjamin is able to focus upon the difference in translation because he is not interested in language as a carrier of sense (which is the traditional preoccupation of translation studies) but in language as a mode or a form. It is because of this that he differentiates between the manner of meaning [die Art des Meinens] and what is meant [das Gemeinte]. What is meant corresponds with what has so far been referred to as sense. It is from within the manner of meaning that Benjamin searches for the "kinship of languages." Because this kinship of languages is characterised by difference rather than by similarity, it is a family relationship wholly unfamiliar to us. Benjamin explains as follows.

All suprahistorical kinship of languages rests in the fact that in every one of them as a whole ... one and the same is meant [eines und zwar dasselbe gemeint ist], which, however, is not reachable by any one of them, but only by the totality of their mutually supplementing intentions [ihrer einander ergänzenden Intentionen] - pure language [die reine Sprache]. While, namely, all individual elements of foreign languages - the words, sentences, contexts - exclude one another, these languages supplement one another in their intentions. To grasp this law, one of the fundamental laws of the philosophy of language, is to differentiate what is meant [das

Gemeinte] from the manner of meaning [die Art des Meinens] in the intention. In "Brot" and "pain" what is meant is indeed the same, the manner of meaning it, on the other hand, is not. ... While ... the manner of meaning in these two words is in conflict, it supplements itself in both languages from which they are derived. The manner of meaning supplements into what is meant. In the individual, unsupplemented languages, what is meant is never found in relative independence, as in individual words or sentences; rather it is grasped in a constant state of change until it is able to step forward from the harmony of all those manners of meaning as pure language.⁴⁴

Benjamin uses the term "suprahistorical" [uberhistorische] to indicate that he is not talking about a historical kind of kinship which relates two languages to one another as historical predecessor is related to what evolves out of it. He is not talking of the relationship between Latin and modern Italian, for example. Benjamin distinguishes between three elements in language in the above passage: what is meant [das Gemeinte], the manner of meaning [die Art des Meinens] and the intention of language [der Intention]. It is important to keep these three separate in order to grasp Benjamin's meaning here, especially because these terms seem to have a strong propensity to become confused. The intention of language refers to the inexpressible ultimate kinship between all languages taken as a totality. The intention of any language is pure language. This intention is inexpressible because it lies beyond the limits of any language, and it is only through the kinship of languages established by the Translator that this intention may be glimpsed. Pure language is really a linguistic reflection of Benjamin's messianism. Because this intention is unattained and inexpressible, it is very difficult to describe. The

⁴⁴I have used Carol Jacobs' translation here (and have inserted in square brackets phrases from the original German) since Harry Zohn's translation is a little confusing and has been called into question: "Harry Zohn remains far less 'true' to the original, far less 'literal' than the text demands. This is because he maintains a significant respect for his own linguistic usage, and, traditionally, that is to his credit. Understandably then, his translation results in phrases such as "the same thing," "the same object," where the German speaks neither of objects nor things." (See "The Monstrosity of Translation" Modern Language Notes 90 (1975), p.760). Interestingly, Jacobs mobilizes Benjamin's demand that translation should be untraditional and more respectful of the foreign language than one's own linguistic usage, in order to discredit Zohn's translation.

difference between what is meant [das Gemeinte] and the manner of meaning [die Art des Meinens], however, is easier to grasp, even though Benjamin uses "what is meant" in a slightly confusing way. "What is meant" seems to refer both to what we normally understand as the sense, as well as to the ineffable intention that I have just described. Although Benjamin gives a simple example, it is not quite as simple as it appears. Benjamin seems to be saying that the "what is meant" of the two words Brot and pain is the same while "the manner of meaning" of the two is different. This distinction seems merely to be taking note of the fact that German and French have two different words which mean the same, or rather, approximately the same. The simple fact that these two words are different means that they can never be entirely the same. But what Benjamin says in the final sentence of the passage cited above complicates the issue and provides the real insight into his theory because it relates his terminology to the kinship of languages. He begins this complicated sentence by talking of the "what is meant" in an "individual, unsupplemented language." He says that "what is meant" is grasped in "a constant state of change." This is rather similar to what Jakobson means when he says that the meaning of a word is another word. Meaning is in a constant state of flux in an "individual, unsupplemented language." However, through the kinship of languages realized in translation, the "what is meant" is altered. Benjamin says that it steps "forward from the harmony of all those manners of meaning as pure language." Thus, in the case of the harmony of supplemented languages "what is meant" is pure language. Thus, "what is meant" changes from something which is in perpetual flux (which is its state in any particular language) to something which is fixed in its most pure sense when it reaches the ultimate logical end of translation. What Benjamin seems to be trying to describe is a situation where "what is meant" will have been supplemented by every

single "manner of meaning" (or language) and thus emerge as instantaneously and universally meaningful. This is a sort of antidote to the arbitrariness in the Saussurian relationship between signifier and signified, because in pure language there can never be another way of expressing "what is meant."

Benjamin's terms das Gemeinte and die Art des Meinens correspond fairly well to Saussure's terms "signified" and "signifier" which together make up the linguistic sign. The claim that signified and signifier are arbitrarily linked, enables Saussure to speak of a chain of signification as many signifiers may be linked to the same signified. Indeed, Saussure makes use of the fact that different languages have different signifiers for the same signified, to clinch his argument. He thus relies on the very idea of translation for his theory of linguistics. The similarities with Benjamin are striking; however, as I have indicated there is one significant difference. For Benjamin there seems to be a cumulative relationship between das Gemeinte and die Art des Meinens. As das Gemeinte is translated more and more, many manners of meaning supplement das Gemeinte. Eventually, taking this supplementation to its theoretical conclusion, das Gemeinte becomes pure language. In this situation the Saussurean signifier would instantaneously encompass all other possible signifiers with all their divergent aspects included. Such a heavy burden of meaning is difficult to imagine, but probably no more difficult than it is to imagine what the Messianic age will be like.

In the case of a language taken by itself, "what is meant" is continually affected and altered by the manner of meaning in a way which is similar to Derridean free-play, or differance. In translation, Benjamin explains, there is a reduction in the amount of flux

because there is a coming together of two manners of meaning. This coming together of the two manners of meaning provides us with a glimpse of the fixity achieved when all possible manners of meaning come together in pure language. Once all possible manners of meaning (that is, all possible languages) have exerted their influence in an additive way upon what is meant, then there can be no more flux, only pure language, because the totality of manners of meaning will coincide completely with what is meant. Indeed, there will be no play between the two because no other way of saying what is meant will exist.

Up till now, Benjamin has spoken of the mutual supplementation of languages in a general sort of way. Speaking generally like this has implied that translation from one language into another, from German into French, say, affects both languages equally, since, once the translation exists, the translation can be said to go in both directions, both from German into French and back again. However, Benjamin insists, against this implication, that translation is unidirectional, that original and translation are always distinct. Original and translation always differ in their translatability; the original is always translatable, the translation never.

Unlike the words of the original, it [the translation] is not translatable, because the relationship between content and language is quite different in the original and the translation. While content and language form a certain unity in the original, like a fruit and its skin, the language of the translation envelopes its content like a royal robe with ample folds. For it signifies a more exalted language than its own and thus remains unsuited to its content, overpowering and alien. This disjunction prevents translation and at the same time makes it superfluous. (p.75)

The reason why a translation is not translatable again is because the status of the language

in a translation differs from that in the original.⁴⁵ This difference is described by means of two interesting metaphors. Language and content in the original are like a skin and its fruit, but in translation they are like a royal robe and its contents, the king. The two have different languages and different contents, and yet the language of the translation points symbolically to the language of the original. The manner of meaning of the translation is conditioned by the manner of meaning of the original and not solely by its own content. Thus, the robe is looser and more ample around the king than the skin around its fruit. Benjamin's theory of translation completely avoids any dependence upon the notion of translation as the transfer of a content or sense. The relationship between original and translation is purely in the manners of meaning of the two languages. Thus the king's robe is symbolic of the fruit's skin, but it most certainly cannot be substituted for the skin of the fruit in any way. Thus Benjamin states,

In translation the original rises into a higher and purer linguistic air, as it were. It cannot live there permanently, to be sure, and it certainly does not reach it in its entirety. Yet, in a singularly impressive manner, at least it points the way to this region: the predestined, hitherto inaccessible realm of reconciliation and fulfilment of languages. (p.75).

It is toward this region, this realm, this kingdom, that the royal robe symbolically points. It is because the language in the translation is symbolic of that in the original that the connection between language and content in the translation can appear looser than that in the original. There is nothing essentially symbolic in itself within the translation's language. What is symbolic in it derives from our knowledge that the translation is in fact a translation of a particular original. This knowledge alone makes all the difference

⁴⁵This supports the legal notion of translation that legal rights remain with the original, never with the translation. No matter what the actual practice involves, a translation is always legally considered to be a translation of "the original," never of one of its translations. This is merely to say that the original may never be thought of as a translation of any one of its translations: translation is always unidirectional. See Derrida, "Des tours de Babel," pp.195-200.

between the language of the original and that of the translation. This fact loosens the bond between language and content in the translation because the translation's language is influenced not by its content but by the language of the original. It is this looseness, this disjunction between the language of the translation and its content that "prevents translation and at the same time makes it superfluous." Translation is prevented in that it is always at a remove from the original, or in Benjamin's terms it is always symbolic of the original and never the original itself. It is superfluous both because it is a secondary reproduction of the original and because its language symbolically grows and proliferates in order to incorporate the language of the original. Thus, for Benjamin, the language in the original is purer than that of the translation. However, it is only because of the fact that it is translated that the original achieves this relative purity.⁴⁶ The same purity of language can never be achieved by any translation because a translation of a translation would symbolically point to the language of the original which the first translation symbolically points to. Thus, a

translation does not find itself in the centre of the language forest but on the outside facing the wooded ridge; it calls into it without entering, aiming at that single spot where the echo is able to give, in its own language, the reverberation of the work in the alien one. (p.76).

The translation can never occupy that "centre of the language forest." No matter how many translations of translations there may be, they will all only look symbolically towards the language of the first original. It is important to note, however, that it is only

⁴⁶Paul de Man comments here, ironically, that translation "canonizes its own version more than the original was canonical. That the original was not purely canonical is clear from the fact that it demands translation; it cannot be definitive since it can be translated. But you cannot ... translate the translation; once you have a translation you cannot translate it any more. You can translate only an original. The translation canonizes, freezes, an original and shows in the original a mobility, an instability, which at first one did not notice." (See "Conclusions," p.35). The original has an afterlife; it survives in translation. The translation has no such afterlife - it cannot be translated as the original can. The translation exalts the original, changes it, in a way that it itself cannot be.

because of translation that we are aware of the original's relative purity. If there were no translation on the outside looking in, then we would have no notion of the original occupying a "purer linguistic air" and we would have no notion of that messianic "pure language" which is the ultimate extrapolation of the difference between translation and original.

Much has been made of the symbolic relationship between the language of the translation and the language of the original in the above explanation. It is now necessary to explain what this means in practical terms. With regard to the practicality of actually translating with this theory of translation and language in mind, Benjamin reverts to the traditional dilemma found in a translator's preface: fidelity versus freedom. But Benjamin explains the conflicting fidelity and freedom of traditional translators' prefaces in such a way that they do not contradict one another. For Benjamin fidelity is literalism itself. It is word-for-word translation. It is not translation of a separate "inviolable" sense or meaning.

Just as fragments of a vessel, in order to be articulated together, must follow one another in the smallest detail but need not resemble one another, so, instead of making itself similar to the meaning [Sinn] of the original, the translation must rather, lovingly and in detail, in its own language, form itself according to the manner of meaning [Art des Meinens] of the original, to make both recognizable as the broken part of a greater language, just as fragments are the broken part of a vessel.⁴⁷

Benjamin describes fidelity, here, as being fidelity to the manner of meaning. Translation must follow or "form itself" according to the original's language, word-for-word (and not

⁴⁷ Carol Jacobs' translation, from "The Monstrosity of Translation" Modern Language Notes 90 (1975), p.762. Jacobs again undermines Zohn's translation: "Zohn's translation is perhaps more logical, certainly more optimistic, but doesn't quite form itself in detail according to the strange mode of Benjamin's meaning." (n.8). Again Jacobs follows Benjamin's program of literalism as fidelity.

necessarily according to its sense). Benjamin asserts that the traditional idea of freedom in translation can have no conflict with this conception of fidelity, "for what is meant by freedom but that the rendering of the sense is no longer to be regarded as all-important?" (p.79). In fact, Benjamin considers the preponderance of sense or content to render translation, as he understands the term, impossible. For him, "sense is touched by language only the way in which an aeolian harp is touched by the wind" - that is, not at all - in the best translation.

Benjamin's desire to efface sense or meaning and to exalt language, or the manner of meaning, to great heights leads him to propose a particularly radical literalism in translation. He proposes the interlinear Bible as the "prototype or ideal of all translation." What Benjamin proposes is not translation as we normally understand it, but the demonstrated amalgamation of two (and ideally of all) languages as exemplified by the interlinear version of the Scriptures. As anyone who has looked into an interlinear bible will know, the translation takes on the same word order, the same breakdown of terms, in short, the same manner of meaning, as the original. This is particularly impressively apparent in the interlinear Hebrew Bible which has the English translation read from right to left as the Hebrew is presented. The experience of reading the interlinear Hebrew Bible is as close to reading Hebrew, without actually reading it, that one can ever be.

רעה	ישראל	האזינה	נהג	כצאן	יוסף
O	Israel	ear give	you	a like	Joseph
	of Shepherd		who	flock	

ישב	הכרבים	הופיעה
you	the (between)	shine
dwell who	cherubim	forth

This line, taken from Psalm 80 verse 2, is presented in the Interlinear Bible⁴⁸ as it appears here. The English text, as it stands, is unreadable because of the reversal of the word order, but it does give us the sense of a word for word translation with the Hebrew word overhead, and the English reader can achieve some measure of knowledge about which word belongs to which. In this kind of translation the manner of meaning of the Hebrew text is supplemented to the English. Milton takes a negative attitude towards the kind of recommendation that Benjamin makes in his preference for the Interlinear Bible's translation practice. In Of Education Milton approves of the idea of the supplementation of languages, but he does not in any way want to do away with the primacy of meaning. He says,

And though a linguist should pride himselfe to have all the tongues that Babel cleft the world into, yet, if he have not studied the solid things in them as well as the words and lexicons, he were nothing so much to be a learned man, as any yeoman or tradesman competently wise in his mother dialect only.⁴⁹

Although Milton has no time for the idea that meaning is of secondary importance (indeed, it would be anachronistic if he did have), he and Benjamin do come together somewhat in their common ideal of a universal linguistic knowledge.

Benjamin's messianic vision of "pure language" is symbolized in "Holy Writ" at the end of his essay:

It is vouchsafed to Holy Writ alone, in which meaning has ceased to be the watershed for the flow of language and the flow of revelation. Where a text is identical with truth or dogma, where it is supposed to be "the true

⁴⁸See Jay P. Green, Sr. (ed.), The Interlinear Bible: Hebrew-Greek-English with Strong's Concordance Numbers above Each Word (Peabody, Ma.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1986), p.489.

⁴⁹See Of Education, in Complete Prose Works of John Milton (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), vol.II, pp.369-70.

language" in all its literalness and without the mediation of meaning, this text is unconditionally translatable. (p.82).

What Benjamin means by this is that Holy Writ is the closest to what we will ever have of "pure language." However, as scripture gradually ceases to be considered Holy Writ, and begins to be considered quite simply a text like any other, then it begins to lose this qualitative closeness to "pure language." Holy Writ is True in a way that no other original text can be. In order to understand what Benjamin means by this we need to look at another earlier text of his. This text, "On Language as Such and on the Language of Man,"⁵⁰ is perhaps even more directly concerned with the way in which translation operates than "The Task of the Translator." However, it is far more impenetrably messianic than the later text. In this essay, Benjamin distinguishes between the language of things, the language of Man (Adamic language) and the language of God. God's word is creative, Man names and things are silent. The whole milieu of this discussion is edenic, prelapsarian. Indeed, Benjamin retells the first two books of Genesis with reference to these three kinds of language. When God's word created the world, that which was created had no name. Man (which is "Adam" translated) supplied the name for the as yet unnamed created thing and in so doing gained knowledge of the created. At this point, Adamic language is pure manner of meaning. There is no sense or "what is meant" as a separable concept from Adam's manner of meaning, for there is absolutely no other access to the things named by Adam other than by the names he gives them.

Man is the namer, by this we recognize that through him pure language speaks. All nature, insofar as it communicates itself, communicates itself in language, and so finally in man. Hence he is the lord of nature and can give names to things. Only through the linguistic being of things can he gain knowledge of them from within himself - in name. God's creation is completed when things receive their name from man, from whom in

⁵⁰In One-Way Street, trans. E. Jephcott and K. Shorter (London: Verso, 1985), pp.107-23.

name language alone speaks. (p.111).

Thus Adam's name-language is the language of things in names - pure language. The Fall of Man (Adam) was also a fall into translation. After the fall, and by this Benjamin means after Babel, translation was no longer simply the translation between the language of things and the language of Man, no longer a simple naming, but translation as we now understand it to be, from one human language into another. What happened at Babel, in Benjamin's terms, was the intrusion of a multitude of manners of meaning upon the single pure Adamic manner of meaning. It is to this language of naming or pure manner of meaning that "Holy Writ" in "The Task of the Translator" refers. Holy Writ has this status only because of the faith that people have in it as a language which simply is as much as it means. Only someone who practices gematria or who kabbalistically believes that the very words of Holy Writ recreate the world each and every moment (as God's words created the world at the very first), can possibly appreciate Holy Writ as pure language and as universally translatable. Holy Writ for such a degree of faith is not a language mediated by meaning, but a language of immediate meaning.⁵¹ In more secular terms, Benjamin's messianic style of argument seems to be an attempt at forging an essential link between world and text. Pure language, or Holy Writ, for Benjamin, is that link where text is world and vice versa.

Benjamin's very literal word-for-word prescription for translation practice, as well as the metaphor of the amphora which he uses to describe the articulation of languages,

⁵¹It must be pointed out here that Benjamin uses "Holy Writ" in a conditional sense. For "Holy Writ" (in Benjamin's sense) is only coincident with the Bible if it is believed in and taken to be authoritative. In a secular culture, where the Bible is read merely as literature, it cannot coincide with Benjamin's "Holy Writ." However, in the puritanical England of Milton's day, the bible had all the authority of "Holy Writ" - well, at least for some.

suggest that his theory of translation is monistic. And even though "pure language," the goal toward which all Benjaminian translation aims, is a particularly mystical and practically unreachable phenomenon (given the beliefs of this day and age), Benjamin's theory seems to provide us with a monistic route to it. And furthermore, it seems that Benjamin's formulation of pure language is designed ultimately to do away with the world - text dualism with which much translation theory seems to struggle. Benjamin's concerted effort to create a theory of translation which eliminates any dependence upon the notion of sense or content, is, at bottom, what makes his theory decidedly monistic. Indeed, Benjamin's theory can be viewed as an unmitigated onslaught against the role of sense in translation theory. What is particularly interesting and compelling in Benjamin's theory is that he seems to provide a monistic avenue of access to a most profound point of faith. Benjamin's theory of the relationship or kinship of translation and original provides a direct route to the universal kinship of languages which is pure language. Thus Benjamin's theory provides a monistic route to what is usually considered accessible only in the presence of God's grace and by an almighty leap of faith.

In his essay "Des Tours de Babel," Jacques Derrida elaborates expansively upon Benjamin's theory of translation and finds his own understanding of translation to be extremely close to what Benjamin describes in his "The Task of the Translator." Like Benjamin, Derrida's view is monistic in that it tends away from the notion of sense. He, too, has an exalted view of language and a diminished view of what is understood as sense. Most of Derrida's essay is a recapitulation of Benjamin's essay, but he does make a few interesting formulations of his own. He celebrates language and translation in his essay in what he calls the "metaphoric catastrophe."

It seems necessary here to ... recognize what I have elsewhere proposed to call the 'metaphoric catastrophe': far from knowing first what 'life' or 'family' mean whenever we use these familiar values to talk about language and translation; it is rather starting from the notion of a language and its 'sur-vival' in translation that we could have access to the notion of what life and family mean. This reversal is operated expressly by Benjamin.⁵²

It is perhaps toward this priority of language over its referents that much of Derrida's work tends. It restates Benjamin's preference for the manner of meaning (or language) over what is meant (or content), and places him well within the monistic camp. Derrida mentions this "metaphoric catastrophe" in his essay as part of his explanation of Benjamin's "kinship of languages." Essentially, what he is saying, is that our usual understanding of "kinship" is not to be applied to the relationship between languages. It is rather the relationship between languages which determines what we normally consider to be "kinship." This is only to say that Derrida, too, prefers the manner of meaning over what is meant. For Derrida, language is primarily non-referential. It is only referential in a secondary sense.

Derrida focuses upon the biblical myth of Babel which, he argues, figures the simultaneous necessity and impossibility of translation. He retells the story of Genesis 11:1-10, of how God, seeing the work of the builders of the tower, comes down and destroys their work and confounds their attempt at making a single unified name for themselves over all the earth. God confounds their name-making endeavour by destroying their construction, by sowing confusion among them, and by imposing his own name upon them. Derrida explains that God's imposition of his name upon them is

⁵²Jacques Derrida, "Des Tours de Babel," in J.F. Graham (ed.) Difference in Translation (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), p.178.

both an act of giving and an act of destruction.

In giving his name, a name of his choice, in giving all names, the father would be at the origin of language, and that power would belong by right to God the father. And the name of God the father would be the name of that origin of tongues. But it is also that God, who in the action of his anger, ... annuls the gift of tongues, or at least embroils it, sows confusion among his sons, and poisons the present. (p.167).

Thus God both gives and takes away. God imposes translation on these builders by confusing their tongues and by imposing his own name upon them. Derrida explains that the word Babel is a proper noun which names at least three things, it names the narrative, it names the tower within the narrative and it is God's proclaimed name. Ba signifies father, and bel signifies God. Thus, Babel is "God the father." But Babel also means "confusion," as the biblical text explains. Such over-determination or confusion of the word Babel itself, Derrida explains, is emblematic of the difficulty of translation.

'Babel' could be understood in one language as meaning 'confusion.' And from then on, just as Babel is at once proper name and common noun, confusion also becomes proper name and common noun, the one as the homonym of the other, the synonym as well, but not the equivalent, because there could be no question of confusing them in their value. It has for the translator no satisfactory solution. (p.172).

In the language of Genesis 'Babel' is simultaneously, in a single word, common noun and proper name in all its namings. In translation this cannot be. Thus the story of Babel demonstrates the necessity of translation and its prohibition, which is what the word 'Babel' also signifies.

So in the myth of the tower of Babel, translation is both imposed upon the world as well as limited. There is an insufficiency in translation because even though it enables the very necessary transfer between languages it can never approach the proper name. However, for Derrida, as for Benjamin, the insufficiency of translation is not a negative

thing. It is not a debilitating nihilistic denial of all meaning as Paul de Man would have it. As we have already seen, the insufficiency of translation, for Benjamin, takes us one step closer to a deeply satisfying purity of language, which, although unattainable, is glimpsable through the insufficiency of translation. For Derrida, the insufficiency of translation is balanced by an equally pressing necessity of translation. Translation for Derrida is a "double-bind."

This chapter, so far, has made an effort to classify various theories of translation as either monistic or dualistic and to demonstrate that such a classification simultaneously exposes the theorist's metaphysics. This classification has at times been obvious and at times quite contorted. However difficult, this effort is valuable because it identifies, even pin-points, the crucial differences between these theories' handling of letter and spirit. By dividing these theories between dualism and monism, it may be seen that translation not only exhibits the same difficulties as letter and spirit, but that it provides a textual means for dealing with these difficulties. It remains, then, to demonstrate how Milton's problematic monistic faith may be simplified and explained by means of the dualistic or monistic assumptions (as the case may be) underlying his work as a translator.

CHAPTER IV

MILTON AS TRANSLATOR

Critical thought has floundered somewhat in its attempts to explain the presence of the metrical psalm translations in Milton's poetic writings. Indeed, there has been considerable embarrassment among critics who have exhaustively studied Milton's Latin, Greek and Italian antecedents when they have come face to face with his declared preference for the Psalms in particular (but also biblical poetry in general) over other poetic traditions. C.S. Lewis graciously admits this in his famous A Preface to Paradise Lost. Lewis acknowledges Milton's judgement that Hebrew lyrics are better than Greek with the following admonition.

I once had a pupil, innocent alike of the Greek and of the Hebrew tongue, who did not think himself thereby disqualified from pronouncing this judgement a proof of Milton's bad taste; the rest of us, whose Greek is amateurish and who have no Hebrew, must leave Milton to discuss the question with his peers.¹

But even among those critics who have been prepared to accept Milton's hebraic preferences, there has been an almost unanimous critical conviction that Milton's metrical psalm translations are of poor quality meriting little literary attention. The natural consequence of such an over-ridingly negative opinion of the psalm translations as literature has been that critics have considered the translations as historical facts useful only in connection with Milton's biography. For if the psalm translations could not be shown to be worthy of Milton's great pen, then, at least, speculation as to the possible motivations prompting Milton to translate the selected psalms when he did, would provide much meat for critics to chew.

¹C.S. Lewis, A Preface to Paradise Lost (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 4-5.

David Masson's monumental biography of Milton originated this trend of the biographical treatment of the psalm translations. Masson makes several assertions, each of which has been made the subject of refinements and refutations by later critics. Perhaps the most long-lived assertion of Masson's has been his speculative argument that Milton translated Psalms 80-88 in 1648 as a competitive entry for a psalter which was intended to supersede the old Sternhold and Hopkins version.² The enormously influential Sternhold and Hopkins psalter, first published in full in 1562, formed the basis of both the Old English Psalter and the Old Scottish Psalter. These two old versions dominated church services in England and Scotland throughout the later sixteenth and the entire seventeenth centuries. During this period, the Book of Psalms was the most translated book of the bible and probably of books in general. The abundance of psalm translation during this period has been explained by several historians as arising out of the strongly felt need for improved versions of the psalter to be used in worship.³ Masson's influential placing of Milton's 1648 translations as a competitive entry within this tradition of national psalters is, however, undermined by the fact that Milton's contribution is entirely absent from the psalter that was eventually realized as the Scottish Psalter of 1650. Masson, influentially, explains this fact by quite simply declaring Milton's translations to be of poor quality and thus uncompetitive. Because of this, argues Masson, they failed to interest the Westminster Assembly, and thus failed to be entered in the national psalter.

²The Life of John Milton (London: Macmillan and Co., 1873), vol.III (1643-1649), pp.683-86.

³See Henry Alexander Glass, The Story of the Psalters: A History of the Metrical Versions of Great Britain and America from 1549 to 1885 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1888), John Holland, The Psalmists of Britain (London, 1843), Thomas Young, The Metrical Psalms and Paraphrases (London: A & C Black, 1909) and Philip von Rohr Sauer, English Metrical Psalms from 1600 to 1660: A Study in the Religious and Aesthetic Tendencies of that Period (Freiburg im Breisgau: Poppen & Ortman, 1938).

William B. Hunter, more recently, has picked up this argument and provided more detail. In his article, "Milton Translates the Psalms," Hunter places Milton (as does Masson) largely on the evidence of dates within the history of the competition for inclusion in the Scottish Psalter. This psalter was originally considered a necessary and worthwhile project because of dissatisfaction with the psalters available at the time (the Great Bible version and the Sternhold and Hopkins version) which were considered theologically unworthy. This dissatisfaction was only intensified by the publication of the spurious "King James" Psalters in 1631 and 1636. The Westminster Assembly selected Francis Rous' 1638 psalter to form the foundation of the new psalter in 1643. After review the Assembly accepted Rous' version as the Westminster version in 1645 but this was rejected by the Lords who favoured William Barton's version of 1644. In the wrangling which ensued revisions were ordered and revisions of the revisions. One such revision was rejected on 14 April 1648 only days before Milton translated (or claims to have translated) his selection of nine psalms. The coincidental timing of this blip in the history of the Scottish Psalter and Milton's nine translations seems to have been enough to lead Hunter (and Masson before him, and indeed all those who accept this argument) to suggest that Milton was an active competitor for inclusion in the national psalter. Eventually the Scottish Psalter, based on Rous' many-times-revised version and without the slightest hint of any Miltonic influence, was published in 1650.⁴ Thus Masson, Hunter and a long line of critics after them, place Milton's intention as a translator within the tradition of competition for a new national psalter. Milton's absence from any such psalter and the fact that Milton only translated nine of the one hundred and fifty psalms in the psalter requires them to argue that his translations were considered to

⁴W. B. Hunter, "Milton Translates the Psalms," *Philological Quarterly*, 40 (1961), 485-94.

be of too poor a quality either to justify his completing a translation of the entire psalter or to compete with those that are represented in the national psalters.

Masson suggests other biographical arguments concerning the 1648 psalm translations which persist in discussions even now. Masson intimates that Milton broke off from the work he had been writing (or, at least, had been planning to write) in order to translate the 1648 set. He suggests that the Psalms suddenly intruded upon Milton's consciousness while he was occupied with a very different project because he simply needed the strong Hebrew of the psalmist for very personal reasons. Masson asserts that Milton required the solace of the psalms both for the anguish of his deteriorating eyesight and for the alarming and depressing dangers threatening Parliamentary England at that time.⁵ In 1648, the parliamentary army was not as dominant as Milton would have liked it to be. In fact, the royal party looked very likely to turn out victorious. This may have been behind Milton's translation of Psalm 83.

**For lo thy furious foes now swell
 And storm outrageously,
 And they that hate thee proud and fell
 Exalt their heads full high.
 Against thy people they contrive
 Their plots and counsels deep,
 Them to ensnare they chiefly strive
 Whom thou dost hide and keep.
 Come and let us cut them off say they,
 Till they no nation be
 That Israel's name for ever may
 Be lost in memory.
 For they consult with all their might,
 And all as one in mind
 Themselves against thee they unite
 And in firm union bind (ll.5-20).**

⁵See Masson, The Life of John Milton, vol.III, p.685.

