

Milton's Sensorium in *Paradise Lost*

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Milton created an extremely sense-filled sensorium in *Paradise Lost*, which can be understood and interpreted both metaphorically and literally. Milton emphasises that when God created the universe, a harmonious relationship was created between everything ethereal and corporeal; this harmony also extended to and included the five senses.

Sin first entered God's created universe when Satan and his angel-followers rebelled against God. This brought about the first disharmony of the sensual universe and resulted in Satan and his followers being thrown into Hell – a sensory antonym to Heaven. The second disharmony, and the disruption of the whole sensual universe for mankind, occurred when Satan escaped from Hell and, as revenge, causes the Fall of Adam and Eve.

The sensescape in *Paradise Lost* is used to express the moral, religious and physical conditions that prevail before and after the Fall. The usage of the five senses in *Paradise Lost* is explored in relation to these criteria in this thesis.

The senses are found to play an extremely important role in *Paradise Lost*: they dualistically convey the changes brought about by sin to the harmonious world and they also lead to sin through their temptation. Milton's distrust of sensual perception leading to correct cognition also becomes apparent through the research. The relevance of *Paradise Lost* today is discussed finally in the conclusion.

This thesis offers a new sensual reading of *Paradise Lost*: the role of all the senses pre- and post-Fall and their theological interpretations are analysed, which have not been researched as a whole before this thesis. This gives new insight into the use of Milton's sensorium and opens up Milton's sensual and materialistic world-view. Through this sensual reading four main findings become evident: the use of the senses to convey the effects of the Fall; the role of the senses in the Fall and sin; Milton's scepticism of the senses – that perception alone does not lead directly to cognition; and finally Milton's materialistic views.

Keywords: *Paradise Lost*, senses, perception, harmony, sin

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PREFACE

This work has taken a huge amount of energy and time from myself and my family. It is extremely hard to work full-time and study for a Master's Degree, and it is something I would not recommend; there are so many things that get neglected due to the added demands. However, I hope I have not neglected my family duties too much and if I have I hope that I will be forgiven.

In regards to the thanks that are due, then firstly, and most importantly, I would like to thank my wife, Satu, to whom I dedicate this work:

You fill up my senses like a night in the forest
Like the mountains in springtime, like a walk in the rain,
Like a storm in the desert, like a sleepy blue ocean.
You fill up my senses, come fill me again.¹

She has given me the strength to carry on and the possibility to accomplish my dreams – thank you. Secondly, I wish to thank my children Rosanna, Rebecca, Robin, Ricky and Aaron for giving me the space to complete this work – our home has not been the quietest, but it has been full of the creative energy that any writer needs.

I would also like to profusely thank David Robertson from the Department of Modern Languages and Translation Studies, who has supported my studies tremendously and has given well needed feedback and inspiring critique during this writing process.

I have found that Milton's *Paradise Lost* has influenced my life philosophically, religiously, spiritually and sensually and that this whole writing process has caused me to re-evaluate my life and beliefs – which is, I'm sure, what Milton would have wanted. So my final, belated thanks go to Milton for creating this epic.

“...long is the way / And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light”²

¹ Lyrics from ‘Annie’s Song’ by John Denver (own transcript), taken from *The Best of the Rocky Mountain Collection*. BMG, 2000.

1. INTRODUCTION

On reading *Paradise Lost* for an undergraduate essay, it became evident that there was an abundant reference to the senses. Initially, the sense of olfaction was the main focus, as Milton's poem is full of scents and smells. However, on further investigation it became evident that the other senses were used copiously, too. Firstly, the fact that Milton had been blind for 15 years before *Paradise Lost* was published³ started to intrigue me, especially from this sensual perspective – could Milton's blindness influence the text in any way by the infusion of a larger usage of the senses? This is a question that is impossible to answer, but it is possible to investigate how Milton uses each of the senses and if they are used more than traditional portrayals of Hell, Heaven and Paradise. There is a critical movement that incorporates the sensual reading of texts and tries to move away from the discourse on 'body' and 'subject' towards establishing a "relationship between reading and the different senses",⁴ which can be approached from various disciplines, for example, sociology, psychology, science and philosophy. It should be noted that all of these disciplines will be needed for a sensual reading of *Paradise Lost*. Senses are also "culturally specific";⁵ Howes points out that the world is explained and experienced differently according to the specific "ratios of the senses", which are shared by a specific culture;⁶ it has also been suggested that the study of a culture's specific sensorium might provide an entire overview of that culture's social experience and actions.⁷ However, any sensual reading of a text, such as *Paradise Lost* has to take into account both the literal uses and

² PL 2.432-3. All quotations from *Paradise Lost* are taken from Roy Flannagan (Ed.). *The Riverside Milton*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998.

³ Roy Flannagan (Ed.). *The Riverside Milton*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998, p. 1217.

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 7.

⁵ *Ibid*, p.10.

⁶ David Howes (Ed.). *The Varieties of Sensory Experience*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991, p. 8.

⁷ Syrotinski, p. 10. Social and gender issues can also be taken into account.

metaphorical uses of the senses, as the senses include many connotations that work on different textual levels and interpretations. The sensual reading of any text requires “various modes of re-reading [and] a critical fare of second sights and double-takes”.⁸ Sensual reading can therefore be a way of opening up texts in a new way – metaphorically, culturally and sociologically. This thesis offers some new insights into the sensual world of *Paradise Lost* through a sensual reading of the text.

It does seem possible that on becoming blind at least 5 to 10 years passed before he started writing. In Sacks’ interesting article, *The Mind’s Eye*, he mentions that people who go blind later in life can either further develop their internal ‘visionary’ skills or these skills can atrophy.⁹ He uses several examples to support his case: one was a man whose visual imagery deteriorated to such a state that he could not remember how anything ‘looked’ after one year – he could not visualise in his imagination the outside world at all. This is clearly not the case with Milton, who falls into the second category in which the visual imagination is finely tuned and can even surpass those who are sighted. Sacks also says that one of his case studies regarded blindness as being a “prerequisite for the full development, the heightening” of the other senses. This is an interesting comment and is something that will be returned to later. Also, Sacks describes a person who felt “a sense of intimacy with nature, an intensity of being-in-the-world,”¹⁰ which was more intense than when he was sighted; he also became “intellectually and spiritually bolder”.¹¹ These are important observations as Milton’s descriptions and spirituality seem to be extremely powerful and enlightened in the poem. Brown adds to this by saying “that Milton’s blindness affected his life and poetry

⁸ Ibid, p. 9.

⁹ Oliver Sacks. ‘The Mind’s Eye: What the Blind See’ in David Howes (Ed). *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Cultural Reader*. Oxford: Berg, 2005, pp. 25-42.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 27.

¹¹ Ibid.

spiritually and philosophically”.¹² Therefore, blindness is not an impairment, but becomes a precondition for seeing the universal whole and is a necessary gateway to God.¹³

I will not be analysing the sound structure of the verse itself (rhythm, alliteration, assonance, consonance, etc). This I feel is something that a poet – whether sighted or blind – incorporates into their verse anyway. However, this is actually an aspect of Milton’s work that has been highly criticised by Elliot. He criticises the fact that Milton does not use visual imagination at all in *Paradise Lost*, and that the work mostly concentrates on sounds in the verses:

The most important fact about Milton, for my purposes, is his blindness. I do not mean that to go blind in middle life is itself enough to determine the whole nature of a man’s poetry. Blindness must be considered in conjunction with Milton’s personality and character, and the peculiar education he received. It must also be considered in conjunction with his devotion to, and expertness in, the art of music. Had Milton been a man of very keen senses – I mean of *all* the five senses – his blindness would not have mattered so much. But for a man whose sensuousness, such as it was, had been withered early by book-learning, and whose gifts were naturally aural, it mattered a great deal.¹⁴

However, in a later article Elliot is more lenient – he still emphasises the aural nature of the verse, but

the emphasis is on the sound, not the vision, upon the word, not the idea; and in the end it is the unique versification that is the most certain sign of Milton’s intellectual mastership.¹⁵

I agree that Milton uses a lot of aural emphasis in *Paradise Lost* (see chapter 3), but I do not agree when Elliot denies Milton’s usage of the other senses. Milton’s text is richly filled with sensual stimuli that take the reader on a sensual journey into the realms of Paradise, Hell and Heaven.

¹² Eleanor Gertrude Brown. *Milton’s Blindness*. New York: Octagon Books, 1968, p. 138 .

¹³ Shirley Sharon-Zisser. ‘Silence and Darkness in *Paradise Lost*.’ *Milton Studies XXV*. Ed. Simmonds, James D. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990, p. 195.

¹⁴ T.S. Elliot. ‘Milton I’ in *On Poetry and the Poets*. London: Faber and Faber, 1957, p. 139.

¹⁵ T.S Elliot. ‘Milton II’ in *On Poetry and the Poets*. London: Faber and Faber, 1957, p. 157.

These sensory worlds are all different: Hell in the first two books is portrayed in a highly visual and auditory manner: the sensescape is full of loud sounds and references to darkness and dark light;¹⁶ the few references to olfaction are highly stereotyped, negative odours. Heaven is then in stark contrast to Hell, it is full of light and harmonious sounds. When the sensescape of Hell is compared to that of Paradise then there is a sensory shift to a more pleasant, olfactory world. This olfactory world is full of incense and flowers which turn the whole environment into a fragrant sensual offering to God. The auditory and visual senses are calmed and a harmonious peaceful feeling pervades. This is a very interesting phenomenon and will be an important part of the research, as both autobiographical and philosophical issues will be investigated in regards to the portrayal of the different sensory environments. It is also worth mentioning that both literal and metaphorical understandings of the senses will be investigated, as both interpretations play important parts in the sensorium

A lot of previous scholarship has focused on the obviously autobiographical section in Book III in *Paradise Lost* related to Milton's blindness. However, there has been a certain amount of research that has focused on certain aspects of the other senses, but I have not found any specific work that has concentrated on Milton's use of the various sensescapes and their function. Also, no scholarship has drawn together all of the explicit references and allusions to the senses. Olfaction, especially, seems to have been a neglected sense and is hardly mentioned in previous research. This is surprising as olfactory stimuli are portrayed very vividly and openly in the text and are very important: the sense of smell plays a very important role in the moralistic/spiritual depiction of Hell and Paradise. In fact, all of the senses play an

¹⁶ This is one of the aspects that Elliot refers to as lack of visual imagination. Ibid, pp. 156-7.

important metaphorical role in defining morality and the spiritual condition, which will also be explored in this thesis.

This introduction consists of a brief introduction to the history of the senses and sensory cosmologies that are relevant for this thesis. I have limited the sensual philosophical history to the time prior to and including Milton's era, so that the philosophical ideas are ones that he could have understood and could have been incorporated into his world view. The following chapters are laid out according to the traditional hierarchy of the senses (which can be seen in 1.2).¹⁷ The main findings from these sensual chapters are presented in the final conclusion together with possible future research that could lead form this thesis.

1.1 History of the senses

Since classical times, philosophers have tried to classify and understand the senses. The philosophical history of the senses is therefore a discipline that would consume this whole thesis, and so only some basic thoughts and ideas are presented here to outline the main trends. The main philosophies before Milton and of his contemporaries are the main focus, as these are the ideas that Milton had at hand and developed.¹⁸

Plato highlighted sight as the most important sense:

...sight in my opinion is the source of the greatest benefit to us, for had we never seen the stars, and the sun, and the heaven, none of the words which we have spoken about the universe would ever have been uttered. But now the sight of day and night, and the months and the revolutions of the years, have created number, and given us the conception of time, and the power of enquiring about nature of the universe; and from this source we have derived philosophy, than which no greater good ever was or will be given by gods to mortal man. This is the greatest boon of sight: and of lesser benefits why should I speak? even the ordinary man would bewail his loss,

¹⁷ Not in support of the hierarchy, but to structure the chapters in a recognisable and traditional way.

¹⁸ I have tried to give a brief overview in historical order of some of the main theories that would have probably been known to Milton.

but in vain¹⁹. ...God invented and gave us sight to the end that we might behold the courses of intelligence in the heaven, and apply them to the courses of our own intelligence which are akin to them, the unperturbed to the perturbed; and that we, learning them and partaking of the natural truth of reason, might imitate the absolutely unerring courses of God and regulate our own vagaries;²⁰

Plato states that vision and hearing can be sensory aids for the gaining of knowledge and that in comparison the proximal bodily senses are more of a temptation and can hinder the acquisition of knowledge.²¹ However, Plato did not discuss the relationship of sight to the other senses in depth: this was developed by Aristotle. The concept of the five senses is usually attributed to Aristotle, who even categorised the senses in a way that “sight is superior to touch in purity, and hearing to smell and taste”.²² According to his criteria, touch and taste are more animalistic senses and can be tainted by lust and gluttony; whereas it is not possible to overindulge with the senses of sight, hearing and olfaction.²³ Aristotle supported the idea that the main endeavour of human existence is

¹⁹ This passage is highly reminiscent of some of the lines in *Paradise Lost*:

...Heav'n
Is as the Book of God before thee set,
Wherin to read his wonderous Works, and learne
His Seasons, Hours, or Dayes, or Months, or Yeares (8.66-9); (cont)

Milton mentions that time can be obtained from the Book of God, i.e. looking and learning from the heavens. And also in part of the poem that is considered autobiographical, Milton does actually complain about his blindness

...Thus with the Year
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of Ev'n or Morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or Summer's Rose,
Or flocks, or heards, or human face divine;
But cloud in stead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from cheerful wayes of men
Cut off, and for the Book of knowledg fair
Presented with a Universal blanc
Of Nature's works to mee expunged and ras'd,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out (3.40-50).

Milton here complains about being cut off from the Book of Nature, so he is no longer able to receive knowledge from his sight.

²⁰ Timaeus 47 a, b and c from *The Dialogues of Plato: Volume II*, translated by B. Jowett, New York: Random House, 1937, pp. 27-28.

²¹ Phaedo: 65 from *The Dialogues of Plato: Volume I*, translated by B. Jowett, New York: Random House, 1937, pp. 448-9.

²² Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*: Chapter 5, available at <www.sacred-texts.com/cla/ari/nico/nico113.htm> [last accessed 20.5.2007]

²³ Aristotle. *Eudemian Ethics* 1231, available at (cont)

to gain knowledge; he emphasised the importance of sight and hearing in learning and cognition and even states that hearing has a greater role in education because of speech and communication.²⁴ Aristotle also classifies the senses according to their proximity: the senses of sight and hearing are distant senses, separated from the object which allows the stimulus to be sensed in its entirety and reduces the amount of distraction – they are directed outwards; however, the senses of olfaction, touch and taste were considered more proximal and were more dependent upon the subjective condition of the perceiver. This proximity was also considered to be a cause of distraction as attention was focused onto the perceiver's body. However, olfaction, like sight and hearing, can perceive objects at a distance and is less prone to excess; this fact raises its status above touch and taste.²⁵ So olfaction formed a bridge between the distant senses and the proximal senses of taste and touch. This ranking of the senses is one that has persisted and is still used when discussing sensory perception.

Aristotle's classifications were adopted into Christian philosophy and theology in the following centuries. However, Christian thinking views the senses as being paradoxical – they are 'good' because they were created by God, but they could also lead to temptation and therefore be a cause of sin. The problem is that the senses are an integral part of human bodies and are in conflict with the spirit; Saint Paul warns that

...the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.²⁶

<www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0049> [last accessed 23.4.2007].

²⁴ Aristotle, *On Sense and Sensible* available at <<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/sense.1.1.html>> [last accessed 21.5.2007]

²⁵ Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics* 1231.

²⁶ Gal. 5:17; this idea is repeated in Romans 7:19-24.

This dualistic idea continues throughout the early church. The senses needed to be kept from temptation and sin – this often led to the ascetic lifestyle of monasteries. To control sinful nature, Chrysostom recommended sensory fasting:

[Let] not my mouth only fast, but also the eye, and the ear, and the feet, and the hands, and all the members of our bodies. Let the hands fast, by being pure from raping and avarice: Let the feet fast, by ceasing from running to the unlawful spectacles. Let the eyes fast, being taught never to fix themselves rudely upon handsome countenances. ..Let the ear fast also. The fasting of the ear consists in refusing to receive evil speakings and calumnies ...Let the mouth too fast from disgraceful speeches and railings.²⁷

However, Chrysostom also valued the senses as they instructed about God's creation; he thought in a similar way to Aristotle that the sense of sight was the highest sense:

God, the Supreme Artist... hath been able to make an eye so beautiful, as to astonish all who behold it, and to implant in it such power, that it can at once survey the high aerial expanse, and by the aid of a small pupil embrace the mountains, forests, hills, the ocean, the heaven, by so small a thing.²⁸

and

The heavens may be silent, but the sight of them emits a voice, that is louder than a trumpet's sound; instructing us not by the ear, but through the medium of the eyes; for the latter is a sense which is more distinct than the former.²⁹

Hence, through sight the heavens and God's works could be viewed and this viewing was a form of praise.

Augustine was extremely ambivalent about the senses. On one hand, he experienced God as a full bodied sensory experience:

You called me; you cried aloud to me; you broke my barrier of deafness. You shone upon me; your radiance enveloped me; you put my blindness to flight. You shed your fragrance about me; I drew breath and now I gasp

²⁷ Saint John Chrysostom. *Works. The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers. Vol. IX.* Philip Schaff (Ed.) Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmann, 1956, p. 359.

²⁸ Ibid, pp. 414-5.

²⁹ Ibid, p.401.

for your sweet odour. I tasted you, and now I hunger and thirst for you.
You touched me, and I am inflamed with love of your peace;³⁰

and on another occasion he thought that the senses lead to sin as they are in opposition to the soul and reason: “I am tempted through the eye”³¹ and as he loved music he was “more fascinated by the pleasures of sound” which caused him to be trapped “between the danger that lies in gratifying the senses and the benefits ...from singing”³² Hence, the senses had their good sides and were important for devotion, but they had to be kept under control to prevent them leading to sin. Augustine’s ambivalence shines through quite comically in his prayer asking for strength in the control of his senses: “Give me chastity and continence, but not yet”.³³

Another aspect of sensual perception was added by Aquinas. He postulated that all of the five senses were situated in a special sense organ and the lowest senses actually acquired the quality of the thing sensed. Hence, when heat or coldness are perceived then the body actually becomes hot or cold accordingly – a physical change occurs in the body. However, when something is viewed the eye does not adopt the shape or colour of the stimulus. He defined sight as being a spiritual sense and touch as being natural. The other senses were then situated between these two extremes possessing various amounts of spiritual and natural qualities.³⁴ The highest and most perfect experience is the vision of God and so Aquinas firmly places vision at the top of the sensual hierarchy. He also thought that the senses interfered with the only passage to God – contemplation.³⁵

³⁰ Saint Augustine, *Confessions*. Book X: 27. Trans. R.S Pine-Coffin. Harmandsworth: Penguin Books, 1961, p.232.

³¹ Ibid, p. 29-34.

³² Ibid, p. 233-41.

³³ Ibid, p.169.

³⁴ W.T. Jones. *A History of Western Philosophy: The Medieval Mind*. (2nd Edition) New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1980, p. 244.

³⁵ Anthony Synnott. *The Body Social: Symbolism, Self and Society*. London: Routledge, 1993, p. 137-8.

This leads to St. Ignatius of Loyola's concerns with the strict control of the senses. In his *Spiritual Exercises* he proposed rules to curb and control gratification and social pleasures; he also proposed certain exercises and prayers for controlling the senses and preventing sin. One of the exercises involved a full-bodied contemplation of Hell to give a person the experience of what eternal damnation might feel like:

The first [exercise] will be to see with the eyes of the imagination those great fires and the souls as it were in bodies of fire.

The second will be to hear with the ears of the imagination the wailings, the howlings, the cries...

The third will be to smell the smoke, the sulphur, the filth, and the putrid matter.

The fourth will be to taste with the taste of the imagination bitter things, such as tears, sadness, and the worm of conscience.

The fifth will be to feel with the touch of the imagination how those fires touch and burn the souls.³⁶

So like Augustine's sensory rich experience of God, Ignatius presents the consequences of sin in a rich sensory form: the contemplation of Hell should awaken fear and sensory anxiety in a person.³⁷ The classical and Christian philosophies of the senses can be seen to focus on certain aspects: control of the senses; their associations with sin; their association with God; their use for acquiring knowledge and association with rational thinking. All of these themes can be observed in *Paradise Lost* as will become evident from the following chapters.

The brief history of the senses ends with some of the philosophies closer to Milton's period and some of his contemporaries. Montaigne (1533-92) realised the importance of pleasant odours for pain relief and mood changing and how the senses are connected to mental and spiritual processes:

The doctors might, I believe, derive more use from odors than they do, for I have often noticed that they make a change in me and work upon my

³⁶ Ignatius of Loyola. *The Spiritual Exercises*. J. Morris (trans.). London: Burns and Oates, 1952, pp. 29-30.

³⁷ These exercises are actually very similar to Milton's depictions of Hell as will be seen in the following chapters.

spirits according to their properties; which makes me approve of the idea that the use of incense and perfumes in churches ... was intended to delight and purify our senses to make us more fit for contemplation.³⁸

It is interesting that Montaigne highlights the role of olfaction and incense, which becomes apparent in *Paradise Lost* as a holy and divine attribute and way of communicating with God.

Descartes incorporates all the scepticism of the senses throughout the centuries into his theories. He says that the main problem with perception is that it is taken at face value and can cause judgemental errors.³⁹ The senses can never tell anything about the true nature of an object outside of the body – but provides signs to be deciphered. However, these signs are not fully trustworthy either, and need to be judged adequately to make a sound and rational decision. Therefore, perceived information should never be accepted without due care and consideration. This will be seen to play a major role in *Paradise Lost* as many false sensory stimuli are received that cause misjudgements and eventually lead to the Fall. However, Descartes takes his theory to the extremes and eventually, totally denies the role of the senses; he develops a mind-body dualism in which the mind is totally separated from the body and can have separate existences. So from observing that the senses are fallible, he eventually denies the need of the senses or the body for the proof of existence.

Finally, Hobbes published *Leviathan* in 1651, around the same time that Milton went blind.⁴⁰ Hobbes asserts his materialism and the absolute value of the senses: “there is no conception in a man’s world, which hath not at first, totally, or by

³⁸ Montaigne. *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*. Donald Frame (trans.). Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965, p. 229.

³⁹ W.T. Jones. *A History of Western Philosophy: Hobbes to Hume*. (2nd Edition) New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1980, p.184.

⁴⁰ Flannagan, p. 1216.

parts, been begotten upon the organs of sense. The rest are derived from that original".⁴¹ He expressed how senses are the actual foundations of cognition and cognition is the foundation of politics and social life.⁴² This is important as the senses form a stable and prime basis for the ideal political state and can be seen to be of extreme importance in Milton's concept of Paradise. In regards to his materialism, Hobbes thought that incorporeal objects did not exist. When challenged with the problem of explaining God's incorporeal existence then he countered by saying that God was not an object of philosophy and that many philosophers have actually regarded God as being corporeal.⁴³ For him sense is

some internal motion in the sentient, generated by some internal motion of the parts of the object, and propagated through all the media to the innermost parts of the organ.⁴⁴

Therefore, any sensation or cognitive action is a purely physical event in the central nervous system – every sensation and thought is purely material. These ideas can actually be seen in Milton's created universe – God actually takes on a materiel form, as do the angels and devils –and will be pointed out as they are evidenced in the text.⁴⁵

1.2 Sensory cosmologies

In this subchapter, some of the theories of sensory cosmologies are presented that were thought to keep God's created universe together and harmonious. According to Boethius, a sixth century philosopher, music is

⁴¹ Thomas Hobbes. *Hobbes Selections*. F.J.E. Woodbridge (Ed.). New York: Scribner's, 1930, p. 139.

⁴² Synott, p. 140.

⁴³ Bertrand Russell. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1946, p. 571.

⁴⁴ Hobbes, p. 107.

⁴⁵ Thomas Aquinas stated that beings above man, i.e. angels, should not be able to actually have sense experiences and do not have bodily functions and organs; however, Saint Bonaventura argued against this theory by saying that angels are basically like man composed of form and matter (Jones, *A History of Western Philosophy: The Medieval Mind*, p. 240) . Milton's concept of angels follows Bonaventura's concept and even takes the materialism further as the angels have all bodily functions including sexual intercourse, eating and expulsion of bodily waste.

...divided into three parts – *musica mundane* (the music of the spheres), *musica humana* (the music binding together body and soul) and *musica quae in quibusdam constituta, est instrumentis* (the music which is constituted in certain instruments).⁴⁶

It is *musica humana* that is the interesting phenomena for this thesis. This is the music that resonates harmoniously throughout God's created universe and binds the body and soul together. It keeps God's order together as all created things resonate at the same frequency. St. Hildegard of Bingen also believed that the body and universe were kept alive and connected by music: she "compares the human being, and by analogy the cosmos, to a song: the body is the words and the spirit the music".⁴⁷

Boehme believed that there were seven controlling spirits controlling the universe:⁴⁸ Astringency, Sweetness, Bitterness, Heat, Love, Sound and Nature. There is a continual harmonious interaction between these spirits which also causes their generation and the generation of the senses, e.g. the interaction of the first three spirits causes the generation of Heat, which causes a flash of light giving rise to sight; they then taste each other – on tasting and seeing, Love is created. This creative process continues until all the senses have been created and the final spirit Nature is born which includes and envelops all the others.⁴⁹ All of these senses with their spirits are in fact God and the understanding of how they work is a way of observing the Book of Nature and divine works:

You may find no book wherein the divine wisdom may be more searched into, and found, than when you walk in the flowery fresh springing meadow, there you shall see, smell, and taste the wonderful power and virtue of God.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Charles Burnett. 'Perceiving Sound in the Middle Ages' in Smith, Mark, M.(Editor). *Hearing History: A Reader*. London: University of Georgia Press, 2004, p.71.

⁴⁷ Constance Classen. *The Colour of Angels: Cosmology, Gender and the Aesthetic Imagination*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 19.

⁴⁸ The idea for the seven spirits came from Rev. 4:5. "...And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God."

⁴⁹ Jacob Boehme. *The Aurora*. J. Sparrow (trans.). London: John M. Watkins and James Clarke, 1960, 8:22-48, pp. 151-7.

⁵⁰ Boehme. *Principles*. 8:11 quoted in Classen, 1998, p.23.

God pulls all the seven spirits into a harmonious interaction, which cause the integration of sense love and knowledge: “This harmony of hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting and smelling is the true intellectual life”.⁵¹

The Fall caused Adam and Eve to experience a fall of the senses according to Christian mythology.⁵² In Hildegard’s ideology, all the senses were harmonious in Paradise and Adam had a voice that was angelic in nature; Satan disliked Adam’s singing and therefore brought discord into Paradise.⁵³ Boehme saw Satan’s disobedience as the disrupting factor upon the seven spirits and sensory perversion followed. The seven spirits were only able to create imperfect copies of divine form, which were tainted with death and evil.⁵⁴ This death and disharmony passed onto mankind and accordingly caused a disharmony in their sensory perception. The only way to restore the harmony is, according to Hildegard, to listen to the ultimate song – Christ.⁵⁵ He was sent by God to restore the harmony to the world and restore the senses to their pure forms. This is how Milton uses the senses in *Paradise Lost* as will be seen in the following chapters: they are used to exemplify God’s natural harmonious order, and the Fall can be seen to bring about extreme sensual changes and discord.

⁵¹ Boehme. *Mysterium Magnum*. 5:14 quoted in Classen, 1998, p. 24.

⁵² Classen, 1998, p.3.

⁵³ Classen, 1998, p. 19.

⁵⁴ Boehme, 13:157, p. 345 and 4:27, pp. 92-3.

⁵⁵ Classen, 1998, p. 19.

2. THE USE OF VISUAL IMAGES IN *PARADISE LOST*

One of the factors that makes the sense of sight higher in hierarchy than the other senses is that it is considered to be a sense that is closer to God due to the eyes' physical positioning on the head and so is used for devotional purposes:

...with heart and voice and eyes
Directed in Devotion, to adore
And worship God Supream (7.513-5).

It is also Adam's "large Front and Eye sublime" that "declar'd / Absolute rule" (4.300-1); so that Adam's prominent forehead and his eye turned to the heavens makes him the dominant species in Paradise before Eve arrives; and when Eve arrives Adam notices that "Heav'n [was] in her Eye" (8.488). All of these quotations add to the idea that the eye is a noble, pious sense organ. The ideas of Plato are interesting here as Timaeus says

God invented and gave us sight to the end that we might behold the courses of intelligence in the heaven, and apply them to the courses of our own intelligence which are akin to them, the unperturbed to the perturbed; and that we, learning them and partaking of the natural truth of reason, might imitate the absolutely unerring courses of God and regulate our own vagaries.¹

This, according to Plato, means that the sense of sight was there to enable the knowledge of the heavens which in turn opens up the possibilities of philosophy. The following of the planets and stars is very important and leads to an understanding of the Book of Nature, and allows glimpses of God's creation. Raphael comments on this to Adam when he says that

...Heav'n
Is as the Book of God before thee set,
Wherin to read his wonderous Works, and learne
His Seasons, Hours, or Dayes, or Months, or Yeares (8.66-9);

¹ Timaeus 47c from *The Dialogues of Plato: Volume II*, translated by B. Jowett, New York: Random House, 1937, p. 28.

but God

Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought
Rather admire (8.73-5);

and

...his wayes from human sense,
Plac'd Heav'n from Earth so farr, that earthly sight,
If it presume, might ere in things too high,
And no advantage gaine (8.119-22).

Raphael is actually arguing against wanting to learn about the heavens too deeply. The Book of Nature is there to be admired and can be learnt from, but to try to delve too deeply into its secrets can lead nowhere. It seems to be a diatribe against astronomers and scientists who calculate and theorise the whole universe – using their reason to gain knowledge of God's works. It is human nature to want to understand ones surroundings as Raphael appreciates, but to turn the Book of Nature into a science book is not the way – one must stand back and admire and have internal sight joined with revelation to understand. So when visual perception is connected to reason, it can sometimes cause problems: it is important when viewing God's works to let reason rest.

It is worth remembering when reading *Paradise Lost* that light is a traditional, universal symbol of spiritual goodness, divine beauty, truth and righteousness and its converse 'darkness' represents spiritual depravity and manifestations of evil.² So the manifestations of light are not only physical but also carry connotations of religious and moralistic significance. These are very important for the understanding of the use of lightness/darkness in the text. I have included subsections on how light and darkness have been used in *Paradise Lost*, as they support my final findings and conclusions. Light and darkness together with blindness are used mainly in a physical perceptual dimension, but should be understood in a metaphorical

² Sharon-Zisser, p. 192.

spiritual level. There are different manifestations of visual imagery in the poem: the actual portrayal of physical vision and its counterpart physical blindness; spirituality with its opposite spiritual blindness; and creative vision versus creative blindness. They are all intermingled in the text, and sometimes it is hard to differentiate between the different meanings; as Waddington mentions Milton collapses “distinctions between temporal and eternal, physical and spiritual”.³ However, this could be one of the points that Milton is trying to make: that they are all metaphors for each other and the outcome of all the forms of blindness is blackness – spiritual and creative. How to overcome and conquer this blackness is something that is brought to a reader’s attention throughout the poem.

2.1 The use of light

...Out of chaos God said
 Let ther be Light, said God, and forthwith Light
 Eterea, first of things, quintessence pure
 Sprung from the Deep, and from her Native East
 To journie through the airie gloom began,
 Sphear’d in a radiant Cloud, for yet the Sun
 Was not; shee in a cloudie Tabernacle
 Sojourn’d the while. God saw the Light was good;
 And light from darkness by the Hemisphere
 Divided: Light the Day, and Darkness Night
 He nam’d (7.243-52).

God created light and made it ‘good’. Goodness is immediately associated with light – and later darkness becomes a metaphor for sin and evil and so night takes on a sinister connotation. When light was created it was an abstract concept that existed *per se* which is very difficult to imagine, therefore, for the benefit of the reader light is described as being contained in a cloud. It appears that God separates some of the goodness or light from Himself and places it into his created universe as a separate light

³ Raymond B. Waddington. ‘Here comes the Son: Providential Theme and Symbolic Pattern in *Paradise Lost*, Book 3’. *Modern Philology*, Vol. 79, No.3. (Feb.), 1982, p. 256.

source. The sun was not initially created - the sun was a later addition that functioned like a lantern or eye for the world. Milton refers constantly to physical light, and of course, it could be interpreted only on a physical level. However, light is a spiritual and moral metaphor; it floods Heaven: it is a sign of purity, goodness, divinity and truth⁴ and it is exactly this meaning that Milton is emphasising as constantly the dualistic nature of light/dark is metaphorically juxtaposed with that of good/evil. So when God creates the world, Chaos flees and with it flees darkness to be replaced by the goodness of light which can be seen with God's "second bidding darkness fled, / Light shon" (3.712-3). The use of light and dark in *Paradise Lost* can be understood in a physical sense, however, as they are also used to represent good and evil: for the purpose of this thesis they are mostly interpreted as moralistic /religious metaphors. So although light is an actual physical sensation, that is physically present in Milton's created world, he seems to be using it more as a metaphor for goodness with dark being the antithesis representing evil.

All light stems from God who is the source of all light: He is light and as John says He is "the true Light which gives light to every man".⁵ He sits on his "high Throne, gloriously bright" (3.655) visible to only seven privileged angels of whom Uriel, "Angel bright" (3.645), is one (3.654-5). However, these angels cannot look directly onto God as the angels in Heaven inform us by singing,

Fountain of Light, thy self invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit'st
Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant Shrine,⁶

⁴ Light: A metaphor for the spirit and divinity, symbolizing inner enlightenment and the presence of a cosmic power of ultimate goodness and truth. By extension, light is a symbol of immortality, eternity, paradise, pure being, revelation, wisdom, intellect, majesty, joy and life itself. Light became synonymous with "good" or "God". Thus Christ is the Light of the World. Jack Tresidder (ed.) *The Complete Dictionary of Symbols in Myth, Art and Literature*. London: Baird, 2004, p.289.

⁵ John 1:9.

⁶ Psalm 104:2 "Who cover yourself with light as with a garment".

Dark with excessive bright thy Skirts appeer,
 Yet dazle Heav'n, that brightest Seraphim
 Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes (3.375-82).

God is the "Fountain of light", too bright and too full of goodness to be looked at and this is why he veils himself in a cloud and appears like an eclipse of the sun; the brightness though, even when it is shielded in a cloud, is still so bright that the angels need to cover their eyes. Only Christ has enough goodness in him to look at his father and take the full power of the light (3.384-7);

...on his Son with Rayes direct
 Shon full, he all his Father full exprest
 Ineffably into his face receiv'd (6.719-21)

and

...unfolding bright
 Toward the right hand his Glorie, on the Son
 Blaz'd forth unclouded Deitie (10.63-65).

God's light is unclouded and shines into His son's face. The light in Christ's face is not only reflected but is also an intrinsic light of Christ; he sits on "on his right / The radiant image of his Glory" (3.62-3) and becomes God's light and glory for the world:

Effulgence of my Glorie, Son belov'd ,
 Son in whose face invisible is beheld
 Visibly, what by Deitie I am (6.680-2);

God's face may need to be hidden due to its brightness, but Christ becomes the visible deity shining light on the world:⁷

Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
 Most glorious, in him all his Father shon
 Substantially expressed, and in his face
 Divine compassion visibly appeered (3.138-41).

However, in Raphael's account of the war in Heaven, Christ rides into battle with so much glory shining from his face that "Brightness had made invisible" (5.599).⁸ Christ has become so bright, i.e. he radiates extreme love and goodness, that he dazzles all

⁷ 2 Corinthians 4:6: For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness who has shone in our hearts to give the light of knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

⁸ C.f. "darkness visible" in Hell (1.63).

who look upon him – and in effect becomes invisible. So Christ’s glory shines brighter as the narration progresses, which is interesting when compared to Satan – who becomes darker.

Initially, when all the fallen angels are thrown into Hell, Satan is not recognised as the same angel he was in Heaven: his light has been dulled. In Heaven he was also known as Lucifer which means ‘light-bearer’ and is also associated with the morning star.⁹ He was

...in happy realms of Light
Cloth’d with transcendent brightness didst outshine
Myriads though bright (1.84-7).

In Heaven he was clothed with brightness that seems to outshine others; it is exactly this brightness that attracts and tricks angels onto his side in Heaven as

His count’nance, as the Morning Starr that guides
The starrie flock, allur’d them, and with lyes
Drew after him the third part of Heav’ns Host (5.708-10).

Satan is a false guiding light that attracts others to his erroneous ways. This idea is also repeated later in the text (7.131-3), where the false light of Satan is contrasted to the true light of Christ.¹⁰ This simile is also returned to later when Satan is compared to a “wandering Fire” (9.634) that leads people astray on bogs and, therefore, is a “delusive [deluding] light” (9.639).¹¹ Satan is the false shepherd leading people and angels to sin. As I mentioned above Christ’s glory is increasing and Satan’s is diminishing: Satan actually realises himself that his glory and brightness have changed when in his monologue he mentions that he is “chang’d in outward lustre” (1.97); later in Paradise

⁹ OED Lucifer: 2. the planet Venus when it rises in the morning. Origin: Old English from Latin, ‘light-bearing, morning star’, from lux, luc- ‘light’ + -fer ‘bearing’. The association of Satan with Lucifer is derived from Isaiah 14:12 “How you have fallen from heaven, / O Lucifer, son of the morning”

¹⁰ Revelation 22:16: “I, Jesus ... am the Root and Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star”. Here it appears that Christ is stating he is the only true Morning Star as the previous Morning Star (Satan) only offers false hope.

¹¹ According to Flannagan (note 188, p 604) Satan is compared to a swamp fire: this is a naturally occurring phenomenon which is caused by either phosphorescence or the combustion gaseous vapours. This false beacon was thought to lead people to damnation.

Satan's "lustre is visibly impaired" when he is questioned by angels, he actually feels how awful goodness is compared to his wretched state and it makes him hate goodness even more. However, he had not lost all of his light and power as

...he above the rest
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent
 Stood like a Tower; his form had yet not lost
 All her Original brightness, nor appear'd
 Less then Arch Angel ruind, and th' excess
 Of Glory obscur'd: As when the Sun new ris'n
 Looks through the Horizontal misty Air
 Shorn of his Beams, or from behind the Moon
 In dim Eclips disastrous twilight sheds
 On half the Nations, and with fear of change
 Perplexes Monarchs. Dark'n'd so yet shon
 Above them all th' Arch Angel (1.589-600).

Satan still has a lot of his "Original brightness" and is compared to the dawning sun rising through mist and also to an eclipse that blots out the sun for a while before it returns in its glory. So it appears that Satan has lost a lot of his light, but he has still retained some and, therefore, still partly lives up to his name. This retaining of his light keeps the possibility of his return and revenge alive. In fact after he has brought about the Fall, he returns to Hell

...invisible
 Ascended his high Throne, which under state
 Of richest texture spread, at th' upper end
 Was plac'd in regal lustre. Down a while
 He sate, and round about him saw unseen:
 At last as from a Cloud his fulgent head
 And shape Starr bright appeer'd, or brighter, clad
 With what permissive glory since his fall
 Was left him, or false glitter... (10.444-52).

Satan is returning as if he were a god, his brightness – what is left of it – appears from a cloud imitating God, who needs to reduce His brightness for perception (see 2.2.1). But Satan's light is false and not so bright, and proves to be misleading and the cause of further misery to the devils. Therefore, after sinning the outer brightness of angels seems to grow weaker, but a certain amount of brightness is retained which makes it

very difficult to discern sin and transgressions in them. So in this way sight is not a very good way of morally judging, as it can be fooled, as Satan does, by changing outward appearances. This is an example of sight not being enough to discern the truth and the use of the senses alone does not lead to cognition – an internal sight needs to be used for discernment together with the senses.

Angels emit light: it seems to be an intrinsic quality that even if they have fallen they still retain (and they could also take on forms “bright or obscure” (1.429)) – but the light given off by the angels in Heaven is even brighter and is unrestricted. The pure angels “Bind thir resplendent locks inwreath’d with beams” (3.361) and are referred to as “Cohort bright” (11.127), “orders bright” (5.587) and “Armies bright” (1.272). And when Satan sees Uriel¹² on the sun

His back was turned, but not his brightness hid;
Of beaming sunnie Raies, a golden tiar
Circl’d his Head... (3.623-6).

Uriel seems to radiate light from his face in a similar way to God or Christ and therefore openly shows his goodness. When the angels are searching for Satan in Paradise their goodness and light are so strong that their “radiant Files” are even “Daz’ling the Moon” (4.797-8). Also when Satan first observes Adam and Eve, he perceives them as “Not Spirits, yet to heav’nly Sprirts bright / Little inferior” (4.361-2); therefore they are not too different from the angels in Heaven. When the archangel Raphael talks to Adam later in the poem, he states that “bodies bright and greater”, i.e. angels, are there to serve the “less not bright” (8.87-8), i.e. mankind. The superior brightness and therefore higher position of the angels does not mean that they should not help or serve those of lesser brightness: this highlights the moralistic metaphor by saying that if one is more enlightened then one should help people more. Their weapons are “fierie Swords”

¹² Uriel in Hebrew means ‘God is my light’ according to *The Reader’s Digest Great Illustrated Dictionary: In Two Volumes*. London: Reader’s Digest Association Limited, 1984, p. 1810.

(6.304) and “two broad Suns thir Shields / Blaz’d opposite” (6.305-6) and they wave their “glittering Tissues [flags]” (5.592). The arms and armour used by the fallen angels also gleam in Hell; they wield “dazling Arms” (1.564) and at the start of the conclave the fallen angels

...forthwith from the glittering Staff unfurled
Th’ imperial Ensign, which full high advanc’t
Shon like a Meteor streaming to the Wind
With gemms and Golden lustre rich imblaz’d,
Seraphic arms and Trophies (1.535-9).

In fact the brightness of their weapons was enough to illumine the dark depths of Hell

...out-flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumin’d hell (1.663-6).

This light must have had the effect of bringing hope (which proves to be false), as their power and strength is once again seen in a concrete sense – the illumination of their dark torture. So all the armoury and weapons seem to gleam and shine with either lights of their own or they reflect the surrounding light. However, as the weapons still shone in Hell where there was no light to be reflected from the weapons, then the light must be intrinsic in the weapons themselves. So like the angels, the angelic weapons must have intrinsically shone. The weapons, like the angels, were made by God and must have had innate goodness – even when used for evil purposes they shone because they were created in Heaven. So God’s light seems to have been put into everything heavenly and can never be removed. This strengthens the argument that vision can be tricked and not everything can be judged from outward appearances. This idea is reinforced by Raphael when he says,

...that Great
Or Bright inferrs not Excellence: the Earth
Though, in comparison of Heav’n, so small,
Nor glistering may of solid good containe
More plenty then the Sun that barren shines (8.90-4)

Raphael even goes a step further by saying that even if something is very bright and therefore should contain goodness this is not always necessarily true. So Satan, even though he still shines, is a false star; Raphael's metaphor can also be extended to religious people who are internally hypocrites and are therefore barren in regards to producing the fruit of faith. So one of the main aspects here is that vision cannot always be trusted for discerning goodness – and that it is possible to trick and mislead perception.

Satan is our guide and 'eyes' as we follow him out of Hell until

...at last the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heav'n
Shoots farr into the bosom of dim Night
A glimmering dawn (2.1034-7).

Satan on emerging from the cold bosom of Chaos is immediately allured by the light of Heaven when “at last a gleame / Of dawning light turnd thither-ward in haste / His travell'd steps” (3.499-501). He hurries to the source of light and glory – Heaven – from whence he has fallen, but finds the gates closed – he no longer has any access. From outside the gates, however, he espies “The golden Sun in splendor likest Heaven” and it “Allure'd his eye” (3.572-3). The sun which also gives off light and warmth similar to God and Heaven is, however, accessible to him and he makes for this alternative source of light (3.572). In this way the sun becomes a Heaven substitute for Satan¹³ but as we have seen from Raphael's comment it is metaphorically barren and spiritually unfruitful. He is fascinated and attracted by its brightness, as all light contains God's intrinsic goodness, but he also finds it loathsome, “O Sun ... how I hate thy beams” (4.37), and needs to question its goodness by calling it “dubious” (2.1042) as it contrasts

¹³ Christian theologians used the sun to express revelation, and it is a symbol for both God and the Son. J.E. Cirlot. *A Dictionary of Symbols*. London: Routledge, 1971, p. 317. So Satan is still drawn to righteousness even if it pains him and he wants to destroy it: light, paradoxically, is still important for him.

and emphasises his darkness and what he has lost. So Satan has a paradoxical relationship to light – he likes and needs it, but also because it reflects his badness and wants to destroy it.

It is Satan who first describes Paradise as a “new world of light and bliss” (2.867); so the light signifies the goodness and pureness that exists in Paradise. After the Fall, however, some of this light disappears as it actually gets dark at night and Adam laments,

...How shall I behold the face
Henceforth of God or Angel, earst with joy
And rapture so oft beheld? those heav'nly shapes
Will dazle now this earthly, with thir blaze
Insufferably bright. O might I here
In solitude live savage, in some glade
Obscur'd, where highest Woods impenetrable
To Starr or Sun-light, spread thir umbradge broad
and brown as Evening (9.1080-8).

Adam was once able to look upon the angels quite freely as he shared their goodness, but now he is afraid they will be too bright for him. He needs to escape light altogether, to hide from its goodness and hides in the forests where light cannot reach. And finally, after the Fall, it is the return of a brightness from the west that is like a new dawn and causes the rest of the sky to seem dark in comparison that warns Adam of the angels coming from Heaven to pass judgement on him:

..why in the East
Darkness ere Dayes mid-course, and Morning light
More orient in yon Western Cloud that draws
O're the blew Firmament a radiant white (11.203-6).

This new brightness brings new hope of reconciliation. However, it also means that Adam and Eve will be expelled from Paradise, so this new dawn is double-edged. But there is a positive outcome of this tragedy as the couple find new consolation and strength in each other to combat the darkness that has entered the world

2.2 The use of darkness

Hell is a dark place: God makes Hell and Chaos out of “his dark materials” (2.916) in stark contrast to the light that was needed to create the world and the heavens. As a punishment for their sins the fallen angels are banished from the light of Heaven and must live in eternal darkness:

...thir Prison ordain'd
In utter darkness and thir portion set
As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n (1.71-3).

They are cast into a “dark durance [prison]” (4.899) where the only light is from the false stars, false treasure and their own glory (2.1). Hence, darkness and the absence of light are being used as a punishment. From the flames of Hell came “No light, but rather darkness visible” (1.63) and they were told that as a punishment they would no longer “Lightning see” but “Black fire” (2.66-7). Satan vividly describes Hell when he says,

Seest thou yon dreary Plain, forlorn and wilde
The seat of desolation, voyd of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? (1.180-3).

All these quotations describing the darkness of Hell are fascinating as even in pitch blackness all is visible; it must have been like living in a black and white photographic negative where images are seen but they are hard to distinguish. As was seen from above, the absence of light is viewed by Milton as being a punishment – so it is a very small step for him to view his own physical blindness as a punishment too. It is interesting that those who disobey and break union with God are punished by being

Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
Into utter darkness, deep ingulft, his place
Ordaind without redemption, without end (5.613-5).