The italicized words (rendered small, here) represent conscious intrusions by Milton. By italicizing his insertions Milton was following the tradition established by the Geneva Bible of italicizing additions to the text which are not strictly required by the Hebrew original.⁶ Milton's intrusion of the word "now" in the first line of this citation seems to connect the biblical situation with the current state of the revolution. Moreover, concerning Milton's other problems, Psalm 88 seems to refer to his encroaching blindness.

9 **Through sorrow, and affliction great**
 Mine eye grows dim and dead,
Lord all the day I thee entreat,
 My hands to thee I spread.

Milton's insertion of the word now into his translation of Psalm 83 suggests that he may have actively wanted to draw a particular parallel between biblical and contemporary events. However, in Psalm 88, Milton does not add anything to the part cited above. He does not add anything to do with blindness; the psalmist's reference to it is already there. This may have been why Milton selected this psalm, but it is unlikely that he would have translated the entire psalm merely for the sake of one line in it which refers to something he was going through. At any rate, one can only empathise with Milton's deeply felt pain at the loss of the sight in his left eye at this time. Milton knew in 1648, having lost the sight in one eye and with the other already dimming, that total blindness would only be a matter of time. He lost the sight in his right eye becoming totally blind four years later in 1652. The subject matter and tone of these nine selected psalms are consistent enough with what quite understandably must have been a depressing time in his life that a causal link between his mood and the selection of these psalms is difficult to dismiss. Indeed,

⁶The roman type is represented here in bold type and the italics are here diminished. The reason for this representation will become evident in chapter 5.

in the words of Psalm 88, Milton is able to shout out the following cathartic lament.

cloyed with woes and trouble store
Surcharged my soul doth lie,
My life at death's uncheerful door
Unto the grave draws nigh.
Reckoned I am with them that pass
Down to the dismal pit
I am a man, but weak alas
And for that name unfit.
From life discharged and parted quite
Among the dead to sleep,
And like the slain in bloody fight
That in the grave lie deep.

Masson believes that Milton may well have been working on a reply to an epistle sent him by Carlo Dati when the psalmist intruded upon his emotions prompting him to translate nine cathartic psalms in the manner illustrated above. This conjectured reply was never written. Masson's disappointment with this is palpable in his distaste for the psalms that occupy this conjectured epistle's stead. Masson deplores the failure of creativity implied by Milton's decision to translate. More recently, William Riley Parker, picking up Masson's judgement, has declared that Milton undertook the 1648 translations because he was unable to sustain creative thought.⁷ The thrust of this argument, while disparaging to Milton as a translator, is essentially directed against translation itself. The implication in Masson's and Parker's argument is that translation, which in itself can never be creative, must always be an interruption to or a failure of creative thought.

Other recent work has picked up and refined Masson's argument concerning

⁷See Parker's Milton: A Biography, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), pp.322-3. Parker goes on to contradict this perception by identifying the strong links between the psalm translations of both 1648 and 1653 with Samson Agonistes. Indeed, this close relationship forms part of his reasoning for an early date of composition of Samson Agonistes. See pages 431-2 of his Milton.

Milton's need for the psalms during 1648. Margaret Boddy suggests two possible reasons why Milton translated nine psalms in April 1648. Both possibilities relate to the political developments of the time. Firstly, Boddy suggests, Milton intended his psalms to answer Henry Lawes' Choice Psalms which focused on the sufferings of the interred king at Carisbrooke. Secondly, and with more conviction, Boddy suggests that Milton intended his psalms for

the famous prayer meeting of the army, largely Independent, at Windsor, which took place, apparently, on three days, ending on the first of May⁸

1648. Carolyn Collette points out that Milton would have turned to various psalms for "personal guidance in times of trial." She details the political anguish that Milton must have felt in April 1648 when the Royalist threat seemed particularly potent, mainly because of the defection of the Presbyterians to the monarchy.⁹

All of these arguments, while interesting and even plausible, seem to share the judgement that Milton's translations are disappointing, or at least, uninteresting as poetry. They all seem to feel the need to excuse these translations or to explain them away. Because of their embarrassment about Milton's achievement as a translator, these critics fail to supply a satisfactory picture of Milton as a translator of the Psalms. They are highly speculative and more importantly, they are limited because they concentrate almost exclusively on Milton's 1648 translations. They fail to account for Milton's translations of Psalms 114 and 136 during his adolescence and in his early twenties and Psalms 1-8 in 1653. The thesis that Milton needed the psalms adds nothing to the well

⁸See Margaret Boddy, "Milton's Translation of Psalms 80-88," Modern Philology, 64 (1966), p.3.

⁹See Carolyn Collette, "Milton's Psalm Translations: Petition and Praise" English Literary Renaissance, 2 (1972), p.247.

known and well publicized fact that Milton was a devout and passionate reader of the Bible. It in no way explains why he needed to translate these psalms. Surely, in his anguish reading the psalms would have sufficed to alleviate his suffering. The decision to translate, it seems to me, suggests an active creative intention rather than passive submission.

A second debate (also touched upon by Masson and not unrelated to the biographical one already mentioned) arises out of the critically prejudiced opinion that the psalm translations are unworthy as poetry. This debate centres about Milton's knowledge of Hebrew. Questions as to how well Milton knew the language of the Bible; whether he had linguistic access to rabbinical commentaries, to the Talmud, and the Targum certainly need to be answered before his work as a translator can be evaluated. Most of the criticism directed towards answering these questions has centred upon the 1648 translations because of the provocative epigraph in which Milton claims the strictest accuracy for his project.

Nine of the Psalms done into metre, wherein all but what is in a different character, are the very words of the text, translated from the original.

In this epigraph Milton, firstly, claims that his translations are extremely accurate, that his translations "are the very words of the text," and secondly, he indicates that he has added to the text by means of the convention established in the Geneva Bible of italicizing. The boldness of his claim to accuracy demands verification, and it certainly has attracted its fair share of critical attention over the years.

Edward Baldwin was the first who really took Milton to task over this bold claim

to accuracy.

The subordinate clause is rather misleading, for it implies a more literal rendering of the Hebrew than Milton attempted, or, at any rate, than he attained.¹⁰

Baldwin examines Milton's translations of 1648 very closely (referring especially to Milton's own footnotes in which he acknowledges the places where he diverges from a strictly accurate rendition) and comes to the conclusion that

[Milton's] acquaintance with Hebrew was a literary rather than a scholarly one. It enabled him to appreciate the distinctive beauties of Hebrew poetry, but did not furnish an adequate equipment for the task he set before himself (463).

Having thus concluded that Milton's Hebrew was not scholarly, Baldwin suggests that Milton probably did not attempt a full translation of the entire psalter because he was all too conscious of his inadequate knowledge of the Hebrew tongue. This suggestion, however, is inconsistent with Milton's sense of linguistic responsibility as expressed in Of Education.¹¹ It is also inconsistent with the fact that Milton published these psalm translations, which suggests that he was rather proud of his achievement than self-conscious about his abilities.¹² Baldwin extends his conclusions to Milton's 1653 translations even though his analytical work only relates to the 1648 set and despite the fact that Milton made no claim for accuracy in 1653.

¹⁰E. C. Baldwin, "Milton and the Psalms" Modern Philology, 17 (1919-20), 457.

¹¹In Of Education Milton demonstrates a diligent commitment to the acquisition of foreign tongues. He is highly critical of the way in which languages are taught in the schools which he criticizes for encouraging barbarism rather than the profitable and easy learning which language acquisition should be. (See especially pp.370-4 in the Yale edition).

¹²Of course, the fact that Milton published his psalm translations could mean that he relied upon an uncritical readership, but this would be entirely inconsistent with Milton's sense of responsibility. (See previous note).

Baldwin's argument has never been directly refuted, although many critics have sought to correct small parts of it, or provide an explanatory context which alters it. Although Martin Jarret-Kerr agrees with Baldwin's negative appraisal of Milton's translations, he differs with him over the reason. Where Baldwin finds Milton to be too inaccurate, Jarret-Kerr disapproves of what he believes to be an over-riding bibliolatry in both the 1648 and 1653 translations.¹³ Thus, for Jarret-Kerr Milton's translations are rather too accurate to support good poetry than inaccurate, as Baldwin argues. Disappointed Miltonists eager to defend Milton from Baldwin's charges have been quick to spot the weakness in his argument. Marion Studley, William Hunter and Harris Fletcher have pointed out in different ways that Baldwin's assumption that Milton intended a pedantically accurate translation is open to question. Studley, already in his title, "Milton and his Paraphrases of the Psalms,"¹⁴ moves away from the notion of accuracy. His argument hinges upon a comparison of Milton's "paraphrases" with those of his contemporaries. His comparison reveals that the inaccuracies which Baldwin finds are largely a matter of convention rather than of mediocre scholarship. William Hunter extends Studley's argument to its logical extreme claiming that Milton

consulted every previous version which he could lay his hands on, and he was especially likely to follow the phraseology of those from the Puritan wing of the church. In general his version is not to be considered an original translation.¹⁵

For Hunter, Milton's translations are so conventional that they are but amalgamations of the work of prior translators. Harris Fletcher alternatively argues that Milton's accuracy

¹³Martin Jarret-Kerr, "Milton, Poet and Paraphrast," *Essays in Criticism*, 10 (1960), 373-89.

¹⁴*Philological Quarterly*, 4 (1925), 364-72.

¹⁵"Milton Translates the Psalms," *Philological Quarterly*, 40 (1961), 485-94. This is a repeat of the same in *Philological Quarterly*, 28 (1949), 125-34.

as a translator is limited by the self-imposed constraint of rendering the psalms in metrical verse, and not by his inability as a linguist. Fletcher argues that this must be the case since there were too many forms of the original available to Milton to suppose that he would have been unaware of a possible mistake.¹⁶ It would seem, from the proliferation of arguments, that the question of how much Hebrew Milton knew cannot effectively be decided by an analysis of his 1648 psalm translations. There seems to be no clear external evidence which indicates precisely where Milton really and truly tried to be accurate and where he was intentionally conventional, where he intentionally paraphrased and where metre constrained him to expand. In the absence of such external evidence we must despair of ever resolving the question of how much Hebrew Milton actually knew and what in his translations may be taken to be mistakes.

Even so, the controversy over how much Hebrew Milton knew has not been laid to rest, and continues unabated. A whole new phase in its history arose in the mid 1970s when Rabbi Jack Goldman attempted to decide once and for all the exact limits of Milton's knowledge of Hebrew.¹⁷ By means of a close analysis of all nineteen of the psalms that Milton translated, Goldman attempts to adjudicate between Harris Fletcher's rather grandiose claim that Milton was a superior scholar of Hebrew with experience of and skill in rabbinical Hebrew, and George Newton Conklin's rather minimal claim that Milton's knowledge of Hebrew was limited to knowledge of the Hebrew Bible.¹⁸

¹⁶Milton's Semitic Studies (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1926), especially pp. 97-110.

¹⁷Rabbi Jack Goldman, "Milton's Knowledge of Hebrew and his Rendition of the Psalms," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Detroit, 1973.

¹⁸George Newton Conklin, Biblical Criticism and Heresy in Milton (New York: King's Crown Press, 1949).

Goldman ultimately is unable to decide.

More recently Golda Werman has suggested that

Milton's hebraic learning was not exceptional for a university-educated person of his day: he could read the Hebrew bible, including the Aramaic sections, and he may have studied the Targums ... These tools ... are not sufficient of themselves for reading rabbinic texts whose compressed style and difficult methodology require years of practice to decipher.¹⁹

Jason Rosenblatt agrees with Werman that Milton's Hebrew was not sufficient to support his own reading of rabbinical material, but, he argues, there were sufficient rabbinical works in translation (by John Selden, for example) for Milton to have been very knowledgable in hebraica.²⁰ Thus, the presence of rabbinic interpretation in his psalm translations is not evidence that he read rabbinic Hebrew. And so the controversy of Milton's knowledge of Hebrew continues unresolved. The absence of conclusive evidence only propagates the controversy as much as it trivializes it. It cannot be doubted, however, that Milton knew Hebrew. It is only the limits of that knowledge which remains elusive.

Although there has been substantial critical interest in Milton's psalm translations, this interest has generally been ancillary to other concerns such as biography. Critics have tended to shy away from direct interpretation of Milton's psalm translations, with the result that these translations have remained incidental to the Miltonic canon. This thesis will attempt to re-evaluate Milton's psalm translations with a view to placing them more centrally amongst Milton's concerns.

¹⁹Golda Werman, "Milton's Use of Rabbinical Materials," *Milton Studies*, 21 (1985), p.37.

²⁰Jason P. Rosenblatt, "Milton's Chief Rabbi," *Milton Studies*, 24 (1988), 43-71.

Given that there is no secure way of knowing exactly how much Hebrew Milton knew and precisely what Milton's intentions were when he translated these psalms, finding a way to discuss Milton's psalm translations is problematic. The immediate critical impulse when dealing with a translation seems to be to attempt an evaluative comparison with the original. However, the discussion in chapter III has indicated that the way in which one views a translation will influence the kind of comparison that one is able to effect. As Werner Schwarz points out, it is very different to compare a translation with its original while taking the inspirational view of translation than to compare them from the philological point of view. Very different theological conclusions seem to be drawn when these different points of view are deployed with respect to a particular translation. And with respect to the more general discussion of translation theory in chapter III, comparing a translation with its original as a dualistic entity is very different from comparing the two monistically. When treating translation as fundamentally dualistic, one first has to establish what the sense of the original is and then one may compare this sense with one's construction of the sense of the translation. This round-about method is necessary because the sense of a text (according to the dualistic view) is always ultimately beyond the reach of its words and thus always below the surface, as it were. So when comparing translation and original, what one is implicitly doing (under dualism) is making one's own translation of the original against which one compares the translation in question. The problem with this is that one is not comparing original and translation, but two different translators' versions of that original. The original itself seems to slip out of view. This is perhaps why using the psalm translations to evaluate Milton's knowledge of Hebrew has produced so much variation and uncertainty. When treating a translation as a monistic structure, however, one must

avoid any reliance upon, or, indeed, any reference to the sense of translation or original. This means that comparison is really out of the question, since any comparison under these circumstances would, at best, be a mere matter of laying the translation beside its original in the manner of an Interlinear Bible. A practical analysis of particular translations from the monistic theoretical standpoint must take a very different form from a narrow comparison.

A recent trend within critical theory has provided a few possible ways of overcoming these practical methodological difficulties. What has become known, over the past decade, as Translation Studies, provides the theoretical background for a practical analysis of Milton's psalm translations. At the very base of Translation Studies lies Polysystem Theory, developed by Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury, who are both central figures in what has been referred to as the Tel-Aviv School of Translation Studies. Polysystem Theory is the study of functional relations within an open, heterogenous, dynamic system. Basic to this relational systems approach is the assumption that social norms and literary conventions in the culture which receives a translation govern the aesthetic presuppositions of the translator. Thus the study of translation is also the study of the social norms and literary conventions of a particular culture. Translations thus provide unique access to the workings of a social system and even mark off the limits of that system.²¹ Gideon Toury points out that most theories of translation are source-text oriented. By focusing on the source-text (or the original) such theories of translation are necessarily concerned with potential translation or

²¹For an introductory review of Polysystem Theory, see Edwin Genzler, Contemporary Translation Theories (London: Routledge, 1993), pp.109f.

translatability and not actual translation. For such theories translation always inhabits the territory of the potential because the translated text can never exactly reproduce its original or source. Polysystem Theory, for Toury enables a target-text oriented approach to translation, which focuses upon the translated text itself as an expression of the social norms and literary conventions which govern its production. Focusing upon the translation itself leads Toury to propose the establishment of what he calls Descriptive Translations Studies (DTS). The whole project of DTS is to gather together a comprehensive inventory of norms and conventions which govern translation within a particular system. Such an inventory would really be an inventory of those norms which essentially define the system which they inhabit. Comparing a translation with its source-text, while never irrelevant, for Toury, is of secondary importance.²²

While Toury's DTS aims at an encompassing description of an entire system, of an entire tradition of translation, Kitty van Leuwen Zwart has developed a descriptive model of translation which is designed to work on the level of a single text. Van Leuwen Zwart's project is to provide a methodical way of establishing an inventory of norms and conventions of translation starting from individual translations. The complex descriptive model which she describes has been both simplified and adapted for a biblical context by Anneke de Vries.²³ Both van Leuwen Zwart and de Vries find themselves making a

²²See Gideon Toury's In Search of a Theory of Translation (Tel-Aviv: Porter Institute for Poetics & Semiotics, 1980), "Translated Literature: System, Norm, Performance: Toward a TT-Oriented Approach to Literary Translation," Poetics Today, 2 no. 4 (1981), 9-27, "Translation, Literary Translation and Pseudotranslation," Comparative Criticism, 6 (1984), 73-85.

²³See Kitty van Leuwen Zwart's two articles, "Translation and Original: Similarities and Dissimilarities, I" Target, 1:2 (1989), 151-81, and "Translation and Original: Similarities and Dissimilarities, II" Target, 2:1 (1990), 69-95, and Anneke de Vries' adaptation of van Leuwen Zwart's work in Zuiwer en Onvervalscht?: Een Beschrijvingsmodel voor Bijbelvertalingen Ontwikkeld en Gedemonstreerd aan de Petrus Canisius Vertaling (Amsterdam: VU Uitgeverij, 1994), especially chapter 2 "De Verhouding

comparison of source-text and target-text. Even though DTS tries to avoid making such comparisons, it becomes obvious that there is no practical way of analyzing the particular norms or shifts that a particular translation may be exhibiting without some means of comparison. Both theorists, thus, embrace what Gideon Toury refers to as the intermediary construct in a much more vigorous manner than Toury does himself. The intermediary construct is that which the analyst constructs purely as a tool which enables the comparison of source-text and target-text. Van Leuwen Zwart proposes what she calls an architranseme and de Vries proposes what she terms the standard as their versions of this intermediary construct. Establishing the intermediary construct, the architranseme or the standard is the very crux of these theorist's methods and turns what is highly theoretical into something which can be practically grasped. De Vries (as the most simple, and therefore, practical example of these) establishes her standard at the level of the word by means of an exhaustive comparison of both source-text and target-text words with definitive dictionary meanings. Van Leuwen Zwart slightly more complicatedly works with what she calls transemes which are units of translation not necessarily confined to the level of the word. A comprehensive list of meanings of the source-text word or transeme under consideration is compiled, and the standard or architranseme is constructed as a sort of average value from this list. The target-text word is then compared against this standard. The selection of the dictionary is, of course, the defining moment in the comparison. The largest and most inclusive dictionaries must be used in order to prevent a disabling relativism from creeping into the comparison. (De Vries, for example, selects the Gesenius Hebrew Dictionary for her comparison of the Hebrew Bible with the Petrus Canisius Dutch translation). Once the standard has been

established and the target-text has been compared with it, target-text identities with and shifts away from that standard are noted. These linguistic identities and shifts provide the basis for a characterization of the relationship between source-text and target-text. The linguistic shifts that a translator employs will indicate what his/her orientation toward the source-text is.

Van Leuven Zwart's and de Vries' models of linguistic shift are very attractive from the point of view that they offer a way of identifying and describing shifts in an acceptably precise manner. Their main contribution is to compare both original and translation to a third dictionary construct. However, the invocation of a standard places their models firmly in the camp of dualistic translation theories. The very fact that a standard can be posited means that words and meaning (meaning here is equivalent to the standard) are separable. This means that an analysis of any translation by this method will in a fundamental sense be predisposed to a dualistic world view. One of the main objectives of DTS was to avoid a source-text oriented analysis of translation and to propose a target-text oriented approach. The slightest hint of an intermediary construct (indeed, of comparison at all) drives DTS directly back into a source-text oriented, or dualistic approach. Linguistic shifts, however, will nevertheless be useful here because they at the very least allow us to choose which words in the source-text and the target-text exhibit unique shifts and represent definitive decisions made by the translator in question. However, it will be remembered at all times that this method carries dualism along with it.

In Milton's case, the establishment of linguistic shifts is somewhat complicated

because of his choice of a metrical paradigm which necessarily offers a paraphrase rather than a word for word translation. This problem may be tackled by first identifying which words do appear to involve a shift in Milton's translation and then comparing this to the parallel word or transeme in a broad range of other translations of the same psalm. This will eliminate the influence of the metrical pressure itself and will enable us, as will become apparent in a moment, to focus on the ideological decisions of the translator. Three kinds of shift are of interest here - synonymy (or no shift), modulation (or a shift in the limits of meaning contained in the transeme) and mutation (or total disparity between the transeme's or words' spheres of meaning and the impossibility of establishing a standard or architranseme).

While Toury, van Leuwen Zwart and de Vries remain inextricably tied to the narrowly comparative method and thus to intermediary constructs and dualism, Andre Lefevere (picking up a different strand in Toury's work) makes a more felicitous attempt to avoid source-target comparisons and even meaning itself. In his article "That Structure in the Dialect of Men Interpreted," Lefevere dismisses as reductionistic the study of translation which compares source and target text and which usually aims pedagogically at producing "good" translators. Embedded in this reductionism is the pursuit of sense or meaning as the purpose of interpretation. Lefevere rejects this preferring to personalize and relativize meaning.

Meaning is ... what you put into a text, or what you get out of it, or even what you get out of what someone else has put into it for you. The number of such interpretations is as unlimited as human ingenuity itself.²⁴

²⁴Andre Lefevere, "That Structure in the Dialect of Men Interpreted," Comparative Criticism, 6 (1984), p.88.

Abandoning the meaning of a text for this relativized interpretation of a text is not gratuitous for Lefevere. What becomes possible once interest in the meaning of a text is abandoned is, according to Lefevere,

an analysis of the conditions under which meaning is or, in practice, meanings are produced, an analysis of the very controls and regulations that have been applied, and continue to be applied to interpretation and translation.²⁵

Lefevere abandons the idea that meaning is inherent within a text. For him, meaning is the product of several interacting factors. He defines the process of such meaning production as "refraction." A refraction is a text, produced on the basis of another text, which adapts that text to a certain ideology. Refractions, then, influence the way in which particular texts are read and received. Interpretation and translation are the two most obvious methods of refraction. Lefevere does not argue that there is no meaning in a translation or interpretation, he merely shifts the emphasis of study away from meaning to the way in which meaning is generated.²⁶ This is illustrated by Lefevere's choice of title. In an article about the meaning of meaning production, Lefevere suggestively refuses to assign any specific meaning to his choice of title, which he refers to only as an unexplained example (for those who are familiar with the text of Paradise Lost) of what he is talking about. "That Structure in the Dialect of Men Interpreted" is taken from Paradise Lost Book V lines 761-2. At this point in his epic, Milton is describing Satan's "royal seat"

High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
 Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers
 From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold,

²⁵Andre Lefevere, Ibid., p.89.

²⁶Lefevere's preference for the manner in which meanings are generated is reminiscent of Walter Benjamin's die Art des Meinens, see p.144.

which "in the dialect of men/ Interpreted" is "The palace of Great Lucifer." Milton offers two descriptions, or rather one description and a name, for Satan's "royal seat." The majestic and grand picture which Milton draws is interpreted (or, in Lefevere's terms, refracted) in common language as "The palace of great Lucifer." But this refraction is also a translation of Isaiah 14:13-4.

I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:
I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the
north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the
Most High.

Milton's description is clearly a refraction of the biblical version. While the biblical version places Satan's throne at the top of a mountain in a mockery of God's presence on Sinai, Milton's version places him at a very Babelian pinnacle of man-made beauty and success. Lefevere's glancing mention of this in his title thus indicates how meaning is refracted, even though he refrains from specific explication.

Following Lefevere, this dissertation will analyze Milton's psalm translations with the purpose of exposing the process of meaning generation which underlies these translations. What this will reveal is not so much what the psalms themselves are about as what Milton's refraction of these psalms amounts to. In this way we will be able to approach a monistic appraisal of Milton's effort as a translator. However, a practical method which will clearly offer up refracted portions of text for analysis has yet to be found. We have already seen how Toury, van Leuwen Zwart and de Vries, while trying to focus exclusively and monistically upon the target text, find themselves staring uncontrollably and dualistically at the source text. Lefevere, too, cannot provide a clean break from a comparative mode, for in order to identify refractions as refractions, we

need to imagine or to construct our own idea of what the refraction has been refracted away from. Thus dualism creeps back into our method just as we have begun to feel free of it. Clearly, a compromise must be sought. If comparison cannot be avoided, then, at the very least, comparison with the source text can be eliminated by comparing the translation in question with a battery of translations of the same source made at the same time and within the same cultural milieu. Milton's decisions will thus be compared with those of other metrical psalm translators who worked in the later sixteenth century up to the first half of the seventeenth century. These include translators such as Philip and Mary Sidney, Joseph Hall (1607), Henry Ainsworth (1612), Henry Dod (1620), Sir John Davies (1624), King James I (1631 and 1636),²⁷ George Wither (1632), George Sandys (1636), Richard Braithwaite (1638), the Bay Psalm Book translators (1640), Richard Slatyer (1643), William Barton (1644), Francis Rous (1646),²⁸ Zachary Boyd (1648), George Abbot (1650), Henry Dunster et al. (1650), Henry King (1651), John White, and George Herbert.²⁹ Comparisons will also be made with the more distant Sternhold and Hopkins psalter of 1562, because this psalter remained the metrical psalter of preference throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and provided the exemplum upon which many metrical translators modeled themselves. Milton's translations will also be compared with a few of the prose translations from the bibles of the period, such as the Geneva Bible, the Authorized Version, the Clementine Vulgate (1592) and the Junius-Tremellius Version (1593). The commentaries of Augustine, Luther and Calvin will also

²⁷The King James I translations (published in 1631 and revised in 1636) were in fact translated by William Alexander, Earl of Stirling, although they retain King James as the nominal translator.

²⁸Although Francis Rous first published in 1638, and revisions were made in 1643 and 1646, the 1646 version will be used here.

²⁹The psalm translations of the latter two were not published in their life-times and no date is given, although they were contemporaries of Milton.

be referred to because these commentaries strongly defended particular translations and translation practices.

Milton translated nineteen psalms during his adult life. It is the fundamental point of this thesis that these translations will exhibit the primary concerns that affected Milton as he translated. Attention will be cast primarily on the 1648 translations because they seem to engage the problems of dualism and monism more directly than any of the others. Milton's ambivalent monistic faith will be seen to inhabit the translations of these psalms in particular. However, it is not only that Milton's refractions of these psalms demonstrate his monistic faith. Translation itself is crucially split both in theory and in practice between dualism and monism, as chapter III and the immediately preceding discussion in this chapter have demonstrated. Chapter III has demonstrated how translation theory has been divided through history by dualistic and monistic arguments. The current chapter has shown that practical methodology is equally divided and somewhat more confused. The splits and confusions within translation parallels the same confused theological split between "Letter" and "Spirit" as discussed in chapter I. There, the confusion of "Letter" and "Spirit" seemed to be behind Milton's own confused notion of "monistic faith." These three sets of similar confusions will be seen to come consistently together, in the next two chapters, to inform the underlying structure of Milton's psalm translations.

CHAPTER V

MILTON'S 1648 PSALM TRANSLATIONS

It makes sense to begin a detailed analysis of Milton's psalm translations with the nine psalms he translated in 1648.¹ These nine psalms have attracted almost all of the critical attention that has been lavished on Milton's translations, and it is not difficult to understand why. Despite the fact that these psalm translations have been considered unworthy as poetry, and thus interesting only as historical or biographical data, and despite the fact that they occupy a relatively lean period in Milton's poetic output,² these psalm translations are interesting because Milton made use of a unique technique in their typographical presentation. The title of these psalm translations describes this unique technique.

Nine of the psalms done into metre, wherein all but what is in a different character, are the very words of the text, translated from the original.

¹It is not very fruitful, if we are to study Milton's work as a translator, to begin chronologically with his early translations of Psalms 114 and 136 done when he was fifteen years old (as he claims). The reason for this is that, as John Carey points out, Milton did not know enough Hebrew at that time of his life (even though he studied Hebrew as a schoolboy at St. Paul's) to translate these psalms from the Hebrew original. It is thus difficult to know which source Milton used for these translations, and indeed, we cannot be certain that the sources he used were not English. These translations are interesting, especially because Milton translated Psalm 114 into Greek ten years later, in 1634. With respect to Psalm 114, see Jack Goldman, "Comparing Milton's Greek Rendition of Psalm 114 with that of the Septuagint," English Language Notes, 21 (1983), 13-23, and "Milton's Intrusion of Abraham and Isaac upon Psalm 114," Philological Quarterly, 55 (1977), 117-26.

²W. R. Parker, Milton: A Biography (Oxford: OUP, 1968), and John Carey, Milton: Complete Shorter Poems (London: Longman, 1971), date Samson Agonistes as being written between 1647 and 1653. Mary Ann Radzinowicz disputes this dating and argues for the traditional late dating of 1667-70, Toward 'Samson Agonistes' (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp.387-407. Proponents of the traditional dating have tended to consider the psalm translations as unworthy because they consider the psalms to have interrupted and even displaced the production of more serious and more accomplished poetry. The alternative dating of 1647-53 (of Parker and Carey) suggests that these translations are slightly more interesting (even if in a derivative sense) because of their association with Samson Agonistes. Even though Radzinowicz prefers the more traditional later date, she nevertheless demonstrates a very close association between the Book of Psalms (both generally as well as Milton's translations) and Samson Agonistes.

The fact that Milton presented his translations in two different typefaces intermixed on the page is not unique. Indeed, the Geneva Bible of 1560 (and bibles ever since) makes use of different typefaces to indicate the points where the translation necessarily diverges from the original.

Whereas the necessitie of the sentence required any thing to be added (for such is the grace and proprietie of the Ebrewe and Greke tongues, that it cannot but either by circumlocution, or by adding the verbe or some worde be understand of them that are not wel practiced therein) we have put it in the text with another kynde of lettre, that it may easely be discerned from the common lettre.³

The question which immediately arises is why did the Geneva translators feel that they needed to mark off the different and difficult "grace and proprietie of the Ebrewe and Greke" from the English, which quite easily could have flowed on smoothly and beautifully without any hint of the linguistic struggle that went into producing it. It is clear that the Geneva translators wanted precisely to display the contortions involved in translating the bible from Hebrew and Greek into English. For this, they give the Apostles' teaching of the bible in Hebraized Greek to the Gentiles as precedent.