This description is obviously about the fallen angels being thrown into eternal darkness for their disobedience, but it is interesting that vision is actually mentioned and the

removal from it or of it seems to being used as a punishment.¹⁴ This aspect of blindness is also mentioned when people do not follow God or his Commandments they are referred to as being blind and “shall be blinded more, / That they may stumble on, and deeper fall” (3.200-1). Therefore, blindness seems to be a punishment metered out by God for disobeying Him. Of course, this predominantly refers to spiritual blindness, but the allusion to physical blindness cannot be ignored: Milton mixes the two interpretations quite freely, so both meanings are awoken when reading the text. Spiritually, those who are blind to the works of God will make their situation worse and worse as they sin and disobey his commands. It is extremely possible that Milton viewed his blindness as a divine punishment caused by some wrong doing in the past. However, according to Wilson in *Milton’s Reaction to his Blindness*,¹⁵ Milton had already deliberated on this possibility and had rejected it in his *The Second Defence* published in 1654:

For my part, I call upon Thee, my god, who knowest my inmost mind and all my thoughts, to witness that (although I have repeatedly examined myself on this point as earnestly as I could, and have searched all the corners of my life) I am conscious of nothing, of no deed, either, recent or remote, whose wickedness could justify occasion or invite upon me this supreme misfortune [blindness].¹⁶

Of course, it is not possible to truly know how Milton felt about his blindness; as Wilson states “what Milton says about his blindness in his prose is not the whole story of his reactions”.¹⁷

When God created the world the realms of Chaos and total darkness were banished to the underworld and light replaced the “hollow dark” (2.953). This darkness is totally absent from Heaven and absent from Paradise before the Fall, but becomes

¹⁴ Line 613 is multivalent: are the fallen angels blinded? Or are they cast beyond God’s vision? Or do they lose a/the vision of God?

¹⁵ H. Wilson. ‘Milton’s Reaction to His Blindness’. *Med.Hist.* July: 4(3), 1960, p. 188.

¹⁶ Milton’s *Second Defence of the English People* in Flannigan, p.1107.

¹⁷ Wilson, p. 193.

tainted by darkness after the Fall. In Heaven, night exists but it is never totally dark – it only seems to be a kind of twilight:

From that high mount of God, whence light & shade
Spring both, the face of brightest Heav'n had changd
To grateful Twilight (for Night comes not there
In darker veile) ... (5.643-6);

and in Paradise the moon and the stars

Ministering light prepar'd, they set and rise;
Lest total darkness should by Night regain
Her old possession, and extinguish life
In Nature and all things... (4.664-7).

This is what Satan, the “Prince of Darkness” (10.383) wants to reverse with “his own dark designs” (1.213) – he wants to reverse and “reduce [Paradise]/ To her original darkness ... / ...and once more / Erect the Standard there of *ancient Night*” (2.983-6). He succeeds in bringing about Adam and Eve’s Fall which causes the disruption of God’s order and harmony (see 3.3). Darkness enters Paradise as

Through the still Night, not now, as ere man fell,
Wholesom and cool, and mild, but with black Air
Accompanied, with damps and dreadful gloom (10.846-8).

Here the darkness is being used as an indicator that sin has entered Paradise and a moral and mortal change has occurred in God’s order. So the physical presence of darkness has extreme moral connotations: it is being used as a metaphor for the presence of sin and evil.¹⁸ It is this evil that is being referred to when the devils’ “darkness durst affront the light” (1.391) and they plan to “rise/ With blackest Insurrection to confound / Heav’ns purest Light” (2.135-7). They offend goodness with their sinfulness, and are, therefore, removed from its vicinity to the realms of Hell. In the bowels of Hell, they plan to rise again to taint the holy light of goodness with darkness. This is in fact what Satan manages to do by bringing about the Fall – he causes darkness (a metaphor for

¹⁸ *OED*. Darkness: 2. wickedness or evil.

sin) to enter the world. As was seen from 2.1 the only way to combat this darkness is when Christ shines light onto the world.

Due to the moral connotations of darkness, it becomes associated with Satan and the devils, who are called the “sons of Darkness” (6.715), and it is during the hours of darkness when they work and plan. As was observed above, night time in Heaven and Paradise prior to the Fall is never totally dark, however, the darkness in Heaven is enough for Satan to plot his rebellion and he is worried that they will be observed “ere yet dim Night / Her shadowie Cloud withdraws” (5.685-6). He also uses “the shades of night” (4.1015) like a cloak that hides him from sight. But Satan does not only use the night for hiding, he also acts at night. He uses the night to whisper to Eve while she is dreaming and during the dream lies about the “Full Orb’d...Moon” that has a “more pleasing light” (5.42-3): the light of the moon is only reflected light and so does not represent ‘real’ goodness, so this light for Satan is more pleasing than the full power of the sun. So Satan is using the night as a time for doing evil, he uses the time when the holy light of the sun is absent, and so metaphorically labels the night as being morally bad. Adam seems to know that night time can be used for evil, even if he does not fully understand the concept or danger of it yet: for instance, after Eve’s dream he prays that

... if the night
Have gathered aught of evil or conceald
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark (5.206-8).

By doing this he tries to counter the effects of darkness by evoking the power of light and holiness, just as God did during the Creation.

The devils even try to associate some of the negative connotations of darkness with God when Mammon argues that

...How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark doth Heav’ns all-ruling Sire
Choose to reside, his glory unobscur’d,
And with the Majesty of darkness round

Covers his Throne; ...
 As he our darkness, cannot we his Light
 Imitate when we please? (2.263-70).

Here Mammon argues falsely that God tried to hide in darkness and live in dark clouds; this is a falsity as God only tried to prevent the full strength of his glory from shining forth onto people or angels who would not be able to stand the intensity of the light (see 2.1). By doing this Mammon says that God has his darker sides and like Satan hides behind darkness. But Mammon argues that as God can copy darkness, then the devils should be able to copy His light. However, the only light that they can produce is from fossil fuel burning lamps that produce a very pale light¹⁹ and appear as false stars: “Starry Lamps and blazing Cressets [baskets of fire]” (1.728), which would have only given off a very weak light; and the false security of the “desert soile / [with] her hidden lustre, Gemms and Gold (2.270-1).²⁰ But the false light of smoky fires in the roof of Hell and the false light of gold and gems is not enough to replace the light of Heaven. Satan and Belial even try to offer false hope to the devils when they say that the suffering and darkness cannot last: “this darkness [will become] light” (2.220) and “nor th’ Abyss / Long under darkness cover” (1.658-9). However, as readers, we know this is totally false and their attempt to obtain this light will only lead to more suffering for them in the end. This causes us to question sensory perception again as hearing is challenged by Mammon’s false rhetoric and vision is challenged by the false light. So the information received from sensory perception has to be internally discerned before actual decisions or conclusions can be reached. So the devils do seem to require light, metaphorically this could mean that they do miss what they had in Heaven and like all living things require God’s holy light – this can be concretely observed when they want

¹⁹ Karen L Edwards. *Milton and the Natural World: Science and Poetry in Paradise Lost*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p 194.

²⁰ These gems and jewels were meant to have become embedded in the earth when the Fall occurred and were meant to be fragments of celestial light. Tresidder, p. 262.

to change “this mournful gloom / For that celestial light” (1.244-5) and Beelzebub expresses his need for light when he argues for living close to Heaven

...in some milde Zone
Dwell not unvisited of Heav’ns fair Light
Secure, and at the brightening Orient beam
Purge off this gloom (2.398-400).

This could be a symbolic representation of their feeling remorse for their deeds, but for these devils, however, there is no forgiveness as they are eternally damned.

So darkness has negative connotations and it used to contrast with the goodness of light. Heaven’s light is too powerful, the rebellion in Heaven failed due to the shining glory of Christ. So the only light that the devils can taint or remove is that of Paradise. As was mentioned in 2.1 it was never totally dark in Paradise, but the Fall changed this – darkness invaded and won back some of its territory from before the creation. Adam notices the change when

Through the still Night, not now, as ere man fell,
Wholesom and cool, and mild, but with black Air
Accompanied, with damps and dreadful gloom (10.846-8).

The night has become black and dark, there has been a shift in the harmony and darkness has invaded. This, of course, is a moral metaphor and is used to concretely highlight that sin has entered the world which has brought about a change to the whole environment and atmosphere.

2.3 Blindness

Blindness is a concept that is constantly present in *Paradise Lost*, which is used to express Milton’s actual physical blindness, but more importantly as a metaphor for creative and spiritual blindness. Milton calls upon his muse²¹ several times within

²¹ There has been a lot of discussion on what/ or who was Milton’s muse; this matter does not concern this thesis, but it might be helpful to note that if the muse is the Holy Spirit then Puritanism regarded the Holy Spirit as a “spiritual perception analogous to the physical perception of the senses and given (cont)

the poem to take him to realms that would be impossible for mortal man to 'see' and to give him the inspiration needed to write and create the poem. He calls upon her to "What in me is dark / Illumin" (1.22-3); this illumination is presumably one of spiritual or creative illumination in Milton's mind, but it is possible to interpret it in other ways too, as all of the interpretations of blindness are evoked: creative, physical and spiritual. He seems to describe being taken on a journey with his muse as a guide: "Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down / The dark descent, and up to reascend" (3.19-20). This means that the aforementioned illumination could also be the insight needed into the realms of Heaven, Hell and Paradise that no person can comprehend without the aid of a divine guide to enlighten the scenes and events; Milton, in fact, strengthens this by saying that "Heaven hides nothing from thy [the Muse's] view / [not even] the deep tract of Hell" (1.27-8).

As I mentioned above, all the meanings of blindness are so finely intertwined that the often quoted autobiographical section in Book III can be interpreted on different levels: on the surface it is obviously about Milton's own experiences of physical blindness, but the lines are infused with metaphors of both spiritual and creative blindness. Milton says that he was

Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down
 The dark descent, and up to reascend,
 Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sovran vital Lamp; but thou
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that rowle in vain
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
 So thick a drop serene hath quencht thir Orbs,
 Or dim suffusion veild. (3.19-26).

With the help of his muse, Milton is able to freely visit the realms of darkness and light. He feels the righteous light which is no longer physically visible to him. He is no longer able to physically see with his eyes, but has the images and visions inside his

in 'experience' as a whole": Geoffery Nuttall quoted in Jackson I. Cope. 'Milton's Muse in *Paradise Lost*.' *Modern Philology*, Vol. 55, No. 1. (Aug.), 1957, p. 10.

head (see 6.1). This is similar to how God gave Adam his visions when Adam recounts that “Mine eyes he clos’d, but op’n left the Cell / Of fancie my internal sight ...” (8.460-1). However, Adam’s eyes were only closed while he slept; Milton’s were ‘physically’ closed for good. But even though the light of Heaven cannot be truly seen, its warmth can be felt and that alone is comforting. So Milton asks for the light to show itself in his mind’s eye so that he can write about the things that a normal person cannot see:

So much the rather thou Celestial light
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight (3. 51-55).

Here Milton requires both spiritual and creative insight into the realms of the spirits. He asks to have his eyes ‘transplanted’ and the “mist”²² removed so as to see into the Celestial realms. This ‘transplanting’ again has a double meaning: that of spiritual enlightenment where Milton knows he needs God’s powers to be able to understand and receive grace; and that of opening the internal eye of the imagination so that a whole new world and dimension can be envisaged and the physical blindness that he suffers from would no longer be a disability. The aspect of ‘seeing’ more than sighted people is a phenomena of blindness that Sacks mentions in his article, *The Mind’s Eye*: he noticed that some blind people create imaginary worlds and sensory maps of the real world that are more accurate and detailed than those of sighted people.²³ This is partly what Milton is asking for in his prayers – to obtain an insight that no mortal vision could ever obtain (see 1). Therefore, blindness is not an impairment, but becomes a precondition for

²² Mist is associated with transitions, supernatural interventions and was a prelude to revelation. Tressider, p. 320.

²³ Sacks, p. 29.

seeing the universal whole and is a necessary gateway to God.²⁴ Finally, Milton also associates himself with some blind prophets from classical times

Those other two equal'd with me in Fate,
So were I equal'd with them in renown,
Blind *Thamyris* and blind *Maeonides*²⁵
And *Tiresias* and *Phineus* Prophets old. (3.33-36).

According to Schor, blindness in literature has traditionally been associated with seers, and so Milton appears to be grounding himself into this tradition.²⁶ When St. Bonaventura's apt spiritual insight is taken into consideration, "to see, one must become blind: *Excaecatio est summa illuminatio*",²⁷ then part of Milton's purpose of emphasising blindness and light is understood more. Maeonides was Homer's surname, he was traditionally considered to be blind and wrote the *Iliad*, which contained the story of a poet, Thamyris, who challenged the Muses and was blinded for his presumptuousness; Tiresias was from Greek mythology, he was blinded for seeing Pallas naked, but then granted prophetic visions as recompense; and finally Phineus was a prophetic king from Greek mythology who was punished for blinding his sons by blindness.²⁸ All of these blind men are firmly rooted in Greek mythology with strong ties to prophetic vision and poetry and so it was very natural for Milton to find companionship with them.

2.3.1 Healing of blindness

The healing of spiritual blindness is a topic that seems to be alluded to several times in the text. To start with "*Siloa's Brook*" (1.10) mentioned directly and

²⁴ Sharon-Zisser, p. 195.

²⁵ All italicisation in the quotes are Milton's own – as will be all subsequent italicisation.

²⁶ Naomi Schor. 'Blindness as a Metaphor.' *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 11.2, 1999, p. 88.

²⁷ St. Bonaventura quoted in Merritt Y Hughes. 'Milton and the Symbol of Light.' *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, Vol. 4, No. 1, The English Renaissance. (Winter) 1964, p. 12.

²⁸ Tresidder, p. 387.

according to Cope is alluded to with “Thee *Sion* and the flowerie brooks beneath” (3.30).²⁹ Siloa was where Christ healed a blind man and said “For judgement I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, / and those who see may be made blind.”³⁰ In Book III, the apocryphal story of Tobit is mentioned and alluded to: Tobit was rendered blind when “...white films came in [his] eyes”³¹; the angel Raphael was sent by God to cure Tobit and to expel the evil spirit Asmodeus by the burning of fish liver; the gall of the same fish was then used to cure Tobit by rubbing it into his eyes which caused “...the white films [to scale] away from the corners of his eyes...”.³² This brings to mind the story of Paul on the road to Damascus, when he was blinded by the bright light of God and later healed by Ananias who touched him and “Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales”.³³ These two stories are alluded to when Satan tempts Eve by saying

...your Eyes that seem so cleere,
Yet are but dim shall perfetly be then
Open’d and cleerd, and ye shall see Gods” (9.706-8);

and when the angel Michael cures the blindness caused by the forbidden fruit when

Michael from Adams eyes the Filme remov’d
Which that false Fruit that promis’d clearer sight
Had bred; then purg’d with Euphrasie and Rue
The visual Nerve, for he had much to see;
And from the Well of Life three drops instill’d.
So deep the power of these Ingredients piec’d,
Eevn to the inmost seat of mental sight,
That Adam now enforc’t to close his eyes (11.412-9).

The herbs that Michael chooses to cure Adam’s sight would have been used in Milton’s time for the restoration of eyesight, as was balm (see 4.2.2). The healing and opening of Adam’s eyes are emphasised many times thereafter: “His eyes he open’d, and he

²⁹ Cope, p. 8.

³⁰ John 9:39. The whole of John 9 is relevant and should be taken into account when thinking about how Milton viewed and considered blindness.

³¹ Tobit 2:10. *The Apocrypha: Revised Version*. London: Oxford University Press, 1895.

³² Tobit 11:13.

³³ Acts 9: 1-19.

beheld...” (11.429) visions; and Adam mentions that Michael was the “True opener of [his] eyes” (11.558) and the “Enlightener of [his] darkness” (12.271) compared to the false promises made by Satan about the properties of the forbidden fruit. Most of the references to blindness from the Bible are included in *Paradise Lost*, which are used to counter the effects of spiritual blindness and blackness.

2.4 Voyeurism, surveillance and observation – the hierarchy of watching and seeing

An extremely important use of vision in *Paradise Lost* seems to be involved with the hierarchy of viewing. This is more of a social issue rather than physical perception, but it is such a large part of Milton’s visual representation that it cannot be ignored. The highest level of viewing is the omniscient presence of God; this is followed by the constant watch kept by the angels; next should come Adam’s watching of Eve, but I have included Satan’s negative voyeurism to help my argument flow; finally Eve’s vanity and self-viewing completes the hierarchy in a baser, more sinful perceptive atmosphere. This hierarchy is interesting from the perspective of feminist theory as the male gaze is looked on as being a form of patriarchy:

In most popular representations it seems that men look and women are looked at. In film, on television, in the press and in most popular narratives men are shown to be in control of gaze, women are controlled by it. Men act; women are acted upon. This is patriarchy.³⁴

This gaze has a form of social and moral control as will be seen from the following examples; but this control is looked on as being positive and is the hierarchical nature of the universe. The only negative gazing is by Satan who is fascinated by the goodness

³⁴ Lorraine Gamman and Margaret Marshment. *The Female Gaze*. Seattle: The Real Comet Press, 1989, p. 1.

and beauty that he no longer possesses; he, however wants it back, but it is something that he can never possess again and therefore only wants to destroy it.

2.4.1 The eye of God

God is all seeing and omniscient, his “eye/ Views all things at one view? he from heav’ns highth / All these our motions vain, sees” (2.189-91). Ryken notices that “the most frequently mentioned of God’s physical parts is his eye”.³⁵ This may be due to the fact that when describing God, it is important that He can be envisioned in some way – the eye was well known in the Old Testament as a symbol of God and so was a logical choice for Milton to use.³⁶ Upon creating the world his first action was to bend “down his eye / His own works and their works to view” (3.58-9) and, according to Waddington, this image of God bending down his eye evokes many complex interrelated, metaphoric traditions: the sun and God are often interrelated and are known as the eye of the world and carry religious overtones of the Trinity and the Son of God, together with authority.³⁷ He also saw that everything that he created was good (7.309-37). Observation, therefore, seems to be very important for God in the control of His created universe. However, the use of the sense of vision is an oversimplification for the sake of human understanding, as God probably does not need a physical eye as he is omniscient; but as I mentioned it does make it easier to understand how He can ‘see’ and know everything.

³⁵ Leland Ryken, *The Apocalyptic Vision in “Paradise Lost”*. Ithaca: New York, 1970, p. 131.

³⁶ For example the eyes of God were used in Psalm 11:4 “The Lord’s throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men”; Psalm 33:18 “Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him”; Proverbs 15:3 “The eyes of the Lord are in every place”. Of course, there could have been a further connection with Milton’s interest with eyes because of his blindness. He could have become obsessed with their symbolism and used them wherever it was possible as both a physical manifestation and a symbolic one.

³⁷ Waddington, p. 258.

The rebellious angels and Satan seem to underestimate God when they plan and make their weapons under cover of darkness, as they think themselves “unespi’d” (6.523) but actually

...th’ Eternal eye, whose sight discernes
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy Mount
And from within the golden Lamps that burne
Nightly before him, saw without thir light
Rebellion rising... (5.711-5);

and Satan believes that they can move in and out of Hell unseen (2.841-3), but the narrator corrects this view by saying: “...what can scape the Eye / Of God All-seeing” (10.5-6). Adam and Eve, after the Fall, believe that they can “hide ... from the face / Of God” (10.723-4); and Eve thinks that

...Heav’n is high,
High and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great Forbidder, safe with all his Spies
About him (9.811-6).

God is described negatively as being a forbiddler and his angels are spies. Eve, like the devils previously, needs to associate negative images with God to reduce the difference between God’s goodness and her sin. This hiding from God is due to the shame awoken by disobeying his commandments, and can be observed when Eve worries “if God has seen” the eating of the forbidden fruit “And Death ensue” (9.826-7). However, as readers we know that nothing escapes God’s sight – and from examples in the Old Testament it is never possible to flee from Him.³⁸

However, the looks and attention given by God seem to confer blessings and justification and those who are deprived of it seem to seek and require it. Paradoxically, it is the fallen angels that say they “...from his sight reciev’d / Beatitude

³⁸ For example Jonah.

past utterance” (3.61-2); the fallen angels seem to remember this goodness and even miss it (5.535-6). For sinners then this removal from God’s sight is also a punishment as He drives “out th’ ungodly from his sight” (7.185) and also withdraws “His presence from among them, and avert[s] / His Holy Eyes” (12.107-9).³⁹ Metaphorically, it is like being shadowed permanently from the warmth of the sun. and it is exactly this idea that is evoked when God says that he will give his “Umpire *Conscience*, whom if they will hear, Light after light well us’d they shall obtain” (3.195-6).⁴⁰ This worry of God closing His eyes to mankind is echoed in Eve’s hope that God will not shut his eye to those who pray, repent and show obedience (3.190-3). If God did shut his eye to mankind, then all hope of reconciliation would be lost. God would remove his justifying looks from the world, which would be left in moral darkness.

2.4.2 Angels keeping watch

Next in the hierarchy are the angels who are also called the eyes of God to aid in the watching and control of the universe; this role is a little ambiguous, as it seems to take away some of God’s omniscience, as he appears to need helpers to assist Him with observation. But this does not really need to be a problem as the angels seem to be God’s messengers and envoys to the world and it is logical that they are also described as scouts as well. In fact they seem to be endowed with numerous eyes and “While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk” (4.685) around Paradise they are compared to Argos: “thir shape / Spangl’d with eyes more numerous than those / Of Argus” (11.129-31).⁴¹ In fact the Messiah’s chariot also had a “multitude of eyes, / One Spirit in them rul’d, and every eye / Glar’d lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire”

³⁹ See 2.2, lines 5.613-5 and note 14, p. 24.

⁴⁰ I.e. God will give mankind a conscience and if this conscience is listened to then God will provide the light, love and his presence.

⁴¹ Argos: In Greek myth, an unsleeping giant with eyes all over his body, only one pair of which were ever closed. Tresidder, p. 14.

(6.847-9) and “the Four [cherubim escorting the chariot] spread out their Starrie wings” (6.827).⁴² These eyes are associated with God’s wrath and anger: God threatens the wicked who defile temples in Ezekiel by saying “therefore I also will act in fury. My eye will not spare nor will I have pity;”⁴³ and “my eye will neither spare, nor will I have pity, but I will recompense their deeds on their own head.”⁴⁴ Therefore, God’s eyes are very scary and threatening to those who transgress His commands: the eyes seem to be a metaphorical way of punishing – the idea of shooting fire and lightning. So the eye’s of God are spread everywhere; this representing of God’s omnipresence as eyes, could be a way of making the whole concept of omnipresence more understandable, and also the eyes, as well as watching, also administered punishment too.

However, it is Uriel who seems to be one of the sharpest sighted out of all the angels and is also referred to as being one of the seven angels who are closest to God. It is “his Eyes / That run through all the Heav’ns, or down to th’ Earth” (3.650-1). Archangel Gabriel also refers to Uriel’s excellent vision:

... no wonder if thy perfect sight
Amid the Sun’s bright circle where thou sitst,
See far and wide (4.577-579).

But it does appear that Uriel’s keen sightedness is tricked as he does not recognise Satan for what he is; however, Uriel’s suspicions must have been aroused as he said he “discern’d [Satan’s] looks” (4.570) and his “eye pursu’d him down / The way he went, and on the *Assyrian* mount / Saw [Satan] disfig’d (4.125-7) and how his “eye pursu’d [Satan] still, but under shade / Lost sight of him” (4.572-3). In fact it is only God or Christ who can discern the true hearts of people, as when evilness or sin is disguised it is very difficult to perceive (see 4.1.1). Thus external perception is not enough to

⁴² The allusion to Argus and the cherubim are reminiscent of Ezekiel 10:12 “And their whole body, with their back, their hands, their wing, and the wheels that the four had, were full of eyes all around.”

⁴³ Ezekiel 8:18.

⁴⁴ Ezekiel 9:10.

discern the truth and a certain amount of insight needs to be connected to perceptive skills.

2.4.3 Satan's voyeurism

It is ironic that the first descriptions and visual images that we as readers obtain of Paradise are accompanied by Satan. He is like an explorer of a new world and we share his sights and experiences. As he stands outside the gates of Heaven, he

Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this World at once. As when a Scout
Through dark and desert wayes with peril gone
All night; at last by break of chearful dawne
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing Hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some forein land
First-seen, or some renown'd Metropolis
With glistering Spires and Pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the Rising Sun guilds with his beams (3.542-51).

It is as if he has been travelling all night and then at dawn he stumbles upon his destination. The narrator's description seems very positive and it is as if Satan has found his home at last and is in wonder of God's creation – it is no wonder that it is exactly this same view with which he tempts Eve in her dream (5.86-90). From the gates he was drawn to the sun from where

Here matter new to gaze the Devil met
Undazl'd, farr and wide his eye commands,
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
But all Sun-shine, as when his Beams at Noon
Culminate from th' Equator, as they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body opaque can fall, and the Aire,
No where so cleer, sharp'nd his visual ray
To objects distant farr... (3.613-21);

and so from the aspect of the sun he has a clear view into Paradise as

From hence, no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
Starr interpo'd, however small he sees,
Not unconform to the other shinning Globes

Earth and the Gard'n of God, with Cedars crowned
 Above all Hills. As when by night the Glass
 Of *Galileo*, less assur'd, observes
 Imagind Lands and Regions in the Moon (5.257-63)

Satan's looking into Paradise is paralleled to observing through a telescope, which is actually flawed and tricks sight into seeing imagined worlds on the moon. The untrustworthiness of sight is again fore-fronted, as what is seen cannot be totally relied upon. The telescope also has a voyeuristic feeling to it as the image is focused on and really scrutinised. This is the start of Satan's dualistic obsession with Paradise – he gets a voyeuristic, obsessive pleasure from Paradise but at the same time he wants to destroy the goodness that is inherent in Paradise. His appetite is awoken and he says to Uriel that he has an “Unspeakable desire to see, and know / All these wondrous works, but chiefly Man” (3.662-3) and so he has to travel to Paradise so “That [he] may find him, and with secret gaze, / Or open admiration him behold” (3.671-2). The idea of viewing in secret becomes an issue immediately and this is exactly how Satan behaves in Paradise. It is interesting that Satan actually talks to Uriel about this secret viewing and Uriel seems to say that “To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps/ Contented with report hear onely in heav'n” is a good thing and “merits praise” (3.687). Uriel, however, understands that Satan is going to show praise to God's creation by looking at something beautiful and magnificent – God's creation needs to be looked at and praised. This highlights one of the classical hierarchical classifications that of the use of vision as a way of praising God and his wonders. Satan is heading to Paradise to gaze in wonder at His works – to praise – but he is also going to ruin its beauty and defile the act of gazing. Plato postulated that if something was aesthetically beautiful then it was in harmony with the universe and God's creation⁴⁵ which is in total contrast to Satan's

⁴⁵ Umberto Eco (Ed). *On Beauty: A History of a Western Idea*. London: Secker & Warburg, 2004, pp. 48-50.

withered condition. Satan wishes to destroy God's beauty as it highlights his condition and he knows that his previous condition can never be regained. So he has a love hate relationship for Paradise – he is in awe of the whole creation but he still wants to destroy it.

Satan lands on the walls of high green bushes which instead of keeping him out “gave prospect large” (4.144) and he is compared to a “Wolfe, whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey, / Watching where Shepherds pen thir Flocks at eeve” (4.184-59). He is a voyeuristic predator that is biding his time to destroy his prey, but at the same time is totally overawed by what he sees, for instance, when he is sitting on the Tree of Knowledge “Beneath him with new wonder now he views” (4.205). The dualistic nature of Satan's feelings are also emphasised when

From this Assyrian Garden, where the Fiend
Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
Of living Creatures new to sight (4.285-7).

So he was not happy with what he observed, but at the same time he was fascinated by it. Adam and Eve walked “naked on, nor shund the sight / Of God or Angel” (4.319) in Paradise; they were not afraid of anybody watching or seeing them – they were innocent to the idea of voyeuristic pleasure. However, Satan was mesmerised, he “still in gaze, as first he stood” (4.556) – he could not move and could only exclaim “O Hell! what doe mine eyes with grief behold” (4.358). This vision of Adam and Eve is too much for him and he becomes totally captivated. Furthermore, he is able to change shape into whatever animal suits his purpose to get closer and look at and listen to Adam and Eve as

...himself now one,
Now another, as thir shape servd best his end
Neerer to view his prey, and unesp'i'd
To mark what of thir state he might learn
By word or action markt (4.397-401).

This obsession becomes more apparent as he “Ey’d them askance, and to himself thus plaind [complained]/ Sight hateful, sight tormenting” (4.504-5). He seems to follow them everywhere: even the angels that catch him accuse him of “watching at the head of these that sleep” (4.826), but, as we as readers, know he was also waiting for the right moment to whisper into Eve’s ear and so poison her dreams. This he accomplishes later and awakens the voyeuristic idea that even Heaven is watching and desiring Eve:

Heav’n wakes with all his eyes,
Whom to behold but thee, Natures desire
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze (5.44-7).

This voyeuristic idea then continues throughout the descriptions of Satan’s rhetoric which leads to the Fall. This awakening of desire and voyeurism could also be being used to awaken Eve’s vanity and so make her feel that she is desired. Satan, when disguised as a serpent, takes “Such pleasure ... to behold” (9.455) Eve that he initially forgets his evil intentions. He immediately apologises to Eve for his “gaze / Insatiate” (9.535-6) and defends his gazing by boosting Eve’s vanity:

Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
By gift, and thy Celestial Beautie adore
With ravishment beheld, there best beheld
Where universally admir’d; but here
In this enclosure wild, these Beasts among,
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
Half what in thee is fair, one man except,
Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who shouldst be seen
A Goddess among Gods, ador’d and serv’d
By Angels numberless, thy daily Train (9.539-548).

This is fascinating as Satan is greedily watching Eve – so that he can not get enough and overindulges – and Satan says that all the angels and beasts do the same, which, of course, is a lie. Satan continues to work on her vanity as he says that he tasted the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge which allowed him to see “all things visible in Heav’n, /

Or Earth, or Middle” (9.604-5),⁴⁶ but that nothing could compare to her beauty which is why he was compelled to come and gaze at her (9.605-12). This whole idea supports Aristotle’s basis of the hierarchy of the senses in a negative way:

If one sees a beautiful statue, or horse, or human being, or hears singing, without any accompanying wish for eating, drinking, or sexual indulgence, but only with the wish to see the beautiful and to hear the singers, he would not be thought profligate any more than those who were charmed by the Sirens. Temperance and profligacy have to do with those two senses whose objects are alone felt by and give pleasure and pain to brutes as well; and these are the senses of taste and touch, the brutes seeming insensible to the pleasures of practically all the other senses alike, e.g. harmony and beauty.⁴⁷

Aristotle argues that the senses of sight and hearing are senses that are for appreciating beauty and overindulgence should not be a problem unless some of the baser senses are mixed in with the perceptive process; this is exactly what is happening with Satan, the sense of sight is for the observation of beauty, but due to the sexual, and gustatory overtones then sight can lead to the sin of visual gluttony. This visual gluttony is a problem that is returned to in Adam’s visions of the future when the men in the vision “let thir eyes / Rove without rein” (11.585-6) over the women in the tents. The sense of vision is also strongly connected with the Fall and sin as Jesus warned “If your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you”.⁴⁸ Augustine also added to this by saying that he was “tempted through the eye”.⁴⁹ So vision is a sense that is primarily used for observing beauty, however, it may also lead to sin if the baser senses are mixed with visual perception. So the temptations that are brought into cognition through the eye need to be kept under control. This is where internal discernment and vigilance become important. This is exactly where Eve failed, she was not vigilant enough, i.e.

⁴⁶ See 2.

⁴⁷ Aristotle: Eudemian Ethics 1230b available at www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0049 [last accessed 23.04.2007].

⁴⁸ Matthew 18:9.

⁴⁹ Saint Augustine, *Confessions*. Translated by R.S Pine-Coffin. Harmandsworth: Penguin Books, 1961, p. 259.

she was “Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warned” (9.363), where ‘watch’ is a metaphor for mental, intellectual vigilance, or ‘internal watching.’ Satan managed to use the visual sense as a weak-link in Eve’s moral defences which allowed him access to her soul. This tempting of the eye can be seen when Satan makes himself attractive in the form of the serpent “To lure her Eye” (9.518); and once the fruit was seen it “Sollicited her longing eye” (9.743), it was “Fair to the Eye” (9.777) and merely “to behold / Might tempt alone” (9.735).

According to Korsmeyer, Aristotle also thought that women could not control their appetites and emotions.⁵⁰ This is exactly what Satan is doing - tempting Eve through her weakness to vanity and her weakness to resist temptation. And so Satan attacks the weakest link according to Aristotelian tradition, woman, by targeting her only weak spot – her lack of control of her appetites.

When viewing a beautiful object, the viewer is usually more active and the object has more of a passive role. However, there was a certain amount of philosophical debate that had been going on for centuries before and during Milton’s time concerning the nature of light; it appears that Milton also joins in the discussion by including “Male and Femal Light, / Which two great Sexes animate the World” (8.150-1).⁵¹ Empedocles, in the fifth century B.C.E., believed that “Sight proceeded from the eye to the object seen; the eyes rayed their own light” and so sight is more active and masculine;⁵² Galen, a second-century physician, said that

A body that is seen does one of two things: either it sends something from itself to us and thereby gives an indication of its particular character, or if

⁵⁰ Carolyn Korsmeyer. *Making Sense of Taste: Food and Philosophy*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2002, p. 32.

⁵¹ Male light also refers to the sun and female light refers to the moon.

⁵² Quoted in Arthur Zajonc. *Catching the Light: The Entwined History of Light and Mind*. New York: Bantam Books, 1993, p. 20.

it does not itself send something, it waits for some sensory power to come to it from us.⁵³

And so, he left the active/passive interpretation of vision entirely open, but opened the discussion of a more passive, feminine vision, i.e. light emanates from some source and penetrates the eye. Milton seems to use this masculine aspect of viewing when Eve's beauty "Shot forth peculiar Graces"⁵⁴ (5.15) and her "Eye darted contagious Fire" (9.1036) and she "from about her shot Darts of desire / Into all Eyes" (8.62-3). It is extremely interesting that Eve is associated with this active viewing, and all around her seem to be receptacles. Classen states that the eye, from a masculine perspective, has been considered to be seminal since Classical times: "the eyes [do] not passively receive visual images, but actively [emit] rays which [come] into contact with the perceived object".⁵⁵ An extremely early theory of vision was postulated by Empedocles who said that Aphrodite created the eye and the experience of seeing by joining the four sacred elements⁵⁶ together with love.⁵⁷

Aphrodite then kindled the fire of the eye at the primal hearth fire of the universe and formed passages for transmitting the eye's fine interior fire to the world. Thus our seeing was born of love, conceived of love.⁵⁸

Empedocles thought that sight proceeded from the eye to the viewed object: so that the eye sent out active rays. For vision to occur then there had to be a harmony and resonance between the fire in the eye and the viewed object.⁵⁹ This theory is very similar to Milton's usage and it is interesting how Eve is compared to Aphrodite, one of the Graces. This theory was developed further by Plato: he believed the fire from the

⁵³ Quoted in David C. Lindberg. *Theories of Vision from Al-Kindi to Kepler*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976, p. 10.

⁵⁴ Eve is being associated with the three Graces one of whom was Aphrodite.

⁵⁵ Classen, 1998, p.71.

⁵⁶ Air, water, fire and earth.

⁵⁷ Laura Sewall. *Sight and Sensibility: The Ecopsychology of Perception*. New York: Tarcher / Putnum, 1999, p. 24.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 24.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 25.

eye mixed with daylight forming a harmonious body of light.⁶⁰ It is interesting that a harmonious relationship has to be developed between the viewer and the viewed. This harmony is something that will be observed with the other senses and connected with God's harmonious order of the universe; it forms an important shift from the sinless world to the sinful: when sin enters due to the Fall then a disharmony occurs in God's created harmonious universe.

2.4.4 Adam and Eve

Adam does not want Eve to be out of his sight. He loves her and is also highly attracted by her beauty, which are the main reasons for his wanting her close; but it could be because he does not want to let Satan have a chance to tempt Eve at all (9.294). Aristotelian philosophy could help in understanding this, because, according to Aristotle, it is partly the role of males to help control the female appetites.⁶¹ After the Fall, Eve returns and feels "The pain of absence from [Adam's] sight" (9.861), which is a double-edged sword – if Adam had been there he may have prevented Eve from tasting and, hence, prevented the pain of shame. Adam wishes that Eve would have not eaten the apple and it would have been "only coveting to Eye" (9.923), but Satan's persuasive technique had made too many things "coveting to the Eye" and this is one of the reasons Eve tastes. Upon Adam eating the forbidden fruit, Adam also degrades the sense of sight by mixing it up with the lower senses when he sees Eve is "exact of taste" (9.1017), so that she tastes good⁶² and he immediately ravishes her.

Eve actually falls into visual error as soon as she enters Paradise; she recounts that

As I bent down to look, just opposite,

⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 25.

⁶¹ Classen, 1998, p. 32.

⁶² "Exact of taste" can also be considered a pun meaning that she has good taste – a sense of taste.

A Shape within the watry gleam appeerd
 Bending to look on me, I started back,
 It started back, but pleas'd I soon returnd,
 Pleas'd it returnd as soon with answering looks
 Of sympathie and love; there I had fixt
 Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire (4.460-6).

She falls in love with her own image and becomes obsessed by it. She becomes fooled by her senses and thinks that her image is separate from her and falls in love with it. She falls into a longing desire and the idea of visual gluttony is incorporated into her staring. This is reminiscent of how Satan behaves by lowering the sense of sight to gluttony. It is God who manages to correct her behaviour by saying "What thou seest ...is thy self" (4.467-8), and so God manages to control and correct Eve's appetites. Therefore vanity is looked on as being a feminine weakness that again needs to be kept in check by males according to Aristotle's theory. It is eventually this weakness in Eve that Satan uses to his advantage to bring about the Fall.

When Adam awakes in Paradise, he sees the heavens, he asks the birds and animals if they knew anything about his creation, but nature is unable to answer his questions. Adam is unable to read the Book of Nature that tells all of God's glory and wonder. It is only when Adam falls into a deep sleep – so that his reason is also freed – that God reveals the truth and introduces Paradise in a vision.⁶³ Therefore, this is another example of sensory perception alone not leading directly to cognition; one needs inner-illumination, insight or revelation which is exactly what Milton asks for in his invocation in Book III.

2.5 Visual conclusions

Milton seems to have only been following traditional classical and biblical traditions when he used images of lightness and darkness and emphasised the eyes of

⁶³ See 6.1 for the importance of sleep in regards to revelation and reason.

God. However, the use of visual imagery and sight related references throughout the whole of the poem is immense. The use of light and dark words actually coordinates with the narration, so that more light words are used for Heaven and *vice versa* for Hell. Through all the metaphors concerned with light/dark and visual images in general, Milton takes us on a moralistic *tour de force*: vision and light are seen through various shades all the way to an actual palpable darkness – which is an oppressive, almost suffocating darkness. All these shades cover spiritual, moralistic, physical and mental realms giving an extremely wide understanding of visual imagery. Milton uses darkness as a metaphor for evil, as Satan tries to reinstate the chaos of darkness in Paradise; after the Fall darkness rules the night, which is very different to the situation before the Fall. This use of darkness could also be viewed as being a psychological/moral turmoil that one has to pass through to reach the light: there may be a dark hell surrounding you but paradise is eventually found within as one finds peace within oneself: the “mind is its own place, and in it self / Can make a Heav’n of Hell, a Hell of Heav’n (1554-5); this is exactly what Satan could not obtain because he had a hell inside him, which he obviously understood when he lamented “my self am Hell” (4.75). However, it was possible for Adam and Eve to “possess/ A paradise within” (12.586-7), even after being expelled from Paradise. For Martz, darkness symbolises “the fallen world of everyday life”,⁶⁴ which can only be illuminated by the Holy Spirit, Christ or God. The only way of restoring light is by calling upon Christ – so that spiritual blindness is healed and the scales or mists that cover the soul are removed. It is ironically Satan who expresses an important spiritual truism, “...long is the way / And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light” (2.432-3): it is a constant and difficult fight against darkness that leads to Heaven.

⁶⁴ Louis L Martz. *The Paradise Within: Studies in Vaughan, Traherne and Milton*. New Haven: Yale University Press 1964, p. 115.

Another issue that is highlighted throughout the text is that of not being able to fully trust visual perception. Perception is a subjective process, which varies according to gender, culture and personal experiences. Perception, however, does not necessarily lead to cognition, as was seen with Adam not being able to understand the Book of Nature and the false light of the devils; a certain amount of insight, intuition and revelation is often needed in conjunction with the senses for cognition to occur. Mankind is also given an “Umpire *Conscience*, whom if they will hear, Light after light well us’d they shall obtain” (3.195-6).⁶⁵ So the internal eye is not the only way of discerning truth – the conscience also needs to be incorporated when making decisions upon sensory information. When the senses are used in conjunction with inner-sight and conscience, then appropriate moralistic decisions and conclusions should be reached. God is the only being able to truly discern hearts whose “sight discernes/ Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy Mount”(5.711-2): He is the only one who can trust his senses – because he sees into souls of people.

As mentioned in 2.4.3, Plato, developed Empedocles’ theory, and postulated that active fire from the eye mixed with daylight forming a harmonious body of light. To actually see and understand then this light had to form a harmonious relationship with the viewed object.⁶⁶ However, vision can be deceived which means that the harmonic resonance must be out of tune or is falsified. This can be seen with the examples where vision is tricked or fooled, for example with the discernment of sin: Uriel was unable to detect Satan’s evilness as he was able to counterfeit holy light, and, hence, resonate like an angel; so that the resonance of the eye and inner-eye are tricked as the viewed object gives off a false resonance. This harmony is something that changes when darkness enters Paradise, nothing physically seems to change in the

⁶⁵ I.e. God will give mankind a conscience and if this conscience is listened to then God will provide the light, love and his presence.

⁶⁶ Sewell, p. 25.

world: the moon and stars still give off their light, but Adam notices that the nights are black and different to before the Fall. Of course, this could be a metaphorical change, or one it is only perceived internally or tacitly, either way it does not really make a difference as a change has occurred and God's harmony is disrupted.

3. THE AUDITORY SENSORIUM

Now I will do nothing but listen,
 To accrue what I hear into this song, to let sounds contribute toward it.
 I hear all sounds running together, combined, fused or following,
 Sounds of the city and sounds out of the city, sounds of the day and
 night...¹

This is what Milton does, he listens and then relates. He has filled *Paradise Lost* with three different soundscapes: the soundscapes of Hell and Chaos will be included together, where loud noises and mayhem seem to predominate; and the soundscapes of Heaven and Paradise. The soundscape of Hell invades that of Heaven during the rebellion of the fallen angels and the raging battle, otherwise peace, silence or angelic voices fill Heaven. The soundscape of Heaven also overlaps into Paradise as the angelic singing can be heard at night by Adam and Eve. Finally, the soundscape of Paradise is one of beautiful natural sounds: birds singing, leaves rustling and the trickle of water which all make up a relaxing, idyllic environment.

Other considerations that will be considered within the sensorium of hearing are how hearing is gender related i.e. how hearing is considered more of more passive and hence a more feminine sense.² The use of silence within each of the soundscapes of Heaven, Hell and Paradise is also interesting and will form the basis of another subchapter.

Paradise Lost was written at a time when the oral tradition of reciting and listing to poetry, ballads and folk tales was coming to an end. But the paradox is that the whole poem was dictated by Milton, so the poem was actually created orally and it also needed to be read back to Milton afterwards. Words, phrases and soundscape descriptions are spread throughout all of the books in *Paradise Lost* and help to bring the text alive to the senses. Oral telling of history was important in the past and oral

¹ Walt Whitman. *Leaves of Grass*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, p.51.

² This is also an aspect of vision and can be seen in 2.

words were chosen in written accounts during the seventeenth century: “You have heard how a truce for five years was concluded between the kings of Fraunce and Spaine”³ and “You have heard discoursed unto you the principall lawes”⁴ And according to Woolf, these early writers viewed their works not only as something to be read but also something that is read out: they were “instruments for the conveyance of their authorial voice to a public which in turn was conceived of as an audience”⁵ This is exactly what *Paradise Lost* is: it is full of story telling and the recounting of history among its characters, but also involves the reader as the final intended audience. For instance when the archangel Michael starts to tell Adam about events in the future, he says “I will relate, / Thou give due attendance and, attend” (12.11-29).

3.1 The Soundscapes of Hell and Chaos

Hell seems to be a vast, empty cavern in which sounds echo and resound, for instance when Satan “call’d so loud, that all the hollow Deep / Of Hell resounded” (1.314-5), “the hollow Abyss / Heard farr and wide” (2.518-9) and when Sin

... cry’d out *Death*;
Hell trembl’d at the hideous Name, and sigh’d
From all her Caves and back resounded *Death* (2.787-9).

So any noise is echoed back, which creates an even worse soundscape where the sense of hearing is constantly bombarded and filled with sounds.

Noises of war and warfare are rampant in Hell with the “warlike sound / Of Trumpets loud and Clarions” (1.531-2) and “...grasped Arms / Clash’d on thir sounding Shields the din of war” (1.668-9) and in Chaos “the noise / Of endless Warrs” (2.896-7) add to the level of loudness that is represented as being close to deafening in

³ John Speed. *The historie of Great Britaine* (1623), p. 699, quoted in D.R Woolf ‘Hearing in Renaissance England’, in Mark M Smith (Editor). *Hearing History: A Reader*. London: University of Georgia Press, 2004, p.112.

⁴ Thomas Dannett, *A continuation of the history of France* (1600), p. 132, quoted in Woolf, p. 112.

⁵ Woolf, p.112.

the enclosed caverns of Hell. In fact the sounds of real-time war have been compared to Milton's depictions of Hell, such as the artillery bombings experienced in the trenches in the First World War when the senses are constantly activated and never at rest.⁶

The sounds of anguish and pain also add to this soundscape as they also reverberate through the cavernous wastes: "These yelling Monsters that with ceaseless cry / Surround me" (2.795-6); "...lamentation loud / Heard on the rueful stream" (2.579-80); and "everlasting groans" (2.184). Sin was also plagued with a constant noise around her and even inside her as

A cry of Hell Hounds never ceasing bark'd
With wide *Cerberian* mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous Peal: yet, when they list, would creep,
If aught disturb'd thir noyse, into her woomb,
And kennel there, yet there still bark'd and howl'd,
Within unseen (2.654-9).

The fallen angels' voices, actions and movements also create a further negative soundscape. The crowd of fallen angels, on showing assent of the speeches and plans at the end of the conclave, applaud loud and

...such a murmur filld
Th' Assembly, as when hollow Rocks retain
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long
Had rous'd the Sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Sea-faring men orewatcht... (2.284-8).

They are compared to the false echoes of the wind that can put tired sailors to sleep and so put them in extreme danger from crashing on the rocks. This description is reminiscent of Aristotle and Magnus who discuss the sonorous properties of metals. According to them, gold, silver and copper were the most sonorous metals due to their being made up of water and earth (the earthly part contained air and sulphur – a possible link with hell). If metals that contain a lot of air are set resonating then the sound is retained for a long time, due to them releasing the resonating air over a long period of

⁶ J.B Priestley. *Margin Released: A Writer's Reminiscences*. London: Heinemann, 1962, p. 100.

time.⁷ When the fallen angels arise, their sound is “Of Thunder heard remote” (2.477); when the conclave of devils is over, it is announced on “Trumpets real” (2.515), and the fallen angels “With deafening shout, return’d them loud acclaim” (2.520); and afterwards “Hell scarce holds the wilde uproar” (2.541). On Satan’s return from Paradise after bringing about the Fall, there is a mighty uproar (10.455) and after giving his speech of supposed success he expects further praise and

Thir universal shout and high applause
To fill his eare, when to the contrary he hears
On all sides, form innumerable tongues
A dismal universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn... (10.505-9)

So instead of his expected praise he hears a tumult of hissing, as all the fallen angels are turned into snakes and cannot speak anymore “But hiss for hiss returnd with forked tongue / To forked tongue” (10.518-9). “Dreadful was the din / Of hissing through the Hall” (10.521-2). This hissing is even emphasised further (10.543; 10.546; 10.573) which makes it dominate the whole soundscape as the multitude of snakes try to express their increased anger and pain, but only seem to add to it by increasing the noise level. So through expressing their own pain and torment in the only way they can – by hissing – they are exacerbating their punishment.