We moste reverently kept the proprietie of the wordes, considering that the Apostles who spoke and wrote to the Gentils in the Greke tongue, rather constrayned them to the lively phrase of the Ebrewe, then enterprised farre by mollifying their language to speak as the Gentils did.

Although the Geneva Bible is far from the illegibly Hebraic (or Greek, as the case may be) Interlinear Bible, the use of italics does go part of the way in providing a slight flavour of the Hebrew (or Greek). Indeed, the use of italics may also be seen as moving in the direction of a Benjaminian translation which brings out the foreignness of the

³The Geneva Bible (1560) is titled, The Bible and Holy Scriptures Conteyned in the Olde and Newe Testament. Translated According to the Ebrue and Greke and Conferred with the Best Translations in Divers Languages. See the preface "To our beloved in the Lord the Bretheren of England, Scotland, Ireland &c. Grace Mercie and Peace, through Christ Iesus," p.iii (which is the page number of both recto and verso leaves).

original tongue in the translation.⁴ Although, to the modern eye, italics suggest emphasis, the Geneva translators intended the very opposite of emphasis. The italicized word is intended not to be emphasized but to be ignored for the sake of the "lively phrase of the Ebrewe." But at the same time, the italicized word is necessary for the integrity of the English. The compromise which these italics suggest enables both a slight appreciation of the Hebrew as well as a "delite in the swete sounding phrases of the holy Scriptures." And yet, we may still ask why the Geneva translators wanted their readers to have an appreciation, however slight, of the Hebrew of the original. Could it be that the Geneva translators were uneasy about the possible eclipse of the original by the translation? Could they, like Thomas More, have been concerned that their translation might usurp the place of the beloved original, and so decided to mark the translation in such a way as no one should ever forget its status as translation?⁵ It is impossible to know the answer to these speculative questions, but that the Hebrew original is palpable within the Geneva translation, however slightly, is difficult to deny.

A few verses from Psalm 80 will demonstrate the Geneva Bible's concession to the original Hebrew.

- To him that excelleth on Shoshanim Eduth. A Psalme committed to Asaph.
- 1 Heare, o thou Shepherd of Israel, thou that ledest Ioseph like shepe: shew thy brightnes, thou that sittest betweene the Cherubims...
- 10 The mountains were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodlie cedres...
- 16 It is burnt with fyer and cut down: and they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

⁴See Walter Benjamin's use of Rudolf Pannwitz in chapter III, page 141.

⁵See chapter III, page 115 for Thomas More's reservations about bible translation.

A slight flavour of the Hebrew לאסף מזמור which, directly translated, according to the Geneva translators, means "A Psalme to Asaph," is, also according to the Geneva translators, necessarily rendered in English (because of the exigencies of that language) as "A Psalme committed to Asaph." The value of this and the other italicized additions and whether they are really and truly required by the English language may be determined by means of a comparison with the same verses from Psalm 80 as translated and italicized in the Authorized Version. The Authorized Version follows the tradition of using italics established by the Geneva translators, but it italicizes, and indeed, translates in a different way.

- To the chief Musician upon Shoshanim Eduth, A Psalm of Asaph.
- 1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the Cherubims, shine forth...
- 10 The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars...
- 16 It is burned with fire, it is cut down: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

If the two groups of translators agree that in order to better reflect the Hebrew, the English additions need to be italicized, they differ on some of the italics that the English requires. Both the Geneva Bible and the Authorized Version render verse 10 identically except for their minor difference over "mountains"/"hills." They both agree that the English translation requires the addition of were like, presumably because they both want to make the relationship between the boughs of the vine they are describing and the cedars clear; they do not want this relationship contaminated by the preceding verb "covered." Reading the verse without were like suggests that the cedars covered the boughs of the vine, which is a reading exactly opposed to the intention of both the Geneva bible and the Authorized Version translators. The addition of were like makes it clear that the boughs are compared to cedars in stature and are not covered by the

cedars and thus diminished by them. Since there is agreement over the insertion of these italicized words, it follows that the English translation may well require the addition. Without the addition, the clarity of the Hebrew is potentially undermined by the English text's vulnerability to ambiguous interpretation. And yet the addition italicised gives the reader a slight taste of the Hebrew original's compactness, because it enables the reader to imagine its omission.

The Geneva Bible, however, chooses to add the word committed to the psalm title, while the Authorized Version retains a closer rendition of the Hebrew. In the Hebrew the exact relationship between Asaph and the psalm is unclear. Asaph could be its author; he could be the one to whom the psalm is dedicated; he could be the founding father of a Levitic guild of psalm singers credited with the singing of this psalm; or the psalm could be about him in some indirect way.⁶ The Geneva Bible's addition of the italicized committed removes some of the ambiguity of the Hebrew. For the Geneva translators, Asaph could not have been the author of this psalm, and King David's authorship of the psalter is thereby reinforced. Committed suggests, possibly, that the Geneva translators opt for the interpretation of Asaph as psalm-singer.

But perhaps the most revealing difference between the two groups of translators' italics is the Geneva translators' decision not to italicize "between" in the first verse.⁷

⁶For a thorough discussion of the possible meanings of psalm titles see The Encyclopedia Judaica and Sigmund Mowinckel, The Psalms in Israel's Worship, tr. D.R. Ap-Thomas, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), especially chapters 14, 15 and 23.

⁷The Interlinear Bible translates this verse in an interesting way. This verse was cited in chapter III (see page 151). It translates as follows: "O Shepherd of Israel, give ear. You who leads like a flock Joseph; You who dwell (between) the Cherubim, shine forth" (p.489). While the Interlinear Bible's project is to stay as close to the Hebrew as possible, it brackets between just as the Authorized version italicizes it.

While it would have been correct to italicise between because the Hebrew original makes no mention of such a prepositional relationship, it seems that the Geneva translators were not prepared to do so. They seem to insist that "between" is wholly and integrally and inseparably intended by the original simply by offering "between" in roman type. The use of this word unitalicised suggests that there can be no ambiguity about the place where God sits - he sits between the Cherubim. The Authorized Version translators' italicization of this word, fifty years later, suggests that they were not so sure about God's seat between the Cherubim. The Hebrew supplies no necessary relationship between the Cherubim and God's seat, and God's presence in the Hebrew remains mysterious. Indeed, God's presence is always diffused and ungraspable in the Hebrew text. Thus the Geneva translators' unreadiness to italicize "between" is an insistent demystification of the mystery of God's presence.⁸

Milton's own translation of Psalm 80 follows the Geneva translators in this respect. He does not italicize "between" in his 1648 version of this psalm, and, in fact, transports this word directly into Paradise Lost. He uses it in Book I when the fallen angels are described as challenging God's unique honour on earth.

The chief were those who from the pit of hell
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, gods adored
Among the nations round, and durst abide
Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned
Between the cherubim; yea, often placed

There is no between in the Hebrew, and yet the Interlinear Bible finds it impossible to leave out.

⁸The Junius-Tremellius Latin Bible, which also follows the italicizing tradition, does not use any italics here, but translates, "insidens Cerubinis" which places God within the Cherubim rather than between them. The English bible tradition has God sitting on the Cherubim as on the Mercy Seat. The Great Bible (1539) and the Bishops' Bible (1568) translate in this way.

Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations. (I.381-89).

The complexity of this very Miltonic sentence makes it difficult to determine whether it is God who is honourably throned between the Cherubim, or the usurping rebel angels who have displaced him and sit on his throne themselves. It seems that God comes dangerously close to playing the idols' game if he is literally to be envisioned sitting throned between the Cherubs on the holy Ark. In Psalm 80, this danger is grasped in the choice that translators seem to make between two perfectly admissible options. They either translate this part of verse 1 as "that dwell'st between the Cherubim,"⁹ or they translate it (like the Geneva translators) using the word "sitt'st" in the place of "dwell'st." Those that take this second option usually exclude the word "between," although the Geneva translators include it. Sternhold and Hopkins (1562), Mary Sidney (c.1594),¹⁰ Henry Ainsworth (1612), and Richard Braithwaite (1638), all allude to the Mercy Seat as a throne by avoiding "between" and by using the word "sitt'st" in place of "dwell'st", or by mentioning God's throne directly.¹¹ Those translators that render "dwell'st" (instead of "sitt'st") tend not to envision God's physical presence, while those who render the reverse do tend to envision it. By using both "sitt'st" and "between" Milton falls ambivalently into both groups. In Paradise Lost, the fallen angels' attempt to usurp God's throne is, according to the cited passage, an abomination of God's holy space, for they

⁹Within this group of translators are those metrical translators who, like the Authorised Version use "dwell'st between." These include Henry Dod (1620), King James I (1631), George Wither (1632), George Sandys (1636), King James I (1636), the Bay Psalm Book (1640), William Barton (1644), and Francis Rous (1646).

¹⁰This date follows Rivkah Zim's suggestion in her English Metrical Psalms (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p.186.

¹¹Mary Sidney renders, "shine from Cherubs throne," Braithwaite, "that sitt'st upon the winged-chaire,/ The Cherubims," Ainsworth, "that sittest on the Cherubs," and Sternhold and Hopkins, "whose seat is set/ on Cherubims most bright."

displace him physically. However, as any believer knows, no idol can ever replace God. It would be impossible for any idol or any god to be actually "throned /Between the cherubim" because this place is in fact no place at all.

Milton's italics thus operate within a well established tradition in bible translation. What is unique about Milton's deployment of this italicizing tradition, however, is that he does not confine his italics to additions which are required by the English tongue. He does not add only those words which, although they are absent from the Hebrew, are necessary for the felicitous flow of the English. Milton makes use of a tradition which normally italicizes up to two percent of the translated text, but italicizes, himself, up to twenty six percent of his text. Milton's additions thus represent an expansion of the original by up to a very substantial thirty five percent. The sheer amount of italics in Milton's 1648 psalms is certainly much more than the English language requires as it tries to follow the peculiar grace and propriety of the Hebrew. The effect of these vast italicisations on the translations and what they reveal about Milton as a translator both need to be examined.

What Milton achieves is a double translation. He presents a close, accurate translation when the roman typeface is taken by itself, and an expanded paraphrase when the roman type is read together with the italics. The doubling of the text seems to pit Milton's work as a translator against itself. On the one side of the double, he establishes a strict adherence to the original and offers an almost word-for-word translation (almost like an interlinear bible); on the other, he abandons the original to paraphrase. Using the two typefaces as he does, Milton forces his readers to read his translations with a double

roman type text.¹⁴ The italicized "whom I loved so dear" has the effect of looking forward to the prophecy of salvation in verse 16 at the end of the psalm,¹⁵ where God promises to reward those he loves (who are also, of course, those who love him).

And we would feed them from the shock
With flour of finest wheat,
And satisfy them from the rock
With honey for their meat.

The insertion of "whom I loved so dear" intensifies the lament underlying the psalm. But what this insertion also achieves is a subtle shift in the balance of responsibilities described in the psalm. In verse 12, God describes the distance which is opened up between himself and his people. If we ignored the context supplied by verse 11, this verse would suggest that it was God who abandoned his people, leaving them to their own devices. However, the insertion of "whom I loved so dear" in verse 11 makes it clear that it is not God, but rather his people who have deserted him. Thus, the insertion of this italicized relative clause suggests that God never really and truly withdraws himself from his people, but rather that his presence is abiding.

Verses 11 and 12 thus describe the lamentable bleakness of God's perceived abandoning of his people as well as his abiding presence. The two opposite moods, of divine absence and divine presence, in these verses are supplied by what I have been calling Milton's double translation. Taken on its own, the text in roman type expresses the bleak scenario of God's abandonment of his people. Taken together with the italics,

¹⁴Milton italicises 7 words of a total of 47, which represents an expansion of 17.5%.

¹⁵It must be noted that I am using Milton's verse numbering here. Milton's numbering is different from the Hebrew bible's numbering because he omits the psalm titles which represent verse 1 in each psalm. Milton follows the tradition of the psalters, which usually omits the titles.

the cumulative text suggests God's abiding presence which consoles the sense of divine absence which pervades the roman text. The relationship between the two aspects of the double translation is thus very much like the relationship between the two aspects of Milton's "double scripture," between "the external scripture of the written word and the internal scripture of the Holy Spirit."

The juxtaposition of italics and roman text in Milton's Psalm 81 works in a similar way to allusions in the Gospel to the Old Testament. Such allusions often refer to something harsh and bleak in the Old Testament. By incorporating the Old Testament reference into a new context, what was bleak and harsh in the Old Testament is turned into something quite different under the Gospel. A good example of this effect may be observed in the crucifixion narrative. The crucifixion necessarily prompts a complicated double response: sympathy with Christ's passion, and great joy at the merciful salvation which it represents. Thus, at the crucifixion, like in Psalm 81, God may be felt to be absent, when we consider Christ's passion, but mercifully present when we consider Christ's redemption. The two conflicting emotions are highlighted by Jesus himself when he mercifully cries, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Lk.23.34), and when he despairingly groans, "'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?' which is, being interpreted, 'My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?'" (Mk.15.34).¹⁶ It is no

¹⁶Jesus recites the beginning of perhaps the bleakest and yet most hopeful of the Psalms, Ps.22.2. It should be noted, however, that the Hebrew psalm and the Greek citation differ. Psalm 22:2 has עֲזַבְתָּנִי לְמַה אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים, while Mark 15.34 has 'Ελωί, 'Ελωί, λαμὰ σαβαχθανί; The Hebrew עֲזַבְתָּנִי (*azavthani*) is very different from the Greek transliteration of סַבַּחְתָּנִי (*sabachthani*). עֲזַבְתָּנִי (*azavthani*), which means "you have left me" refers directly and unambiguously to the psalmist's sense of divine disjunction. סַבַּחְתָּנִי (*sabachthani*), however, means "you have confounded me," or "you have interwoven me." This clearly confirms Jesus' anguish on the cross, but it does not suggest God's desertion of him. Another possible source for the transliteration is זָבַחְתָּנִי (*zavachthani*) which means "you have sacrificed me." The Greek transliterations' variations from the original Hebrew are obviously felicitous.

coincidence then that Jesus cites a psalm at this moment of utter despair. However, the citation from Psalm 22, at this moment, within the context of the Gospel, converts the very pain expressed in it into a joy which only a believer in the felix culpa or the saving passion can appreciate.¹⁷ Being able to see the joy in Christ's agony is one way of grasping what it means to read Psalm 81 as Milton's double translation suggests.

Thus, reading with the joy of the gospel in mind means that God is never absent as he so often seems to be according to the Hebrew bible. He is rather ever-present, requiring only to be recognized as such. The experience of reading first what the "original" has to offer gives one a taste of what it means to experience the absence of God. As Psalm 81:12 puts it, one follows one's "own conceits" and one's "own devices blind" and finds divine absence. And yet for the believer, who knows how to read with the Holy Spirit or with "the mind of Christ," or at the very least, how to read the second aspect of Milton's double translation, God's ever-present love becomes visible. The two different yet simultaneously interwoven scripts in Milton's translation seem to require this double reading and this double vision. The double reading that Milton stimulates in his 1648 psalm translations provides an educative example of what it might mean to have faith. To have faith then, in terms of Miltonic translation, is to translate scripture and

¹⁷Milton's poem "The Passion" fails, it seems, to combine such suffering and joy in the same moment. Milton abandons the unfinished poem which, by line 56 (the last line of the poem), has descended irretrievably into despair. The opening stanza demonstrates the beginning of this descent.

Erewhile of music, and ethereal mirth,
 Wherewith the stage of air and earth did ring,
 And joyous news of heavenly infant's birth,
 My muse with angels did divide to sing;
 But headlong joy is ever on the wing,
 In wintry solstice like the shortened light
 Soon swallowed up in dark and long out-living night.

simultaneously to see both the original and what is beyond it (which, in some essential yet mysterious way, is within it, too).

This preliminary reading of Milton's 1648 psalm translations by means of the exemplary Psalm 81:11-12, will need to be extended to a close psalm-by-psalm analysis of the 1648 set. The psalms are not all entirely concerned with divine presence or absence, and not all with New Testament resolution of Old Testament pain. However, the relationship between the two aspects of Milton's double translation will be seen to demonstrate the relationship between Milton's christian faith (or spirit) and his Hebraic monism (or biblical literalism), where they are clearly demarcated and where they become confused.

Psalm 80

In his chapter "Of God's Providence" in De Doctrina Christiana (book I chapter 8) Milton cites Psalm 80 as evidence that God the Father "preserves" all created things. For him, Psalm 80 represents evidence that God preserves his creation from minute to minute, or second to second through history. He cites both the opening verse,

O Pastor Israelis auribus percipe; dux Josephi tamquam gregis,
insidens cherubim illucesce. [O shepherd of Israel perceive with your
ears; leader of Joseph as of sheep, in-sitting the Cherubim, shine],¹⁸

¹⁸In the De Doctrina Christiana, Milton uses the Junius-Tremellius Latin translation of 1593 which is given here. I have translated the Latin literally, even though this has meant I have translated clumsily, so that the manner of the Latin may be apparent.

and the refrain,

fac ut luceat facies tua; ita servabimur [make your face shine, so that we will be saved/preserved],

which appears three times in the psalm (at verses 3, 7 and 19). It seems surprising that Milton should include selected verses from this particular psalm with his evidence for divine preservation because the tone of Psalm 80 is far from affirmative. Indeed, commentators agree that this psalm is more properly a lament, and as such describes divine absence and neglect, and directly contradicts Milton's interpretation. For example, Rabbi David Qimhi (the RaDaQ, a medieval rabbinical commentator with whose work Milton may have been familiar)¹⁹ says that this psalm is about גלות (galuth) or "exile" (with all its implications). More modern commentators, such as William Riley Parker²⁰ and B. D. Eerdmans,²¹ make the point that השׁיבנו (hashivenu, "return us") implies exile; and W.O.E. Oesterley thinks this psalm reflects a more or less permanent desolation "which promises no immediate change except through the direct intervention of YHWH."²² Artur Weiser calls this psalm a "community lament,"²³ and Edward J. Kissane says that this psalm is expressive of the state of misery consequent upon calamity.²⁴ Hans-Joachim Kraus says that the plangent tone of this psalm is determined

¹⁹Harris Fletcher, Milton's Semitic Studies, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1926), and Golda Werman, "Milton's Use of Rabbinic Material," Milton Studies, 21 (1985), p. 36, suggest that Milton was familiar with and had ready access to John Buxtorf's Biblia Rabbinica, which includes translations of Rashi's, Ibn Ezra's, Levi ben Gerson's, and David Qimhi's commentaries. Jason P. Rosenblatt, Torah and Law in Paradise Lost (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p.84, however, doubts this.

²⁰Milton: A Biography (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), p.322-3.

²¹The Hebrew Book of Psalms (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1947), p.386.

²²The Psalms (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1939), p.366.

²³The Psalms: A Commentary (London: SCM Press, 1962), p.547.

²⁴The Book of Psalms Translated from a Critically Revised Hebrew Text (Dublin: Browne and Nolan Ltd., 1954), vol.2, p. 47.

by "the distress of the people torn apart under the wrath of God and abandoned without protection."²⁵ Milton's surprising interpretation of this psalm, in the face of all this opinion to the contrary, may be accounted for, to a certain extent, by arguing that when he cited Psalm 80, he was not referring to the psalm in its entirety. It could be said that he selected verses 1 and 3, removed them from their context and used them as free-standing evidence for the point he was trying to make in De Doctrina Christiana.²⁶ But even these two verses, taken in isolation, invoke an absent God. There can be no doubt that Milton very seriously believed that the verses he cited from Psalm 80 crucially prove his point about divine preservation even though almost everybody else thinks exactly the opposite. The question which must be answered, then, is how we are to reconcile Milton's perverse view with that of other commentators, or, at the very least, how we may explain the logic of such a perverse view.

Milton's 1648 translation of this psalm provides us with an answer to these questions. His translation of this psalm, and indeed, of all the 1648 psalms, is really a double translation consisting of both "the very words of the text, translated from the original" and Milton's italicized additions. As has already been seen in chapter 3, critics

²⁵Psalms, tr. Hilton C. Oswald, (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988), vol.2, p.143.

²⁶By making this argument in mitigation of Milton's very surprising interpretation of Psalm 80, we would essentially be claiming that Milton had adopted an interpretive method which he himself had expressly castigated on several occasions. Indeed, it is both unlikely and uncharacteristic of Milton to take isolated verses out of context as throughout the De Doctrina Christiana, Milton has a very keen eye for context and tends to explain the errors of his opponents in terms of their inattention to the fuller context of the biblical evidence they cite. See chapter 5 (Bk I) of De Doctrina Christiana for several examples of this. In chapter 30 of De Doctrina Christiana, Milton makes explicit his dependence upon context: "The right method of interpreting the scriptures has been laid down by theologians. This is certainly useful, but no very careful attention is paid to it. The requisites are linguistic ability, knowledge of the original sources, consideration of the overall intent, distinction between literal and figurative language, examination of the causes and circumstances, and of what comes before and after the passage in question, and comparison of one text with another" (p.582, Yale edition) [emphasis added].

have had much to say about the accuracy or otherwise of these translations. What they have omitted to notice is that very obviously these translations are both accurate and inaccurate. Indeed, the designation of these renderings as either translations or paraphrases has, as we have seen, been debated by Charles Baldwin and Marion Studley. Baldwin's article, "Milton and the Psalms,"²⁷ looks at the 1648 translations from the starting assumption that they were intended to be accurate translations. Baldwin rests his assumption on Milton's provocative "the very words of the text." This assumption unsurprisingly leads Baldwin to find Milton deficient in several ways. Ultimately Baldwin is simply unprepared to accept Milton's adulterations of the original. Marion Studley's article, "Milton and his Paraphrase of the Psalms,"²⁸ considers Milton's manipulations to be acceptable as paraphrase thus effectively undermining Baldwin's arguments. However, it must be noted that Studley is just as guilty, on the one hand, as is Baldwin, on the other, of simply ignoring the considerable and deliberate effort that Milton made in separating his paraphrases graphically into two components.

Milton's typographical presentation of the 1648 psalm translations/paraphrases thrusts forward a double translation. The highly visible distinction between what is offered to us as "the very words of the text" and what is offered as acknowledged adulterations insists that we read with a double cast of the eye. Reading first "the very words of the text" by paying attention only to the text printed in roman type, we discover psalm translations which read rather fluently and yet are closely literal (near to what we might expect to find in an interlinear-type bible). The fact that the text in roman type

²⁷*Modern Philology*, 17 (1919-20), 457-63.

²⁸*Philological Quarterly*, 4 (1925), 364-72.

reads (on the whole) fluently, even if it has a slightly foreign feel, insists that it has a certain integrity, an integrity which deserves the respect of interpreters. A second look, one which ignores Milton's contrived graphic disjunction, takes in a different translation from "the very words of the text." It sees the entire text, including the italicized additions, in all its completeness. Reading thus, with a double sweep, proves so compelling that it becomes difficult to doubt that this was the motivating intention behind the graphic presentation. At any rate, treating these translations as double translations provides us with a means for answering the questions raised a little earlier about Milton's perverse interpretation of Psalm 80.

A close analysis of the first three verses of Psalm 80 (which include the two verses Milton cites in De Doctrina Christiana) and then of verses 4-6, will amply illustrate what Milton's double translation yields.²⁹

- 1 **Thou shepherd that dost Israel** keep
 Give ear in time of need,
 Who leadest like a flock of sheep
 Thy loved **Joseph's seed**,
 That sitt'st between the Cherubs bright
 Between their wings outspread
 Shine forth, and from thy cloud give light,
 And on our foes thy dread
- 2 **In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's,**
 And in Manasseh's sight
 Awake thy strength, come, and be seen
 To **save us** by thy might.
- 3 **Turn us again**, thy grace divine

²⁹Since I am focusing so much attention on the graphic disjunction in these translations, I will enhance the effect by diminishing Milton's italics and by emboldening his roman type in my citations. This will facilitate the necessary double-take for readers who have become accustomed to underlined italics as indications of emphasis. This is in fact the effect realized in the 1611 edition of the Geneva Bible printed in London by Robert Barker, which has the main text in black letter and what was originally in italics in diminished roman type. It must be noted that I have already cited passages from the 1648 psalms in this format. It was decided to present all cited passages uniformly for the sake of consistency; see page 189, for example.

To us **O God** vouchsafe;
Cause thou thy face on us to shine
And then we shall be safe.

If we read "the very words of the text," which Milton offers us in roman type (and which appear bold here), we perceive the psalm to be disjunctive. But when we read the modified text, that is the roman and italic types together, we begin to understand Milton's conjunctive interpretation of the psalm in De Doctrina Christiana.³⁰ Critics are quick to explain the additions purely in terms of the demands of rhythm and rhyme.³¹ While there is no doubt that metrical constraints may well explain particular additions, the sheer weight of interpretation that Milton's additions support renders this factor relatively insignificant. For example, it might be suggested that Milton's addition of "keep" in verse 1 is not motivated by any theological interpretation of the psalm but simply by the need to rhyme with "sheep." This would seem to suggest that "keep" has no effect upon the meaning of the psalm, and that it may be ignored as a mere poetic ornament. However, the addition of "keep" felicitously agrees with Milton's unique interpretation of this psalm in De Doctrina Christiana. Indeed, "keep" strongly asserts divine preservation. Taking this into account, it seems absurd to suggest that Milton considered "keep" to be a neutral addition based solely on the demands of the rhyme scheme. In the opening line of his translation, Milton does make an addition based purely on metrical and grammatical considerations. He adds "that dost" but does not italicise these words. The addition of "that dost" is required by the addition of "keep" and yet "that dost" is interpretively neutral in a way that "keep" obviously is not. This, of course, does not

³⁰This strategy coincides with the fundamental Christian idea that Christ fulfils the law. Thus the law (O.T.) is considered to be an incomplete text which may only be completed by reading it "under the Gospel" with the "mind of Christ." This idea is fundamental to the well known strategy of typology.

³¹See E.C. Baldwin's "Milton and the Psalms," Modern Philology, 17 (1919-20), pp.457-8, for example.

mean that every italic addition is significantly meaningful; however, as is evident from this example, certain additions have a powerful impact upon the meaning of Milton's psalms.

Another reason why metrical constraints may be considered of relatively minor importance is that other metrical translators manage to translate without having to make the additions that Milton does. For example, Francis Rous (1646) renders verse 1 without "keep."

Hear, Israels Shepherd; like a flock,
 thou that dost Joseph guide;
 Shine forth, O thou that dost between
 the Cherubims abide.

William Alexander (translator of the "King James I" Psalters) renders it,

Heare Israels Shepherd, like a flocke that ledest Joseph out,
 thou that 'twixt Cherubims do'st dwell, in brightness shine about.

The Bay Psalm Book translators offer

O Isr'ells shepherd, give thou eare;
 that Ioseph ledest about
 like as a flock: that dwelst betweene
 the Cherubims, shine out.

The duplication of the "out" - "about" rhyme in Alexander's and the Bay translators' versions suggests that these are due to metrical constraints. Rous' version, however, is not constrained to make use of this rhyme, and Milton differs from all three. The only other version which makes use of "keep" in the first verse is the Sternhold and Hopkins psalter which renders it

Thou hearde that Israell dost kepe,
 geue eare and take good hede:
 Which ledest Joseph lyke a sheepe,
 and dost him watch and feede.

Sternhold and Hopkins' psalter is perhaps more copiously expanded than Milton's versions. Although several of Milton's additions are very similar to those of Sternhold and Hopkins, the majority are different.

Returning to the context of the first three verses of Psalm 80, Milton's additions may be observed to exert a powerful influence upon what may be considered a rather desperately disjunctive psalm. The roman-type text in the first three verses expresses the insecure wishes of a people who feel themselves to be abandoned by God. Seven imperatives call upon God to hear, to shine (twice), to arouse himself, to come, to save, and to turn us. So many imperatives, so much asking, in so confined a space, lays bare a plangent desperation, a mood of unanswered prayer. The opening line of the Hebrew text, רעה ישראל האזינה, calls upon an apparently deaf God to paradoxically "give ear." The plangent invocation suggests that God is deaf to his people's cries and that the hope that the cry may be heard is pitiful, even futile. Indeed, prayer itself suffers from the problem suggested here. In prayer, God is called upon to answer, and yet if he were to answer, it would mean that his omnipotence has been subjected to human desire. Milton's double translation of the opening line of Psalm 80 both raises such a problem and resolves it. The roman text presents the psalmist's pitiful complaint and is suggestive of divine absence. Milton's addition of "keep" and "in time of need" alters the tone and meaning of the line entirely. They abolish the melancholy tone of the Hebrew text which is expressed in the roman text. As has been mentioned, "keep" asserts divine preservation. The fact that it is offered in the present tense suggests that God is actively involved in the preservation of his creation at the very moment that the psalmist calls upon him. This assertion, however, raises the question why there is any need for all the

plangent imperatives. The complete text (that is, the roman and italic texts together) also provides a plausible context for the desperate cry, "give ear." This context eliminates the absurdity, present in the roman text, of crying to a deaf God, by explaining that this cry is conditioned by a "time of need" and not by a vain hope of overcoming God's deaf indifference by force of voice. The intrusion of this "time of need" shifts the implication of the cry away from absence by asserting an alternative motivation. Milton's double translation may thus be considered a way of writing the unwritten word of God. The unwritten word is the spiritual aspect of Milton's "double scripture" and a key element in his faith. The articulation of the written and unwritten words may be seen in the double translation of the verse we have been discussing. The written word (represented by the roman text) first realizes an absence. The unwritten word (represented by the italic text) then emerges in that absence and guarantees divine presence and preservation. It is not so much whether the word "keep" (for example) is or is not required by the Hebrew original that proves or disproves Milton's claim that God preserves his creation. The key to Milton's double translation of Psalm 80 is that the word "keep" is both present (written) and absent (italicised) in a way which is similar to God's presence and absence. This will become clearer as the discussion of this psalm and the other psalms in this set proceeds.