These soundscapes of Hell are also paralleled in Adam’s visions of the future: as a punishment for trying to attain Heaven through the Tower of Babel, God

... sets
Upon thir Native Language, and instead
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown:
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud
Among the Builders; each to others calls
Not understood, till hoarse, and all in rage (12.52-89).

⁷ Burnett, p.69.

This is reminiscent of the hiss of the snakes in Hell, as with rage and frustration they cannot communicate with each other and only make more noise. Those in Heaven only look down on all the “hubbub strange / And hear the din” (12.60-1), as this soundscape on earth is heard all the way to Heaven. In addition to all of these sounds, the sound of Satan’s voice is even more horrific as he “upsent / A shout that tore Hells Concave, and beyond / Frightened the Reign of *Chaos* and old Night” (1.541-3).

When the loud metallic noises and other sounds are added to the environment, it turns into an auditory, hellish environment which could be paralleled to what was happening in London and other cities during Milton’s age. London was known to be a noisy place from the travel accounts of people visiting⁸ and as the trades and workshops increased rapidly, the decibel level of the hammering and pounding must have increased too.⁹ When this noise is added to the traffic sounds that were also deafening, London must have had an extremely hellish soundscape too. For a blind man this must have especially pronounced as through the darkness a wild mixture of sounds “assaults his eare / With loudest vehemence” (2.951-4). So an autobiographical perspective can be attached to the soundscape in Hell.

But what exactly is noise? Noise according to Bailey is “sound out of place”.¹⁰ It does not become conscious until it reaches the levels of being a nuisance or a lot worse. So the noises that are experienced in Hell constantly interfere with thoughts, speech and being in general. “Terror arrives first through the ear”¹¹ as we hear the army coming before we see it, we hear the trumpets of war and the cries of pain without necessary seeing where they come from. All of this is added to in an echoing

⁸ Peter Bailey. ‘Breaking the Sound Barrier’ and Bruce R. Smith. ‘The Soundscapes of Early Modern England’ both in Mark M. Smith (Ed.). *Hearing History: A Reader*. London: University of Georgia Press, 2004, pp. 29, 88 respectively.

⁹ Smith, 89.

¹⁰ Bailey, 23. This is reminiscent of Mary Douglas’s famous definition of dirt as “matter out of place” which is a wonderful definition for any form of pollution –auditory, visual, and olfactory. In *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concept of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge, 1966, p. 36.

¹¹ Ibid.

environment as sounds rebound from every surface and interfere with each other – so that the listener is totally disorientated. Sound is also a palpable sense as the vibrations can be felt – so in an extremely noisy soundscape the body would never be free from stimulation. In fact the angels of heaven travel near to Hell’s gates and hear “Noise ... [of]/ Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage” (8.243-4). The noise in Hell and Chaos are part of the punishment and torture that the fallen angels have to live with eternally and are described very succinctly as Satan crosses Chaos his ear is “peal’d / With noises loud and ruinous” (2.920-1) and

At length a universal hubbub wilde
Of stunning sounds and voices all confus’d
Born through the hollow dark assaults his eare
With loudest vehemence (2.951-4);

Satan’s ears ring with the noises of Hell and are constantly battered by the deafening and overbearing soundscape. So Hell is a place where the din makes it impossible to really focus on thoughts. The noises seem to reverberate and echo from every surface. In Greek mythology, Echo was a nymph on Mount Helicon who with her constant chatter distracted the goddess Hera from catching her husband. Hera punished Echo by cursing her to only speak the last words addressed to her. Echo then fell in love but frustrated by her inability to converse eventually faded away until only her voice remained.¹² The frustrating aspect is something that is felt in Hell – at times it seems as if any spoken words assault the devils’ ears in a jumbled mess of noise and confusion; and any thought or conversation is disrupted constantly by the noise. So the civilised art of discussion is constantly frustrated and thwarted which creates a condition of anxiety and distress.

¹² Tresidder, p. 162.

3.2 The Soundscape of Heaven

Heaven, in stark contrast to Hell, vibrates with the sweet choirs of angels:

... with the innumerable sound
Of Hymns and sacred Songs, wherewith thy Throne
Encompass'd shall resound thee ever blest (3.147-9)

and

The multitude of Angels with a shout
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heav'n rung
With Jubilee and loud Hosanna's filld
Th' eternal Regions" (3.345-9).

They praise and worship God and the Messiah with instruments as well as song “and never shall [their] Harp thy praise / Forget, nor from thy Fathers praise disjoin” (3.414-5). Trumpets are also part of the musical soundscape; they are used during the battle in Heaven (see 3.2.2) for military purposes, but are also used for calling angels together: “th' Angelic blast / Filld all the Regions” (11.76-7) of Heaven to which the angels responded and hurried to hear God's words.

The hymns and music seem to be surrounding God all the time “Melodious Hymns about the Sovran Throne / Alternate all night long” (5.656-7),¹³ and so they seem to be an intrinsic part of Heaven. After God had created the world, Heaven is full of

... the sound
Symphonious of ten thousand Harpes that tun'd
Angelic harmonies: the Earth, the Aire
Resounded, (thou remember'st, for thou heardest)
The Heav'ns and all the Constellations rung,
The Planets in thir stations list'ning stood,
While the bright Pomp ascended jubilant (7.558-64).

It is ironic that this music and singing is expressed with the same words as the noises in Hell – “resounding” and “rung”, but now the distraction and frustrating aspects have

¹³ C.f. incense that also constantly surrounds God in Heaven - see olfaction 3.3 and 3.3.1.

been removed: the music is uplifting, inspiring and enlightening. The universe resounds with jubilation and as Raphael points out this is the same rejoicing that can be heard sometimes in Paradise (see 3.3). This angelic singing is also expressed as “the sound of Seas” (10.642) – powerful but also lulling at the same time.¹⁴ The whole harmonious relationship of all the music and singing is expressed: God has created a harmonic, vibrating universe that is kept attuned by the resonating. The singing of the angels incorporates all three of Boethius’s classifications (see 1.3), but the main idea is *musica humana*: this binds the soul and the body and its influence extends to Paradise where it soothes and influences Adam and Eve spiritually. The whole of Heaven is attuned to the same rhythm or “Angelic harmonies” which means that angels can spontaneously open up into song and they will also be in key and tune. This is part of God’s order – the universe is totally attuned and vibrating with the same notes.

3.2.1 The Battle for Heaven

The soundscape of the battlefield is described as “The brazen Throat of Warr” (11.713). According to Flanagan, this refers to the trumpets that sound on the battlefield,¹⁵ but it also awakens a multitude of painful and terrified screams. When the battle starts, the air is filled with “the shout / Of Battel” (6.96-7) and “rushing sound / Of onset ended soon all milder thought” (6.97-8). The terrible sounds of the battlefield disrupted all other thought, just as happened in Hell. During the battle, when Abdiel strikes Satan and causes him to fall, then the angels

...bid sound
Th’ Arch-Angel trumpet; through the vast of Heaven
It sounded, and the faithful Armies rung
Hosanna to the Highest (6.202-5).

¹⁴ “...the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings...” Rev. 19:6.

¹⁵ Flanagan, note 229, p. 682.

Trumpets seem to be an integral part of the battlefield, as troops are rallied and certain victories are celebrated and proclaimed. But the battle did not end with Satan's first wounds; it was at this point that all hell literally breaks loose. This is where an extremely strong and vivid soundscape is entered as the battle rages worse than ever:

... now storming fury rose,
And clamour such as heard in Heav'n till now
Was never, Arms on Armour clashing bray'd
Horrible discord, and the madding Wheelles
Of brazen Chariots rag'd; dire was the noise
Of conflict; over head the dismal hiss
Of fiery Darts in flaming volies flew (6.207-13).

No such noise has ever been heard in Heaven before and so the discord of sin and the fallen angels manages to disturb "Heav'ns blessed peace" (6.266-7) for a while as "...all Heav'n / Resounded" (6.217-8) and shook with the battle.

On the final day of the battle, "The matin Trumpet" wakes the victorious angels and calls them to arms. This is comparable to the matin or the morning song of the birds in Paradise (3.3); the more peaceful awakening has been replaced by a more violent or warlike, heraldic call, which really emphasises the loss of peace and how the whole musical atmosphere has changed in Heaven.

However, for the final battle, the rebellious angels have invented the canon to use against the angels which "shall send forth /From far with thundering noise" (6.486-7) and "roar /Emboweld with outrageous noise the Air" (6.586-7). So the heavens are filled with an "Infernal noise" (6.667) - the sound of artificial thunder that does not originate from God. But when the canons are fired, it is only then that the battle becomes unlike anything else imaginable to human ears. Now "Warr seem'd a civil Game / To this uproar" (6.667-8), as the previous battle and any war waged by mankind on earth is but a game when the noise of the canons and angels battling are heard. Finally when the angels and Christ have won the battle, the fallen angels are

expelled from Heaven; this noise is horrendous and even “Hell heard th’ unsufferable noise” (6.867) and would have metaphorically tried to run away had not it been fixed into place.

Finally it is worth mentioning here that Satan’s persuasion of the rebellious angels is carried out with “counterfeted truth” that “held thir ears” (5.771) which is also “argument blasphemous, false and proud! / Words which no eare ever to hear in Heav’n / Expected” (5.809-11). In other words, the ears of Heaven are offended by war and by Satan’s lies, which causes further offence in and harder repercussions. This emphasises the fact that one can not always trust perception, words have to be considered and reasoned. Simple perception is not enough to allow cognition, but the perceived information needs to be rationally and intuitively analysed.

3.3 The Soundscape of Paradise

According to Smith the music of early modern Europe was “full of bird songs turned into madrigals”¹⁶ and natural sounds were formulated into compositions.¹⁷ Paradise is full of sounds of nature and they seem to be of the purest notes: they are natural music and are a manifestation of God’s harmony in the natural world. Paradise is full of “murmuring waters” (4.260, 4.453, 8.263); and singing “Birds thir quire [choir] apply” (4.264).

The nightingale seems to play an important role in Paradise as a complement to the silence that is present at night time (3.38-40). The nightingale seems to stay awake all night as “she all night long her amorous descant sung” (4.603).¹⁸ Other

¹⁶ Smith , 87

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ According to Flannagan (note 21, p. 417), Milton apparently associated himself with the nightingale, his poetic voice being reminiscent of the bird’s song, both before and after his blindness. The nightingale was also associated with the Greek Myth of Philomela, who was raped by her brother and then had her tongue cut out to prevent her from telling anyone; she was turned into a nightingale by the pitying (cont.)

birds and animals also occupy the soundscape: firstly ones of not such a peaceful nature are the seagull that emits a “clang” (7.422)¹⁹; and the “crested Cock whose clarion sounds / The silent hours” (7.443-4); however, there are other birds that warble in the branches (8.265) and sheep that bleat (7.472) which produce a tranquil rural soundscape.

The sounds of Heaven sometimes waft into Paradise as the angels sing and play their instruments. Adam notes to Eve

...how often from the steep
Of echoing Hill of Thicket have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to others note
Singing their great Creator; oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk
With Heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds
In full harmonic number joind, thir songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven (4. 680-9).

The fact that angelic singing and instrument playing can be heard quite freely in Paradise is mentioned again by Adam later, when he is talking with Raphael (5.546-8). As this phenomenon is mentioned twice in the poem on separate occasions, then it forefronts its importance in the soundscape of Paradise. It is related to *musica humana*, which binds the soul and the body and its influence extends to Paradise where it soothes and influences Adam and Eve spiritually: Adam and Eve resonate with the same harmony, as they are sinless. The angelic voices of Heaven also seem to complement the nightingale, the night time voice of Paradise. The angelic voices and the nightingale create an extremely beautiful and sublime, nocturnal lullabies as Adam and Eve are “lulld by Nightingales” (4.771) as they sleep in each others arms.

gods (Tressider, 341). The biographical connections with the nightingale arise because of its associations with poets and with the suffering that Milton must have gone through with his blindness.

¹⁹ According to Flannagan, this is the harsh sound that seagulls make: Flannagan, note 149, p. 551; and according to the *OED*, clang: is a loud, resonant metallic sound and clank: a loud, sharp sound or series of sounds.

The voice of God is also heard in Paradise and has many ways of expression – these vary on a continuum from gentleness and “milde” (6.28) to extreme anger; he also seems to laugh at some of the ideas of men (8.78). These emotions are evident through the descriptions of how God uses His voice. God speaks to Adam quite normally before the Fall: they are able to discuss and debate over different issues (8.269-378) and in fact God’s voice

...that celestial Colloquie sublime
As with an object that excels the sense,
Dazl’d and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
Of sleep (8.455-8),

puts Adam to sleep with its lulling power. However, on giving the only rule to Adam, God spoke “Sternly” and “pronounce’d / The rigid interdiction which resounds / Yet dreadful in mine eare” (8.333-5).²⁰ Furthermore, when angered, then “Amidst in Thunder utter’d thus his voice” (10.33); God’s voice becomes associated with thunder – loud, threatening and fear provoking.

Of course, the manner in which something is heard is also dependent upon the person listening. So for instance, if someone has a guilty conscience they may hear a totally neutral expression as attacking. After the Fall, Adam says to God that he is afraid of God’s voice to which God responds “My voice thou oft hast heard, and has’t not fear’d. / ... how is it now become / So dreadful to thee” (10.119-21). God’s voice seems to have changed to Adam’s sinful ears. It could be the effects of shame and fear of God’s retribution upon Adam, or that the sense of hearing has actually changed after the Fall and God’s voice has become “dreadful” and thunder-like (10.779-80). This is repeated later by Archangel Michael when he says that “...the voice of God / To mortal eare is dreadful” (12.235-6); which means that once one has fallen then the conscience

²⁰ God’s words echo or resound in Adam’s ears. This is interesting to compare with how Satan’s words “in [Eve’s] ears the sound / Yet rung of his perswasive words” (9.736-7). The ringing in Eve’s ears seems (cont) more negative and is reminiscent of Satan’s journey through Chaos when his ears “peal’d / With noises loud and ruinous” (2.920-1).

plays an important role with how something is heard. A disharmony has been caused by sin and a mortal person is no longer attuned to the *musica humana*. To find this harmony again, then a person needs to atone – to find the unity and reconciliation with God.

Mornings start with the gentle natural music of rusting leaves, flowing water and magnificent birdsong. All is silent apart from

... th' only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills [brooks],
...and the shrill Matin Song
Of birds on every bough... (5.5-8).

So other birds take over the nightingale's work and awaken Adam and Eve together with the smells of the opening flowers (4.2.1). Every morning, upon waking, Adam and Eve then say their prayers and offer thanks to God

... in fit strains pronounc't or sung
Unmediated, such prompt eloquence
Flowed from thir lips, in Prose or numerous Verse,
More tuneable than needed Lute or Harp
To add more sweetness... (5.148-52)

These prayers do not need any instrument to add to their beauty or harmony and so pure notes of prayer flow up to heaven.²¹ These prayers are compared to the natural praise offered to God by birds and natural sounds of nature. So, as will be seen in the chapter on olfaction (4.3.1), Paradise itself is an offering of thanks to God: and the whole of creation offers aural praise.

It can also be observed that the movement of the planets and stars offer praise by being harmonious so that God listens to His creation talking to him which echoes his creation. This is according to Boethius *musica mundane* (see 3.2) – the planets and stars move in a harmonious way according to God's plan. So God's universe vibrates with the music of the spheres which is created by the rapid motion of

²¹ C.f. to their mute prayers after the Fall (3.4).

the planets. This spreads through everything in the universe and makes them resonate at the same frequency:

... in thir motions harmonie Divine
 So smooths her charming tones, that Gods own ear
 Listens delighted (5.625-7).

All these natural sounds “attune / The trembling leaves” (4.266) i.e. all the birds, leaves and nature generally vibrate on the same wavelength. This harmony of nature is evident throughout the heavens and *musica humana* even vibrates in the perfect relationship of Adam and Eve, “Harmonie to behold in the wedded pair / More grateful than harmonious sound to the eare” (8.604-5). And the whole of nature, animate and inanimate, showed its delight on the marriage of Adam and Eve in such a way that

... the Earth
 Gave sign of gratulation, and each Hill;
 Joyous the Birds; fresh Gales and gentle Aires
 Whisper’d it to the Woods ...
 ... the amorous Bird of the Night
 Sung Spousal, and bid haste the Eevning Starr (8.513-9)

Musical harmony plays a very important role in *Paradise Lost*, and sin causes a disharmony in the divine harmony of the universe. For instance, when Eve’s Fall occurs “Nature from her seat / Sighing through all her Works gave signs of woe” (9.782-3); and when Adam feels “the faulting measure” (9.846): all of the world expresses the despair as the harmony is disrupted. And again when Adam lapses, “Nature gave a second groan, Skie lower’d and muttering Thunder” (9.1001-2) – nature expresses its pain and anger. Adam seems to realise the change that has taken place in the natural harmony because when he is lamenting his fortunes after the lapse he says,

O Woods, O Fountains, Hillocks, Dales and Bowsrs,
 With other echo late I taught your Shades
 To answer, and resound farr other Song (10.860-3).

So the auditory sensescape is influenced by sin, which causes God’s universal, harmonic resonance to fall out of phase – the *musica humana* that connects the body

and soul is no longer attuned to God's harmonic plan and so falls into disharmony. Sin has disrupted the harmony that can only be restored through atonement.

3.4 Music in Heaven and Hell

Music is a mediator between soundscape and speech: "it moves nonhuman sounds in the direction of speech, and speech in the direction of nonhuman sounds."²²

The music in Heaven and Hell are actually fairly similar – the instruments are the same, harmonious singing occurs in both, but the music of Hell takes on a more sinister feeling. There is the "noyse of Drums and Timbrels loud" (1.394); to convene the meeting the fallen angels herald "with awful Ceremony / And Trumpets" (1.753-4) and at the closing of the conclave "Trumpets regal sound" (2.515). Some fallen angels even wander off and lament their outcome to

...a silent valley, sing
With notes Angelical to many a Harp
Thir own Heroic deeds and hapless fall (2.547-9).

It appears that silence is obtainable in the vaults of Hell because some of the fallen angels retreat to "a silent valley". However, this "silent valley may also refer to a more psychological setting with the fallen angels retreating into their own silent, solitude of meditation. It is only then that they can reflect and lament their misfortunes. The music that flowed from them seems to charm and alleviate the pains and misfortunes of Hell for a short time:

Thir song was partial, but the harmony
(What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)
Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet
(For Eloquence the Soul, Song charms the Sense,) (2.552-6).

²² Smith, p. 87.

The song is harmonic²³ and is, according to Flannagan,²⁴ polyphonic in nature – sung in parts; but the song is also favouring the devils side of the story.²⁵ So again this questions the nature of what is heard, and its relation to cognition. Matters and facts have to be weighed up before an unbiased opinion can be formulated. The final line is very interesting in that eloquence or the power of persuasive speaking eases the soul and brings peace of mind. So even if the spoken words are lies or false, they can still alleviate anxiety if they are believed or not thought through rationally. Music, on the other hand, soothes and charms the senses and has the ability to ease pain (see 6.3). The fallen angels have retained their heavenly musical skills, as was the light inherent in their weapons (2.1.1) and are able to use this skill briefly for a respite from their torment. In fact it is worth thinking that this may appear to be an alleviation of their pain, but when they have had time to recollect what they have lost then it might in fact worsen the whole situation: when what they have lost is compared to what they have ended up with then the lamentation is worse. This healing or magical power of music is echoed in Book I when the fallen angels are marching “in silence to soft Pipes that charm’d / Thir painful steps o’re the burnt soyle” (1.561-2); they may be tired and in pain but the music spirits them on. The power of music is also mentioned later in Book VII, where Orpheus’s singing is alluded to: singing that could charm and awaken emotions in animate and inanimate objects so that “Woods and Rocks had Eares / To rapture” (7.35-6).²⁶

Music is also related to war as the trumpets of war sound (1.531-2), “Sonorous mettal” blows “Martial sounds” (1.540) and fallen angels advance in

²³ *OED*: partial: a component of a musical sound; an overtone or harmonic.

²⁴ Flannagan, note 134, p. 397.

²⁵ *OED* 2: favouring one side in a dispute above the other; biased.

²⁶ Tresidder, p.359 “Orpheus became famous for his singing and playing of the lyre. It was remarked that he played the lyre so beautifully that animals were charmed, rivers ceased flowing and mountains and trees moved to hear his music.”

formation “to the *Dorian* mood / Of Flutes and soft Recorders” (1.550-1). The Dorian was classed as being one of the eight Classical Greek music modes, which was ideal for war.²⁷ Its influence can be observed to increase valour (1.554), remove the thoughts of death (1.555) and “chase / Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain / From mortal or immortal minds” (1.557-9). So it is not only the heavenly harp and polyphonic singing that have curative effects, the inspiring battle hymns fortify the hearts of the fallen angels and allow them to tolerate the torments of Hell for a while. The angels of Heaven are called to their ranks by “the loud / Ethereal Trumpet” (6.59-60) and then marched “to the sound / of instrumental Harmonie” (6.64-5). It might be worth noting that the military music in Heaven is described as being harmonious and this differentiates it from that of Hell.

The sound of the huge organ that is created out of the rocks and ore in the depths of Hell “Rose like an Exhalation, with the sound / Of Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet” (1.711-2). According to Flannagan, the key words for interpreting this line are “dulcet” and “sweet” as they have negative associations.²⁸ However, ‘sweet’ is also used later to describe the music of Heaven so can it really be interpreted as being so negative here? As was noted above some of the fallen angels could still play the harp and produce angelic sounds so not all the music of Hell is negative. A modern understanding of this hellish organ playing could be compared to the Phantom of the Opera which is seductive, bewitching and piercing. Milton actually wrote about the affects of organ music in “Il Penseroso”:²⁹

There let the pealing organ blow,

²⁷ Cirlot, p. 225. The Dorian was also connected to Mars, the Roman god of war and in the *OED* the Dorian mode is defined as: the mode represented by the natural diatonic scale D-D (containing a minor 3rd and minor 7th).

²⁸ He says that the usage of the word ‘sweet’ has negative overtones in *Paradise Lost* and is emphasised with its association with ‘dulcet’. Flannagan, note 207, p. 376; *OED*: dulcet: sweet and soothing (often used ironically).

²⁹ Flannagan, p. 77.

To the full voic'd Quire below,
 In Service high, and Antheems cleer
 As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
 Dissolve me into extasies,
 And bring all Heav'n before mine eye. (161-166).

The music does cause ecstatic visions of Heaven, which supports the idea of charming the senses. Basically, the organ seems to be another instrument for inducing spiritual and religious feelings – like the harp – and could be used to alleviate the feeling of pain for a while. Another aspect to the appearance of an organ could be the construction of a false church: a church run by fallen angels who have retained a certain amount of their holy light. The perceived ‘angels’ of light who look good combined with the religious music creates a church atmosphere. But the senses cannot be trusted again – they give false information – and the perceived information has to be assimilated and rationally reviewed.