The second line of verse 1 in the Masoretic Hebrew text continues the despairing insecurity of the first line. Milton's roman translation renders the Hebrew, כצאן יוסף נהג, "Who leadest like a flock of sheep Joseph's seed." Although he does not italicize "seed," there is absolutely no mention of this word in the Hebrew text. His inclusion of this word in the roman text may be due to the rhyme with "need." It is a neutral addition

which is justified perhaps by the fact that Joseph literally means "gathering" or "synagogue" and thus may refer to the forefather's lineage as well as to the man himself. Much more significant, though, than this unitalicized addition, is the insertion of "thy loved." This emphatically alters the presiding melancholy tone of the Hebrew original and of Milton's roman text which follows it closely. Once again, the combined text allays the doubts that seem to plague the roman text and the Hebrew original. Thus Milton's interpretive expansions tend to close off or limit the suggestive openness of the Hebrew original, and we begin to see how Milton is able to find divine providence where others see divine disjunction.

The third line of verse 1, ישב הכרבים הופיעה, occupies four lines in Milton's translation. Here the additions are so substantial that they do not merely serve to limit the interpretive possibilities inherent in the Hebrew text, but offer rich associations of their own. The roman translation accurately renders this line, "That sitt'st between the Cherubs Shine forth."³² This is clearly an allusion to Ex.25:22 which describes the precise point of contact between God and his people:

And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel. (Authorized Version).

This allusion, however, only serves to intensify the perceived absence of God. By naming the place of God's usual commerce with humanity in the past, the pathos in the current call to "shine forth" is sharpened. Milton, however, extends the allusion with an

³²This part-verse has already been discussed in some detail, and the accuracy or otherwise of "between" has been discussed at length. See page 186.

addition of his own, "and from thy cloud give light./ And on our foes thy dread." In this context, the cloud refers to Ex.40:34-8:

Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle ... For the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys. (Authorized Version).

This verse, alluded to by "thy cloud," also provides insight into what kind of dread Milton's addition means. Moses' dread of entering the tent of the congregation because of the presence of the cloud suggests that "And on our foes thy dread" is a mere repetition of the preceding call for light. The complete text goes further than the roman translation by not only alluding to the place of God's communion with his people (the Mercy Seat), but also by alluding to God's dreadful presence in his "cloud." Even though God's visible presence is asserted by Milton's addition, there still remains a perceived absence. Although God is visible as a cloud, he is also obscured by his cloud. The psalm calls upon God to "shine forth," to come out of his hidden place and to discover himself to his people more directly than is implied in his clouded obscurity. Verse 2 ("In Ephraim's view ... in Manasseh's sight ... be seen/ To save us") picks up the allusion to God's clouded appearance, and points to "in sight of all the house of Israel" in Ex.40:38. The clouded nature of God's appearance suggests an abstract visibility.³³ Indeed, the Authorized Version in Ex.40:34 says, "the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle," suggesting, perhaps, that God's clouded visibility may be understood abstractly as referring to his "glory." The Hebrew text, here, has כבוד, which is best comprehended by the Latin gravitas. This may, perhaps, be the source of Milton's addition of "thy

³³Cf. Paradise Lost I.63, "No light, but rather darkness visible," or alternatively, Lycidas, l.138, "the swart star sparely looks."

dread." And yet all this does not entirely abolish the sense of divine disjunction which persists. The Miltonic psalmist's call for God to "shine forth," to "give light," suggests that God's clouded presence is not sufficient, and that a brighter, clearer, more visible presence is being sought. It appears that the suggested abstract "glory" or "dread" is not sufficient, and that the Miltonic psalmist requires a more realizable, more precisely visual presence.

Precisely what may be understood by Milton's translation "shine forth" requires a deeper analysis than the mere suggestions thrown up by allusion. This is especially the case when we consider that the word in the Masoretic (Hebrew) text that Milton is translating is הוֹפִיעָה, which is properly rendered "appear" or "show yourself." It seems that Milton deliberately avoids these more proper translations because they would not leave us with the residual disjunction which "shine forth" suggests. Indeed, the Miltonic psalmist seems to be calling for more than a return to the divine presence in the Ark of the Covenant. Milton's insistence upon the metaphor of shining cannot be dismissed as the mere consequence of such formal constraints as rhyme (it is not in a rhyming position) or metre (there are other equally metrical alternatives). Thus in his avoidance of the more proper translations of the Hebrew, it is clear that Milton means something more than mere appearance.

The metaphor of shining is implicit in the allegory of the vine in verses 8-16. There God is represented as the gardener who plants, tends and protects the vine. However, there is also an implicit association in this allegory with the kind of divine

presence which the Miltonic psalmist has been calling for in earlier verses. This is evident in the beginning of verse 14:

14 **Return now, God of Hosts, look down
 From Heaven, thy seat divine,
 Behold.**

God here, in a variation on the refrain, is called upon to "look down" and to "behold." When we couple these calls for God to "look down" and to "behold" "from Heaven, thy seat divine" with the similar call in the refrain to "cause thou thy face ... to shine," the connection between God and the sun becomes inevitable.

Leaving aside the complex vine allegory for the moment, the effect of "shine forth" becomes clear in Milton's addition to the end of verse 1, "and on our foes thy dread." This, coupled with the additions of verse 2, makes it clear that Milton calls upon God to make a distinction between two groups of people by means of two opposing actions. He is to "shine forth" upon "us" (his people), and he is to put forth his "dread" upon "our foes." The manner in which God's dread is manifest is made clear in verses 4-6. In these verses the dread wished upon "our foes" is actually felt by "us" because it is God's people who are feeling God's opprobrium at the time the verse is uttered. God has yet to shine on them, even as they call for him to do so. These verses describe the actual disjunctive state that God's people find themselves currently inhabiting and which they would like transferred to their "foes."³⁴ It is not surprising, then, that Milton offers very few italicized additions in this section of the psalm. From 38.3% in the first three verses, the italicization rate falls to only 13.5% in the next three verses. Milton's double

³⁴It must be noted that "dread" is ambiguous. I have discussed it in previous paragraphs in its positive sense of God-fearing. As such it referred to an awareness of a kind of hidden presence of God. In what follows here the negative aspects of the hiddenness of God's face will be discussed.

translation in this psalm aims to establish both the dread of divine absence as well as the serenity of his preservation.

- 4 **Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou,
 How long wilt thou declare
 Thy smoking wrath, and angry brow
 Against thy people's prayer.**
- 5 **Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears,
 Their bread with tears they eat,
 And mak'st them largely drink the tears**
 Wherewith their cheeks are wet.
- 6 **A strife thou mak'st us and a prey
 To every neighbour foe,
 Among themselves they laugh, they play,
 And flouts at us they throw.**

It must be pointed out that in his effort not to italicize this section of the psalm, Milton adopts a highly repetitive strategy. "Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears,/ Their bread with tears they eat" and "Among themselves they laugh, they play,/ And flouts at us they throw" present examples of such redundancy. This redundancy is by no means a mere formal shift to preserve metre. It is wholly appropriate to and suggestive of the plangent tone of this section. Milton's addition of "and angry brow" to "thy smoking wrath" is also repetitive (almost an entirely redundant parallelism) and yet it makes a vital contribution to the distinction that has emerged in our discussion of the first three verses of the psalm. God's "angry brow" is in direct contrast with his shining face. Indeed, an image system based on the sun begins to emerge. A shining sun promises goodness; a sun hidden by cloud promises stormy, thunderous weather.³⁵ Clearly, "smoking wrath" feeds into this image, even though smoke is more suggestive of burning than of, say, a lightning storm. Indeed, this "smoking wrath" is explained more fully by verse 16.

³⁵See the RaDaQ's (רד"ק) The Complete Commentary on the Psalms (Jerusalem: Mossad HaRav Kook, 1967), pp.180-2.

16 **But now it is consumed with fire,
 And cut with axes down,
 They perish at thy dreadful ire,
 At thy rebuke and frown.**

God's thunder, lightning and cloud are reflected in the man-made versions of the arsonist's fire and smoke.

Oesterley, in his commentary on Psalm 80, connects the two aspects of God's visage with human facial expression, "the metaphor of light and darkness is readily applied to the favour or displeasure shown in a man's expression".³⁶ The two facial expressions of God are highlighted in verse 14, which is a variation of the refrain.³⁷

14 **Return now, God of Hosts, look down
 From Heaven, thy seat divine,
 Behold us, but without a frown,
 And visit this thy vine.**

Milton does not render the Masoretic Hebrew text very faithfully here. He should perhaps have italicised "down" and "thy seat divine." His decision not to italicise when he might well have seems to indicate that these phrases contribute to disjunction rather than conjunction (as the roman text generally contains the disjunctive moment in this psalm). Verse 1 has mentioned God's historic earthly presence as a cloud in the tent of the congregation, between the Cherubs, covering the Propitiatory. Verse 14, however, now places God aloof in heaven, clouded behind a frown, but he is called upon to "look down" as the sun might on a warm day, and to "visit" the vine (which is Israel) as the sun

³⁶The Psalms (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1939), p.368.

³⁷Many modern translators and commentators follow the Septuagint tradition, conforming it to the refrain pattern of verses 3, 7, and 19. See for example, C.A. Briggs, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary of the Book of Psalms (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1907), p.202, and W.O.E. Oesterley, The Psalms (London: The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1939), p.367. Clearly, Milton does not follow this tradition.

might nurture any green thing. Thus opposing clusters of images describing God's aspect emerge in this psalm. Shining (or a sunny aspect) is opposed to clouded or frowning (or a stormy aspect). God's wrath is associated with his frown, as well as with his occlusion by cloud and the storm this occlusion implies. His salvation or grace is associated with shining.³⁸ The addition "but without a frown" suggests divine disjunction, since it (and not the roman translation) concretizes God's opprobrium. But there is also an oblique suggestion within it that God is beholding "us" now as the psalmist is calling on him to stop his frowning on "us." Even though the frown is negative, it suggests (positively) that God has not totally abandoned his people because he still looks on them, albeit with a frown. According to this addition, then, God's providence is double edged - it may be either benevolent (which is what the psalmist is praying for) or dreadful (which is what the psalmist perceives to be the current state of affairs).³⁹ The final addition in this verse, "thy vine," intensifies the suggestion of the presence of God's love. This intensification derives its energy from the additions to the beginning of the vine allegory in verse 8.

A vine from Egypt thou hast brought,
 Thy free love made it thine,
And drov'st out nations proud and haught
To plant this lovely vine.

With the addition of "Thy free love made it thine," here, God's providence is sealed as ever present. Designating the nations as "proud and haught" places them at a remove from God through their own choice and through no aloofness on God's part.

³⁸Images of light versus dark flourish in Milton's poetry. This is not surprising given his subject matter. Good and evil are traditionally distinguished by means of the opposing images of light and dark. However, it may be seen here, and it will be seen throughout this thesis, that these opposing images are central to Milton's formulation of monism. For Milton, the elimination of darkness is also the elimination of dualism. Vision and visibility thus have an important role to play in the definition of Miltonic monism. This may be seen in Lycidas (ll.168-71) - see page 63 in chapter II above - the transition from Book 11 to Book 12 of Paradise Lost, "The Passion," and others.

³⁹It has already been noted that "dread," itself, carries such a double edge. See note 34.

The allegory of the vine (in verses 8-16), too, exemplifies Milton's strategy of double translation. How the allegory functions, however, is very difficult to decide. Hans Joachim Kraus has rightly said that this is "an allegory which ever and again runs off to concrete interpretations."⁴⁰ By this he means that what clearly begins as an allegory becomes so overloaded with imagery that the interpretation is governed more by the imagery than by the original idea that the imagery seemingly was imported to express. What is difficult to pin down in this allegory (no matter which translation we examine) is God's precise relationship to the vine. He shifts from being the transplanting gardener, to being that force which allows the vine to flourish (the benevolent sun, perhaps), to being the active destroyer of the vine's protective walls, to being the motivating force behind grazing beasts (foes), to being withholder of divine grace, to being fiery destroyer. At the very least, this shifting relationship seems to exemplify all of the kinds of presence and absence which the earlier verses have suggested.

It has become clear that the disjunction between man and God in this psalm, which is implicit in the Masoretic Hebrew text, is reproduced in Milton's roman text, and that it is transformed by his italicised additions. The combination of roman and italic texts produces a complete version which demonstrates a simultaneous absence and presence. How one understands the psalm, then, is determined by which aspect of the double translation one favours. Milton clearly favours the conjunctive completed text as his citation of this psalm in De Doctrina Christiana suggests. The completed version achieves a successful sense of providence only by shifting all suggestions of disjunction onto a designated group of people, "our foes." Thus "we" are saved. However, Milton's

⁴⁰Psalms, trans. Hilton C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988), p.142.

strategy of double translation is, by its very nature, itself disjunctive. It cuts the psalm neatly into two as I have diligently been demonstrating. It cuts the psalm into an essential roman text part which is (more or less) directly derived from the original, and into the italicised additions which seem non-essential, even though they do affect the meaning of the psalm as a whole. Any suggestion that the italics may make about the monistic or conjunctive presence of God's providence is undermined by this superior dualism. Indeed, the italicised additions seem, by their very separation from the roman text "original," to have a secondary importance.

The question which needs to be tackled now is whether the additions are to be considered as being always outside the real text, or whether they are in some way integrally linked to and thus justified by the original. This may be approached by means of an examination of verses 15 and 17.

15 וכנה אשר-נטעה ימינך // ועל-בן אמצת לך

17 תהי-יודך על-איש ימינך // על-בן-אדם אמצת לך

Milton renders the Hebrew as follows.

15 **Visit this vine, which thy right hand
 Hath set and planted long,
 And the young branch, that for thyself
 Thou hast made firm and strong.**

17 **Upon the man of thy right hand
 Let thy good hand be laid,
 Upon the Son of Man, whom thou
 Strong for thyself hast made.**

The two Hebrew verses are remarkably similar. They share more than 50% of their words as well as an identical accentuation.⁴¹ The second hemistiches (after the caesura) in each case are almost identical. Several commentators have suggested a dittography to explain the close similarity, as only an error, they argue, can explain the illogical similarity.⁴² However, such an irreverent explanation is unavailable to anyone who believes in the holy integrity of the text, as did Milton. Indeed, his translations are not quite so similar as one would expect from the Hebrew. I will focus here on Milton's translations of two words from verse 15, בן (ben) and ימינך (yeminecha), and of two compounds in verse 17, similar to these, איש-ימינך (ish-yeminecha) and בן-אדם (ben-adam).

In verse 15 ימינך (yeminecha) refers to God's "right hand." The vine is the work of his right hand. The implication is that God has two hands; his goodness belongs to his right hand, and his punishments to his left.⁴³ Thus, איש-ימינך (ish-yeminecha, "the man of your right hand") in verse 17 may refer to the man who is judged to be on the right hand of God. In this sense, then, the wish, "Let thy good hand be laid" would be redundant, merely amplifying the phrase "the man of thy right hand." However, another possibility exists. ימינך (yeminecha) may also refer to God's active power. This is clearly the way in which Milton translates the phrase in verse 15. The relative clause, "which

⁴¹Following James T. Price's system of accents in The Syntax of Masoretic Accents in the Hebrew Bible Lewiston, N.Y.: The Edwin Mellon Press, 1990, p. 162-3, the sequence of accents in both verse is as follows: dechi-munach-athnach//rebia mugrash-mereka-silluq.

⁴²See, for example, E.J. Kissane's commentary, vol.2 p.51; Hans Joachim Kraus, vol.2 p.139, and W.O.E. Oesterley, p.368. The Revised Standard Version omits the second hemistich of vs.15.

⁴³This double handedness is referred to in a later translation by Milton, see Ps.82:1, "Among the gods on both his hands/ He judges and debates."

thy right hand hath set," refers to the divine action of having planted the vine. Thus verse 15 employs יְמִינֶךָ (yeminecha) as God's benison, and verse 17, as his efficiency. Similarly, in the case of בֵּן (ben), two possibilities are taken in two ways by Milton's translation. In verse 15, Milton translates בֵּן (ben) as "the young branch," while in verse 17 he translates בֵּן (ben) as "the Son of Man" meaning Christ. More specifically and strictly, Milton translates בֵּן (ben) as "branch" in verse 15 and as "son" in verse 17. In doing so, he follows the tradition of Gen. 49:22 which establishes the precedent for rendering בֵּן (ben) as both "branch" and "son."⁴⁴ This enables a connection between the allegorical vine of Psalm 80 and "the Son of Man."⁴⁵ Thus the vine which suffers destruction because of God's angry withdrawal from it is also Christ who is the very substance of God's restitution. And in His very abandonment of His people, God is demonstrably (at least in this psalm) close at hand. In the translation of the word בֵּן (ben) there is a miraculous doubleness. It is the double translation of this word and others like it, which justifies Milton's entire project of typographically explicit double translation. It also justifies Milton's perverse conjunctive reading of Psalm 80, when so many have seen only divine disjunction.

⁴⁴Gen 49:22 begins, בֵּן פֶּרֶת יוֹסֵף בֶּן פֶּרֶת; talking of the sons of Jacob, the passage begins, "A fruitful branch Joseph, a fruitful branch..." The connection between the branch and Joseph's sons is effected by the fruitfulness of the branch.

⁴⁵It is important, of course, that the translation of בֶּן-אָדָם is taken to be Son of Man (meaning Christ) and not "son of man" (meaning human being or person in general). Milton ensures that the generic possibility is excluded by capitalizing Son of Man. Many other translators do not make this distinction. The Hebrew language has no capitalization at all, and thus it has no way of making this distinction visible. It is purely a matter of the English translator's inclination. The messianic reading of "Son of Man" in this psalm is supported within the rabbinic tradition by Saadia Gaon. The generic interpretation, however, is supported by David Qimhi.

Psalm 81

Milton cites Psalm 81 three times in De Doctrina Christiana. He cites the same verses 11 and 12 twice in two different but related contexts, first to prove that God is in no way the author of sin, and second to prove that human wisdom (as opposed to divine wisdom) is folly.⁴⁶ The third citation of this psalm (verses 13-14) forms part of Milton's definition of Obedience.⁴⁷ His citations of this psalm in De Doctrina Christiana thus map the territory covered by the psalm as lying between warnings against sin or human folly and recommendations for the virtue of obedience (which amount to the same thing).

The structure of Psalm 81 falls into two parts. The psalm opens with a call to prayer and to a very musical exaltation of God. Milton casts this call in increasingly obedient and dutiful terms.

- 1 **To God our strength sing loud**, and clear
 Sing loud to God our King,
To Jacob's God, that all may hear
 Loud acclamations ring.
- 2 **Prepare a hymn, prepare a song**
 The timbrel hither bring
The cheerful psaltery bring along
 And harp with **pleasant** string,
- 3 **Blow**, as is wont, **in the new moon**
 With trumpets' lofty sound,
The appointed time, the day whereon
 Our solemn feast comes round.
- 4 **This was a statute** given of old

⁴⁶Milton cites verses 11 and 12 in his chapters "Of God's Providence" and "Of the immediate Causes of Good Works," De Doctrina Christiana, I.8, p.334 and II.2, p.651, respectively.

⁴⁷The citation is in Milton's chapter "Of the Virtues which are Related to our Worship of God" (II.3) in De Doctrina Christiana, p.664.

For Israel to observe
And law of Jacob's God, to hold
 From whence they might not swerve.

Milton's additions display an interesting progression in the stated motivations behind this call to prayer and praise. In verse 1 the motivation behind the call is "that all may hear." Prayer and praise should be exclaimed loudly simply because they should be heard. The progressive motivation moves through the pleasure of music in verse 2 to the force of custom in verse 3, which is expressed in Milton's addition of "as is wont." Finally, in verse 4, this movement in the call to prayer and praise culminates in an insistent and repetitive appeal to duty, speaking of a statute and a law "to hold/ From whence they might not swerve." Milton adds more to this verse than to the preceding three. Milton's first four verses (verse 4 in particular) are clearly consistent with his citation of this psalm in connection with the definition of obedience in De Doctrina Christiana. Obedience, for Milton, is a duty which is part of what he describes as "internal worship."⁴⁸

Other commentators and translators are not so narrowly focused upon obedience in their interpretations of these verses. John Calvin, for example, in his Commentary upon the Book of Psalms, is wary of the psalm's exhortation to loud and musical prayer and praise. He is particularly insistent that the first part of this psalm is of historical interest only, and clear that it should not represent a liturgical manual. He says,

But now when the clear light of the Gospel has dissipated the shadows of the law, and taught us that God is to be served in a simpler form, it would be to act a foolish and mistaken part to imitate that which the prophet enjoined only upon those of his own time.⁴⁹

⁴⁸See De Doctrina Christiana, pp.656-65.

⁴⁹John Calvin, Commentary upon the Book of Psalms, tr. James Anderson (1845), p.312. See also Arthur Golding's translation, "The Psalmes of David and others. With M. John Calvins Commentaries,"

Calvin, here, launches straight into the Puritan argument regarding the manner of worship in the Church. The Puritans were suspicious of the physical worldliness of singing, believing that the enjoyment of the song might detract from a more spiritual appreciation of the psalm. They were also militantly opposed to the Catholic liturgy. Nathaniel Holmes, in his Gospel Musick of 1644, explains the crucial difference between psalm singing and the Catholic liturgy as being that the Catholics "do not let all the Congregation, neither sing, nor understand what is sung."⁵⁰ The Presbyterian view was that the psalms formed the core of both public and private worship, as the Ordinance for 4 January 1644 (1645) indicates:

It is the duty of Christians to praise God publicly by singing of Psalmes together in the Congregation, and also privately in the Family. In singing of Psalmes the voice is to be tunably and gravely ordered: But the chief care must be, to sing with understanding and with Grace in the heart, making melody unto the Lord.⁵¹

The singing, clearly, should never detract from understanding the meaning of what is sung and should never suggest a mood of levity. John Cotton's famous defence of psalm singing, Singing of Psalmes: A Gospel-Ordinance, lays bare the concerns of the Puritan detractors while answering them.

When we say, singing with a lively voyce, we suppose none will so farre misconstrue us, as to thinke we exclude singing with the heart; for God is a Spirit: and to worship him with the voyce without the Spirit, were but lip-labour ... But this we say, As wee are to make melody in our hearts, so with our voyces also.⁵²

(1571).

⁵⁰Nathaniel Holmes, Gospel Musick, p.19.

⁵¹C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait, Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum (London, 1911), vol.1, p.607.

⁵²John Cotton, Singing of Psalmes: A Gospel-Ordinance (London: John Rothwell, 1647), p.2.

Cotton goes on to intensify his argument by stating that the singing of psalms must necessarily encompass both literal and spiritual singing.

It is an unsafe and unsavoury expression, to speake of the words of David and Asaph, as if they were onely the words of Christ in the mouths of spirituall singers. For if they were not the words of Christ in the mouths of carnall singers also, then the holy Scriptures were not the word of Christ, if they be read by a carnall reader. So the unbeliefe of man shall make the faith of God of none effect; yea the word of God, not to be the word of God.⁵³

Thus Cotton defends psalm singing by insisting that it should be both literal and spiritual as Christ himself is both literally and spiritually true. While Milton is aware of the potential lack of spirituality for which the catholic rite was often castigated (by such as Calvin), he, like John Cotton, is by no means against the singing of psalms. His own translation of these psalms in common (Church) measure, designed for singing in churches, attests to this. What concerns Milton seems to be that the music and singing should not interfere with the psalm's meaning. This explains his additions of "sing loud, and clear" and "that all may hear" to verse 1. In Psalm 86:4, Milton declares,

**O make rejoyce
Thy servant's soul; for Lord to thee
I lift my soul and voice.**

The addition of "and voice" clarifies Milton's view in this set of psalms. He is by no means against the vocalised expression of what is in the soul, and he therefore does not exclusively advocate the private worship of the soul.

⁵³John Cotton, Sing of Psalms: A Gospel-Ordinance p.18. Several translators of the psalms defend psalm singing pointedly in their prefaces. For example, Stanley Gower in his preface to John White's Dauids Psalms in Metre (London: S. Griffin, 1655), A₃^v, "The singing of Psalms was under the Law, is under the Gospel, an Holy Ordinance of God, in right performance whereof, Churches and Christians make heavenly melody in their hearts unto the Lord Eph.5.19," and Henry Dunster, The Psalms Hymns and Spiritual Songs of the Old and New Testament (London: Richard Chiswell, 1680), A₃^r, "Dauids Psalms, as hath been shewed, were sung in heart and in voice together, by the twenty four orders of the Musicians of the Temple."

Milton deals with the subject of worship in De Doctrina Christiana book 2, chapter 4, which is titled, "Of External Worship." While Milton does not pronounce specifically on the issue of psalm singing in this chapter, it emerges from the weight of his comments about worship that he is by no means against such singing. What is of paramount importance to Milton is that "God is worshipped sincerely by rites and methods which he himself has prescribed."⁵⁴ Milton, here, objects to "superstition" which he defines as "a man-made form of worship." He is not opposed to "rites" per se, but to man's perversion or hypocrisy with respect to these rites, which occurs when "the external forms are duly observed, but without an internal or spiritual involvement." Milton opts for the reasonable view in the debate over the manner of worship and does not support blanket prohibitions as does Calvin. The manner in which Calvin imputes psalm singing (namely, by means of a general demotion of the Old Testament law), however, does attack Milton's increasing insistence upon the law in his translation of Psalm 81. Even while insisting on the law, Milton does distance himself from it in his translation of this psalm. His translation begins in the first person (plural) and already by verse 4 it has switched into the third person. This shifts Milton's position in relation to psalm singing. While he includes himself initially, by verse 4, he seems to be outside the group called to prayer. However, towards the end of the psalm, Milton presents God as bewailing just such a distancing from the law. In verses 11 and 13 God exclaims,

11 **And yet my people would not** hear,
 Nor **hearken to my voice;**
And Israel whom I loved so dear
 Misliked me for his choice.

13 **O that my people would** be wise
 To **serve me** all their days,

⁵⁴De Doctrina Christiana, p.666.

And O that Israel would advise
To **walk my** righteous **ways**.

The first part of Milton's Psalm 81 thus establishes a duty to sing psalms and praise God, but at the same time undermines it by identifying this duty solely with Israel or Jacob. This exclusive identification of the duty of psalm singing with Israel fuels the Puritan disapproval of public displays of worship. What is of particular interest in this psalm is its shifts between first and third person pronouns. Such a shift has already provided an argument against psalm singing. Other shifts between first and third person pronouns will be seen to be crucial to the psalm's prophetic nature.

The change from first person to third person pronoun established over verses 1-4 shifts again in verse 5.

This he a testimony ordained
In Joseph, not to change,
When as he passed through Egypt land;
The tongue I heard was strange.

Three key changes occur in this verse. It is in the light of these transitions that Milton's only addition to this verse, "not to change," takes on a heavy burden of meaning. The three changes relate to the festival mentioned in verse 3, the meaning of that festival under the Gospel, and the relationship between God and worshipper in the psalm. The first change, having to do with the occasion for the psalm singing that this psalm invokes, changes from the New Moon and the New Year festivals (in verse 3) to the passover in

verse 5.⁵⁵ The passover is clearly intended in verse 5 because the psalm singing of verses 1-4 is to be a testimony in Joseph "when he passed through Egypt land."

The second change in verse 5 has to do with the close connection between the passover and Christian salvation, a connection which is paradoxically resisted by Milton's translation of this psalm. The typological connection between Joseph in this verse, and Christ is made clear by St. Augustine's comment on this verse in his Expositions on the Book of Psalms.

Ye remember, ye know of Joseph sold into Egypt: Joseph sold into Egypt is Christ passing over to the Gentiles. There Joseph after tribulations was exalted, and here, Christ, after the suffering of the Martyrs, was glorified.⁵⁶

Augustine explains in this comment that the "testimony in Joseph," or the reason why we are exhorted by the psalm to sing and praise, is also a testimony in Christ. Towards the end of this psalm Milton contrives by means of his additions to present a prophecy of christian salvation. Verse 15 is the crucial verse.

Who hate the Lord should then be fain
 To **bow to him and bend,**
But they, his people, should remain,
Their time should have no end.

Reading the roman (bold) script, it is the people who hate the Lord whose "time should have no end." This strange assertion is explained away in the commentaries in the

⁵⁵ Hans Joachim Kraus, Psalms 60-150: A Commentary, tr. Hilton C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), p.148, explains "the word מִלְּנֵחַ suggests that you do not think of any new moon or full moon celebrations you choose but assume a 14-day festival time which was opened with a celebration during the time of the new moon and concluded with a festival gathering during the time of the full moon. The reference here must be to one of the three great annual festivals of Israel (cf. Exod. 23:14ff.). If we examine the cultic calendar carefully, we see that only the fall festival comes into consideration." Kraus thus places the feast of verse 3 at one of pesach, rosh hashana, or shavuoth. Kraus prefers rosh hashana, even though verse 5 clearly refers to the passover and consequent exodus.

⁵⁶(Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1850), vol.4, p.118.

negative sense that those who hate the Lord will be eternally humiliated.⁵⁷ Milton's addition makes it clear that "their time should have no end" is a conditional promise of eternal bliss to God's people, if only they would hearken to his voice.

The third transition effected by verse 5 lies in the interpretation of the most difficult part of the verse. This part-verse is perhaps the most enigmatic element in the entire psalm. The Masoretic Text gives it as follows.

שֶׁפֶת לֹא - יָדַעְתִּי אֲשַׁמַּע

Milton renders it, "The tongue I heard was strange," but the line is translated in many different ways. Two general translation strategies seem to emerge from all the various versions of this line. The most common strategy has the translation explicitly identify the unknown language as the language of Egypt, which was unknown to Joseph and remained unknown to his descendants until the time of Moses and the Exodus. Typically the translators who adopt this strategy render something similar to Henry Dod's translation of 1620, "through Egipt land he went:/ Where I a language heard that I/ did never understand." Indeed, the children of Israel are continually referred to as Hebrews in the book of Exodus, and their very identity in Egypt is considered to be defined by their exclusive retention of their own language.⁵⁸ Rabbi David Qimhi (the RaDaQ) holds this view and refers us to Psalm 114:1 as evidence, "When Israel went out of Egypt, the

⁵⁷W.O.E. Oesterley, *The Psalms* (London: SPCK, 1953), for example, takes this view. He translates the verse, "They that hate them would come cringing to them, and their terror, would be for ever," and explains, "if they had hearkened to him, and walked in his ways, they would have known victory instead of defeat, and it would have been their enemies who have been subdued and come cringing to them, living for all time lives of terror" (pp. 371-2).

⁵⁸See, for example, Exod. 1:15-16, where Pharaoh orders the death of every male child born to the Hebrews.

house of Jacob from a people of strange language."⁵⁹ A variation on this strategy has Canaanitic as the unknown language, which was the language of the land that the children of Israel went to after the Exodus. Saadia Gaon (the RaSaG), in his commentary on this psalm, explains the line in terms of the Hebrews' separation from the Canaanites whose land they later entered. Central to the strategy of both the RaDaQ and the RaSaG is the idea of לשון קודש (lashon kodesh) or "holy language," which also means "separate language." Translators who follow the interpretation of the RaDaQ are the translators of the Geneva Bible, the Authorized Version, the Scottish Psalter (of 1636) and the Bay Psalm Book, Junius and Tremellius, Henry Dod, George Sandys, William Barton, Henry Ainsworth, George Wither, Francis Rous, Zachary Boyd, John White, and Sir Thomas Fairfax. All these translators either add a relative "where" or in some other way explicitly identify Egypt as the location of the unknown language. Richard Braithwaite seems rather to follow the RaSaG's view by translating the line as follows.

In Joseph was this witness cleer'd,
 when he from Pharaoh's land
 Went forth, a language there I heard,
 I did not understand.

It seems that, for Braithwaite, "there" refers to the land of Canaan, inhabited after the Exodus from Egypt.

The second major strategy in the interpretation of this line does not place the unknown language in relation to the clash of identity produced by the confrontation of different foreign tongues (either Egyptian or Canaanite with Hebrew). Rather it

⁵⁹Rabbi David Qimhi, The Complete Commentary on the Psalms [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1967), p.183.

comprehends the unknown language in a prophetic and thus more spiritual manner. Mary Sidney's paraphrase offers, perhaps, the best example:

This to us a law doth stand,
 Pointed thus by Gods owne hand;
 Of his league a signe ordained,
 When his plagues had Aegipt pained.
 There heard I, erst unheard by me,
 The voice of God⁶⁰ (ll.13-18).

The translations of the Vulgate, William Alexander (translator of the spurious "King James I" Psalter - both the 1631 and the revised 1636 editions), and the Henry Dunster and Richard Lyons Psalter, all fall into this category with more or less conformity. These translators neither insert a relation between the final verse segment and the rest of the verse (like those mentioned already), nor do they mention God directly (as does Mary Sidney), but they all leave the unknown language provocatively unidentified. The bizarre juxtaposition that results magnifies the mystery of the unknown language in a way which is opposite to the clarificatory addition of the translators who follow the interpretations of the RaDaQ or RaSaG.

The shift from the third person pronoun to the first person is what is mainly responsible for the abrupt and bewildering transition that the psalm enacts in this verse. The verse begins by talking about a psalm-singing festival which is a testimony or witness to Joseph's passing out of Egypt and ends with a mysterious "I" who fails to understand an equally mysterious language. What follows this enigmatic verse is God, in his own voice, relating how he has redeemed his people from slavery. It is this godly pronouncement which prompts the interpretation of Mary Sidney and those who more

⁶⁰The edition of the Sidney Psalms used here is that of Rathmell (1963).

or less agree with her. St. Augustine offers a typological interpretation of the mysterious language, which is consistent with this spiritual interpretation. He relates Joseph's (or, rather, his descendants') passage through the Red Sea to the Baptism of Christ. It is in terms of this baptism and the resulting spiritual transportation that it implies that he understands the very enigmatic close of this transitional verse.

when thou shalt have passed the Red sea [i.e. been baptised], when thou shalt have been led forth out of thine offences with a mighty hand and with a strong arm, thou wilt perceive mysteries that thou knowest not: since Joseph himself too, when he came out of the land of Egypt, heard a language which he knew not. Thou shalt hear a language which thou knowest not: which they that know now hear and recognise, bearing witness and knowing. Thou shalt hear where thou oughtest to have thy heart.⁶¹

Augustine's interpretation thus identifies the "I" with the individual worshipper who recites this psalm. By reciting the psalm the worshipper recounts the spiritual renewal which accompanies the Christian faith. The worshipper, in this way, enacts and experiences the deep and fundamental change between the old law and the Gospel as he/she passes from verse 4 through the enigmatic verse 5 to verse 6 of the psalm. The Hebrew original seems to support this view in a way that none of the translations do. The Hebrew verse has a felicitous mix of tenses which may be rendered as follows: "I will hear a language that I did not understand." The promise of an Augustinian kind of transformation is difficult to deny when the verse is translated in this way. However, Augustine's typological argument paradoxically depends upon an initial agreement with the view of the RaSaG (namely, that the unknown language is that of Canaan). The paradox emerges from the fact that the baptismal transformation (or entry into a new language) that Augustine envisages is based upon a biblical story in which the unknown

⁶¹Expositions on the Book of Psalms (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1850), p.119.

language of Canaan remains unknown, in which no promise of future understanding is made.

Milton's translation of verse 5 resists the transformation that Augustine suggests. Milton's unique addition to this verse, "not to change," could not be more resistant to the idea of transformation. Milton's addition makes it clear that "the statute" or "the law of Jacob" may not be changed. This runs contrary to any interpretation which suggests that the Gospel has superseded the law. Taking Milton's addition into account, the verse is not amenable to any form of typological interpretation, such as Augustine's, which implicitly depends upon the belief that the Gospel supersedes the law. It is surprising that Milton's addition should elevate the law to the level of the Gospel, since his additions have so far been presumed to express his reading of scripture with "the mind of Christ." This means that Milton's additions are not necessarily to be taken as supersessionary. Indeed, they do not over-ride what is written in the roman type "original;" they merely add a supplementary interpretation. Indeed, there would be no need to italicise or to separate the additions from the original if the additions were deemed supersessionary. Thus while Milton's additions may indeed be taken as his readings of the psalms "with the mind of Christ," they simply may not be taken as being in agreement with supersessionary readings such as that of Augustine. For Milton, then, the addition of "not to change" represents a conservative attitude to the law, even under the Gospel. This conservative attitude may be seen to be vindicated in his double translation of the psalms.

Milton's translation of verse 5 thus effects a transition of an entirely different nature from that of St. Augustine. The shift from the third person back to the first person

in this verse suggests that a strange kind of dialogue is being established in this psalm. Two voices and two calls to obedience emerge on either side of this verse - the psalmist's call to the obedient and dutiful praise of God in verses 1-5 and God's own call to obedience which follows. The call to God and His reply are separated by a verse in which the psalmist recognises that the language of God is unknown to him. Immediately following this concession, however, God's voice is presented as speaking, perhaps through the psalmist, in a language which is very understandable. Milton's line, "The tongue I heard, was strange," may be understood as marking a distance between the psalmist and God. It is not that the psalmist cannot understand God's voice, but that the voice which proceeds from verse 6 onwards is not the psalmist's voice, although it is expressed through him. The line thus marks the change within the psalmist from speaking in his own voice to speaking in God's voice. The necessity of such a marked transition may be questioned because the reader has no difficulty in recognising God's voice as belonging to God in verses 6-16. There is absolutely no danger of anyone mistaking the "I" in verses 6-16 as belonging to the psalmist. It would seem, then, that the line which marks the transition is not entirely necessary. We do not need it in order to know precisely whose voice speaks when. This suggests that something more complicated is at play. It seems that this psalm is not only about obedience, but also about the relationship between God and his prophet in the psalms.

The final verse of the psalm, like verse 5, is also particularly enigmatic because of its strange alternation of pronouns. The Masoretic Text,

וַיֹּאכִילֵהוּ מִחֶלֶב חֶטֶה וּמִצֹּר דָּבַשׁ אֲשֶׁבִיעַךְ

typically translated by Henry Dunster,

And with the finest of the wheat
 have nourish'd them should he:
 With hony of the rocke, I should
 have satisfied thee,

demonstrates a shift from a third person subject to a first, and from a third person object to a second.⁶² The puzzling shift has been explained by Rabbi Menachem HaMeiri as a prophetic convention. To speak once in the voice of the prophet and once in the voice of God, says the rabbi, belongs to the very nature of prophecy.⁶³ If this is the case, namely, that God is intended by both "he" and "I," HaMeiri does not explain why this should be so. It is not unlikely that the cross-over of pronouns in prophecy is intended to represent the special relationship between God and his prophet. At any rate, this verse with its crossed pronouns is of much more interest in translation because of various translators' attempts to interpret the cross-over. As has already been seen in the typical case of Dunster, most translators render this verse plainly with its crossed pronouns simply displayed.⁶⁴ However, some simplify the verse by rendering it with a first person subject only and thus insist that the voice is that of God alone.⁶⁵ Others, such as William Barton, simplify it by rendering it with the third person pronoun throughout, thus insisting upon the prophet's voice alone. Milton, unique among translators of the psalms, renders the verse as follows.

⁶²This verse is, according to C.A. Briggs, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1907), p.213, a loose translation of Deut. 32:13-14. The Deuteronomy version, however, has no cross-over of pronouns as does Psalm 80; furthermore, the psalm version is offered as a promise, the Deuteronomy version as historical fact: וינקהו דבש מסלע ... עסחלב כליות חטה [And he suckled him with honey from the rock ... with the fat of kidneys of wheat.]

⁶³Rabbi Menachem ben Shlomo HaMeiri was a rabbinical scholar of the medieval period in Spain.

⁶⁴Translators who render the verse in this way include besides Dunster, Zachary Boyd, the Scots Psalter (1636), King James I (1631 and 1636), the Bay Psalm Book, Francis Rous, Henry Dod and Henry Ainsworth.

⁶⁵Translators following this strategy include George Sandys, Mary Sidney, George Wither, Richard Braithwaite, Sir Thomas Fairfax, and John White.

16 **And we would feed them** from the shock
 With flour of finest wheat,
And satisfy them from the rock
 With honey for their meat.

Milton, too, simplifies the play of pronouns present in the Hebrew text, but unlike any other translator, he uses the first person plural pronoun for the subject. No other translator, including the translators of the bibles and other prose translations, renders the verse in this way. Indeed, many editors of Milton's poetry (such as F.A. Patterson) replace "we" with "he," believing that the use of the first person plural pronoun to be merely a typographical error in the 1673 *Poems*. John Carey, however, retains "we." The effect of this unique translation is to unite prophet and God in a single voice in this verse. The distance between the prophet and God experienced in verse 5 is thus overcome by the end of the psalm. Verse 10 provides a clue as to how God's voice can be combined with the psalmist's.

הרחב־פִּיךָ וְאִמְלֵאֶהוּ

Open wide your mouth and I will fill it.

In the context of a psalm about obedience, God promises to fill the mouth which is opened to him. One way of filling the open mouth could be with the divine word. In this sense Milton would be justified in translating the final verse of Psalm 81 with the combined voices of God and psalmist. Indeed, verse 10, understood in this way, could be taken as scriptural precedent for the inspirational view of translation. Under this interpretation, opening one's mouth would be translating scripture, and God's filling one's mouth would be God's inspiration of the translator. However, Milton's translation of verse 10 precludes this translation. In fact in this particular verse, Milton strays far from the very words of the text and paraphrases liberally, even in the roman-type text.

**Ask large enough, and I, besought,
Will grant thy full demand.**

This differs substantially from the literal Hebrew. It is thus difficult to know what Milton understands by the unified voice of psalmist and God. What is clear, however, is that they are united at the end of the psalm, whereas they were not so right the way through it. Thus the final moment of this psalm is one of divine unity with the psalmist, a unity which is held up as the promised reward for the virtue of obedience.

Psalm 82

Milton mentions Psalm 82 in two different contexts in De Doctrina Christiana. The first context is that of chapter 5, "Of the Son of God," in which Milton lays bare his antitrinitarianism. Psalm 82 is referred to twice with respect to the same line of argument within Milton's developing heretical commitment to the Son's subordinate status. Psalm 82 is invoked as proof that even though the Son is referred to as God, he is not essentially one with the Father. Milton argues,

The numerical significance of "one" and of "two" must be unalterable and the same for God as for man. It would have been a waste of time for God to thunder forth so repeatedly that first commandment which said that he was the one and only god, if it could nevertheless be maintained that another God existed as well, who ought himself to be thought of as the only God.⁶⁶

Psalm 82, among many other examples, contributes to this point as an example of the word אלהים (elohim) or "god" being used both to refer to God and to magistrates, judges, the whole house of David, and angels. The word אלהים is a plural form;

⁶⁶De Doctrina Christiana, p.212.

however, when it refers to "God" it is characteristically used as a singular noun, taking singular verb forms and singular pronouns. When it refers to magistrates, judges, David's descendants, or angels, it is used as a plural noun. Psalm 82 thus presents cast-iron proof that although the Hebrew word for God, אלהים, refers both to God and to man, there is no essential equality whatever between God and anyone else referred to by means of this word. The psalm demonstrates the very different uses of the singular and plural references of this plural word, which may be seen in verse 1.

אלהים נצב בעדתיאל בקרב אלהים ישפט

which Milton translates,

1 **God in the great assembly stands**
 Of kings and lordly states,
Among the gods on both his hands
He judges and debates.

Milton's translation of אלהים as both singular and plural in lines 1 and 3, respectively, is quite correct and is in agreement with translators across the spectrum.

This psalm thus represents crucial evidence for Milton's argument for the essential difference between God the Father and Christ the Son. What is striking about this psalm translation is that the italicisation rate is half the average for all the other translations in this 1648 set. Milton italicises 21 words out of a total 161, or 13% of the psalm. Milton uses an alternative to italics in order to indicate where his translation is perhaps freer than the Hebrew strictly allows, or perhaps where the constraints of the metre demand some latitude. Milton refers his readers to seven footnotes to indicate his divergences from the Hebrew original. These seven footnotes explain the divergence of 43 words in Milton's text, thus raising Milton's acknowledged difference from the original to 27%. The effect

of using footnotes as opposed to italics is significant. As has been demonstrated, the use of italics marks the divergences from the text so that the reader may know what belongs to the original and what is interpretation. The use of footnotes suggests that, although the translation has diverged from the original, these divergences are insignificant. The footnotes seem to insist that the divergences that they mark are in fact not divergences at all.

While Milton uses footnotes in all of his 1648 translations they are nowhere so prominent than in Psalm 82. The reason for this can only be conjectured. But it is most likely, in the light of the use of footnotes as an alternative to italics, that Milton wants this psalm to appear relatively unadulterated, since it supports his heretical argument about the Son. Evidence suggestive of this may be found in verse 1, which has already been cited. Milton expands בעדת־אל (b'edath-el) in his translation as, "the great assembly ... Of kings and lordly states." This is consistent with and emphasises the difference between "God" and "gods" which Milton demonstrates in De Doctrina Christiana. בעדת־אל could be translated "assembly of God," as Milton points out in his footnote, because אל (el), like אלהים (elohim), means "god". But he avoids translating אל (el) as "God" because it would both weaken and confuse the contrast between God (referred to as אלהים in the singular) and the gods (referred to as אלהים in the plural) whom he is judging in this psalm.

Further evidence suggestive of the use of footnotes in the manner conjectured above lies in verse 7. The Masoretic Text has,

אִכֵּן כִּאֲדָם תִּמְוֹתוֹן וְכֵאֲחֵד הַשְּׂרִים תִּפְלוּ

which may be translated, as the Authorized Version typically has it,

But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

Milton translates the verse idiosyncratically as follows.

**But ye shall die like men, and fall
As other princes die.**

E.C. Baldwin points out that Milton's translation of the word אַחַד (achad) as "other" is incorrect, and suggests that Milton may mistakenly have registered the word אַחֵר (acher). The two words are typographically very similar in the Hebrew.⁶⁷ This is unlikely, as Harris Fletcher points out, because several other translators of the period translate the verse in the same way as Milton does. Milton, he concludes, seems to be translating according to a specific tradition.⁶⁸ What Fletcher does not explain is why Milton should choose this particular expression in verse 7, or what the tradition of translating אַחַד (achad) as "other" might mean.

Verse 7 is offered as a memento mori, God's warning and reminder that the great rulers of the earth will die, that they should never feel that they are above the great leveller, death. The memento mori is particularly poignant since it follows the grand affirmation of verse 6, in which God says, in Milton's translation,

**I said that ye were gods, yea all
The sons of God most high.**

Calvin offers a reason why the memento mori should not be translated as the Hebrew text seems to require. For him it is an impropriety to translate, "ye shall die as one of he

⁶⁷E.C. Baldwin, "Milton and the Psalms," Modern Philology, 17 (1991-20), p.461.

⁶⁸For the dimensions of this tradition and the translators and translations it includes, see H. F. Fletcher, Milton's Semitic Studies (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1926), p.101.

princes" because God is speaking to the princes themselves and the simile is thus redundant. Calvin himself suggests the translation, "ye shall die as one of the common people," which substantially alters the original.⁶⁹ Milton's "ye shall ... fall as other princes die" is a much more felicitous solution to Calvin's tautological problem. This rendition warns the "princes" that they will be no different from other princes whom they have seen fall from the heights of glory and die ignominious deaths. The irony behind this translation, however, is that the very same warning applies to the "Son of God" in the same measure as it applies to the "sons of God." Christ, too, falls as other princes, dies as other gods. But Christ is the only "god" who rises again. This rising is intimated in verse 8,

Rise God, judge thou the earth in might,
This wicked earth redress,
For thou art he who shalt by right
The nations all possess.

This transition from verse 7 to this final verse is suggestively similar to the Son's redemptive acceptance of responsibility for man's coming fall in Paradise Lost. The Son acknowledges that he will die, but he will rise again to overcome Death and all his foes.

Though now to Death I yield, and am his due
 All that of me can die, yet that debt paid,
 Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
 His prey, ...
 But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
 My vanquisher. (3:245-51)

Although the final verse of Psalm 82 is suggestive of Christ's resurrection and judgement, Milton's insistent use of the word "God" for "God the Father" must weigh against such an interpretation. Other translators of Psalm 82 do, however, seem to support this

⁶⁹See John Calvin, Commentary upon the Book of Psalms, trans. James Anderson, (London: 1845), pp.335-6.

christological interpretation more assuredly. Henry Dunster's translation may be taken as typical of this group of translators.

That thou may'st judge the earth, O God
do thou thyself advance:
For thou shalt have the nations all
for thine inheritance.

Two aspects of this translation suggest that Christ is intended here, the use of "advance" and of "inheritance." "Advance" suggests that the psalmist calls upon Christ to advance his coming judgement, and "inheritance" is something much more appropriate for the Son than the Father.

Psalm 83

This psalm recounts the struggle for a name. The psalm describes the enemies of God as challenging his name indirectly. Their attack upon God's name is effected by conspiring against his people with the intention of wiping them out, the bearers of God's name. Thus the conspiracy of God's enemies is characterised by a dualistic comprehension of the name. For them the name of God is not assailable directly but is vulnerable only through an attack on its vehicle, Israel.⁷⁰ The meaning of the Hebrew word ישראל (Israel) is, according to Jerome, "princeps sive directus Dei."⁷¹ The direct link with God is underlined in the meaning of this name. The intention to wipe out Israel as the vehicle for God's name is expressed in Milton's translation as follows.

⁷⁰John Calvin, in his Commentary, p.337, explicitly connects the destruction of Israel with the extinction of the divine name.

⁷¹See Martin Luther's Commentary on the Book of Psalms, p.123.

4 **Come let us cut them off say they,
 Till they no nation be
 That Israel's name for ever may
 Be lost in memory.**

In order to wipe out the memory of Israel the enemies of God unite in hand and mind for the better execution of their aim.

5 **For they consult with all their might,
 And all as one in mind
 Themselves against thee they unite
 And in firm union bind.**

The irony in the intention of the enemies of God lies in the fact that their own identity as a united community depends upon their attempt to destroy Israel and to eradicate its memory. Thus even if they were to achieve their aim of wiping Israel out entirely, they would never be able to blot out its name from memory, that is if they wish to remain "in firm union" bound. As much as they are bound together in their common aim, they are bound to the object upon which their plans are to be enacted. Their own united existence, in the absence of Israel, would prove a constant reminder of the name Israel and of the name that it in turn points to - God.

Milton's translation of verses 4 and 5 is free from italicised additions. This is significant, as will be demonstrated in what follows. Even so, his translation of these verses is not free from expansion. Milton explains, by means of a footnote, that the Hebrew **לב יחדו** ("lev jachdau"), which he has translated as "with all their might," is more properly rendered, "with heart together." But Milton does not only do this; he also duplicates the phrase in the very next line, "And all as one in mind." Here, however, Milton translates **לב** ("lev") as "mind," which is the usual interpretation of the word **לב**. The Great Bible renders this verse, "they have caste their heades together," Thomas

Becon in the Bishops' Bible, "they have conspired all in one mind," for example. Sternhold and Hopkins translate it, "they all conspire within theyr hart," which is clearly a mental rather than a physical event. Milton's duplication of this line, using both "might" and "mind," suggests that the enemies of God are engaging in both a physical as well as a mental or spiritual onslaught. Milton includes the physical when other translators seem to focus upon the spiritual only. That Milton does not italicise his addition of "might," but only footnotes it, suggests that, for him, this physical interpretation is integral to the Hebrew text. Thus for him, the struggle over the Name is more than just spiritual. In general, it is characteristic of Milton's technique that where an addition refers to a physical reality he tends not to italicise, preferring rather to footnote it instead.

After thus insisting upon the inclusion of the physical, Milton launches into a catalogue of names of the conspiring enemies.

- 6 **The tents of Edom, and the brood**
 Of scornful **Ishmael,**
Moab, with them of Hagar's blood
 That in the desert dwell,
- 7 **Gebal and Ammon** there conspire,
 And hateful **Amalek,**
The Philistims, and they of Tyre
 Whose bounds the sea doth check.
- 8 **With them** great **Ashur also bands**
 And doth confirm the knot
 All these have lent their armed hands
 To aid the sons of Lot.
- 9 **Do to them as to Midian** bold
 That wasted all the coast
To Sisera, and as is told
 Thou didst **to Jabin's** host,
 When **at the brook of Kishon** old
 They were repulsed and slain,
- 10 **At Endor quite cut off, and rolled**
 As dung upon the plain.

As is evident, these verses are heavily italicised. It is possible that this is because a catalogue of names is difficult to put into metre, but as many other translators manage to do precisely that without adding nearly as much as Milton, this most probably does not account for all the additions. Before this part of the psalm, the text is free of italics, and, as it has been suggested above, Milton accordingly insists upon including the physicality along with the more commonly understood spirituality of the challenge against Israel and God's name. Here the italics are used to supplement the spiritual or mental interpretation which is attached to the names of the nations.

Three italicised expansions are of interest because of the way in which they interpret the names of the particular enemies in question. "Them of Hagar's blood" are described as "that in the desert dwell." This is derived from Gen. 21:20 where the son of Hagar, Abraham's servant, is described as living and growing up in the desert. The same verse in Genesis describes Hagar's son as an archer. But besides the scriptural reference, the Hebrew word הַגֵּר (hagar) may be understood as "sojourner" or "stranger" and it is thus apt to describe "them of Hagar's blood" as dwelling in the desert. But הִגֵּר (higer) taken as a verb, means "flow," and while this is commonly related to migration, it can take on the specific meaning of "haemorrhage." Thus Hagar's blood refers both to the descendants of Hagar and to blood spilt, perhaps by archery, in the desert. The theme of blood as both lineage and murderousness is strongly developed in this catalogue of names. Martin Luther, and John Calvin, as well as Augustine before them, understand אֲדוֹם (Edom) along the lines of "men of blood, of earth, of bloody earth."⁷² A second

⁷²See St. Augustine's Expositions on the Book of Psalms (Oxford: John H. Parker, 1850), vol.4, p.142; Martin Luther's Commentary on the Book of Psalms, vol.11, p.123, and John Calvin's Commentary, p.344.

significant italicisation describes the citizens of Tyre as "whose bounds the sea doth check." Here, too, the meaning of the Hebrew word for Tyre (צור, tzor), which is "narrow," or "compressed,"⁷³ is picked up in Milton's italicised expansion of the name. Perhaps the most meaningful of the three names which Milton singles out from the catalogue for interpretive expansion is that of Ashur (אשור). Ashur seems to represent the culmination of the catalogue of Israel's and God's enemies for Milton. Verse 8, in which Ashur appears, is also the most abundantly italicised and interpreted. Ashur is expanded as that which "doth confirm the knot." Most commentators take the meaning of the Hebrew אשור (Ashur) to be "step" and thus interpret the mention of Ashur here in terms of some sort of advance upon Israel; however, Milton, uniquely, seems to understand this word as "confirmation." Milton seems to be translating another word, Ishur, which appears identical to Ashur in the unpointed Hebrew (אשור). For Milton, Ashur is the confirmation of the bond between the enemies of God. But Ashur is also the nation which arose out of the ruin of Babel, out of the destroyed city of confusion, originally built by Nimrod.

And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel ... Out of that land went forth Ashur. (Gen. 10:8-11).

Ashur, the confirmation of the knot of nations, is the product of Babel, of Nimrod's rebellious attempt to steal a name for himself from God. Even though Milton, in Paradise Lost unequivocally blames the tower of Babel and all it represents on Nimrod whose name Milton believes to be derived from "rebellion" (see PL, XII.36), there is some doubt in the Genesis version of the story whether it is Nimrod or Ashur who is responsible. At

⁷³See Martin Luther's Commentary, p.127, and Augustine's Expositions, pp.142-3.

any rate, whether instigator and confirmation, or confirmation only, Ashur comes at us directly from Babel.

In Paradise Lost, Milton describes the tower of Babel as if it were an anastomosis linking hell to heaven in the most physical and direct manner.

Marching from Eden towards the West, shall find
The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge
Boils out from under ground, the mouth of hell;
Of brick, and of that stuff they cast to build
A city and tower, whose top may reach to heaven;
And get themselves a name, lest far dispersed
In foreign lands their memory be lost
Regardless whether good or evil fame (XII.40-7).

The surprising purpose of the tower, as stated both here in Paradise Lost and in the original story in Genesis, is not to join heaven and earth and hell together in one continuous extension, but it is to "get themselves a name." The sin of Babel is not that it represents a monistic continuity between heaven and earth or that it offends the fineness of heaven with its grossness.⁷⁴ The sin rather lies in the name that the builders try to make for themselves. And it is in the name that they are punished; God imposes upon them the name "Confusion." In doing so, as Derrida explains, God imposes his own Name upon the inhabitants of the world.⁷⁵

⁷⁴Adam seems to think that the grossness of the tower is offensive to heaven as he ridicules the practicality of building a tower to heaven:

What food
Will he convey up thither to sustain
Himself and his rash army, where thin air
Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross
And famish him of breath, if not of bread? (ll.74-8).

⁷⁵Derrida's comments and their implications for translation have been discussed in greater detail in chapter III. See page 155, and the discussion of Derrida's article, "Des Tours de Babel."

In Psalm 83 Ashur is curiously described as the "confirmation" of God's enemies, while in the Babelian story Ashur represents confusion and dispersion. Of course, to be an enemy of God is also to be confused and dispersed. This psalm, as the story of Babel, culminates with the primacy of God's Name.

18 **Then shall they know that thou whose name
 Jehovah is alone,
 Art the Most High, and thou the same
 O'er all the earth** *art One.*

In the Babel story, God imposes his name upon the world after having confounded the nations' tongues and left them in a state of confusion. A similar deadly confusion is called for here by the psalmist.

17 **Ashamed and troubled let them be,
 Troubled and shamed for ever,
 Ever confounded, and so die
 With shame,** *and 'scape it never.*

The imposition of God's name in verse 18 comes as a kind of antidote to this confusion. God's name brings the nations back together again and counteracts the confusion of Babel, presumably because it guarantees the translatability of languages. God's name is what stabilises the confusing flux of language and guarantees the transferability of meaning from one to another. The question of what kind of translation or transferability of meaning is guaranteed by this name, however, is not specified. Milton's italics shed some light here. The italics of verse 18, "and thou the same...art One," clearly express Milton's Arianism. The kind of name that God imposes is exclusive of Christ, jealous of any mediated language, insistent upon the direct access of his people.⁷⁶

⁷⁶The boldly stated Arianism of Milton's italicised additions to verse 18 was first noticed by E.C. Baldwin, in his "Milton and the Psalms," Modern Philology, 17 (1919-20), p.461, and has never been disputed.

Psalm 84

Psalm 84, the fifth in Milton's 1648 selection, is dedicated to the sons of Korah, as its title states. It is the first of four psalms similarly dedicated (Pss. 84, 85, 87 and 88). The four are interrupted by a single Davidic psalm (Ps.86), and the remaining four psalms of the 1648 set are dedicated to Asaph (Pss.80-83). Martin Luther explains the three different dedications as follows.

The Sons of Korah have the prophetic spirit almost always for Christ's incarnation rather than for His Passion. David in his spirit speaks of the mysteries of the Passion more clearly. Thus any one prophet seems to have the spirit more for one matter than for another. Hence the sons of Korah rarely speak about the Passion, but almost always speak about Christ's incarnation and His marriage with the church, so also their psalms are joyful and full of mirth. David, on the contrary, deals more with the Passion and the Resurrection and the things the Lord did in his maturity. Asaph, in turn, talks mostly about the separation of the wicked from the fellowship of the godly, about the destruction of the ungodly and of the synagog, as is clear from his psalms.⁷⁷

The preceding discussion of Psalms 80-83 bears out Luther's comments about the Asaphic Psalms. He continues to interpret the names of each of the psalmists as corresponding to their thematic concerns.