The “golden Hinges” of the gates of Heaven open with “Harmonious sound” (7.206-7); they seem to glide musically and turn into an instrument in their own right. These golden gates resonate with harmony and could refer to the resonating properties of gold mentioned in 3.1. When these gates are compared to the gates of Hell that emit a “jarring sound /... and on thir hinges grate / Harsh thunder” (2.880-2), then the rusted heavy metal gates have turned into an tuneless, uncared for instrument that scrapes and shakes the nerves. One gate offers harmony the other sinful disharmony.

Heaven is full of choral singing and angels that play on instruments to show reverence and honour to God and his works (7.252-4):

... thir gold'n Harps they took,
 Harps ever tun'd, ...
 ...and with Praeamble sweet
 Of charming symphonie they introduce
 Thir sacred Song and waken raptures high;
 No voice exempt, no voice but well could joine
 Melodious part, such concord is in Heav'n (3.365-71)

The music of Heaven is blissful and perfect – the instruments are permanently tuned and can never produce a wrong note. The symphonies are also described as being charming, this could be understood as meaning beautiful but if the line “waken raptures high” is taken into consideration, then the meaning could also encompass that of being charmed or hypnotised by the music. This is paralleled in Hell when the music seems to alleviate the suffering and so charms the senses. So Milton seems to highlight the healing properties of music and how it can uplift the spirits. These properties must have been present in the ambient atmosphere constantly, just like incense in Heaven (4.3) and the scents in pre-lapsian Paradise (4.2.1), because the angelic singing seems to be go on non-stop as they “Thir happie hours in joy and hymning spent” (3.417).

The music that is experienced in the visions given to Adam about the future on earth uses similar instruments to Heaven, but now there is a more sinful overtone, when

...the sound
Of Instruments that made melodious chime
Was heard, of Harp and Organ (11.558-60)

and seductive women “to the Harp they sung / Soft amorous Ditties, and in dance came on” (11.583-4). The music of the harp and organ has now changed: they are no longer harmonious, but only melodious and enticing; they have become “amorous Ditties” to which women dance and become wanton. So the original harmonious and spiritual music of the heavens has now become debased into ditties and wanton melodies.

3.5 Silence

Silence has many roles in *Paradise Lost*: to show contemplation, concentration and deliberation; to show respect or reverence; to complement night; and

to show when a situation is awkward. In Hell, it is sought by the fallen angels but can never be obtained as “peace and rest can never dwell” (1.65-6) there.

Silence is used mostly to convey when deep thought is going on, some decision has to be reached or a moral dilemma has to be solved. This can be observed in many places in the poem. Initially, when the fallen angels find themselves in Hell, they look around and see what they have been reduced to. If they had been given time or chance, then this is when they would have started to wonder if the rebellion was in their best interests. This is where Satan has to act quickly and break “horrid silence” (1.83), to give the angels something else to think about. Later some of the fallen angels wander off to find “a silent valley” (2.547) for contemplation, which is not geographical but psychological. When the fallen angels are marching, they “with fixed thought / Mov’d on in silence” (1.560-1); this is paralleled in Heaven as the angels “mov’d on / In silence” (6.63-4) - so their minds are concentrating and focusing on the tasks and deeds in front of them. It is interesting that when Eve has fallen and Adam has to contemplate their fate then

Speechless, he stood and pale, till thus at length
First to himself he inward silence broke (9.894-5);

he breaks this internal silence for his own internal dialogue; and later when they both have fallen then

... They destitute and bare
Of all thir vertue: silent, and in face
Confounded long they sate, as struck’n mute (9.1062-4).

Adam and Eve are caught up in their own shame and are involved in their own personal, moral monologue. In fact this is what happens when something is being debated within our minds: externally we appear mute but internally a continuous monologue is ongoing. This brings in the idea of muteness as “attention held” the fallen

angels “mute” (1.618) and they “all sat mute / Pondering the danger with deep thoughts” (2.420-1). Satan realises the dilemma that they are going through, which leads him to say that “With reason hath deep silence and demurr / Seis’d us” (2.431-2). When Satan returns in triumph to the gates of Hell and sees that a bridge through Chaos has been built by Sin and Death, he just stands silent until Sin breaks it with her speech (10.353). The angels in Heaven also show their sorrow and deep thoughts as after the battle “all the Heav’nly Quire stood mute, / And silence was in Heav’n” (3.217-8); and as they descend from heaven “mute and sad” (10.18) for fallen man. The Messiah intercedes for Adam after the Fall, and offers Adam’s prayers to God and asks God to “heare his sighs though mute” (11.31). This could be interpreted in a way that the prayers are actually silent and are in a form of silent prayer or contemplation, which may not have been acceptable because God requires oral prayers like incensed ones (4.3.1). The only “silent praise” (9.195) that seems to be acceptable to God is from plants and animals that do not have the power of speech; they offer their praise in different ways, such as perfume (9.194-5).

Silence is also used to show reverence and respect, for instance, when the Messiah returns from the battle in Heaven “all his Saints, who silent stood / Eye witnesses of his Almighty Acts” (6.882-3); and when Satan returns from Paradise, though the acclaim was loud, Satan could command silence by only the raising his hand (10.455-9). Silence was also used for the acceptance of convention and ritual: “After a short silence then / And summons read, the great consult began” (1.797-8). But for praising God, then silence is not the correct medium, as Adam is told that the Sabbath is not for silent prayer but for musical praise (7.594-9).

Satan on being confronted by Gabriel in Paradise mentions that the created world was known in Hell and that “Fame is not silent” (4.938). So Satan is saying that if

something wonderful or brave has been done it is or should be talked about. This could be an altruistic comment from Satan who needs to mention all his deeds and achievements. This is exactly what Michael's visions of future mankind show: he tells Adam of all the fighting and deeds that the future generations will do and adds that for humans there is no point of keeping merits silent - humans need fame, they cannot keep silent about their deeds and so fall straight into vanity (11.699), just like Satan. But Gabriel counterbalances this, by mentioning that fame only leads to vanity and so all the brave angels who fought in Heaven will be forgotten in "Eternal silence" (6.385).

Silence is also an integral part of night time in Paradise, but in fact it is presented as a force, like darkness that should not exist totally – there is never total silence in Paradise and the moon provides light so there is never total darkness.³⁰ To prevent total silence, the nightingale sings in unison with the silence of night (4.647-8) and "Silence was pleas'd" (4.604). It seems that night likes and needs companionship. However, Satan turns this singing of the nightingale into an intrusion as he says that "silence yields / To the night-warbling Bird" (5.39-40). Satan may see the night as being his realms and the 'intrusion' of something beautiful like the nightingale's singing disturbs him. Therefore, he says that night has to give way to the bird song which makes it intruding and negative. The bird song also is part of nature's way of expressing praise to God and His creation, so the praise continues throughout the night. As mentioned above silent praise is inferior to sung worship and so this bird song is also distasteful because of its symbolic meaning. Night is a bringer of silence though (7.105-6) - the two are very strongly connected and need each other to become whole; they are both important for sleep and rest even in Heaven (5.667-8), but are also complemented by angelic lullabies.

³⁰ Sharon-Zisser., p. 203.

3.6 Social aspects of listening

There is a certain social hierarchy to listening as there is with vision (2.6). God is on top of this hierarchy, of course, everyone listens to the “Divine instructor” (5.546) when he speaks; His voice commands and controls the universe. Of course, he also listens as He hears prayers: Christ asks Him to “bend [His] eare / To supplication, heare [Adam’s] sighs though mute” (11. 30-1). The angels come next, but they do seem to be on a more equal level to Adam. When Raphael has been telling the story of Heaven to Adam, his voice

...in *Adams* Eare
 So Charming left his voice, that he a while
 Thought him still speaking, still stood fix’d to hear (7.1-3);

Adam is totally mesmerised by Raphael’s beautiful voice that for a moment he forgets everything else and does not even notice when the narration has finished. Adam, also after hearing Michael’s visions of the future, says he is “Greatly instructed...shall hence depart” (12.557). But it is not only the angels’ voices that mesmerize Adam, it is their oratory skills. Milton seems to have idolised the ancient Greek times with its powerful orators, as when the narrator describes Satan’s skills:

As when of old som Orator renound
 In *Athens*, or free *Rome*, where Eloquence
 Flourished, since mute (9.670-2).

This is evident in many of the speeches given by the characters in *Paradise Lost*. And in fact, Raphael and Adam start complementing each other on their oratory skills (8.210-222), so they try to bring their eloquence into the praise of each other. However, these skills of eloquence can not always be trusted as the above lines from Book IX are taken from the temptation scene: Satan is eloquently persuading Eve to taste the fruit and so the rhetoric being used is untrustworthy. This is a further example of sensory perception

and cognition not always being in line – a certain amount of discernment needs to occur and one needs to be vigilant when receiving sensory information.

Next is Adam and Eve's hierarchical relationship. Initially, when Adam is created he calls out, but there is no reply and he finds himself alone (8.282-5). He persuades God that he needs a companion, someone to converse with (8.418). And so God created Eve, who is led "And guided by [God's] voice" (8.486) to Adam; immediately Adam names her and announces what her role is going to be in life and Eve listens (8.491-500). From the beginning she takes on the role of a listener and Adam is the speaker. According to Pollari, hearing is gendered – so that passive listening is receptive and feminine; and the active, intrusive speaking is masculine.³¹ She even points out that the shape of the ear and ear canal are womb like³² and are actually penetrated by words.³³ Thus the basis for their relationship is that Adam speaks and Eve listens; this is noticed especially when Raphael comes to talk with them, Eve does not want to listen to him but prefers to hear everything from her husband later. However, this is not because Eve is not capable of understanding of what is being said but

... such pleasures she reserv'd,
Adam relating, she sole Auditress;
She her Husband the Relater she preferr'd
Before the Angel, and of him to ask
Chose rather; hee, she knew would intermix
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
With conjugal Caresses, from his Lip
Not words alone pleased her (8.50-7).

³¹ Niina Pollari. 2006 "...at the ear of Eve": Hearing, Gender, and the Physiology of the Fall in John Milton's Paradise Lost.' [Internet] Florida: Florida Atlantic University. Available at <http://digitalcommons.fau.edu/wilkes_thesis/18> [last accessed 22 September 2006], pp. 16, 17.

³² According to Tresider (p.162), in early Christian thought, it was believed that Christ was conceived when the Holy Spirit entered the Virgin Mary's ear – hence the dove at Mary's ear in some Annunciation scenes.

³³ Ibid, p. 18.

It seems that Adam is such a good story teller, and flatterer that Eve prefers his narration to the angel's. Thus from Eve's point of view, Adam is higher in the narrative hierarchy than Raphael. After the Fall, the order of their relationship changes (see below) and Eve instead of receiving her information from Adam, listens unseen as Adam is being told about their expulsion from Paradise (11.266) – she hides herself out of shame and does not want to be seen. Satan also gains his information by eavesdropping (10.342), but this is of a different nature – it is a sneakier, more sinful way of getting information and strengthens Satan's voyeuristic nature that was observed in 2.6.3. Finally the order of Paradise is exemplified by Eve when she speaks; she actually has control over the animals who are "more duteous at her call" (9.521). So the animals seem to be the lowest on the hierarchical list.

This order is disrupted by Satan who initially tempts Eve out of the established, hierarchical order of listening by saying "Easie to mee it is to tell thee all / What thou commandst, and right thou shouldst be obeyed" (9.569-70). He is breaking the order by saying that she should be obeyed and command others. This womb-like aspect of the ear is poignant when Eve "gave eare / To that false Worm" (9.1067-8); she seems to have been penetrated by his lies that affect her judgement and awaken her vanity. Adam is initially distraught at Eve's lapse and laments that "Would thou hadst heark'nd to my words" (9.1134). Eve should have listened to Adam, but she felt she knew better and went by herself to tend the garden. Eventually, Adam eats the fruit himself after a long deliberation, now both have fallen, and when

...the voice of God they heard
Now walking in the Garden, by soft windes
Brought to thir Ears... (10.97-9),

they no longer answer it, but ignore it and hide (10.116-7). God remonstrates with Adam by saying

Was shee thy God, that her thou didst obey
 Before his voice, or was shee made thy guide,
 Superior, or but equal, that to her
 Thou did'st resigne thy Manhood, and the Place
 Wherein God set thee above her made of thee (10.145-9).

Adam has broken the order and harmony of marriage by listening to Eve and is punished “Because [he] hast heark'nd to the voice of [his] Wife” (10.198). However, as they are leaving Paradise Eve spoke to Adam and he “heard / well pleased...” (12.624-5). It seems that as they are leaving Paradise their relationship seems more equal: they have been released from the strong bonds of an ordered relationship.

Finally whispering is mentioned a couple of times in connection with the manipulation of dreams. Milton in one of the autobiographical parts wonders if the poem is created from his imagination or has his muse been whispering it into his ear each night “... if all be mine, / Not Hers who brings it nightly to my Ear” (9.46-7). And Satan in the form of a toad whispers in Eve's ear to elicit the temptation scene in her dreams (4.800). As Pollari points out the ear is the only sense organ that has basically a direct access to the brain; its locality helps to reach the “Organs of ...Fancie” (4.802) or imagination.³⁴ So any information gained through the ear during sleep was thought to directly influence dreams. Sleep is also the time when reason is not vigilant, and so there is more freedom to subliminally control the imagination.³⁵ When Eve awakes she recalls from her sleep that “Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk / With gentle voice I thought it thine” (5.37-6); Eve's sense of hearing is tricked as Satan must have imitated Adam's speech. However, Eve is not to blame for this sensual misconception

³⁴ Pollari, p. 5. However, the nose also has an extremely direct access and this could be one of the reasons for its association with memories.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 3.

because it is extremely hard to discern the evil in Satan (9.1150), which only God or Christ can actually perceive.³⁶

3.7 Auditory conclusions

Paradise Lost is a very oral/aural text and in this way it is an epic text.³⁷

Words connected to this oral/aural nature abound in the text, from active oral words such as ‘say’, ‘tell’, ‘relate’ and ‘bellow’; to passive aural words such as ‘listen’, ‘hear’ and ‘give audience’; there is also a large vocabulary concerned with creating soundscapes in Heaven, Hell and Paradise. When all of these are connected to the oral/aural background of Milton dictating the text, then this epic poem just talks to us through every line.

There are certain themes that seem to be fore-grounded throughout the text: one of these is the importance of silence for contemplation, this does not mean that there needs to be silence externally, only that the person who is thinking is quiet. In fact external silence is viewed as being negative – it is something that comes with night and when darkness and silence are joined then two sensory inputs are removed. Another important issue is music. It is difficult to leave out the fact that music also seems to be an integral part of the text. Elliot actually criticises this by saying that the musical aspect of the lines takes over everything else and that there is no fusion of content and auditory imagination:

...the syntax is determined by the musical significance, by the auditory imagination, rather than by the attempt to follow actual speech or thought. It is at least ... possible to distinguish the pleasure which arises from the noise...³⁸

³⁶ Compare this to Satan fooling Uriel on the sun 2.6.2.

³⁷ *OED*: epic: a long poem, typically one derived from ancient oral tradition, narrating the deeds and adventures of heroic or legendary figures or the past history of a nation.

³⁸ Elliot, ‘Milton I’, p. 142. The musical nature of Milton’s text is also refuted by Davie who only sees the musical aspect in a couple of main places (i.e. the invocation to Light in Book III); otherwise “the splendidly elaborate syntax, which one could suppose created as precisely as a musical resource, (cont.)

However, apart from the musical syntax of the poem, music is also described as being an ambient noise in Heaven and Paradise which seems to be considered part of and a complement to nature. Music has an uplifting, curative function in Heaven and Hell. In Fludd's *Utrusque Cosmi Historia* there is a very apt illustration entitled "The Tuning of the World", it shows the world in the form of an instrument with a divine hand tuning it.³⁹ This is what is happening in *Paradise Lost*: God initially set the world resonating but the harmony of *musica humana* was disturbed by sin. Milton comments on this disharmony in his poem "At a Solemn Musick".⁴⁰ He mentions that there is perfect, harmonious music in Heaven which is everlasting – the harmony of Heaven was never disrupted. However, it was challenged by the evil rebellious noise of the battle in Heaven, but harmony was restored by Christ. But how can sinful descendents of Adam and Eve

...on Earth with undiscording voice
 ... rightly answer that melodious noise [of Heaven];
 As once we did, till disproportion'd sin
 Jarr'd against natures chime, and with harsh din
 Broke the fair musick that all creatures made
 To their great Lord (17-22).

Before sin entered the world, praise was in unison with the harmony of the heavens, however after the Fall the *musica humana* was no longer pure and harmonious. Christ was sent to retune the world, as was seen in Heaven, but it is now up to everyone, individually, to start to listen to the resonance and accept it as their own. This means that the text has extreme relevance for today as we all need to listen and tune ourselves internally and universally. Finally, to return to where this chapter began, I will use Whitman to exemplify the purpose of an epic oral/aural poem:

...in fact is employed characteristically to check narrative impetus and frustrate musical pleasure." Donald Davie. 'Syntax and Music in *Paradise Lost*' in Frank Kermode (Ed.) *The Living Milton: Essays by Various Hands*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967, p. 83.

³⁹ Quoted in Smith, p. 5.

⁴⁰ Flannagan, p. 57.

Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all
poems,
You shall possess the good of the earth and sun, (there are millions of suns
left.)
You shall no longer take things at second or third hand nor look through
the eyes of the dead, nor feed on the spectres in books,
You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me,
You shall listen to all sides and filter them for yourself.⁴¹

⁴¹ Whitman, p. 30.

4. OLFACTION

The sense of olfaction is an extremely powerful sense. Helen Keller who was born deaf-blind fine-tuned her other senses and found smell to be

...a potent wizard that transports us across thousands of miles and all the years we have lived. The odour of fruits waft me to my southern home, to my childhood frolics in the peach orchard. Other odours, instantaneous and fleeting cause my heart to dilate joyously or contract with remembered grief.¹

Olfaction can transport a person through time and space to a particular sensory event that has been lodged in memories. It only takes a tiny amount of scent to trigger an extremely strong response within a person's memory and even body. So when scentscapes are evoked in literature they can provoke strong reactions in readers as their own recollections, associations and even new sensations awaken sensory reactions. During the last century philosophers have started to re-evaluate the senses and have literally come to their senses about olfaction: Nietzsche thought that "All [his] genius is in [his] nostrils"² and that smelling *per se* is an act of thinking.³ So the role of olfaction has increased in importance. Another criterion for the evaluation of the senses was their importance for religious devotion, again vision and hearing won out, but Milton in *Paradise Lost* tries to re-establish the hierarchy and boosts the importance of olfaction within this religious context.

The olfactory map of *Paradise Lost* is made up of the following scentscapes: Hell, Paradise (pre and post Fall) and Heaven (during the rebellion and normally). Each has its own scentscape, but, as will be seen, each can be tainted or

¹ Helen Keller. 'Sense and Sensibility', *Century Magazine*, 75, February, 1908, p. 574.

² Nietzsche, 1971 quoted in Annick Le Gu  rer. 'Olfaction and Cognition: A Philosophical and Psychoanalytic View.' in Schaal, Beoist (Editor). *Olfaction, Taste and Cognition*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 6.

³ L. Thomas quoted in David Howes. 'Nose-wise: Olfactory Metaphors in Mind.' in Beoist Schaal (Editor). *Olfaction, Taste and Cognition*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 71.

influenced by the other. I will start by looking at the different scentscapes in turn and focusing on certain interesting aspects of each.

4.1 The Stench of Hell

Hell was described by St. Hildegard of Bingen as being “a wide marsh filled with filth and vermin of many types and emitting a worse stink” and “a ditch ... filled with a fierce fire that gave forth a tremendous stink.”⁴ Other descriptions abound throughout history from “the stench of sulphur”,⁵ “the stink of gangrene”,⁶ and “the breath of ... foul smelling bodies in a completely enclosed sewer”;⁷ to a general stench filled with noxious air.⁸ Le Guérier quotes a twelfth century writer who describes Hell as being “nauseating” and full of “sulphurous vapours.”⁹ The descriptions of Hell in Books I and II are suffused with these stereotypical, noxious fumes from the earlier centuries. The sulphurous aspect is repeated in “ever-burning Sulphur” (1.69); “the Sulphurous hail” (1.171); “Belch’d fire and rowling smoak; the rest entire/ Shon with a glossie scurff, / ...The work of Sulphur” (1.671-4) and “mixt with *Tartarean* Sulphur” (2.69). The volcanic connection to sulphur, together with its pungent odour probably made it a suitable aspect of Hell. This noxious fume of “Sulphurous and Nitrous Foame” (6.512) even pollutes Heaven as the rebellion of the angels turns to battle. This connection of “sulfurous Fire” (11.658) with battle is repeated later when Raphael shows Adam visions of the future. It is very interesting that the use of gunpowder and guns is closely related to the stink of sulphur which makes it easy to perceive them as evil inventions from Hell. The smell of smoke and fossil fuel derivatives that Milton

⁴ Classen, 1998, p. 48.

⁵ Ibid, p. 48.

⁶ Ibid, p.48.

⁷ Ibid, p. 48.

⁸ Annick LeGuérier. *Scent: The Mysterious and Essential Powers of Smell*. New York: Turtle Bay Books, 1992, p. 122.

⁹ Ibid, p. 122.

describes visually and olfactically in Hell, is also connected to this sulphurous aspect. These can be noticed in the “stench and smoak” (1.237); “th’ *Asphaltick* Pool” (1.367);¹⁰ “thir noxious vapours” (2.216); and “Starry Lamps and blazing Cressets fed/ with *Naptha* and *Asphaltus*” (1.728-9). These lamps would have produced an extremely noxious smell¹¹ and in conjunction with the sulphurous odours, would have made the air unbearable and extremely toxic and acidic. This fossil fuel connection is continued with the building of the Tower of Babel

...wherein a black bituminous gurge
Boiles out from under the ground, the mouth of Hell;
Of Brick, and of that stuff they cast to build
A Citie and Towre, whose top may reach to Heav’n (12.41-4).

The bitumen that was flowing out of Hell was used as mortar when building the tower. This according to Edwards¹² would have caused the stink of the building to reach Heaven; when this is compared to the sweet-smelling offerings that were offered to God, then this stink must have caused great offence. This could have been another reason for the tower’s destruction as well as mankind trying to reach God. And so, Milton is using this stench of fossil fuel to represent the evil and sinful nature of the fallen angels and fallen man.

An interesting parallel is that London at this time was criticised for its stench and smoky atmosphere. A traveller in 1661 could smell London before being anywhere near¹³ and the quality of air at the time was very poor. Evelyn wrote in 1661 that “the City of London resembles ...the Suburbs of Hell” and London was full of

¹⁰ Flannagan’s notes connected to this entry mention that “th’ *Asphaltick* Pool” is another name for the Black Sea due to its “bituminous scum” (PL, 367).

¹¹ Edwards, p.194.

¹² Ibid, p. 194.

¹³ Ibid, p.194.

“infernal Smoake”.¹⁴ He thought that the increasing industrial developments and the striving for material wealth were wrapping the city in a “Hellish and dismall Cloud” and that this was sacrificing the clean air and turning it into “an impure and thick Mist accompanied with a fuliginous and filthy vapour.”¹⁵ Evelyn is comparing the smoky atmosphere of London to that of Hell, which, in turn, is identical to Milton’s description. Hell is no longer confined to the depths but has been placed on earth – a time and place that everyone in Milton’s age knew, could sense and could definitely smell. Of course, this awakes the question of could Milton have been referring to London when he wrote his description of Hell? Milton was a man who enjoyed walking¹⁶ and so the air quality would have been extremely important; the poor quality of air would have been emphasised with his loss of sight as his other senses may have been more finely attuned. And so to evoke a paradise, the air would have to be clean and pure to directly counterbalance the noisome fumes of Hell. It is interesting to note that Evelyn proposed two theories for the purification of the air, one of which is highly reminiscent of Milton’s Paradise: to build an immense, aromatic hedge surrounding London, which was to be

elegantly planted, diligently kept and supply’d with such *Shrubs*, as yield the most fragrant and odoriferous *Flowers*, and are aptest to tinge the *Aer* upon every gentle emission at a great distance¹⁷

In fact, the importance and healing properties of clean, pure, fresh air is mentioned a few times in the poem: as when Satan enters Paradise for the first time

...And of purer aire
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy (4.153-5);

¹⁴ Evelyn’s quotations are all taken from *Fumifugium: or, The Inconvenience of the Aer and Smoak of London Dissipated* (London, 1661) found in Edwards, p. 195.