The sons of Korah are many, denoting the new people of faith who were born spiritually of water and the holy spirit (John 3:5), as Christ was born of the Virgin. This is the mystical incarnation of Christ, that he is born in them spiritually, indeed, that they are born of him. Therefore every one of their psalms echoes this two-fold birth, namely, of Christ the Head and of the church, His body.

This rather abstruse bit of reasoning on Luther's part may be more graspable if it is considered that the Hebrew for Korah, קרח may be understood as "ice," and thus it becomes a little easier to see how Luther arrives at his first interpretive leap, namely, that

⁷⁷Martin Luther, Commentary on the Book of Psalms, vol 11, p.152.

the sons of Korah are "born spiritually of water." Furthermore, in Numbers 26:11, it states, "the children of Korah died not." They did not share their father's end of being swallowed up by the earth. This, too, suggests why Luther understands them to be "born spiritually of water." However, when Luther speaks of the spirit, it is perhaps dangerous to pin him down to literal translations. He is far more lucid when speaking of the meaning of David's and Asaph's names.

But David, "strong of hand," shows Christ now doing miracles and bearing the cross, and therefore his psalms almost always speak about these things. Finally, Asaph means "gathering," the people separated and gathered from those who remain and are not gathered.

Luther eschews Jerome's translation of David as "desiderabilis" or "beloved" for Jerome's alternative of "fortis manu," presumably because he wants to emphasise David's connection with justice more than his connection with mercy. Luther follows Jerome's translation of Asaph as "congregans."

True to Luther's interpretation of the sons of Korah, Psalm 84 negotiates between the physical and the spiritual proximity of God to his people. The tone of this psalm is not embattled as that in the four previous ones, but rather joyful. It carries no warning, no reprimand, no lament, but rather describes the joy of those who follow and rely upon God. John Calvin, however, disputes that this psalm is properly considered the work of the sons of Korah, preferring to name David as author despite the title.

The title of this psalm does not bear the name of David; but as its subject matter is applicable to him, he was in all probability its author. Some think that it was composed by the sons of Korah, for his particular use; but to prove the groundlessness of this opinion, it is only necessary to advert to this one consideration, that David in his time was so eminently distinguished by the gift of prophecy as to be under no necessity of

employing the Levites to perform a service for which he himself was so well qualified.⁷⁸

Clearly what offends Calvin in Luther's understanding of the title is its implicit diminution of David's prophetic power. It would seem, too, that Calvin sees this psalm primarily as one of longing, of exile, and thus would take issue with Luther's more joyful interpretation. In Milton's translation, the psalm culminates on a high note of joy, consistent with Luther's interpretation.

12 **Lord God of Hosts** that reign'st on high,
 That man is truly blest,
 Who only on thee doth rely,
 And in thee only rest.

Once again, however, as in Psalm 83, Milton's added emphasis of "only" seems to argue for the influence of his Arian heresy.

As far as Milton seems to be concerned this psalm is about how God is worshipped. Milton cites the joyous verse 12 in De Doctrina Christiana Book 2 chapter 3 when he is talking of "The Virtues which are Related to our Worship of God." Milton's discussion is really about the "devout affection for God." Psalm 84:12 is cited in connection with confidence or trust in God which is an effect of this "devout affection" and which constitutes what Milton terms "internal worship."⁷⁹ The psalm for Milton is, thus, about one's access to God in worship, and not, as Calvin argues, David's expression of longing for sanctuary as he is pursued by his enemies.

⁷⁸See Calvin's Commentary upon the Book of Psalms, p.352.

⁷⁹See De Doctrina Christiana, pp.656-8.

The psalm opens with an exclamatory praise of God's house. The first two verses seem to maintain a balance between the earthly and heavenly dwellings of God.

- 1 **How lovely are thy dwellings fair!**
 O Lord of Hosts, how dear
 The pleasant tabernacles are!
 Where thou dost dwell so near.
- 2 **My soul doth long and almost die**
 Thy courts O Lord to see,
 My heart and flesh aloud do cry,
 O living God, for thee.

Martin Luther suggests that the psalm is about the church which is the forecourt of the heavenly Jerusalem.⁸⁰ The psalm seems to point both to the physical temple in Zion and to the mystical Jerusalem rebuilt in heaven. Milton's italicised "where thou dost dwell so near" seems to insist upon the physical temple, and the longings of both body and soul for a glimpse of heaven reinforce this. Between verses 1 and 2 there is a change in the dwelling referred to, from one which is visible and amenable to compliment, to one which is invisible and only longed for. The entire psalm seems dedicated to closing the gap between the two.

The change between the experience of God's earthly and heavenly dwelling is described in detail in verses 6 and 7. Here the happiness of those who reside in God's house is described. Again, it is not immediately clear whether those who reside in God's house are residing in an earthly or a heavenly dwelling. This needs to be examined.

- 6 **They pass through Baca's thirsty vale,**
 That dry and barren ground
 As through a fruitful wat'ry dale
 Where springs and showers abound.
- 7 **They journey on from strength to strength**

⁸⁰See Luther's Commentary, vol.10, p.136.

With joy and gladsome cheer
Till **all before** our **God** at length
In Sion do appear.

The happy residents are described, paradoxically, as making a voyage through a mythical vale which is described, by Milton's italicised additions as "thirsty" and as "dry" and "barren." Miraculously, however, their experience is not of thirst or of dry barrenness, but rather of "a fruitful wat'ry dale." A similar contrast is effected in Milton's famous poem of eleven years earlier, Lycidas. The barren dryness of Lycidas' death is emphasised by his description as "welter[ing] to the parching wind," as he lies unwept "without the meed of melodious tear" (ll.13-14). Later on in the poem Lycidas is described in a moist heavenly environment as

other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
(ll.174-7).

Clearly a translation has taken place between the drier early part of the poem and its moist end, a translation which is similar in nature to the assumption of Enoch who first "walked with God" and then "was not; for God took him" (Gen.5:24).

The translation which takes place in Psalm 84 is a translation which only the faithful can effect. They walk through a desert as if it were a verdant paradise and in this manner they, as verse 7 describes, "in Sion do appear." Although verses 6 and 7 detail the movement from the earthly house of God to the heavenly there is a crucial and impenetrable "as if" governing the procedure. Clearly, then, the articulation between the heavenly and the earthly depends upon a crucial turn of mind. This crucial turn of mind is detailed in verse 10.

10 **For one day in thy courts** to be
 Is better, and more blest
Than in the joys of vanity,
 A thousand days at best.
I in the temple of my God
 Had rather keep a door,
Than dwell in tents, and rich abode
 With sin for evermore.

It would seem from this verse that the crucial turn of mind is based upon the very simple desire to inhabit God's courts. If the desire is strongly present the mind may be easily turned. It is to this, then, which Milton refers when he cites this psalm in connection with "confidence" or trust in God. As he explains in De Doctrina Christiana, such confidence proceeds from one's "devout affection for God." Verse 10 is transposed into Paradise Lost where Michael teaches Adam the correct meaning of the vision of the marriage of the sons of God and the daughters of men.

Judge not what is best
 By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet,
 Created, as thou art, to nobler end
 Holy and pure, conformity divine.
 Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents
 Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
 Who slew his brother. (11:603-9).

Here, as in Psalm 84, what seems to nature meet is but barrenness and vanity.

Psalm 85

This psalm, like Psalm 84, is primarily concerned with the relationship between earthly and heavenly things. This relationship is cast by different commentators in different terms. Hans-Joachim Kraus says that "Psalm 85 stands between salvation

accomplished and future, final salvation."⁸¹ J.W. Rogerson and J.W. McKay say that "the psalm develops, from the apparent contradiction between a certainty in God's promises and the present fortunes of the people of God, a sublime picture of the blessings to come when God's rule is unalterably established."⁸² John Calvin, too, places this psalm between earthly and heavenly salvation.

Inspired with hope and confidence, they [God's people] triumph in the blessedness promised them; for their restoration to their own country was connected with the kingdom of Christ, from which they anticipated an abundance of good things.⁸³

Calvin thus connects the historical salvation represented by the return from Babylonian exile with the more spiritual salvation which is yet to come.

The psalm may be broken down into three distinct parts according to the verb tenses used. It is with respect to the different tense and the times they represent, that different translators approach the articulation between the earthly and the heavenly. It stands to reason that this grammatical point should be employed as a connection between the two realms because it is at the end of time, at the future and coming apocalypse, that the earth and heaven will finally be indistinguishable. Verses 1-3, which, in the Hebrew, are in the Hebrew perfect tense, give thanks to God for having brought his people out of captivity. Verses 4-8, predominantly Hebrew imperfect, pray for salvation and mercy, and verses 9-13, again predominantly Hebrew perfect, present a prophetic promise of salvation. The shifting tenses in the Hebrew are most often translated into English in

⁸¹Hans-Joachim Kraus, Psalms 60-150: A Commentary, trans. Hilton C. Oswald, (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), p.177.

⁸²J.W. Rogerson and J.W. McKay, Psalms 51-100 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p.174.

⁸³See John Calvin's Commentary upon the Book of Psalms, p.367.

such a manner as to proceed from the past through the present to the future, in the three respective parts of the psalm. Sternhold and Hopkins' translation is a good example of this simple deployment of the tenses. They translate the first part of the psalm in the past tense and thus place the psalmist in a time which looks back upon a historical exile, most probably the Babylonian exile, and Israel's deliverance from it. They translate the second part predominantly into the present tense.⁸⁴ This part of their translation places the psalmist in his own time, from which he is able to look forward into the future and towards the salvation promised in the third part of the psalm.⁸⁵ However, this simple tense-based breakdown is not universally followed by translators, nor is it understood in the same way by all of them. Martin Luther interprets the tripartite division of this psalm as follows.

The psalm has three parts: In the first the psalmist gives thanks for the blessing of the coming incarnation; in the second he prays for it to come, and in the third he foretells that it will come.⁸⁶

Luther's division thus does not describe a progression through time, merely three different ways of viewing the same future time. He explains that even the past tense may refer to the future time of heavenly bliss in a prophecy such as this psalm because, for God, this time has already been established. Milton, however, translates this psalm in a much more complex manner, with respect to the tenses employed. He begins the psalm, like other translators, in the past tense. In the second part of the psalm he follows the Sternhold and Hopkins paradigm closely until verse 8, which he renders as an immediate

⁸⁴Although the future tense is used in this part of Sternhold and Hopkins' psalm, the whole section is entirely governed by the present tense.

⁸⁵Mary Sidney (c.1594), George Wither (1632), George Sandys (1636), and John White (1655) follow this tense paradigm.

⁸⁶See Luther's *Commentary*, vol.11, p.164. Luther has a slightly different breakdown as well. He has verses 1 and 2 in the first part, verses 3 to 8 in the second and 9 to 13 in the last.

future event rather than as something taking place in the psalmist's present. After this transitional verse, Milton offers the first two verses in the present, and the following three in the future. Although Milton is not unique in his insertion of the present tense in the final part of the psalm, it is clearly a deliberate variation selected in preference to something like the Sternhold and Hopkins paradigm.⁸⁷ Another tense structure, in the final part of the psalm, is employed by several other translators, namely, Henry Ainsworth (1612), Henry Dod (1620), William Alexander ("King James I," 1631), Richard Braithwaite (1638), the Bay Psalm Book (1640), William Barton (1644), and Francis Rous (1646), all of whom follow the Masoretic Text by introducing the past tense into verses 10 and 11. In doing this, they focus verses 10 and 11 upon the same subject as the opening three verses, namely, upon the deliverance of Israel from the Babylonian exile.

What is of particular interest in this psalm is the manner in which the relationship between earthly and heavenly things is deployed. This is, in general, the main problem with which any prophecy needs to deal. As is usual in prophecy, this psalm has a transitional verse which articulates the two sections of the psalm, which deal with the earthly and the heavenly. Such a transition is often cast in terms of the psalmist registering a change in voice. In psalm 81, as we have already seen, such a transition was observed in verse 5.

**This he a testimony ordained
In Joseph, not to change,
When as he passed through Egypt land;**

⁸⁷The Authorised Version (1611) uses the same tense structure as Milton except in one verse. The AV renders verse 10 future, while Milton renders it present. Henry Dunster et al. (1650), and Zachary Boyd (1648), use the same tense structure as Milton.

The tongue I heard was strange.

As we saw in Psalm 81, this transitional verse was the object of much interpretive variation, which took the strange language alternatively as that of Egypt, Canaan and God. Here, in Psalm 85, verse 8 provides just such a transitional role.

8 And now **what God the Lord will speak**
 I will go straight and **hear**,
 For to his people he speaks peace
 And to his saints full dear,
 To his dear saints he will speak peace,
 But let them never more
 Return to folly, but surcease
 To trespass as before.

Milton places this transition in between the second and third parts of the psalm and renders it in a unique form of the future tense. The psalmist tells us that his very next action is going to be an action of listening and hearing God's voice. The italicised additions of "now" and "go straight" effect this sense of immediacy. They have the effect of almost creating a future-in-the-present suitable for the prophecy which follows. The psalmist, in effect, predicts that he is going to hear God's voice and, in the prophecy which follows, this is shown to be true, to a certain extent. What is surprising, however, is that the prophecy of the time to come does not proceed immediately, even though this is what the psalmist has prepared us for. What follows is a quick one-verse summary of the general moral principle that salvation is contingent upon fearing God.

Surely to such as do him fear
Salvation is at hand
And glory shall ere long appear
 To **dwell within our land.**

The word, "surely" works to undermine any prophetic impact that this verse might have. "Surely" suggests an element of uncertainty and thus the verse cannot be a prophecy, but only a moral principle. A different voice entirely seems to be speaking here. It is not

God's voice, and, because of this, we see that the psalmist does not "go straight" to the prophecy we expect. The psalmist's promise of an immediate prophecy is further delayed in the following two verses, in which the relationship between Mercy and Truth is described. In fact, God's voice, unlike in Psalm 81, is never directly heard in this psalm at all, despite the promise of immediate conversation in verse 8.

10 **Mercy and truth** that long were missed
 Now joyfully are met
 Sweet **Peace and Righteousness have kissed**
 And hand in hand are set.

These verses, in the present tense, describe the present situation of the world and do not constitute a prophecy of the time to come. The Hebrew text has these verses in the perfect tense, suggesting their historical relevance to the Babylonian exile and Israel's historic release from it. However, in Milton's text, the tenses have been shifted into the present. This shift removes any connotation of the Babylonian exile from the salvation promised in this psalm and focuses on the situation which God's people face currently. Which specific time is referred to is debatable. Those critics favouring a biographical interpretation of Milton's psalm translations could argue here that Milton is referring to the current state of affairs in 1648. At the very least specific, however, Milton refers to the time between Christ's first and second comings. For in this period in world history, it would be true to say, "Mercy and Truth that long were missed / Now joyfully are met." It is highly unlikely, however, that Milton would be able to describe his own war-torn times in the serene terms he uses in this psalm, "Sweet Peace and Righteousness have kissed / And hand in hand are set."

At any rate, Milton's translation seems to be recognizing a salvation by degrees, and a salvation which proceeds through time. He does not focus solely upon the final salvation as do Sternhold and Hopkins, for example. Milton's addition to verse 7 gives us a clear idea of what he has in mind.

**Cause us to see thy goodness Lord,
To us thy mercy shew
Thy saving health to us afford
And life in us renew.**

The italicised addition in this verse clearly identifies Milton's understanding of the entire verse as being connected to what he describes in De Doctrina Christiana as "renovation." By renovation Milton understands the process by which a man "is brought to a state of grace after being cursed and subject to God's anger."⁸⁸ Milton divides renovation into two kinds, a natural and a supernatural. Natural renovation, he calls "vocation," and supernatural, "regeneration." Both vocation and regeneration are effects of divine grace and are what constitute and confirm faith.⁸⁹ Vocation is God's invitation to man to have knowledge of and therefore faith in God's way.⁹⁰ Regeneration means that

the old man is destroyed and that the inner man is regenerated by God through the word and the spirit so that his whole mind is restored to the image of God, as if he were a new creature. Moreover the whole man, both soul and body is sanctified to God's service and to good works.⁹¹

⁸⁸De Doctrina Christiana, p.453.

⁸⁹The paradox inherent in this is magnificently grasped by St. Augustine in the opening prayer of his Confessions, trans. R.S. Pine-Coffin (London: Penguin, 1961), p.21. "Grant me, Lord, to know and understand whether a man is first to pray to you for help or to praise you, and whether he must know you before he can call you to his aid. If he does not know you, how can he pray to you? ... Or are men to pray to you and learn to know you through their prayers? ... I shall look for you, Lord, by praying to you, and as I pray I shall believe in you, because we have had preachers to tell us about you. It is my faith that calls to you, Lord, the faith which you gave me and made to live in me through the merits of your Son, who became a man, and through the ministry of your preacher."

⁹⁰De Doctrina Christiana, pp.453-60.

⁹¹De Doctrina Christiana, p.461.

Both vocation and regeneration are God-given, but they are given by God only because of Christ's redemption of mankind.⁹²

It is to this renewal, then, that Milton refers in Psalm 85:7. The renewal in the psalm is thus made possible only because of Christ's redemption, and it is therefore to the period between Christ's redemption and judgement that the present tense sections in this psalm refer. Indeed, in Paradise Lost, Milton alludes to this psalm in a passage which combines Christ's redemption with his judgement.

Vicegerent Son, to thee I have transferred
 All judgement, whether in heaven, or earth, or hell.
 Easy it might be seen that I intend
 Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee
 Man's friend, his mediator, his designed
 Both ransom and redeemer voluntary,
 And destined man himself to judge man fallen.
 (10:56-62).

These lines define Christ as "mercy colleague with justice" since he is both man's judge and redeemer. Psalm 85, however, does not speak directly of "mercy colleague with justice." It mentions mercy and truth in verse 10 and truth and justice in verse 11.

11 **Truth from the earth** like to a flower
 Shall bud and blossom then,
 And Justice from her heavenly bower
 Look down on mortal men.

In the psalm mercy and justice are articulated through truth. This truth spans the two verses as it spans the time frames of each. It inhabits both the present of verse 10 and the future of verse 11. It is a participant both in present mercy, with the regeneration that it brings, and in future justice, with the glorification that it implies. In the light of this

⁹²See De Doctrina Christiana, p.455.

connection, the prophetic third part of Psalm 85 may be described as expressing a promise of impending salvation (in verse 9), and a description of the current state of merciful renewal (verse 10) which is only slightly in advance of the coming final salvation and glorification (in verses 11-13). Christ's present role is linked to his future judgement through Truth which can only mean Righteousness, which is paralleled to Truth in verse 10.

The future time of verse 11 is expressed as a mirrored relationship between Truth on earth and heavenly Justice. Conditions on earth mirror those in heaven, as the foliated bower of Justice and the growing blossoms and buds of Truth look at one another. What is particularly curious is Milton's italicised addition of "on mortal men" to this verse. As he is describing the state of future salvation here we would expect him to refer to immortality. Clearly Milton is referring to the moments leading up to the final judgement, when mortal men will become immortal, and Truth and Justice will approach one another as Mercy and Truth have already done.

Psalm 86

In his summary of Psalm 86, John Calvin identifies the main thrust of the psalm as the nourishing of faith.

In this psalm prayers and holy meditations, engaged in with the view of nourishing and confirming faith, together with praises and thanksgivings, are intermingled.⁹³

St. Augustine, in his exposition of this psalm, insists that when we pray to God, we do not separate the Son from Him.⁹⁴ Milton's sense of this psalm, as we may see from his translation, agrees with Calvin's description of its overall theme, but disagrees with Augustine's incorporation of Christ. As may be seen from Milton's version of verse 7, direct faith, without reference to the Son's mediation, seems to be his theme.

7 **I in the day of my distress**
 Will call on thee for aid;
 For thou wilt grant **me** free access
 And **answer**, what I prayed.

For Milton, this psalm is about "access" to God. Milton's faith seems to give him "free," immediate "access." In the discussion which follows, it will be seen how Milton excludes Christ from his invocation in this psalm and, indeed, from the godhead.

This psalm is the only psalm of David in the 1648 set. According to Luther's thematic classification of the psalms according to the named figure in the title, this psalm of David, abandons the more joyful tone of the sons of Korah, for the more harsh subject matter and tone of Christ's passion and resurrection. But while, in Milton's translation,

14 **O God the proud against me rise**
 And violent men are met
 To seek my life, and in their eyes
 No fear of thee have set,

⁹³See Calvin's Commentary, p.379.

⁹⁴See Augustine's Expositions, vol. 4, p.184.

may easily be understood as the words of Christ in his passion, the very next verse renders this unlikely.

15 **But thou Lord art the God most mild**
 Readiest thy grace to shew,
 Slow to be angry, and *art styled*
 Most merciful, most true.

The roman-type text could quite easily be the words of Christ, praying to God the Father in his most wretched hour. However, Milton's italicised addition, "art styled," renders this interpretation unlikely. One could quite possibly argue that "styled" is introduced purely because of the need to rhyme with "mild" - a very difficult word to match up. However, regardless of the reason why Milton first thought of using this word, he must have been very aware of the profound effect that it has on the meaning of the psalm and on Christ's possible involvement in it. This addition is an unseemly qualification of God's mercy and truth. "Art styled" may be understood in two ways. It may refer either to "being made or fashioned" in a particular manner, or to the use of accommodated language in order to describe God. According to the first interpretation, namely, that God has been fashioned merciful and true, the psalm cannot be referring to God the Father but only to the Son who has been fashioned or created by the Father. Milton uses the word in this same sense to refer to Nimrod - the builder of Babel and arch-constructor.

A mighty hunter thence he shall be styled
 Before the Lord, as in despite of heaven,
 Or from heaven claiming second sovereignty
 (XII.33-5).

In the case of Nimrod, the fashioning is a self-fashioning, unlike in the case of Christ, who is fashioned by God. The two are similar in that they both may only claim a "second sovereignty." The second interpretation, namely, that God is not literally merciful and true but only described as such in an accommodated use of language, is unlikely to be the

one intended by Milton as he believes that the attributes of God, given in scripture, are to be taken literally.⁹⁵ It would seem, then, that this psalm does not trace Christ's passion at all.

Milton cites Psalm 86 on three occasions in De Doctrina Christiana. He cites verses 4 and 5 in connection with "external worship." This has been discussed along with Psalm 81 on page 216. Milton cites this psalm twice in his chapter "Of God" in De Doctrina Christiana, where he describes the attributes of God. This psalm is cited with respect to two crucial attributes, the oneness of God, and God's supreme kindness. In his argument for the oneness of God, Milton cites this psalm (along with Psalm 7:10) to demonstrate that the word אלהים (elohim), although plural, refers to a single God. This has already been discussed in connection with Psalm 82:1, on page 228. Indeed, this psalm is full of references to the singleness of God. Verses 8 and 10 are the principle statements of God's unity in the psalm.

- 8 **Like thee among the gods is none**
 O Lord, nor any works
 Of all that other gods have done
 Like to thy glorious works.
- 10 **For great thou art, and wonders great**
 By thy strong hand are done,
 Thou in thy everlasting seat
 Remainest God alone.

While these two verses refer to the unity of God in the roman-type text, Milton adds the unity of God to verse 5 by means of an italicised addition, and thereby reinforces this theme in his translation of this psalm.

⁹⁵See Milton's discussion of "accommodation" in De Doctrina Christiana, Book I, chapter 30. See also the discussion of Milton's theory of accommodation in chapter 1 of this dissertation, pp.33-35.

5 **For thou art good, thou Lord art prone**
 To pardon, thou to all
 Art full of mercy, thou alone
 To them that on thee call.

Here, God's mercy is invoked. Since Christ is often conceived of as the instrument of God's mercy, it would be possible to interpret this verse (when the roman-type text alone) as referring to him. But, once again, as in verse 15, Milton's italicised addition eliminates this possibility.

However, this psalm does not only provide Milton with an opportunity to champion God's unity at the expense of Christ's participation in it. Milton's translation is also suggestive of other monistic readings. Verse 13, for example, raises the spectre of Milton's monistic view of body and soul.

13 **For great thy mercy is toward me,**
 And thou hast freed my soul
 Even from the lowest hell set free
 From deepest darkness foul.

Luther, a believer in psychopannychism (that the soul sleeps between death and judgement), discusses this verse in an interesting way. He focuses on the phrase

והצלת נפשי משאול תחתיה

which he renders, following the Vulgate's, "et eruiſti animam ex inferno inferiori," "thou hast delivered my soul out of the lower underworld," saying,

In scripture the word "underworld" [sheol] is used, first, in the sense of the grave for the body. Job 17:3 reads "The underworld is my house, and in darkness I have spread my couch." Second, [it is used] for the receptacle of souls. And this is called the lower underworld (inferior infernus), for just as in natural death the body goes down from its higher place to its underworld, so also the soul goes to its underworld. And this was the case with those who died before the coming of Christ. And for that reason Christ also went down to both, namely, according to the body, and according to the soul. But as He was not left in the grave according

to the body, so He was not left in the underworld according to the soul.
 God raised both from their respective underworlds.⁹⁶

Luther, curiously, retains the body-soul dualism, and yet he also describes what comes dangerously close to the death of the soul. He retrieves himself from this heretical view by suggesting, mysteriously, that "perhaps the grave of Christ is somehow a type of the underworld of souls," by which he means an uncorrupting grave. Milton's full-blown thnetopsychism (death of the soul) may be glimpsed in his translation of this verse. While the roman-type text is non-committal on this score, the italicised addition of "from deepest darkness foul" seems to suggest a grave in which even the soul is corrupted. The word "foul" is crucially suggestive here. It must be noted however, that Milton and Luther differ on the interpretation of the Hebrew word נֶפֶשׁ (nephesh). Luther understands this word exclusively to refer to the soul, while Milton understands it to refer to both body and soul together. It is perhaps this difference which accounts for Luther's dualism and Milton's monistic view here.

Psalm 87

This psalm, of the sons of Korah, once again seems, like Psalms 84 and 85, to be about the relationship between heaven and earth. The subject of the psalm, however, turns out to be a matter of some debate. The way in which verse 1 of the psalm is interpreted, seems to be crucial for the interpretation that each commentator favours. Augustine declares,

⁹⁶See Luther's Commentary, p.175.

the subject of song and praise in [the] Psalm is a city, whose citizens are we, as far as we are Christians: whence we are absent as long as we are mortal.⁹⁷

He understands verse 1, "her foundations are upon the holy hills," to refer to the foundations of a city. The city referred to, according to Augustine, is the Heavenly Jerusalem. He reaches this conclusion from verse 2, in which "Sion" is mentioned,

Sion was a certain city of this world, which bore a typical resemblance as a shadow to that Sion...that Heavenly Jerusalem.⁹⁸

John Calvin, however, understands the subject of this psalm to be the Church.

What we are taught in this psalm may be summed up in this, That the Church of God far excels all the kingdoms and polities of the world, inasmuch as she is watched over, and protected by Him in all her interests, and placed under his government.⁹⁹

Calvin attacks Augustine's understanding of verse 1, insisting that it cannot possibly refer to a city, much less, therefore, to the Heavenly Jerusalem. He argues that the pronoun is masculine, "His foundations are in the holy mountains," and not feminine, as Augustine renders it. The masculine pronoun cannot, Calvin argues, refer to a city, which is necessarily feminine. It refers to God who "chose the holy mountains in order to found and erect his city in the midst of them."¹⁰⁰ Calvin's point is quickly made that God's establishment of his city in the holy hills sets it apart from the establishment of any other city, and he is well on his way to making his point that the psalm demonstrates that the Church "far excels all the kingdoms and polities of the world." In making his point, Calvin refers fleetingly to "some Jewish interpreters" who understand the first verse to

⁹⁷See Augustine's Expositions, vol 4, p.213.

⁹⁸See Augustine's Expositions, p.214.

⁹⁹See Calvin's Commentary, p.393.

¹⁰⁰Calvin, Ibid., p.397.

refer to the psalm itself. For them, the opening verse, would read something like, "the psalm is founded in the holy mountains which are Jerusalem and Zion."¹⁰¹ The RaDaQ, who subscribes to this view, understands the psalm simply as a praise of the earthly Jerusalem which has been made holy by God. Milton fits somewhere in the middle of these views, and casts the scope of the psalm between the earthly and the heavenly city.

1 **Among the holy mountains** high
 Is his foundation fast,
 There seated in his sanctuary,
 His temple there is placed.

The roman-type text could suit any of the above interpretations, except perhaps for Augustine's, because of the masculine pronoun. However, Milton's substantial italics give the game away. These make it clear that Milton is talking about God's earthly seat. He refers to his "sanctuary" which recalls the Propitiary mentioned in Psalm 80:1. However, here, Milton refers to the permanent "temple" rather than to the mobile tabernacle of the exodus. God's temple, as distinct from his tabernacle is rooted in the earth, has foundations in the holy mountains. Indeed, verse 2, exalts God's seat above any other, including his tabernacle in the desert. Thus the dwelling of God is placed on a hierarchical progression in this psalm. It has progressed from the tabernacle in the desert, to the holy hills of Zion, and, as will be seen by the end of the psalm, it ends in heaven.

The many interpretations of the psalm's opening render verses 4 and 5, probably the most enigmatic lines of the psalm, richly variable. Milton translates as follows.

¹⁰¹This is a translation of the RaDaQ's interpretation of this verse, בהררי קדש שהם ירושלם וציון. See Rabbi David Qimhi, Complete Commentary on the Psalms [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Mossad HaRav Kook, 1967), p.192.

4 **I mention Egypt**, where proud kings
 Did our forefathers yoke,
I mention Babel to my friends,
 Philistia full of scorn,
And Tyre with Ethiop's utmost ends,
 Lo this man there was born:
 5 **But** twice that praise shall in our ear
 Be said of Sion last
This and this man was born in her,
 High God shall fix her fast.

The question which faces most interpreters is, what is to be made of "this man there was born" and its repetition "this and this man was born in her." The RaDaQ interprets this as an expression of the accumulation of learned scholars from the nations of the world in Jerusalem. He understands this in the light of verse 4 which exalts Jerusalem's reputation amongst a short catalogue of great nations. These nations, according to the RaDaQ, will praise their best and most learned sons with the accolade, "this man there was born" meaning Jerusalem.¹⁰² Calvin argues that these lines mean

that whatever nation men may belong to, they shall willingly renounce their own country, to be enrolled in the Register of the chosen people.¹⁰³

Calvin, clearly, means that everyone will want to be a member of the Church. Augustine, reading the Septuagint in a strange manner, renders verse 5,

Lo, Sion, O mother, a man shall say; and a man was born in her, and Himself the Most High hath founded her.¹⁰⁴

He immediately interprets this very puzzling rendition,

Lo, Sion, O mother, a man shall say. What man? He who was born in her. It is then the man who was born in her, and He Himself hath founded her. Yet how can He be born in the city which He Himself founded? It had already been founded, that therein He might be born. Understand it thus,

¹⁰²See Qimhi, Complete Commentary, p.193.

¹⁰³See Calvin's Commentary, p.401.

¹⁰⁴See Augustine's Expositions, p.221. He reads the Septuagint as μήτηρ Σίων instead of μήτι.

if thou canst: Mother Sion, he shall say; but it is a man that shall say, Mother Sion; yea a man was born in her: and yet he hath founded her, (not a man, but,) the Most High. As He created a mother of whom He would be born, so He founded a city in which He would be born.

In a spectacularly complex manner, Augustine explains the fifth verse in terms of Christ's miraculous double nature.

Milton's interpretation, as always, is accessible through his additions. His italics alter verse 5 in a unique manner. He speaks of Sion being praised twice. This is because the man referred to is born twice in her. He is born in her first when he is born naturally and he is born a second time into the Heavenly Jerusalem when he is resurrected. Sion here changes from being Jerusalem to being "Sion last," which can only refer to the Heavenly Jerusalem which comes after the earthly at the final apocalypse. The man referred to is thus both Christ and any other resurrected man. Indeed, verse 6 confirms that the second birth is the resurrection, just as verse 4 suggests a more earthly birth.

**6 The Lord shall write it in a scroll
 That ne'er shall be out-worn
 When he the nations doth enrol
 That this man there was born.**

The Lord's enrolling of the nations in the scroll that "ne'er shall be out-worn" seems to be an inscription in a book of eternal life. Verse 7 confirms the heavenly nature of the city with which the psalm here seems to be engaged.

**7 Both they who sing, and they who dance
 With sacred songs are there,
 In **thee** fresh brooks, and soft streams glance
 And **all my fountains** clear.**

The very moist and musical image of the heavenly Jerusalem is highly reminiscent of the heavenly environment in which Lycidas may be found. It is no doubt the same heavenly

Jerusalem that Milton has in mind in the earlier poem, for both poems describe the same singing and dancing taking place in similarly moist surroundings.¹⁰⁵

Psalm 88

This Psalm is the most moving of all the 1648 set of translations. It is a bleak lament, the darkness of which leaves commentators struggling to reconcile it with God's saving ways. Milton's translation opens with an ironic reference to God's salvation and preservation.

1 **Lord God that dost me save and keep,**
 All day to thee I cry;
 And all night long, before thee weep
 Before thee prostrate lie.

Although Milton offers the word "keep" in roman-type, it is not strictly justified by the Hebrew. It is a particularly perverse addition when considered in the context of the rest of this extremely bleak psalm. Here, it is very much unlike Milton's addition of the same word in Psalm 80:1. Psalm 88 tells of nothing but the very opposite of divine

¹⁰⁵Much of the following has already been cited several times in this thesis. These lines from Lycidas are included here once again for the sake of comparison with Psalm 87:7.

Where other groves, and other streams along,
 With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
 And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
 In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
 There entertain him all the saints above,
 In solemn troops, and sweet societies
 That sing, and singing in their glory move,
 And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
 (ll.174-81).

preservation (which was the subject of Psalm 80), as a quick glance at the closing verses of this psalm affords.

16 **Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow**
 Thy threat'nings cut me through.
 17 **All day they round about me go,**
 Like waves they me pursue.
 18 **Lover and friend thou hast removed**
 And severed from me far.
 They fly me now whom I have loved,
 And as in darkness are.

The psalmist ends the psalm overwhelmed by God's wrath, deserted by his friends and loved ones, who are now "in darkness," or dead, to him. This bleak picture is compounded only by the knowledge that it is God's justly earned wrath which punishes him so, and which actively withholds the preservation suggested by the addition of the word "keep" in verse 1. The pattern of the psalm is one of increasing doom interspersed with the psalmist's casting of himself onto God's absent mercy. The last such appeal to God's mercy in the psalm takes place in verse 13.

13 **But I to thee O Lord do cry**
 Ere yet my life be spent,
 And up to thee my prayer doth hie
 Each morn, and thee prevent.

It should be noted that the roman-type text, even in this verse is grievously bleak. It is only Milton's italicised additions which seem to offer any hope at all. "Ere yet my life be spent" stands against all of the psalmist's cries throughout the psalm that he is already dead. That he is still alive is the only real scrap of hope that inhabits this psalm. Milton, in fact, cites verse 13 of this psalm, its most hopeful verse (which is not saying much), in De Doctrina Christiana in his chapter "Of External Worship." His reference to this verse in his theological treatise avoids the bleakness of the psalm, and makes a small point about the time at which one may pray. Milton argues that one may pray at any

time. This verse confirms that praying specifically in the morning is permitted.¹⁰⁶ A better verse in this psalm, for the sake of Milton's argument, might easily be verse 1, which refers to the psalmist's prayers day and night. However, verse 1 is far too strongly suggestive of divine absence and dereliction to serve as an encouragement to prayer round the clock.

There is some debate over the meaning of the psalm's title with respect to its authorial attribution. It is unclear whether it is to be considered a psalm of the sons of Korah or a psalm of Heman the Ezrahite. The terribly bleak tone of the psalm militates against Luther's suggestion that the psalms of the sons of Korah are "joyful and full of mirth."¹⁰⁷ John Calvin attributes the psalm to Heman the Ezrahite who, he says, presents "to our view an example at once of rare affliction and of singular patience."¹⁰⁸ Calvin looks upon Heman's psalm as an exemplum which has much by way of moral encouragement to offer us.

It greatly concerns us to look upon such a distinguished servant of God ... thus overwhelmed with so heavy a burden of afflictions as made him mournfully complain that he differed nothing from a dead man, - it greatly concerns us, I say, to look on this spectacle, that our distresses, however grievous, may not overwhelm us with despair; or if we should at times be ready to faint with weariness, care, grief, sorrow or fear, that we may not on that account despond, especially when we see that it is not without the highest effort that the holy prophet emerges from this profound darkness into the cheering light of hope.

Calvin's insistence upon this psalm's consolatory efficacy falls flat especially in the face of the final three verses which have been cited above. It is difficult to imagine how he

¹⁰⁶See *De Doctrina Christiana*, p.674.

¹⁰⁷This has been discussed more fully under Psalm 84. See page 240.

¹⁰⁸See Calvin's *Commentary*, p.407

manages to find "the cheering light of hope" amid the overwhelming darkness of this psalm.

Fitting the bleakness of the psalm to the history of Israel, the RaDaQ interprets the psalm as being a cry from exile, as much the Egyptian as any other.¹⁰⁹ Augustine takes the psalm, as does Luther, to be about Christ's Passion. This interpretation solves the problem of the overwhelming darkness of the psalm. Christ's Passion cannot be described in so bleak and dark a manner as to eliminate the joy which is paradoxically released by it. The sheer suffering of Christ in his Passion becomes a joyful event because He takes on, and takes over, the penalty of death for all mankind. It is this bleak joy which Augustine sees in this psalm.¹¹⁰ Part of Augustine's justification for indulging in this psalm's utter bleakness at all, lies in his strange interpretation of the word מחלת (machalath) in the psalm's title, which he insists on transcribing as "melech." He understands this word to mean "for the chorus," and thus reasons that this psalm is intended to be chanted responsively. He explains what it means to respond by citing Peter, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps [1 Pet.2:21]; this is the meaning of to respond." Unlike Calvin, for Augustine, there is no trite turn to any simple joy in this psalm.

¹⁰⁹Qimhi, Complete Commentary, p.194.

¹¹⁰Milton's poem, "The Passion," possibly attempts to describe this bleak joy, but its attempt is nowhere near as bleak as this psalm and offers no joy. Indeed, Milton admits his failure in this poem and abandons it uncompleted.

This psalm is preoccupied with death. Indeed, Milton cites it in his chapter on death in De Doctrina Christiana, and it lies at the heart of his heretical belief in mortalism. Milton argues,

what could be more absurd than that the part which sinned most (i.e., the soul), should escape the sentence of death; or that the body, which was just as immortal as the soul before sin brought death into the world, should alone pay the penalty for sin by dying although it had no actual part in the sin?¹¹¹

Milton cites numerous passages in support of this argument, but singles out David's, the psalmist's, contribution in particular.

10 **Wilt thou do wonders on the dead,**
 Shall the deceased arise
 And praise thee from their loathsome bed
 With pale and hollow eyes?
11 **Shall they thy loving-kindness tell**
 On whom the grave hath hold,
 Or they who **in perdition** dwell
 Thy faithfulness unfold?
12 **In darkness can thy mighty hand**
 Or **wondrous acts be known,**
 Thy justice in the gloomy land
 Of dark oblivion?

These lines are heavily ironic. They ask three questions to which the tone of the psalm as a whole shouts a resounding "NO, NO, NO" in answer. It is difficult to understand how someone like Calvin can find hope and light in the piece. Indeed, it is difficult, when confronted with these heavy handed verses to understand how anyone could possibly not entirely agree with Milton's mortalist argument. Detractors begin building their case against a mortalist interpretation of the psalm in verse 5. The Authorized Version's translation is typical here.

¹¹¹De Doctrina Christiana, p.401.

I am as a man that hath no strength: Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from thy hand.

Crucial to the non-mortalist interpretation of this verse is the typical use of the phrase "free among the dead," a phrase avoided by Milton, as we shall see. Augustine explains this as referring to Christ who was not dead when he was amongst the dead after his crucifixion. Calvin rejects this interpretation preferring a bizarre kind of life-in-death which even Coleridge would shudder at.

The prophet intended to express something more distressing and grievous than common death... The prophet ... [affirms] that having finished the course of this present life, his mind had become disengaged from all worldly solicitude; his afflictions having deprived him of all feeling.¹¹²

Having explained this bizarre life-in-death, Calvin finds it necessary to deny the second half of the verse, about being cut off from God in death, by saying simply that "it is certain that the dead are no less under the Divine protection than the living." Other translators of this verse deal with its problematic tendency to mortalism in different ways.

Mary Sidney, for example, renders it,

With them that fall into the pitt
I stand esteem'd:
Quite forcelesse deem'd,
As one who free from strife,
And stirr of mortal life,
Among the dead at rest sitt.¹¹³

Sidney's translation places the psalmist as standing among the fallen and describes him as weak as if he were dead. Sidney ingeniously reverses the simile used by many other translators including the Authorized Version. She likens the weakness of the psalmist

¹¹²See Calvin's Commentary, p.409.

¹¹³See J.C.A. Rathmell (ed.), The Psalms of Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke (New York: New York University Press, 1963), Ps.88, ll.13-8.

to those who are dead, thereby making the reference to the dead entirely metaphoric. The Authorized Version envisages the psalmist standing "free among the dead" who are the slain in battle. Milton renders this verse as follows.

5 **From life discharged and parted quite**
 Among the dead to sleep,
And like the slain in bloody fight
 That in the grave lie deep.
Whom thou rememberest no more,
 Dost never more regard,
Them from thy hand delivered o'er
 Death's hideous house hath barred.

Milton's psalmist is far less metaphoric than any other translator in his description of his deathlike state. Milton's psalmist sleeps as a psychopannychist among the dead. Milton's italicised addition of "death's hideous house hath barred" is particularly emphatic about the absence of God's preservation in death. In verses 10-12, Milton's most devastating image of death lies in another italicised addition, where he describes the dead as lying on "their loathsome bed / With pale and hollow eyes." This skeletal image of the vacant stare of a dead skull strongly emphasises the point that these three verses are making, namely, that the dead are entirely cut off from God. Of course, Milton is not arguing against the resurrection here, even though the bleakness of this psalm seems to suggest that he may.

CHAPTER VI

MILTON'S 1653 PSALM TRANSLATIONS

Milton's 1653 psalm translations differ significantly from his 1648 set. The most glaring difference is that he makes no attempt to mark his 1653 texts typographically as he did in 1648. This crucial difference means that the 1653 translations are really no more than paraphrases wholly unlike the double translations which we have just been discussing. Milton's 1653 paraphrases of Psalms 1-8, each in a different metre, make no indication as to where he may be trying to provide an accurate translation and where he is not. Thus we cannot know whether Milton renders a particular verse in a particular way because he believes it to be an accurate representation of the original Hebrew, or a reasonable interpretation, or a metrical necessity, or an acceptable traditional rendition, or even a poetic enhancement. Italicisation in the 1648 set does at least have the effect of separating the addition from what Milton asserts to be the "original" and so it is a much simpler matter (as chapter V has indicated) to speculate about Milton's motivations for making them. In the 1653 set, however, there is no line drawn between original and addition. If any such distinction is to be made it would have to be made by the reader alone on his own initiative. While the double nature of the 1648 set of translations provides a ready means for evaluating Milton's intentions in and interpretations of the psalms he selected, and thus enables the identification of Miltonic "refractions," the 1653 paraphrases are by no means so transparent.

Critical appraisal of these psalm translations has been scant, and as for the 1648 set, the 1653 translations have tended to be ignored as relatively uninteresting poetry. Once again, the traditional literary bias against translation explains the relative paucity

of critical comment with regard to these psalm translations. Although not warmly admired, they have been considered of slightly better poetic quality than the 1648 set, usually for the simple reason that Milton displays a wide metrical diversity and prosodic virtuosity in them. William B. Hunter, in his article, "The Sources of Milton's Prosody,"¹ goes so far as to argue that the 1653 set represents a metrical experiment in which Milton attains his mature metrical practice. Edward Weismiller (in agreement with Hunter) identifies several verse features which became prominent only in Milton's major poems. He even suggests that "it might not be an exaggeration to say that they sometimes appear like full-dress rehearsals for the lyric choruses of Samson Agonistes."² Mary Ann Radzinowicz takes the argument that the psalm translations represent experimental and rehearsal exercises for Milton a step beyond prosody, suggesting that Milton's prime interest in the Book of Psalms in general and his psalm translations in particular, is that they represent "a covenant setting forth an ethical program for man in response to a historical and prophetic series of imperatives from God."³ Radzinowicz also suggests that Milton drew upon the psalms as a poetic source for human responses or insights, namely, human misunderstanding, failure, penitence, grief, shame and despair. Radzinowicz does not identify the psalms as a source of Milton's faith, despite the fact that she notes his very heavy use of the psalms as proof texts in his De Doctrina Christiana.

¹Philological Quarterly, 28 no.1 (1949), p.141.

²Edward Weismiller, "Studies of Verse Form in the Minor English Poems," in A.S.P. Woodhouse and Douglas Bush (eds.), A Variorum Commentary on the Poems of John Milton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), vol.2, part 3, p.1084.

³Mary Ann Radzinowicz, Toward 'Samson Agonistes', (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), p.205.

The 1653 set has generated far less speculation as to its biographical and historical relevance, than has the 1648 set. Carolyn Collette, one of the few who have commented on them, suggests that what merely lay in the background in the 1648 set becomes the dominant theme of the 1653 set. This is the lament "appropriate for a man who feels himself wronged by his enemies and uncertain of his relationship with God." Collette believes that Milton's self-esteem "was soundly shaken by an international pamphlet controversy in which he was accused of homosexual prostitution and bad poetry."⁴ Collette is, of course, referring to Milton's acrimonious confrontations with Salmasius, who had launched a very personal attack upon Milton in a series of pamphlets to which Milton wrote equally caustic replies. She suggests that the political-religious controversy between Milton and Salmasius and the causes they represented "came to a head in the summer of 1653; while Salmasius retired during July and August to write a final crushing reply to Milton, the Defender of the Commonwealth waited and (most significantly) translated the first eight psalms."⁵ Collette repeatedly insists that these eight psalms were interpreted at the time as "cries of lamentation and as spiritual guides to the righteous in times of distress."⁶ Her insistence on this interpretation is banal. Most of the psalms in the Book of Psalms may be understood in this way. Indeed, the 1648 set is interpreted by Collette in the same way. It cannot be doubted that these psalms (as are many others) are laments and embattled calls upon God for consolatory guidance. But

⁴Carolyn Collette, "Milton's Psalm translations: Petition and Praise," English Literary Renaissance, 2 (1972), p.254.

⁵Collette, Ibid., p.256. Of course, Salmasius died in September 1653 and the reply Milton had been waiting for never came (see Parker, Milton, p.433).

⁶Collette, Ibid., p.256.

this does not necessarily mean that Milton selected these psalms entirely because of his need for consolation in the face of adversity.

Lee Jacobus leaves the historical, political and biographical details surrounding these psalm translations aside in an attempt to confront the widespread disapproval of Milton's poetic achievement in his psalm translations head on. Jacobus distinguishes the 1653 set from Milton's other translations as being more personal and artistic in purpose. While the 1648 set was intended for singing, Jacobus argues, Milton's purpose in 1653 was primarily to produce the finest poetry possible.

These psalms represent an effort of a special kind: to raise the spirit of the metaphrast to that of the original psalmist by a performance of a like act: making a prayer in the best poetic form possible.⁷

Jacobus suggests that Milton may have been influenced in his purpose by the similar projects of Theodore Beza and Clement Marot (who translated the psalter into French in 1562, producing a version rich in metrical variety) and Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke (whose translations were composed in the 1580s and 1590s). Jacobus goes on to evaluate Milton's poetic achievement in his translation of Psalm 1 by means of a comparison with the translations of Sternhold and Hopkins, Francis Bacon, George Wither, George Sandys and Philip Sidney. Jacobus finds that Milton's Psalm 1 differs from that of the others in being more urgent and therefore more powerfully persuasive. He explains that the force of Milton's translation lies in its dichotomous emphasis, an

⁷Lee Jacobus, "Logic and Rhetoric in Psalm 1," *Milton Studies*, 23 (1987), p.122. Jacobus uses the term "metaphrast" not in the manner of Dryden, but rather in the manner of Ascham, who considers metaphrase to be the same as paraphrase except that it renders verse into other kinds of verse. By choosing Ascham's use of the term, he thus focuses upon Milton's prosodic and poetic achievement and de-emphasizes the more usual critical focus upon fidelity. In claiming that Milton's purpose was primarily poetic, Jacobus agrees with the approaches of Rivkah Zim (*English Metrical Psalms*) and Mary Ann Radzinowitz (*Toward 'Samson Agonistes' and Milton's Epics and the Book of Psalms*).

emphasis due to his interest in Ramist logic.⁸ Jacobus, unlike so many before him,⁹ approves of Milton's poetic achievement, which he believes to reside in the polemical force that Milton brings to his 1653 translations.

What concerns us here, however, is not so much Milton's poetic power of persuasion, but rather whether the 1653 psalm translations provide us with any insight into the dualistic or monistic structure of Milton's faith. But the methodological problem which we face in making any inferences about Milton's faith based on his 1653 translations brings us, once again, face to face with the problem of continuity against which we have been struggling throughout this thesis. The problem as it arises here may be stated as follows. Because we know that Milton read the scriptures, as he has stated in De Doctrina Christiana, as double scriptures, we may assume that it is very likely that his 1653 translations might represent an attempt to reproduce such double scripture. However, with this expectation of double scripture, we find ourselves confronted by a problem of textual evidence. In the absence of italics we have no ready way of demonstrating a textual link between the translations and Milton's theological beliefs. We are given no guidance as to what belongs to the Hebrew original and what belongs to Milton's christian liberty. We cannot readily know what in the translations belongs to the written Word and what to the unwritten Word. Indeed, in the face of such a

⁸Jacobus demonstrates that the dichotomous nature of Milton's translation is particularly close to the Ramistic map of the psalm presented by Richard Bernard in his Dauids Musick (1616) and to the dichotomising interpretation of William Temple, even though the translations of these two commentators are not dichotomous themselves. It is because of this that Jacobus concludes that Milton is even more rhetorical in his translation than the rhetoricians (see p.130).

⁹Such as W.B. Hunter, E.C. Baldwin, J. Hale, M. Jarret-Kerr, W.R. Parker and others.

methodological problem we may even feel the need to abandon our expectation of finding any doubleness in the 1653 set at all.

We may, however, take strength from the realisation that the problem of basing spiritual interpretations upon strictly textual rules of evidence is universal in religious discourse, as much of this thesis has argued and which chapter I, in particular, has demonstrated. Indeed, the entire Book of Psalms itself presents the very same problem of the "letter" and the "spirit" to any Christian interpreter approaching them. The Psalms, being written well before the advent of Christ, make no literal or historical mention of him and yet every Christian interpreter approaches this book certain that the psalms are almost all prophecies of Christ. Martin Luther, John Calvin, Richard Bernard, George Wither, Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins all assert this in different ways. The way in which Milton's translations compare with the comments and translations of these and various other writers will enable us to place him and to evaluate his strategies.¹⁰

The different ways in which Milton and other writers deal with the disjunction between "letter" and "spirit" may be observed in the differing ways in which they interpret Psalms 1 and 2. These two psalms have often been considered two parts of the same psalm for three reasons. They both lack a title; Psalm 1 opens with the same word which closes Psalm 2, namely אֲשֶׁרִי (*ashrei*) or "blessed," and they both share a covenantal theme. However, even though these two psalms have often been linked, they

¹⁰Such a comparative method was suggested in chapter IV of this thesis, and applied in chapter V. Here, the method is applied in a manner which is less focused upon small sections of translation as was chapter V. This is in recognition of the less transparent paraphrasis that Milton employed in the 1653 translations.

differ radically in terms of the presence and status of Christ in them. Both Psalms distinguish between two groups of people, but the basis of the distinction differs in each. Psalm 1 distinguishes the just from the wicked, and as Milton's translation demonstrates, it is the attitude of the two groups to God's law which distinguishes them.

Bless'd is the man who hath not walked astray
 In counsel of the wicked, and i'the way
 Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat
 Of scorers hath not sat. But in the great
 5 Jehovah's law is ever his delight,
 And in his law he studies day and night.
 He shall be as a tree which planted grows
 By wat'ry streams, and in his season knows
 To yield his fruit, and his leaf shall not fall,
 10 And what he takes in hand shall prosper all.
 Not so the wicked, but as chaff which fanned
 The wind drives, so the wicked shall not stand
 In judgement, or abide their trial then,
 Nor sinners in the assembly of just men.
 15 For the Lord knows the upright way of the just,
 And the way of bad men to ruin must.¹¹

The just take delight in God's law and study it day and night. The wicked, sinners and scorers are "not so." While there is no mention of Christ in Milton's translation of Psalm 1, Martin Luther is able to see Christ everywhere in it. The man mentioned in the opening verse of the psalm is, for Luther, none other than Christ. This interpretation is entirely consistent with the first verse of the psalm. Who, other than Christ, has never "walked astray" or stood with sinners or sat amongst scorers? Luther's reading, however, is challenged by Milton's translation of the second verse. His use of the word "studies," in line 6, suggests that "the man" has an inferior status to "God's law." This is not appropriate for a Christ who is part of the Trinity. It is difficult to imagine there being any need for Christ to study God's law day and night, and the suggestion that this

¹¹Milton's 1653 translation of the psalm.

is necessary for blessedness is even more inappropriate with respect to Christ. Luther avoids this problem by following the Vulgate's translation of the Hebrew יהגה (yehegeh), as meditabitur. Although this verb may be translated as either "meditates" or "studies," Luther quite clearly opts for the meditative sense which suggests a more equitable relationship between "the man" and God's law." "Meditates" suggests that Christ participates in "God's law" mentally and that God's law inhabits his mind. It does not suggest the inferiority of "the man," but describes an appropriate relationship between the Son (who is also the Word) and God's law (or word). Although the meanings of "meditate" and "study" are very closely related as possible translations of meditor, the two may be differentiated etymologically. There is an energetic zeal in "study," inherited from the Latin studere, which suggests a servility absent from "meditate." Thus Milton's use of "studies" distances itself ever so slightly from meditor and suggests that he is referring to any just man who is zealously devoted to God's law. Milton's selection of "studies" also implies that "the man" is at a remove from the law. This disjunction, however, is not present in "meditates." Luther uses the Vulgate's meditabitur to conflate Word and word, to intermingle the Son and the text in a way which is consistent with his "inspirational" sense of scripture.¹² Milton's translation, alternatively, tends to exclude Christ from the psalm and from the godhead, and tends to keep Word and word separate.¹³

¹²See the discussion of Werner Schwarz's "inspirational" and "philological" views of scriptural translation in chapter III.

¹³Of course, this separation of Word and word is visually demonstrable in the 1648 set (as chapter V has indicated), but here Milton's translation at best is only suggestive of such a separation.

Although Luther's preference for "meditates" does not contradict his interpretation that Christ is "the man," it does not prove that Christ is indeed the best or in any way a necessary interpretation. Indeed many others read the Vulgate without necessarily coming to the same conclusions as Luther does. Luther justifies his interpretation by means of a radical strategy which attempts to eliminate the influence of the "letter" in favour of the "spirit." In his "Preface to the Glosses" appended to his "Lectures on the Psalms," Luther sets out to explain precisely how one may read the psalms in such a manner as we have just witnessed. He explains that his entire understanding of the Book of Psalms is based upon the conflict between littera occidens and spiritus vivificans as it is expressed in 1 Cor.14:15, "I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also." "This," Luther explains, "is said in opposition to those who sing only in the flesh." Luther opposes those who sing "with the spirit" to

those who have a carnal understanding of the Psalms, like the Jews, who always apply the Psalms to ancient history apart from Christ.¹⁴

Luther favours an understanding of the Psalms with a mind which has been "opened" by Christ. If one sings with the spirit, Luther seems to be saying, one will find Christ wherever one looks, and if one sings carnally, then one sees only ancient history. What is disturbing about Luther's explanation is that one has already to have found Christ in order to find him, since one can only sing in the spirit if one has already found the spirit.¹⁵ Indeed, Luther describes how we should interpret the Psalms with just such a priority of spirit.

¹⁴Hilton C. Oswald (ed.) Luther's Works (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1974), vol.10, p.3.

¹⁵John Donne expresses this problem eloquently in his "Holy Sonnet IV" ll.9-10,
 Yet grace, if thou repent, thou canst not lacke;
 But who shall give thee that grace to beginne?

Every prophecy and every prophet must be understood as referring to Christ the Lord, except where it is clear from plain words that someone else is spoken of. For thus He Himself says: 'Search the Scriptures, ... and it is they that bear witness to Me' (John 5:39). Otherwise it is most certain that the searchers will not find what they are searching for.¹⁶

However, it is clear that Luther is a searcher who knows before he looks what he is going to find. He finds Christ everywhere except where it is very clear that it cannot be Christ who is spoken of. Such an approach is destined to violate the dictates of the literal text because finding Christ in the psalms does not depend entirely upon the literal text as far as Luther is concerned.¹⁷ In fact, the strict adherence to the literal text is considered to be unspiritual and fit only for carnal Jews.¹⁸ That Luther undermines the link between the literal text and the spiritual text may be seen in his hermeneutic map of Mount Zion, which is laid out on the following page.¹⁹

¹⁶See Luther's "Preface of Jesus Christ, Son of God our Lord, to the Psalter of David," in Hilton C. Oswald ed. Luther's Works, vol. 10., p.7.

¹⁷Luther is rather equivocal on this point. Although he is very clear about the priority of Christ in any interpretation of scripture he cites, in his discussion of Psalm 1:2, Hilary, De Trinitate, I, 18, who makes a very strong claim for the priority of the letter. "The best reader is the one who looks for the understanding of the words from the words themselves, rather than imposing his own understanding, and takes something out, rather than bringing something in, and does not force the words to seem to contain what he had assumed must be understood before reading." See Luther's Works, vol.10., p.18.

¹⁸The theological principle behind this kind of reasoning has been demonstrated in chapter I in relation to the parable of the Sower and Jesus' explication of it. See page 27.

¹⁹"Preface to the Glosses," in First Lectures on the Psalms, ed. Hilton C. Oswald (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1974), p.4.

		the killing letter	the life-giving spirit concerning the body human and ecclesiastical body
Mount Zion	historically	the land of Canaan	the people living in Zion
	allegorically	the synagog or a prominent person in it	the church or any teacher, bishop or prominent man
	topologically	the righteousness of the Pharisees and of the law	the righteousness of faith or some other prominent matter
	anagogically	the future glory after the flesh	the eternal glory in the heavens

On the contrary, Kidron Valley from the opposite point of view.

In destabilizing the link between the literal and the spiritual this map runs contrary to the typical medieval formulation of the four-fold hermeneutic method. Luther supplies an eight-fold hermeneutic method which separates the letter from the spirit in a way wholly different from the four-fold method of, say, Dante. Dante, in his letter to Can Grande describes what he understands as legitimate hermeneutic method in relation to the opening verse of Psalm 114.

"When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from people of strange language; Judah was his sanctuary and Israel his dominion." For if we consider the letter alone, the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt in the time of Moses is signified; if the allegory, our redemption accomplished in Christ is signified; if the moral meaning, the conversion of the soul from the sorrow and misery of sin to a state of grace is signified; if the anagogical, the departure of the sanctified soul from the slavery of this corruption to the liberty of the everlasting glory is signified.²⁰

Dante separates the literal (historical), on the one hand, from the spiritual (mystical) which includes allegory, moral meaning and anagogy, on the other. Dante's distinction

²⁰Charles S. Latham, A Translation of Dante's Eleven Letters (London: Edward Arnold, 1891), p.193.

between letter and spirit is readily graspable as it is based upon the difference between the literal and the figurative in a literary text.²¹ For Luther, both the letter and the spirit may be literal (or, as Luther prefers, historical) as well as figurative (or mystical, in Dante's terms). This means that, for Luther, the literal and the spiritual run exactly parallel to one another and never run into one another. If the literal never runs into the spiritual, then figurative or typological readings (as we know them) are impossible, for the figurative (or the typological) meaning of a psalm would depend entirely upon its literal base. Interpretation of the psalms, for Luther, is a matter of eliminating the literal and of isolating the spiritual. Luther's very radical distinction between the letter and the spirit suggests that there may be no visible point of distinction between the two and thus no need for any italics such as Milton offers in 1648. Indeed, for Luther, the entire text should be in the identical script because the text is entirely either spiritual or literal, depending only upon the mind with which one sings. For Luther, there is a distinction between two different kinds of people (or interpreters, or singers), those who sing spiritually and those who sing carnally. In his case, there would be no point in marking a text, but only in marking the people themselves who sing the text.