¹⁵ Edwards, p. 194.

¹⁶ William R Parker. ‘The Dates of Milton’s Sonnets on Blindness.’ *PMLA*, Vol. 73, No. 3. (Jun, 1958), pp. 473 and 577.

¹⁷ Edwards, p. 196.

and Eve on being expelled from Paradise worries “how shall we breath in other Aire / Less pure” (11.284-5). So the air quality was of a real concern for Adam and Eve. The air quality is also a concern of the devils, which can be seen when Beelzebub speaks about either returning to Heaven or finding an alternative place where God is absent in which

...the soft delicious Air
To heal the scar of these corrosive Fires
Shall breathe her balme (2.400-2).

So London was compared to Hell by Evelyn and it is very reasonable to assume that Milton could have thought the same. Later in Book IX, Satan is described

As one who long in populous City pent
Where Houses thick and Sewers annoy the Aire,
Forth issuing on a Summers Morn to breathe
Among the pleasant Villages and Farmes
Adjoynd, from each thing met conceaves delight,
The smell of Grain, or tedded Grass, or Kine,
Or Dairie, or each rural sight, each rural sound (9.445-51).

So now Satan is in Paradise after being in the noxious underworld or city; and he seems to enjoy the rural scents and needs the pure air of the countryside.

The stench of the air and noisome fumes could also be connected to the plague that was thought to be spread by contaminated air. It was considered to be an evil smell and thought to be a disease that came up from the underworld to spread on earth.¹⁸ This aspect of pestilence may account for the need to purify the air by burning incense and using balm (see 4.2.2).¹⁹

¹⁸ Le Guérer, 1992, p. 60.

¹⁹ Paul Slack. ‘Review of Rebecca Totaro’s *Suffering in Paradise: The Bubonic Plague in English Literature from More to Milton*’, *Milton Quarterly*, Vol 4, No 1, 2006, p. 81.

4.1.1 The Stink of Evil

“O my offence is rank, it smells to heaven”²⁰

Sin has a noxious smell²¹ as can be seen from Claudius’s guilty confession above from *Hamlet*. Bad smells were considered to be the corruption of divine breath²² and as Synnott points out, we have a wide range of negative metaphors including ‘a sinker’ and ‘a foul person’ that all refer to the smell and moral condition of a person: “Evil stinks.”²³ So Satan must reek: Synnott mentions that the Devil “smells like hell”, which is a combination of pitch, brimstone and sulphur.²⁴ Classen notes that throughout the pre-modern west, Satan was believed to emit a foul odour.²⁵ Traditionally Satan is associated with fire and brimstone, and thus Milton connects him to gunpowder and the sulphur of Hell. Nowhere does Milton say that Satan actually does have a foul smell but he is automatically associated with one.²⁶ Satan’s offspring, Sin, is attracted by “the smell of infant blood” (2.664) which is an aspect that connects her to witches and fills a reader with revulsion. After the Fall, Sin and Death are able to smell the moral condition of Paradise and sense that death has entered. They are compared to carrion birds or vultures that can smell blood even before it has been shed.

...with delight he snuff’d the smell
Of mortal change on Earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous Fowl, though many a League remote,
Against the day of Battel, to a Field,
Where Armies lie encampt, come flying, lur’d
With sent of living Carcasses design’d
For death, the following day, in bloodie fight.
So sented the grim Feature, and upturn’d
His Nostril wide into the murkie Air,

²⁰ William Shakespeare. *Hamlet*. London: Arden Shakespeare, 2005, act III, Scene iii, line36.

²¹ Classen, 1998, p. 48.

²² David Reid. ‘Spirits Odorous.’ in *Milton Quarterly* 25, Number 4, (December, 1991), p. 141.

²³ Synnott, pp. 190-1.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 192.

²⁵ Constance Classen. ‘The Odor of the Other: Olfactory Symbolism and Cultural Categories.’ *Ethos*, Vol. 20, No. 2. (Jun., 1992), p. 159.

²⁶ Reid, p. 142.

Sagacious²⁷ of his Quarry from so farr (10.272-282).

So a change has occurred from a sweet smelling Paradise (see 4.2.1) to one of a different smell – the evil smell of mortality. Adam also notices the change in odour

Through the still Night, not now, as ere man fell,
Wholsom and cool, and mild, but with black Air
Accompanied, with damps and dreadful gloom (10. 846-8).

“Damps” were a release of noxious gas that were thought to pass on diseases, which turns the originally incense filled Paradise into a sewer-like, tainted environment. The effects of sin have left a smell that replaces the beautiful smell of Paradise and turns it into a hellish environment. One question that is brought to mind at this point is how did Satan, with his sinful stench, manage to converse with Uriel on the surface of the sun and how did he manage to enter Paradise without being detected? Milton seems to have foreseen this problem, as in response to this question, he writes that Satan

...spake...unperceived;
For neither Man nor Angel can discern
Hypocrisie, the only evil that walks
Invisible except to God alone (3.681-4).

So Milton claims that if the sinful and evil mind is well hidden, then only God can truly discern the truth. It is interesting to note that Milton uses the term “unperceived” which directly agrees with the quotation below about Sin and Death (2.841-3) where the lack of correct visual, auditory and olfactory stimulation results in a failure to detect the true, sinful nature. Despite this, various saints and pious people have, apparently, been able to smell out sin and evil from the scent that it leaves.²⁸ This can also be observed in the Old Testament where the Messiah “...shall not judge by the sight of his eyes, / Nor decide by the hearing of his ears”;²⁹ this means that when the Messiah returns he will

²⁷ *OED*: 1: sagacious: “Acute in perception, esp. by the sense of smell” and is often used to refer to tracking dogs.

²⁸ Classen, 1998, pp.48-9.

²⁹ Isaiah 11:3.

be able to discern the true nature of someone's soul by smell³⁰. This was echoed in Nietzsche, when he claimed to be able to read people's hearts and souls by sniffing out falsity and illusion.³¹ People were usually branded witches because of their bad odour; however, folklore states that witches were also supposed to be able to disguise their scents and produce "heavy, sweet scents which acted like a drug on their victims."³² So Satan could presumably disguise his smell as well, just as he could change his form: when Satan appeared to Eve in a dream "his dewie locks distill'd / *Ambrosia*" (5.56-7). So like the angels that I will look at later, Satan could give off pleasant fragrances. I doubt if this was permanent but was something that could be used like a camouflage or disguise as angels could

...as they please,
They Limb themselves, and colour, shape or size
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare (6.351-3).

This was also alluded to when Satan is talking to Sin and Death about travelling

...up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom Air, imbalme'd
With odours (2.841-3).

The gruesome pair are not seen, heard, or smelt – they have taken on a sensory camouflage. I disagree with Flannagan's interpretation of these lines, in which he

³⁰ "*Et sagacem illum reddet in timore Iehovae; non secundum aspectum oculorum suorum iudicabit, neque ex auditu aurium suarum arguet.* And will make him sagacious. The verb ריח, (riach,) which is here put in the Hiphil conjugation, signifies literally to smell; but may also be explained in an active sense, as meaning to give a keen smell; which agrees better, I think, with this passage, so that this sagacity may be also included among the gifts of the Spirit. And this effect is peculiarly applicable to the person of Christ, namely, that far beyond what the godly are able to conceive, he is endowed with shrewd discernment for governing his people. We ought to attend, first of all, to the metaphor in the verb smell, which means that Christ will be so shrewd that he will not need to learn from what he hears, or from what he sees; for by smelling alone he will perceive what would otherwise be unknown." John Calvin's Commentary on Isaiah Volume 1 available at <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom13.xviii.i.html>> [last accessed 29.4.2007].

³¹ Nietzsche, 1971 quoted in Annick LeGuéner. 'Olfaction and Cognition: A Philosophical and Psychoanalytic View.' in Schaal, Beoist (Editor) New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 6.

³² Constance Classen. 'The Witch's Senses: Sensory Ideologies and Transgressive Femininities from the Renaissance to Modernity.' in Howes, David (Editor). *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual and Culture Reader*. Oxford: Berg, 2005, pp. 71-2.

associates the “imbalm’d/ with odours” as referring to the air:³³ the lines could also refer to Sin and Death who have taken on the false smell of Paradise to disguise themselves. Further evidence can be found when Satan disguised as a snake lies in “ambush hid among sweet Flours and Shades” (9.408); his smell is totally hidden within the scented garden, and like the expert at camouflage that he is, he has probably dressed himself in the robes of fragrance of the surrounding flowers. So in this way Satan could fool the angels and mankind. As I mentioned above, the true nature of a person can only be perceived by God who can smell and see through any hypocrisy.

4.1.2 Foul Flatulence

This is partly a side issue, but because of its nature it belongs in the hellish smellscape. Brown mentions that Milton was prone to digestive and stomach problems that could have been due to illness.³⁴ In a letter to Leonard Phiaras, Milton wrote that he “noticed [his] sight becoming weak and dim, and at the same time [his] spleen and all [his] viscera burdened and shaking with flatulence.”³⁵ This real-life flatulence is echoed in *Paradise Lost* in the form of puns which add to the scentscape of Hell. In Hell

...combustible
And fewel’d entrals thence conceiving Fire,
Sublim’d with mineral fury, aid the Winds,
And leave a singed bottom all invov’d
With stench and smoak (1.233-7)

add to the noxious smellscape; and Raphael’s warnings of overindulgence turning “Wisdom to Folly, as Nourishment to Winde” (7.130); and according to Gigante, Milton calls upon his muse to “Purge and disperse” the internal mist which means foul

³³ Flanagan, note 213, p. 405.

³⁴ Brown, p.30.

³⁵ Flanagan, p. 1055.

digestive vapours³⁶ (this internal mist could also be understood as a fog in Milton's mind i.e. writer's block or unclearness in his mind). Milton used digestion as a metaphor for God keeping things in order,³⁷ so this flatulence can be seen as being a transgression of God's order and represents sin. Before the Fall it can be observed that the digestive system works well and does not emit foul odours: Adam upon waking had a good night's sleep that

Was Aerie light from pure digestion bred,
And temperat vapours bland, which th' only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, *Aurora's* fan
Lightly dispers'd... (5.4-7).

The flatulence that was released during Adam's sleep was inoffensive, and was dispersed and removed naturally by the movement of the leaves which acted like a fan. At the moment of Adam's Fall, Eve urges Adam to "freely taste, / And fear of Death deliver to the Windes" (9.988-9); this could be where the flatulence turns rotten and becomes the odour of mortality. So flatulence only became a noxious problem after the Fall and was a problem of man's sinful nature

Soon as the force of that fallacious Fruit,
That with exhilarating vapour³⁸ bland
About thir spirits had plaid, and inmost powers
Made erre, was now exhal'd and grosser sleep
Bred of unkindly fumes (9.1046-50).

Adam and Eve are also compared to the bad gasses caused by flatulence after the Fall and need to be removed like a waste product from Paradise:

Those pure immortal Elements that know
No gross, no unharmonious mixture foule,
Eject him tainted now, and purge him off
As a distemper, gross to aire as gross (11.51-3).

³⁶ Denise Gigante. 'Milton's Aesthetics of Eating.' *Diacritics*, Vol. 30, No. 2. (Summer, 2000), note, p. 95.

³⁷ Thomas Kranidas. 'Adam and Eve in the Garden: A study of *Paradise Lost*, Book V.' *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, Vol. 4, No. 1, The English Renaissance. (Winter, 1964), p. 82.

³⁸ *OED*, 'vapour' definition 3a: "In older medical use: Exhalations supposed to be developed within the organs of the body (esp. stomach) and to have an injurious effect upon the health".

And any prayers offered by Adam to God after the Fall had “No more availes than breath against the winde/ Blown stifling back on him that breaths it forth” (11.312-3). So that Adam’s prayers are blown back into his face like flatulent gases, which in fact is what they are as the worthiness before God has been lost - they are unscented words and are therefore unacceptable.

This punning was prevalent among eighteenth-century literature according to Brant and was also used as a political statement: political orators were full of flatulence and the stink of corruption was abounding.³⁹ It is self-evident that flatulence was defiantly intended to mean that human nature was corrupted, and Milton could be seen as a predecessor of this form of political slandering. But whatever Milton’s intention was with his punning on flatulence, be it autobiographical or moralistic, the scentscapes of Paradise and Hell were enriched with this smell and inform the reader that the corrupted, moralistic nature of mankind consists of negative odours that are unacceptable to God.

4.2 Pleasurable Paradise

Paradise has been a traditional concept for centuries and has had varying interpretations. Some of the traditional concepts of Paradise prior to *Paradise Lost* may be compared to Milton’s scentscape but they can be seen to vary in regards to some of the traditional concepts. In Virgil’s Elysium there is a highly scented grove that seems to be a basis for future Christian interpretations.⁴⁰ In the fourth century, Pseudo-Basil wrote that Paradise, before the fall, was full of fragrance;⁴¹ St. Ephraem the Syrian

³⁹ Clare Brant. ‘Fume and Perfume: Some Eighteenth-Century Uses of Smell’. *Journal of British Studies* 43 (October 2004), p. 447.

⁴⁰ Joseph E. Duncan. *Milton’s Earthly Paradise: A Historical Study of Eden*. London: Oxford University Press, 1972, p. 32.

⁴¹ Jean Delumeau. *History of Paradise: The Garden of Eden in Myth and Tradition*. New York: Continuum, 1995, p. 12.

imagined a “granary of perfumes” throughout the garden;⁴² and Tertullian emphasised three aspects of Paradise that are repeated throughout Christian literature: the perfumed odours, the fountain and the precious stones.⁴³ However, Milton’s Paradise is far more fragrant than Virgil’s;⁴⁴ from an olfactory perspective it surpasses these earlier Christian writings⁴⁵ and contains fragrances that are “beyond our normal experience.”⁴⁶ So it seems that although the earlier concepts of Paradise were highly infused with fragrances, Milton still adds to and surpasses them with the descriptions of olfactory delights.

4.2.1 Perfumed Paradise

Milton’s Paradise is so highly infused with perfumes and scents that according to Knott, it offers a bliss too great to be understood.⁴⁷ The first descriptions of Paradise are from Satan’s sensual perspective; we are sensing the same environment as joint sinners or outsiders, who do not really belong in the garden, but are there as voyeurs (see 2.4.3). The first descriptions are of a highly sensual nature with scent being one of the most described:

...And of purer aire
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness but despair: now gentle gales
Fanning thir odoriferous wings dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmie spoiles. As when to them who saile
Beyond the *Cape of Hope* and now are past
Mozambic, off at Sea North-East windes blow
Sabean Odours from the spicie shoare
Of *Arabie* the blest, with such delay
Well pleas’d they slack thir course, and many a League

⁴² Ibid, p. 13.

⁴³ Ibid, p. 13.

⁴⁴ Duncan, p. 32.

⁴⁵ Broadbent, J.B. ‘Milton’s Paradise.’ *Modern Philology*, Vol. 51, No. 3. (Feb., 1954), p.161.

⁴⁶ John R. Knott. ‘Milton’s Wild Garden.’ *Studies in Philology*, winter 2005, vol 102, Issue 1, p. 67.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p.68.

Chear'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles (4. 153-165).

Satan and the reader experience Paradise for the first time as an explorer of a tropical land would: smelling the exotic perfumes from far away before the land is in sight. The explorers even reduce speed and are suddenly in no hurry, as the rich smells need to be savoured for as long as possible. This exploration theme is strengthened by accounts of European explorers during Milton's era who wrote about similar sensory experiences upon encountering the New World⁴⁸

In the Mediterranean parts thereof are many goodly Forrests, full of Trees bearing Frankincense, and Myrrhe; therein grow also Palme-trees, Canes, Cinamon, and other such like odoriferous things whereof it is not possible to recount all the severall sorts in particular, so abundantly hath Nature assembled them there together; so that the odours, which come to our senses from those Trees, seeme to be somewhat that is truly Divine...⁴⁹

Satan even seems to find the scents pleasing like the explorers, and ironically, like the explorers, will be the one to destroy the scents in the end: "So entertained those odorous sweets the Fiend, / who came thir bane" (4.166-7).

The vegetation literally oozes scent: "...rich Trees wept odorous Gumms and Balme" (4.248); "...Blossoms also, and those dropping Gumms" (4.630); "fragrant leaf" (4.695); "sweet-smelling Herbs" (4.709); "spicie Forest" (5.298). The flowers and fruit that are mentioned are also of a highly fragrant nature. Raphael describes the fruit and flowers that are there for Adam and Eve as containing "Spirits odorous" (5.482) which seems to give them an enchanting, god-like quality. This magical, all-curing quality is echoed in the lines

...aires, vernal aires,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves (4.264-6).

The scents of Paradise seem to be the factor that keeps harmony and ensures that the world resonates at the correct frequency. This is a fascinating thought as perfumers refer

⁴⁸ Edwards, p. 192.

⁴⁹ Quoted from Diodorus, *History* in Edwards, p. 193.

to the principle constituents of perfumes as notes – so the vocabulary of scent and music are linked.⁵⁰ This harmonious smell, keeping everything in Paradise in tune, also has moralistic echoes as we have seen from the opposing noisome fumes being sinful: causing chaos and disharmony. However, Eve emphasises the importance of Adam in the order and beauty of Paradise as she tells him upon waking that

Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest Birds; pleasant the Sun
When first on this delightful Land he spreads
His orient Beams, on herb, tree fruit and flour,
Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful Evening milde, then silent Night
With this her solemn Bird and this fair Moon,
And these the Gemms of Heav'n, her starrie train (4.641-9).

The harmony and resonance that is present in Paradise would not be the same, or needs to be complemented by Adam and Eve to make the resonance complete.

Each flower can be smelt and perceived as we, as readers and onlookers, are led through a

...blissful field, through Groves of Myrrhe,
And flowering Odours, Cassia, Nard, and Balme;
A Wilderness of sweets (5.293-5)

and breath the scentscape in. We are led to a “Citron Grove” (5.22), forests of “Cedar, and Pine, and Firr” (4.139) and pine forests alone (5.193). God places Adam into “her [the earth’s] bosom smelling sweet” (7.319) where he wakes up in awe of his surroundings as “all things smil’d / With fragrance” and his heart overflowed with joy (8.265-6). Upon the marriage of Adam and Eve the earth celebrated as

...fresh Gales and gentle Aires
Whisper’d it to the Woods, and from thir wings
Flung Rose, flung Odours from the spicie Shrub (8.515-7).

⁵⁰ Shirley Price. *Aromatherapy Workbook: Understanding Essential Oils from Plant to Bottle*. London: Harper Collins, 1993, p.15.

All the sensory delights of the earth were released as an olfactory firework display, when rose (maybe petals or scent), a symbol of romantic and sensual love⁵¹, and other aromatic plants were scattered into the air and Adam and Eve retire to their bed for their wedding night. This wedding night is turned into a sensual event in both meanings of the word – sexual and olfactically. However, the innocence and goodness of the wedding night is preserved by the surrounding scents *per se*. As readers or observers, we are taken into Adam and Eve’s home, where the walls are made of “odorous bushie shrub” (4.696), decorated with flowers and “fragrant smells” (5.379) and we are overpowered with the scents of roses and jasmine (4.698). The whole atmosphere within the garden is described as being “prime for sweetest Sents and Aires” (9.200). The whole dwelling place has been turned into a scentscape that evokes peace, love and piety. Upon awakening one morning in this olfactory-filled abode, Adam reminds Eve how lucky they are to be awoken by

...the Flours [flowers]
That open now thir choicest bosom’d smells
Reserved from night, and kept for thee in store (5.126-8).

The flowers seem to keep their scents especially for Adam and Eve and release them as a mixed symphony of smells upon sunrise. Even when these flowers are closed, night time is still highly fragrant and is described as “ambrosial Night” due to the “Clouds exhal’d / From that high mount of God” (5.642-3). God has turned Paradise into a scent-filled environment, which symbolises the purity and acceptability to God; it is the fragrant grace of God that is ubiquitous throughout Paradise. This scentscape also has the power to control feelings and has curative properties: as God’s grace does within the soul.

⁵¹ Tresidder, p. 417.

4.2.2 The Role of Balm

Balm is defined as being a fragrant substance used for healing and soothing the skin. It is also a tree that yields fragrant resin used for medicinal purposes.⁵² Edwards quotes some of its curative properties from a medieval herbalist's book:

good use against all poisons and infections, both Vipers, Serpents and Scorpions, the pestilence ...diseases of the head or stomache...it cleareth the eyes of filmes or skinned, overgrowing the sight.⁵³

In addition to these important properties, it was also believed to have preserving properties⁵⁴ this can be seen when Michael tells Adam and Eve that the "Balme of Life" has been taken from them, and that they will get old and eventually die (11.538-46). As can be observed "the balmie Reed" (5.24) grows throughout Paradise and its aromatic scents are wafted on the wind (4.158-9). The fallen angels believe in its curative powers, as when they are entombed in Hell they fantasise about reaching Paradise, where they "Shall breathe her balm" (2.402)⁵⁵ which they hope will heal their burnt lungs. Satan actually destroys this possibility for the fallen angels, as after the Fall, it seems that the Paradisiacal scents and balm disappear. Edwards argues, however, that scent can never be removed from Paradise as balm is mentioned after the Fall (11.135 and 11.546). However, this balm is no longer an intrinsic property of Paradise, but it is sent by God as a sign of reconciliation and healing: Heaven sends "fresh dews imbalmed" (11.135) to restore and preserve. This balm is also used as a symbol to tell Adam and Eve that their prayers have been heard; in addition, the curative properties

⁵² *OED*, 'balm' n. definition 5: "aromatic ointment used for soothing pain or healing wounds" quotes Milton's *Samson Agonistes* 186 "As Balm to fester'd wounds".

⁵³ Edwards, pp. 182-3.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.183.

⁵⁵ *OED*, 'balm' n. definition 6: "*transf.* or *fig.* A healing, soothing, or softly restorative, agency or influence", quotes 2.402 as an example.

bring hope and help restore their hearts. The non-existence of bad odours in Paradise before the Fall is strengthened by Adam's "Balmie Sweat" (8.255): Adam effuses a pleasant smell of sweat, which only after the Fall becomes a negative odour. The role of balm could also be a preservative and could symbolise immortality.⁵⁶ The odour of sanctity has a similar role, it is based on a Christian tradition that those who lived in a state of grace were infused with the divine scent of the Holy Spirit. This divine scent was a way of making the presence of God sensible. It was specifically noted that some saints did not decompose, but were preserved in the state that they died emitting sweet odours.⁵⁷ However, balm does not cure all and does not offer real protection. It can not cure Satan's ailment of sin and despair (4.156) and Eve is led through a grove "Of blowing Myrrh and Balme" (9.629) which does not offer her protection, nor does it repel the serpent.

4.2.3 Satan and Sin Enter Paradise

The fall occurs in Book IX and after this the scentscape of Paradise radically changes. There is no longer any mention of beautiful, enchanting smells only references to negative ones: "damps and dreadful gloom" (10. 846-8) and the references to flatulence as mentioned previously (4.1.2). Prior to the Fall as Satan leads Eve to temptation, the lighting of noxious gasses from underground brings in a negative smell which for Eve is likened to the hope of those lost on a bog (9.635). This hope is false, however, as it is born from noisome gasses from Hell and can therefore only lead to sin. Sin and Death can also perceive the change in the scentscape that has occurred in Paradise; as they are compared to birds of prey that can smell the blood from afar (10.272-282). So the whole scentscape of Paradise has changed to a negative olfactory

⁵⁶ Edwards, p. 197.