Other commentators and translators of Psalm 1 are more tolerant of the letter than Luther is. John Calvin does not identify "the man" as Christ. He understands the meaning of the psalm to be

²¹In the *Convito*, ii. 1, Dante indicates that his four-fold method is more literary than theological. Charles S. Latham, in *A Translation of Dante's Eleven Letters* (London: Edward Arnold, 1891), cites the relevant passage in full, p.194.

that it shall be always well with God's devout servants, whose constant endeavour it is to make progress in the study of his law.²²

For Calvin, the psalm represents a covenant between any just man and God. Golding's translation of Calvin's second verse of the psalm reinforces the service involved in studying the law. For him, it is not a matter of meditation.

But delighteth in the law of the Lord, and occupieth himself in his law day and night.²³

George Wither seems to follow the sense of obedient and devoted service suggested by Calvin's commentary and Golding's translation. He renders the verse similarly.

For, in God's Lawe his pleasures be,
Thereon, he day & night bestowes.

Wither's use of the word "pleasures" even has a carnal ring. Richard Bernard comes very close to reading "the man" of verse 1 as Christ but finally opts for a more literal reading of the psalm.

That man] Ha, is put emphatically, ha-ish, that man, which is a singling out of some special person (yet so one, as all of that sort is to bee therein comprehended).²⁴

Bernard's pointed use of the deictic "that" (where everyone else uses "the") suggests that he may have intended Christ, but the parenthesis eliminates this possibility. Milton's translation seems to correlate more closely with the more literal arguments of Calvin, Wither and Bernard in opposition to the spiritual reading of Luther.

²²See Calvin's Commentary, pp.1-2.

²³Anderson translates Calvin's verse, "But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." This weakens the force of servitude in Golding's translation.

²⁴See Richard Bernard, David's Musick (London: Felix Kyngston, 1616), p.8.

Milton's paraphrase remains close to the Hebrew original. One divergence, however, is of interest. Milton uniquely adds the word "knows" to verse 3. The impact of this may be felt in comparison with other translations.

He shall be as a tree which planted grows
By wat'ry streams, and in his season knows
To yield his fruit [Milton].

He shall be like a Tree that spreads his root
By living streames, producing timely fruit.
[George Sandys].

And, therefore shall be like a tree
Which near unto the river growes.
His fruits, in season, he doth give.
[George Wither].

Hee, like a plant which by a streame doth growe,
His timely fruit shall in due season showe.
[Sir John Davies].

The similarity of Milton's and Davies' rhymes indicates that Milton's unique addition is not a result purely of the need to rhyme "grows." "Knows" is a particularly apt addition to the psalm because it picks up the theme of study presented in the preceding verse. As Wither's translation emphasises, the tree simile is a consequence of the just man's devotion to God's law. Milton's knowing tree pursues this consequence further than any other translator does. The verse as it usually appears is generally understood to indicate the good fortune of the just man. Calvin explains it thus.

The children of God constantly flourish, and are always watered with the secret influences of divine grace, so that whatever may befall them is conducive to their salvation.²⁵

²⁵Calvin, Commentary, p.6.

This interpretation is supported by the translations of Wither, Sandys and Davies as well as many others.²⁶ Milton's translation, which speaks of a knowing tree is different. The fruit of the knowing tree cannot refer to the good fortune or bounty of the just man, but rather to the fruit of his study, to his wisdom or knowledge of God. The just man, who is learned in God's law thus becomes, according to Milton's translation, a teacher or minister of God's Word. It is characteristic of Milton to suggest that one's personal study also requires an outpouring for the possible edification of others.²⁷ His attitude to the psalms he translates stands testimony to this. It is perhaps ironic that an image of a knowing tree should represent the just and obedient man who makes every effort to know God, whereas the forbidden tree of knowledge in Genesis had only seemed to provide access to godliness but had in fact only been a means to destruction. There can be little doubt that Milton intends the knowing tree of Psalm 1 to represent the antidote to the tree which brought about the fall of man.

While Psalm 1 provides little opportunity for Christological interpretation (indeed, only Luther, of those discussed, finds Christ in this psalm), Psalm 2 seems to mention Christ directly. The apparent direct mention of Christ in this psalm both challenges Luther's abrogation of the letter and provides scope for less radical alternative methods for presenting the relationship between letter and spirit. Milton renders the psalm as follows.

Why do the Gentiles tumult, and the nations

²⁶These include Sternhold and Hopkins, The Authorised Version and Philip Sidney. The RaDaQ also supports this view, explaining it in terms of agricultural practice. The well irrigated tree suffers no retardation or distortion in its yield.

²⁷This interpretation is expressly negated by Calvin, but supported by Menachem Ben Shlomo HaMeiri.

Muse a vain thing, the kings of the earth upstand
 With power, and princes in their congregations
 Lay deep their plots together through each land,
 5 Against the Lord and his Messiah dear
 Let us break off, say they, by strength of hand
 Their bonds, and cast from us, no more to wear,
 Their twisted cords: he who in heaven doth dwell
 Shall laugh, the Lord shall scoff them, then severe
 10 Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell
 And fierce ire trouble them; but I saith he
 Anointed have my king (though ye rebel)
 On Sion my holy hill. A firm decree
 I will declare; the Lord to me hath said
 15 Thou art my Son I have begotten thee
 This day; ask of me, and the grant is made;
 As thy possession I on thee bestow
 The heathen, and as thy conquest to be swayed
 Earth's utmost bounds: them shalt thou bring full low
 20 With iron sceptre bruised, and them disperse
 Like to a potter's vessel shivered so.
 And now be wise at length ye kings averse
 Be taught ye judges of the earth; with fear
 Jehovah serve, and let your joy converse
 25 With trembling; kiss the Son lest he appear
 In anger and ye perish in the way
 If once his wrath take fire like fuel sere.
 Happy all those who have in him their stay.

A first alternative strategy to Luther's radical spiritualism is that of typology. In his introductory comments to Psalm 2, John Calvin describes the psalm as David's boast that his kingdom will be perpetual, even in the face of adversity, because it is upheld by God; and as David's exhortation to the rebellious nations to submit to God. Calvin adds at the very end of his summary,

All this was typical, and contains a prophecy concerning the future kingdom of Christ.

Calvin thus identifies a link between the letter and the spirit, which is absent from Luther's strategy. In the body of his commentary on this psalm Calvin generalises about typology.

And in order to learn to apply to Christ whatever David, in times past, sang concerning himself, we must hold this principle, which we meet with everywhere in all the prophets, that he, with all his posterity, was made king, not so much for his own sake as to be a type of the Redeemer.²⁸

Calvin shows that the typological principle is held prior to and aside from anything that the literal text might have to offer. However the literal does exert an influence upon the actual application of the principle in that it is necessary first to ascertain what it was that took place with reference to "David, in times past" and then this may be applied to Christ.

George Wither, in his Preparation to the Psalter, employing a similarly typological strategy, explains what he understands to be the doubleness of David's prophecy. After perusing some part of the books of Moses, David, Wither explains,

did by a double spirit of prophecie, perceive a spiritual sense beyond the literal meaning of the words; and that those things that were done, were sacraments and signs of others which should come to pass in future ages. That being understood; he was by inspiration of the holy Spirit raised from thence to an admirable fore-sight of the mysteries of Christ.²⁹

For Wither, the double spirit of prophecy is really the blessed ability to foresee two distinct futures, the first relating to the Jews, and the second, based upon this, to Christ.³⁰

²⁸Calvin, Commentary, p.11.

²⁹George Wither, A Preparation to the Psalter (1619) (Manchester: Spenser Society Reprint No. 37, 1884), p.31.

³⁰Wither explains the difference between simple and double prophecy a little later in his Preparation. "The simple spirit of prophecie ... is that which those prophets had, which saw things onely as they concerned the particular church of God in the nation of the Iewes" (p.38).

The radical separation that Luther makes between letter and spirit in his hermeneutic map is far more disjunctive than the typological distinctions made by Calvin or Wither. Luther doubles up on Dante's four-fold hermeneutic method creating an eight-fold method consisting of two parallel sides, each corresponding to the letter and the spirit, respectively. Luther's dualism here is so radical that he consistently argues that the meaning of the psalms has nothing to do with the Jews (except, of course when the psalms are regaling the enemies of God). For him, the literal and spiritual occupy parallel states and it is useless to draw any connections between the two. For him the letter truly kills and should be avoided at all costs, as he would "sing with the spirit." The typological method of Calvin and Wither is not quite so abhorrent of the letter. They rely on a certain similarity between letter and spirit, even though the two remain separate. Thus while typology is fundamentally dualistic it is less radically so than Luther's spiritual strategy. Indeed, Luther's spiritualism is so radical that he almost approaches a kind of monism by virtue of the fact that he attempts to exclude the letter entirely.

Interpretations of verse 7, in which God's declaration "Thou art my Son; I have begotten thee this day" is cited, differ revealingly according to the strategy adopted with regard to the relationship between letter and spirit. Calvin understands this verse to be spoken by David who assumes the office of preacher in order to take away all pretence of ignorance from his enemies. Calvin, by gradual application of the typological method traces the link between David who is the Son of God and Christ who is also the Son of God, but in a different sense.

David, indeed, could with propriety be called the son of God on account of his royal dignity, just as we know that princes, because they are elevated above others, are called both gods and the sons of God. But here

God, exalts him not only above all mortal men, but even above the angels. ... David, individually considered, was inferior to the angels, but in so far as he represented the person of Christ, he is with very good reason preferred far above them. By the Son of God in this place we are therefore not to understand one son among many, but his only begotten Son, that he alone should have pre-eminence both in heaven and on earth.³¹

There seems to be a mutuality in the relationship between David and Christ. David represents Christ and provides textual access to him. In return, by representing Christ, David, as a type, receives some of the exaltation due to Christ and is glorified far above what he deserves as a man, and above what the text of the psalm literally affords. Martin Luther takes the verse to be spoken by the Holy Ghost through the mouth of the prophet. David thus is a passive vehicle for the voice of the Holy Spirit. Already Luther's more radical dualism asserts itself. Luther deals with verse 7 as a continuation of verse 6, which states (in Milton's translation), "but I saith he/ Anointed have my king ... / On Sion my holy hill." Luther takes this establishment of the king on Sion to refer to the physical placement of Christ the man in the physical Sion. Verse 7, however, says Luther, indicates that Christ is also the Son of God begotten from eternity. This, Luther says, "could not be discerned with the eyes, and so the King Himself teaches it. It is a matter of faith."³² Although Luther speaks of the physical Sion, and of Christ as a man, he nevertheless remains well within the bounds of the spirit and never quite sinks to the level of the letter, for at no time is David involved in his interpretation. David has no role to play other than passive vehicle. Besides Calvin's typology and Luther's radical spirituality, another strategy emerges in the interpretation of Richard Bernard. Bernard offers a particularly literal interpretation of the psalm, even though it is tinged with

³¹Calvin, Commentary, p.17.

³²Luther, "Psalm 2," Luther's Works (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1955), p.47.

typology. He approaches the psalm in terms of logic and offers a Ramistic chart which interprets the psalm in terms of a series of linked dichotomies.³³ Such Ramist analysis, although it divides according to a binary principle, is by no means dualistic. It is much closer to a monistic approach since it merely bisects subjects into their constituent parts. Although Bernard interprets verse 7 as a prophecy of Christ, he focuses on a particularly literal aspect. He takes the verse to refer to David's prophecy of Christ's conception in the Virgin. For Bernard, the verse thus does not describe Christ's generation from eternity or any other such spiritual begetting, but rather concentrates on the physicality of Christ. Even though Bernard is particularly literal here it must be noted that he does not sustain such a level of literalism throughout, but reverts to typology in most other places in the psalm.

Milton's translation of verses 6 and 7 provides little clue as to Milton's interpretation of this psalm and even less about the strategy he employs in order to articulate letter and spirit. However, Milton refers to this psalm twelve times in De Doctrina Christiana. Eight of the twelve references are to verses 6 and 7. The general thrust of all of these citations relates to Milton's Arianism. The most arresting of Milton's Arian arguments relates to the attributes of God and of the Son. Whereas God is omnipresent and omnipotent, the Son, according to Milton, cannot be considered to possess these attributes. Psalm 2:7 is cited as evidence that the Son cannot perform anything by himself, unless he has seen the Father performing it (John 5:19). The fact that Psalm 2:7 is itself a citation of the Father's decree and that it is not the words of the Son himself suggests that the Son is limited to reflecting the Father's power. That the

³³Richard Bernard, Dauids Musick, p.47.

Son needs to cite the words of the Father and to draw upon the Father's authority for his own exaltation clearly makes him inferior to the Father. Milton's translation of verse 8,

ask of me, and the grant is made;
As thy possession I on thee bestow
The heathen, and as thy conquest to be swayed
Earth's utmost bounds,

reinforces the relative impotence of the Son. Milton's translation both generalises and intensifies the Hebrew original.

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could be translated "Ask and I will give the nations as your possession." Milton generalises this with "ask of me, and the grant is made." This generalised version suggests that the Son's power is one hundred percent derived from the Father. Although Milton does not specifically point out this verse in his argument about the Son's limited power, this verse is well recognised among commentators as supporting the Arian heresy. Luther points out the Arian argument in his commentary.

If, [Arius] argues, Christ is God by nature, then He is already Lord of the nations and of the ends of the earth. But here he entreats as one inferior to God and receives what he did not have before.

Luther recognises the force of this argument, but refutes it by simply inverting it.

The Son is here appointed Lord of the ends of the earth, that is, over every creature. Consequently it follows that He is God by nature.³⁴

The Arian argument sees the Son as receiving God's power and therefore he cannot be God. Luther's riposte counters that only God could receive such power. Clearly, which way one will tend in this argument is a matter of one's individual interpretation. Milton declares his Arianism citing this psalm as evidence. It is likely that his own translation,

³⁴Luther, "Psalm 2," *Luther's Works*, vol.12, pp.54-5.

which intensifies one of the verses in the psalm crucial to his argument, was in his mind when he committed himself unequivocally to this view in the De Doctrina Christiana.

Besides the Arian element in verse 8, there is also a revealing reference to the kind and extent of Christ's kingdom. Several translators, such as George Sandys, George Wither, Thomas Fairfax, and Sir John Davies tend to emphasise the literal dimensions of Christ's kingdom suggesting a preoccupation with territorial acquisitiveness. Thomas Fairfax, is noted in history, among these, for his attempts to claim territory for the good cause.

As heire of all to the I've given
Earth in full possession wthe the Heathen.
(Thomas Fairfax).

Request, and I will grant thy praire,
Subject all Nations to thy Throne,
And make the Sea-bound Earth thine owne.
(George Sandys).

The Gentiles I will give to thee.
And make the king of e'vry land.
(George Wither).

Aske, and I will assigne thee for Thy Lott
Of heritage the lands and nations all,
Betweene the Sunnes uprising and his fall.
(John Davies).

Milton's version of this verse seems to concentrate on the spiritual dimensions of Christ's kingdom. Milton uses the word "possession" with respect to the heathen and not with respect to the lands of the earth as Wither, Sandys, Davies and Fairfax do.³⁵ Sternhold

³⁵George Herbert also falls into this more territorial trend. "Make thy request, and I will grant/ the Heathen shall thy portion be./ Thou shalt possess earth's farthest bounds." The attribution of this translation to Herbert is questionable. F.E. Hutchinson, in his commentary in The Works of George Herbert (Oxford: Clarendon, 1941), pp.554-5, describes the available evidence for the attribution of Psalms 1-7 (printed in this volume under the heading of "Doubtful Poems") to Herbert. This evidence is based mainly on claims made by John Playford in his preface to Psalms & Hymns in Solemn Musick (1671).

and Hopkins, Philip Sidney, and Joseph Hall seem to prefer the more spiritual subjection of the heathen, like Milton.

Aske I will give to thee
The heath'n for thy childe-right, and will thy realme extend
Farre as worldes farthest end.
(Philip Sidney).

All nations, to thy rightful sway,
I will subject; from furthest end
Of all the world.
(Joseph Hall).

All people I will geve to thee,
as heires at thy request:
The endes and coasts of all the earth,
by thee shall be possest.
(Sternhold and Hopkins).

Milton's preference for the Son's more spiritual possession of the earth by no means undermines the monism implicit in his antitrinitarianism as it is expressed in this psalm. Milton's monistic sense of the spirit is of something continuous with the body. There is no clash between his declared monism and his belief in the spirit or soul. Indeed, the Son's possession of the earth in a spiritual rather than a physical sense recalls the Milton's notion of "the genius of the shore" in *Lycidas*. There, the spiritual nature of the "genius" seemed problematic until it was understood in terms of Milton's "animist materialism."³⁶

Hutchinson concludes, "the psalms signed G.H. in Playford's collection have none of the felicity which distinguishes Herbert's authentic version of Ps.23. They may possibly be early experiments of his, which he was too well advised to continue or to publish, but the evidence for assigning them to him is happily slender." Hutchinson's guess that the psalms, if they be Herbert's, be early works prompt me to suggest a date of approximately 1609-10, the date when he matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and the date of his letter to his mother in which he states his dedication to devotional poetry, "my poor Abilities in poetry, shall be all, and ever consecrated to Gods glory" (p.363)

³⁶See chapter II, p.93ff.

The discussion of Milton's and various other translators' and commentators' views of Psalms 1 and 2 has focused upon the way in which these commentators and translators deal with the difficult hermeneutic problem presented by the dualism of letter and spirit. The discussion has amounted to an evaluation of the manner in which these commentators and translators have included or excluded Christ from the meaning of Psalm 1, and to an estimation of the status afforded the Son in Psalm 2. Milton's translation of Psalm 1 observes a reasonably unremarkable literalism and only hints faintly (in the image of the knowing tree) at the double scripture which was so palpable in the 1648 set of translations. His translation of Psalm 2 is emphatically consistent with his antitrinitarian view of the Son, but he also emphasises the spiritual nature of the Son's kingship. From the evidence of these two translations, it would seem that Milton is more emphatically committed to a literal reading of scripture and to his monistic heresies, than he was in 1648. However, it is impossible to decide to what extent this finding depends upon Milton's intention and to what extent it is produced by the relative opacity of his translations. It should be noted that inferences drawn upon the 1653 translations may not be as powerful as those based upon the 1648 set because of the absence of his italics in 1653. With this in mind, a survey of key moments in the remaining 1653 translations will further support the tentative findings so far.

Both psalms 3 and 4 recall Psalm 88 in their mention of the psalmist's sleeping. Milton, in his translation of Psalm 88:5 in 1648, had in fact added the idea of sleep himself.

From life discharged and parted quite
Among the dead to sleep,
And like the slain in bloody fight

That in the grave lie deep.
Whom thou rememberest no more,
Dost never more regard,
Them from thy hand delivered o'er
 Death's hideous house hath barred.

In this bleak passage, Milton's addition of "sleep" suggests a psychopannychist mortalism. As such it provides a slight glimmer of hope amidst the deepest despair. In Psalms 3 and 4 the notion of sleep has a much more assured and confident tone and indicates the psalmist's certainty in divine preservation, rather than the disjunction it suggests in Psalm 88.

I lay and slept, I waked again,
 For my sustain
 Was the Lord. (Psalm 3:5, ll.13-5).

In peace at once will I
 Both lay me down and sleep
 For thou alone dost keep
 Me safe where'er I lie
 As in a rocky cell
 Thou Lord alone in safety mak'st me dwell.
 (Psalm 4:8, ll.37-42).

St. Augustine interprets both these passages as having more to do with the psalmist's sense of death and resurrection than with literal sleep. Augustine reads the passage from Psalm 3 as Christ's death and resurrection and that of Psalm 4 as describing the peaceful sleep one can expect after death, when one is free of the cares of this world.³⁷ While Milton was content to mix the notions of death and sleep in Psalm 88, here he opts for a very literal interpretation of the sleeping passages and thus resists any suggestion of death in them. Milton's translation diverges from the Hebrew original in two ways. The final verb in the Hebrew is in the future tense, יהוה יסמכני "the Lord will sustain me," and God is the one who actively wakes the sleeping psalmist, הקיצותי "he woke me."

³⁷See Augustine's *Expositions*, pp.9 and 23.

The Hebrew which Milton avoids would be very amenable to an interpretation which included death and resurrection. The idea of God actively waking the sleeper suggests that he would not wake otherwise and thus would suggest resurrection. Furthermore, God's sustaining power being cast into the future is also consistent with such an interpretation. The fact that Milton avoids these effects of the Hebrew original suggests that he wanted to avoid the eschatological interpretation in the interest of asserting God's present preservation. The fact that the psalmist is able to sleep and wake unharmed amongst his enemies is testimony to God's provident power and present involvement in human life. Milton adds a line to Psalm 4:8 which suggests that it be interpreted in a similar way to Psalm 3:5. He adds, "as in a rocky cell," which, although it could suggest a tomb, is much more likely to represent a safe protective room which keeps the sleeper's enemies away. Again Milton asserts present divine preservation and avoids any prophetic interpretation of these psalms.

However, Milton's mortalism does emerge in this set of translations. In Psalm 6, the psalmist complains,

Turn Lord, restore
 My soul, O save me for thy goodness' sake
 For in death no remembrance is of thee;
 Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise?

This passage recalls Milton's Psalm 88 in which the psalmist asks a similar series of rhetorical questions about the state of the soul after death. The force of the questions there, as here, is to assert the very absence of life after death in confirmation of Milton's mortalist heresy. Calvin resists the mortalist reading of this passage. He insists that the passage does not mean that the souls of the dead are senseless or lifeless.

We know that we are placed on the earth to praise God with one mind and one mouth, and that this is the end of our life. Death, it is true, puts an end to such praises; but it does not follow from this, that the souls of the faithful, when divested of their bodies, are deprived of understanding, or touched with no affection towards God.³⁸

Calvin insists that Psalm 6 in no way undermines his belief in the body-soul dualism and that the soul persists after death. Calvin's defense against mortalism depends upon his persistent belief that body and soul are distinct and that they separate at death. That body and soul are distinct receives ambiguous support in this psalm.

heal and amend me,
For all my bones, that even with anguish ache,
Are troubled, yea my soul is troubled sore.

The separate treatment of "bones" and "soul" suggests that they are distinct entities here. However, that both feel their anguish and trouble in the same sort of visceral pain suggests that the two are related physically. While it is impossible to decide finally where Milton stands on this matter in this psalm translation, he reveals himself less ambiguously in the following psalm. In his translation of Psalm 7, Milton switches meaningfully between "soul" and "life" and suggests that either and both may be trampled to dust.

Let the enemy pursue my soul
And overtake it, let him tread
My life down to the earth and roll
In the dust my glory dead,
In the dust and there outspread
Lodge it with dishonour foul.

Milton follows the Hebrew original closely as he translates נַפְשִׁי "my soul" and חַיִּי "my life." In the Hebrew the two terms are synonymous and both suggest both body and soul together.

³⁸Calvin's Commentary, p.71.

In the Psalms discussed so far in this chapter Milton has consistently preferred a very literal plain interpretation of the text and has shunned the more eschatological possibilities which have been suggested by others. His pre-occupation with the literal interpretation of these psalms rather than with the christological suggests that he is more concerned with God's present preservation and providence than he is about the more remote matters of faith. He is much more concerned with man's present access to God and his reading of the psalms is characterised by this. Milton's object throughout emerges as an attempt to justify a literally monistic approach to God. If God is literally accessible through the psalms without the complicated assumptions required by dualists then his project may be counted a success.

Psalm 8, however, in its very literalism provides a hint of divine disjunction.

When I behold thy heavens, thy fingers' art,
 The moon and stars which thou so bright hast set,
 In the pure firmament, then saith my heart,
 O what is man that thou rememberest yet,

And think'st upon him; or of man begot
 That him thou visit'st and of him art found?

Although the tone here is of tremendous wonder, the psalm seems to suggest a surprising incredulity that God should take any interest in man. The psalmist measures the great distance between himself and the stars in the heavens and is overawed. His own relative negligibility comes crashing in on his consciousness. The psalm continues with increasing incredulity to describe how God has placed man at the head of creation. Although this magnifies God's glory and praises his providence, the psalmist seems to shake a bewildered head at it all. There is no literal, clear, plain explanation which can cope with such a surprising and wonderful participation in man's world by God.

Although this psalm is assured of God's preservation, God himself seems to be no more accessible than one of his distant stars.

EPILOGUE

What has proved crucial throughout this thesis is Milton's dual understanding of the source of faith. It is because he understands faith to be both a directly given gift from God and a gift mediated through scripture, that he never seems able to eliminate dualism from his theology no matter how hard he tries. But even more importantly, it is because faith has this double source that he feels the need to eliminate dualism in the first place. It is the dual source of scripture which produces the problems which Milton's monism tries to answer. The problem with faith given as a direct gift from God is that one has no access to faith. One has to wait passively for a gift which one cannot be certain will come. More importantly, this sense of directly given faith undermines moral choice and the need for personal action. Milton always opposed the Calvinist passivity which this concept of faith involves. If faith is derived from scripture, however, these problems disappear. But faith achieved as a result of diligent study of scripture brings problems of its own. The moment faith is located within a textual source, the problem of right interpretation and authority arises. Texts can never be confined to a single interpretation and one's faith thus threatens to become diluted, side-tracked, or even confused. The two kinds of problem which result from the two sources of faith have been discussed under the rubric of "the letter and the spirit" in this thesis. The two terms, the letter and the spirit remain in dualist conflict in much of Christian thought, and it is the object of Milton's monism to reconcile these concepts. What his monism amounts to, then, is the assertion that letter and spirit (body and soul, and even man and God), although different, are fundamentally of the same substance. And since they are similar in substance they may be understood to be continuous and even convertible one into the other. As soon as

this is said, it becomes clear that Milton's monism must fail at some fundamental level, because it ultimately and absurdly suggests that man and God are convertible in the same way as matter and energy are related by the equation, $E=MC^2$. Although Christ, for many Christians, represents God become man, none would agree that this represents a two-way conversion between man and God. Milton, certainly, never takes matters so far. What he does in De Doctrina Christiana is assert his monistic beliefs, basing them wholly upon a literal interpretation of scripture, while retaining an underlying belief in a more directly communicated faith than scripture offers. This means that Milton is able to enjoy the best of both worlds, as it were.

Tradition and translation both attempt to achieve the same effect as Milton's monism. They both attempt to assert continuity within very disjunctive contexts. Tradition, while asserting the connection between two texts, carries with it the idea that the two texts in question are essentially historically remote. Translation similarly asserts the connection of two texts which differ in every single word (being in two different languages). Lycidas and Milton's psalm translations represent the coming together of tradition, translation and monism and thus provide useful grounds for the examination of Milton's monism and the evaluation of its efficacy.

Chapter II focuses upon Milton's monism in the context of the pastoral-elegy tradition of Lycidas. Because this tradition, and Lycidas in particular, is preoccupied with death, the discussion of Milton's monism in chapter II centres around his mortalist belief. Lycidas is found to undergo two different resurrections, the one in agreement with mortalist doctrine, the other (that of the genius loci) both supporting and undermining it.

The genius loci proves highly problematic because, on the one hand, it functions as the "intermediate state" (which is necessary if mortalism is to be at all feasible), and yet, on the other hand, it is quite clearly a dualistic structure. The genius loci which is quite literally "the spirit of the place," is an oxymoron which mixes matter and spirit unhappily together. Thus while Lycidas effectively deploys a mortalist resurrection, there is nevertheless some leakage into dualism because of the dual form of the genius loci. The analogy between tradition and Milton's monism which is established in chapter II provides a way of dealing with the threat of dualism in the genius loci. It provides a literal continuity which stretches from Greek Sicily, through Latin Arcadia to Milton's England. The continuity of the poet's voice forms part of the subject of Lycidas, and in terms of tradition, the very literal resurrection of Lycidas is effected and guaranteed by the poet's traditional voice singing for him.

The discussion of bible translation and translation theory in chapter III presents two different orientations with respect to translation. Translation may be understood as either dualistic or monistic depending upon one's attitude to the relationship between word and meaning. A dualistic relationship between word and meaning naturally corresponds with a dualistic sense of translation, and a monistic sense of translation depends upon word and meaning being one and the same. The fact that translation is susceptible to both dualistic and monistic interpretation has special relevance in the context of this thesis as chapters IV-VI have shown. Milton's translations of the psalms present an opportunity to analyze the conflict between letter and spirit within Milton's faith in a highly technical manner. Milton's additions to the original text, where they could be identified, provided the elements of this analysis.

In his 1648 psalm translations, Milton's additions are particularly easily identified because of his use of italics and footnotes to mark them off from the original. The analysis of Psalms 80-88 in chapter V reveals that the italicised additions represent a direct, non-scriptural source of faith. Indeed, as Psalms 80 and 81, especially, demonstrate, the meaning of the psalm can be entirely reversed by the inclusion of these additions. Milton presents his reader with a combined text which is visibly made up of a mixture of non-scriptural and scriptural material. He thus reconciles the two sources of his faith, the letter and the spirit, or the directly given with the scripturally derived. Although Milton presents the combined text as a reconciliation of letter and spirit, the two are not quite continuous. As comparison with the versions of other translators demonstrates, Milton's directly given faith is clearly highly individualistic and as such cannot ultimately be the unwritten word of God. The 1653 psalm translations are by no means as transparent as the 1648 set. These psalms do not distinguish the additions from the original and thus provide only speculative evidence, on the basis of comparison alone, of the way in which Milton interprets them. In both sets of translations Milton's additions consistently agree with his monistic doctrines.

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