⁵⁷ Classen, 1998, pp. 36-44.

environment. The only other pleasant scent mentioned in Paradise after the Fall is the use of incense which is used as a communication with God and act of contrition rather than a natural intrinsic scent of Paradise.

When Satan finds Eve just before he tempts her, she is “Veild in a Cloud of Fragrance” (9.425). This is an interesting line and can be interpreted in a way that Eve is surrounded by scent that declares her innocence: as in Western society maidenhood or virginity were often connected to sweet fragrances and roses;⁵⁸ these sweet fragrances could also symbolise Eve’s piousness and belief in God; the fragrances could further symbolise that Eve is being protected by the scents: so that the beautiful smells, like balm (discussed in 4.2.2), have some form of curative or protective properties. But this protection is not enough and Satan leads Eve to temptation initially thorough her sense of smell

When from the boughes a savorie odour blow’n
Grateful to appetite, more pleas’d my sense
Then smell of sweetest Fenel or the Teats
Of Ewe or Goat dropping with Milk at Eevn (9.579-82).

And so led by her nose, she was “... quick’nd at the scent / Of that alluring fruit” (9.587-8) which is again emphasised and repeated as her “eager appetite, rais’d by the smell / So savorie of that Fruit” (9.740-1). Both these are identical to Eve’s account of her dream to Adam (5.84-5) and seem to highlight the role of olfaction in the temptation. Olfaction’s role is further strengthened when Eve brings the fruit to Adam which the “ambrosial smell diffus’d” (9.852) so as to tempt Adam even more. And so Eve, after eating the apple, finds that Paradise has changed and without the possibility of sharing what she has obtained with Adam then it will become “odious soon” (9.880) i.e. a negative, noxious experience. The fact that the world has changed becomes evident when Michael shows Adam the future: as a house of sickness and disease

⁵⁸ Classen, 1992, p. 143.

“Before his [Adam’s] eyes appeared, sad, noysom,⁵⁹ dark” (11.478). Noxious smells and sickness have been allowed into the world which represent human mortality, sin and moral decay.

4.3 Heavenly Scent

The scentscape of Heaven seems to be similar to prelapsian Paradise. However, the scents emanate from God rather than the natural world. God effuses incense – he is “Th’ incensed Deitie” (3.186) and is “Rapt in a balmie Cloud” (11.706). Likewise, Heaven was often described by early modern writers as a mixture of sweet smells.⁶⁰ During the creation of the world, Heaven was wrapped in “incense Clouds / Fuming from Golden Censers” (7.599-600). When God speaks, He utters “odious Truth” (11.704). It is as if the Word or Spirit that flows from God’s mouth is fragrance itself:

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill’d
All Heav’n and in the blessed Spirits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffus’d (3.135-7).

This is exactly how the gods of Greece and Rome were described: they used to exhale ambrosia that acted as a perfume to the gods.⁶¹ This divine fragrance was used to inform people of God’s presence: Paul wrote that “through us diffuses the fragrance of his knowledge.”⁶² Paul and his fellow Christians were the “fragrance of Christ”⁶³ on earth and were here to return the fragrance to the world. Some saints were said to have given off sweet heavenly scents that were uplifting and spiritually strengthening to all those

⁵⁹ *OED*, ‘noisome’ definition 4: Offensive to the sense of smell; foul-smelling.

⁶⁰ Brant, p. 446.

⁶¹ Classen, 1998, p. 44.

⁶² 2 Corinthians 2:14.

⁶³ 2 Corinthians 2:15.

that perceived them.⁶⁴ Angels themselves seem to have a scent of Heaven as Raphael “shook his Plumes, that Heav’nly fragrance filld / The circuit wide” (5.286-7). This could be for recognition,⁶⁵ as when he is wrapped in the heavenly fragrance then everyone knows and perceives him as an angel, or it could be that angels as godly creatures basically effuse the scent of God and Heaven naturally.⁶⁶ Classen mentions that throughout history angels have been associated with the smell of heaven by quoting people who have described being touched by angels; after being touched the smell stayed on those people’s hands and even lasted for many years.⁶⁷ It appears that Satan has the ability to disguise his smell of sin, so it seems all angels, whether fallen or not, have the ability to secrete or copy heavenly scent in Milton’s sensorium.

The scents of Heaven have uplifting and curative properties, as has been seen in Paradise. The only negative scent that occurred in Heaven’s scentscape was in connection with the rebellion, as mentioned in 4.1, when the smell of sulphur and gunpowder (6.512) disturbs the tranquillity and sensuality in Heaven.

4.3.1 Incense

Incense seems to play a major role in Milton’s olfactory environment; this could be viewed as being against Milton’s Puritanical background⁶⁸ (Puritans considered incense to be part of the Roman Catholic heresy and so any use of it was to be avoided). However, in my opinion it supports Milton’s following of the Old Testament as the biblical source. Incense was used to make prayers and offerings suitable to God, and was also used as a curative or for expelling of evil spirits. Milton

⁶⁴ Classen, 1998, p. 37.

⁶⁵ Flannagan, note 88, p. 484.

⁶⁶ Reid, p. 141.

⁶⁷ Classen, 1998, p. 47.

⁶⁸ David Robertson. ‘Incensed Over Incense: Incense and Community in Seventeenth-Century Literature.’ Lecture given at Tampere University, 2006, p. 1.

refers to Tobit's expulsion of Asmodeus, an evil spirit, by burning the heart, liver and gall of a fish as incense (4.168-71). In Book I there is allusion to and direct mention of the misuse of incense: there is an allusion to Jeremiah 44.17-20 where incense was burnt in idolatry to the "Queen of Heav'n" (1.439-41); and where burnt offerings were used to adore vanquished gods (1.474-6); and also the use of altars used to worship other false deities (1.492-3). Even the angels made offerings to God, which could have been a form of communication: this can be observed when Mammon casts scorn on the idea of having to continue with making offerings to God as "his Altar breathes / Ambrosial Odours and Ambrosial Flowers" (2.244-5). It could also be argued that when the Messiah goes to intercede for Adam and Eve he is "clad with incense, where the Golden Altar fum'd" (11.17-8). So even in the presence of his father, the Messiah needs to be clouded in incense, or is continually cloaked in odours.

Eve wanting to make their home odoriferously acceptable decorates the floor "With Rose and Odours from the shrub unfum'd" (5.349). The shrub is presumably incense, but as there is no fire in prelapsian Paradise then it cannot be lit.⁶⁹ A similar fragrance without the pious overtones could probably be obtained by scattering it upon the floor as a sign of respect and honour.

In fact Paradise as a whole seems to have been designed as an acceptable offering and the whole earth seems to act as an altar to God: this can be seen when morning breaks in Eden

...the humid Flours, that breathed
Thir morning incense, when all things that breathe,
From th' Earths great Altar send up in silent praise
To the Creator, and his Nostrils fill
With grateful smell... (9.193-7).

⁶⁹ Adam and Eve were "Guiltless of fire" (9.392)

So the prelapsian world as a whole is a prayer and offering to God: it is good and acceptable to God's eyes and nose. Classen sums up this whole aromatic process by saying that "humans and deities were united in an olfactory cycle, whereby sweet scents travelled up from earth to the gods and down from the gods to earth."⁷⁰

After the Fall, when Paradise seems to be fragrance-free, then incense is used as a supplication to God. Adam says he will "Offer sweet smelling Gumms and Fruits and Flours" (11.327) and in a vision Adam sees Abel following the prescribed rituals as in Leviticus 6.9-14 "with Incense strew'd / On the cleft Wood, and all due Rites perform'd" (11.439-40). Jesus offers God the "Sighs / And Prayers" (11.23-4) of Adam and Eve when he intercedes for them in Heaven. But they are not in their original form, they have been made acceptable to God by placing them "in this Golden Censer, mixt / with Incense" (11.24-5). So the role of incense was to make communication with God acceptable – turning these words into a form of Holy Spirit which itself is aromatic and incense-like (4.3). So the ultimate sacrifice is the Messiah who suggests to his father that he should become the "smell of peace" (11.38) and bring the aromatic Holy Spirit back into the world. According to Classen "the initial pristine aroma of creation was corrupted by the stench of sin and then purified by the fragrant blood of Christ."⁷¹ The final mention of incense is in connection with the birth of Christ when "Incense, Myrrh, and Gold" are brought as presents (12.363). Two aromatic substances are presented as acceptable gifts to the son of God, which can symbolise both mankind's attempt to supplicate to God and Jesus' reconciling fragrance that has been brought into the world. This is the constant aromatic cycle where prayers are made acceptable to God through incense; God sends his son to infuse heavenly grace into the world in the form of incense; and eventually everyone will be judged by their spiritual odour.

⁷⁰ Classen, 1998, p. 44.

⁷¹ Ibid, p. 5.

4.4 Olfactory Conclusions

Knott states that “fragrance becomes the signature of Paradise for Milton, representing the mood it evokes in everyone but Satan.”⁷² However, Satan *is* affected positively by the scentscape of Paradise, as we have seen above, but due to its inherent goodness wants to destroy it; and it is these paradisiacal scents themselves that he eventually uses to finally tempt Adam and Eve. So that God’s creation is being used as a weapon against God himself.

Milton has created a Paradise where all pre-existing sensory experiences need to be relaxed to fully enjoy the fragrant environment⁷³ and fully benefit from the sensorium. Olfaction seems to play an important part in the whole sensorium of *Paradise Lost*, as it is used to describe the scentscapes of each environment and is also used to concretely symbolise the fallen nature of mankind. *Paradise Lost* starts with Books I and II describing the scentscape of Hell; this is immediately followed by elaborate, olfactory descriptions of Paradise; where scents overpower and outnumber many of the other sensual descriptions. Books VI and VII move on to Heaven, where the battle in Heaven is described in VI with only one reference to scent and book VII containing only three references. Books VIII, IX and X move back to Paradise with most of the olfactory references occurring in Book IX where the Fall occurs. Book X has some of the first negative odours associated with Paradise, which spread into Book XI. But the predominant feature in this post-lapsian Paradise in Book XI, is the abundance of incense, which seems to embalm and purify the events that have occurred earlier in Paradise. Finally, in Book XII, there are only two olfactory references again concerned with incense. It can be seen that after the initial negative smell of sin, the

⁷² Knott, p. 82.

⁷³ Knott, p. 70.

main olfactory references occur in *Paradise* and emphasise the sinless nature of the world. These godly scents predominate the text and are missed after the Fall. When the Fall occurs there is a dramatic change in the scentscape – negative smells invade *Paradise* as sin enters. Pleasant smells are replaced by noisome smells until there is a need for reconciliation and the role of God-sent incense becomes important. So the scentscape of *Paradise Lost* can also be used to map the events that occur within the narration.

Laskewicz⁷⁴ mentions that olfaction makes an experience vital and new to an individual involved in the act. This experience does not have to be experienced first-hand, however, but can be experienced from a description of a scentscape in a text. This is what a reader experiences in *Paradise Lost* – one is transported to an olfactory world through the strong associations of smell with the past and present. Smells had a more important role during Milton's era: they were vital for survival; they were more predominant in society at large; they had religious overtones; and they had strong moralistic connotations. When Milton's text is compared to a text written about olfactory experiences in the twenty-first century:

We in the American middle class grew up in a world almost entirely devoid of smells, except for that of household cleaning products, and barely remember our childhood at all, except for the television programs. And worse Protestantism has given us no neutral word like 'taste', for smell. 'Stench' or 'fragrance' is exact, as they should be, but 'odour' or 'smell', which should have no value, generally imply a foulness and 'to smell' misleadingly is both a transitive and an intransitive verb. They pertain to a world whose Satan has a smell, but whose God does not,⁷⁵

then we can really perceive the two extremely different environments. The importance of Milton's scentscape may not be evident to modern readers, but it probably had an impact on readers in Milton's time because the associations would have been stronger.

⁷⁴ Zachar Laskewicz. 'From the Hideous to the Sublime: Olfactory Processes, Performance Texts and the Sensory Episteme.' *Performance Research*, 8 (3). (2003), p 57.

⁷⁵ Eliot Weinberger. *Karmic Traces*. New York: New Directions, 2000, pp. 142-3.

The need for a fragrant paradise would have been acute if the accounts of the cities and towns in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are accurate: the scentscapes were similar to hell on earth – open sewers, pollution and the ever present threat of plague. So the reading of *Paradise Lost* could even be an escape from reality for people – to enter into a virtual world where the stench of life is alleviated for a while and hope is obtained. One theory for why the sense of smell has declined in importance in modern society is that smell causes one to merge with the surrounding environment, whereas in modern society individuality has taken over.⁷⁶ In *Paradise Lost* this merging with the environment does in fact occur: Adam and Eve blend into Paradise; the fallen angels and Satan stink like Hell; angels take on the heavenly scent; and scent is used as a cloak by Satan so as to disguise himself. This modern obsession with hiding true smells with artificial ‘beautiful’ fragrances has further repercussions when the religious aspect of *Paradise Lost* is taken into account: the true religious scent of a person or a person’s sole is hidden by these artificial fragrances; this makes it harder to discern true hearts, as was mentioned earlier. So the fragrance industry has taken up the fragrant cloak as Satan did to cover the sinful nature of mankind and could represent the anti-religious feelings that are prevalent in society.

⁷⁶ Classen, 1998, p. 58.

5. TASTESCAPES

Taste is considered to be one of the lowest of the senses as food has to come into contact with the body for it to be tasted and is also considered to be a more animalistic, baser sense in general.¹ However, taste is not only connected with perception, but is closely related to the ingestion of food in general, the sensation of taste and description of food and eating are very difficult to separate in *Paradise Lost* and so have both been included in this chapter. Also, according to Gigante, there were a few different understandings of taste in the seventeenth century: sensationally it was connected to the physical tasting of food and philosophically it was connected to knowledge, pleasure and morality:² what was seen as aesthetically tasteful was also considered to be intrinsically morally good. Plato postulated that if something was aesthetically tasteful or beautiful then it was in harmony with the universe and God's creation; he thought that beauty does not only correspond to what is seen or perceived, but the physical senses need to be ruled by internal sight schooled in philosophy for cognition to occur.³ It appears that Milton mixes all of these meanings up into a cocktail of tastescape, so that readers have to decipher meanings themselves.

Milton seems to have created two main tastescapes in *Paradise Lost*: Paradise and Hell. The tastescape of Paradise is concerned with aesthetic eating, where tastes are extremely pleasurable, but excess is not reached and even taboo: moderation was an integral part of renaissance table manners; the Fall plays a very important role in this tastescape, as taste has a major role prior to and after the Fall. Hell, however, has a tastescape similar to its scentscape, in that negative images and sensual experiences are

¹ Korsmeyer, p. 11.

² Gigante, p. 89.

³ Eco, pp. 48-50.

described which make a reader dislike the whole environment. Tastes are very pleasurable, like smells, in Paradise – it is interesting that negative tastes do not occur after the Fall but intoxication and gluttony become the important factors.

5.1 The taste of Hell

It seems as if hunger and thirst are a punishment in Hell. When the devils try to quench their thirst then “the water flies / all taste of living wight [human being] as once it fled / The lip of *Tantalus*”(2.612-4). The Greek myth of Tantalus is very pertinent to the suffering of the fallen angels. There are two varying tales: one is that he fed his son to the gods of Olympus and the other is that he stole ambrosia and nectar from the gods. However, the culpable act is not important here, what is important is the punishment that was meted out. Tantalus was made to stand eternally in a pool with water up to his chin; this punishment was made even harsher due to the fact that when he stooped to drink then the water receded from his reach; added to this trees dangled fruit over his head, but as he reached for them the wind pushed them out of reach.⁴ This meant that he was in a constant state of thirst and hunger, just as the devils were in Hell. However, Sin and Death, who live on the outer extremes of Hell, do seem to eat, but the food awakes revulsion in the reader as Sin’s offspring “gnaw / [her] Bowels” (2.799-800) and her “own brood, that on [her] bowels feed” (2.863). Death, if he were allowed, would “his Parent... full soon devour / For want of other prey” (2.805-6), but if he did eat his own mother then she herself admits that she “Should prove a bitter Morsel, and his bane” (2.808). This could mean that Sin would never give Death’s bowels and stomach peace, and would punish Death with possible indigestion eternally. Death is, therefore, metaphorically portrayed as a wild hungry animal or dog tearing at the tether

⁴ Tresidder, p. 464.

to get at some food. It is Satan's job to make this possible, and turn the world into a feeding ground for these demons. Satan, upon breaking out of Hell and reaching the world, is described as a vulture waiting "To gorge the flesh of Lambs or yearling [newborn] Kids" (3.434), so Satan metaphorically becomes an animal of prey just like his heinous followers. He is preparing and waiting to gorge on the flesh of the victims of other predators: a vulture is a bird of prey that does not kill for itself but waits until another predator has killed or that the prey is too weak to defend itself. Sin and Death have their appetites whetted as they are told that they will be able to "be fed and fill'd / Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey" (2.843-4).

Immediately upon Sin and Death sensing that mortality has entered Paradise, they rush off to "taste / the savour of Death" (10.268-9); and Death is described as being "half starv'd" (10.595) for the need to eat the sinful. So metaphorically, it appears that the devils and Satan will be tempting the prey and then eating the remains after Sin and Death, the active predators, have killed and fed. The devils are described as the Dogs of Hell at this point and are let loose onto the world to "lick up the draff and filth" (10.630). Draff is disgusting refuse or leftovers⁵ and again awakens the disgust of a reader. After the Fall, Eve tries to formulate a plan for tricking Death out of his future meals by not having children so that he "...be deceav'd his glut, and with us two / Be forc'd to satisfie his Rav'nous Maw" (10.990-1). Of course, this is not a solution as Adam points out and Death does get his future fill. This lack of food and water is part of the eternal punishment meted out by God, and it is ironic that the only 'food' that will be available for these demons are God's creation on earth. Eating, of course, is only being used metaphorically and so the predator-prey relationship is used to show that sin separates man from God - the soul is devoured which leads to

⁵ Flannagan, note 224, p. 643; and *OED*: refuse from brewing or distilling.

spiritual death. However, the devils gnawing on the bowels of sinful souls, still remains a powerful image and awakens a great deal of revulsion and fear of sin.

Later in Paradise, immediately prior to the Fall, Satan makes a comment that “Revenge, at first though sweet, / Bitter ere long back on itself recoils” (9.171-2). According to Flannagan, this refers to the invention of guns and gunpowder in Heaven – so that the weapons invented by Satan backfire on him.⁶ However, Satan’s comment has further repercussions as later God sends a tree to Hell that produces bitter fruit. So Satan, who is about to bring about the Fall and lead Eve into temptation, gets his revenge on God, but he, as a premonition of future events, sees the devils will be fed forevermore on bitter apples. The idea of recoiling can also be used to refer to a snake that bites its prey, but then recoils and manages to bite itself too. Because Satan led Adam and Eve into temptation, God casts a punishment onto the devils whom he has turned into serpents, so that they “dust shalt eat all the days of thy Life” (10.178). So even if it appears for a brief second that Satan succeeds with this revenge, he and his followers are very quickly punished and end up in a worse state. The serpents are described as being “parcht with scalding thirst and hunger fierce” (10.556), due to them not being able to eat or drink, and, of course, as soon as the tree bearing fruit appears they head straight for the offered food and the possible alleviation to their suffering. However, upon biting into the fruit,

...not the touch, but taste
 Deceav’d; they fondly thinking to allay
 Thir appetite with gust⁷, instead of Fruit
 Chew’d bitter Ashes, which th’ offended taste
 With splattering noise rejected: oft they assyd,
 Hunger and thirst constraining, drugd as oft,
 With hatefullest disrelish writh’d thir jaws
 With soot and cinders fill’d; so oft they fell
 Into the same illusion, not as Man
 Whom they triumph’d once lapst (10.563-72).

⁶ Flannagan, note 64, p. 589.

⁷ A pun can be observed with “gust” referring to the resulting flatulence after eating fruit.

The apples looked like apples, felt like apples, but did not taste like apples – so only the sense of taste was deceived. If the word “deceived” is understood as “fooled” or “tricked” then all the senses have been tricked as the apple appeared real but in fact was made of ashes. However, According to Gigante, the Latinate meaning of ‘deceive’ means ‘to disappoint’, which would explain this problem.⁸ So the apples appeared real and felt real, but upon biting into the fruit, the sense of taste was disappointed because the apples were not real. The apples turned into bitter ashes, as predicted by Satan earlier, which worsened their condition of thirst and starvation. They were led into the same act again and again eternally, as they seemed to forget what the apples tasted like.⁹ So unlike Adam and Eve, who fell into temptation once, these devils were constantly led into temptation only to be deceived again and again.

5.2 A taste of Paradise

Paradise is abundant with tastes, they are mostly connected with food and during the temptation taste plays an extremely important role, as will be seen in 5.2.2. The food in Paradise is so delicious with different tastes everywhere. As we have seen in the olfactory sensescape, smells are an intrinsic part of Paradise, as tastes are, but tastes do not float in the air like scents – they need contact with the mouth to experience and are therefore harder to describe in the environment. However, the fallen angels do give an idea how tastes do cross the sensory boundaries, when they want to breathe and taste the “soft delicious Air” (2.400). So here a synaesthetic experience is being described by the fallen angels, who need to breathe in fresh air after the polluted, acidic

⁸ Gigante, p. 98.

⁹ Part of the punishment could have been that once they had eaten, the memory of the negative taste experience is wiped out. Alternatively, they could have been so desperate for the alleviation of their suffering that they risked the negative taste experience just in case the ash-filled fruit had changed according to its physical appearance and relief could be obtained.

air in Hell and at the same time are so starved that the air is explained in a gustatory way.

Before the Fall, it appears that the food chain works in a semi-vegetarian or totally vegetarian way, so that the animals appear to only eat plants. This would also emphasise that the descriptions of Satan, Sin and Death as being predators and vultures were against God's natural order and harmony. This can be seen after the Fall, when the animals stop "to graze the Herb" and "devour'd each other" (10.711-2). They, therefore, leave from their vegetarian diet and start to eat each other in a predator-prey relationship – just as occurs in the natural world today.

5.2.1 Food and nourishment

Upon first waking up in Paradise, Adam's first act was "to pluck and eate" (8.309) due to having his appetite awoken by the sight and smell of the wonderful fruit around him. God tells him to "eate freely" (8.322) as all the fruit is for him to care for and consume. Everything in Paradise was "of delicious taste" (4.251). It is hard to believe that any bitter tasting foods or poisons would have been present at all: so everything was safe to eat except for the forbidden fruit. It has been questioned if the forbidden fruit would have tasted good or not, but I shall return to this subject in 5.2.2. Fruit not only smelt, and tasted appealing but some were also "burnishet with Golden Rinde" (4.249). The waters of Paradise ran with nectar (4.240), which seems to make the whole tastescape extremely appealing, god-like and heavenly.

Food was easy to reach and, for instance after working all day Adam and Eve settled down to rest and eat

Nectarine Fruits which the compliant boughes
Yielded them, side-long as they sat recline
On the soft downie Bank damaskt with flours;
The savourie pulp they chew, and in the rinde

Still they thirsted scoop the brimming stream (4.332-6).

The trees seemed to hand their fruit to Adam and Eve as they just held out their hands. To quench their thirst they had freely flowing, nectar-like water readily at hand, which they could cup in the rinds of fruit that has been eaten. The whole garden seemed edible, everywhere they turned food was at hand and was described as

...and this delicious place
For us too large, where thy abundance wants [lacks]
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground (4.729-31).

There was more food than they could actually consume; there was never a worry from whence the next meal came. When this is compared to what was happening to the fallen angels in Hell, who were starving and could not quench the dryness from their throats, there is an extreme contrast. After the Fall, Adam and Eve were very concerned about how they will nourish themselves in the future. This was in fact a very poignant question, because after the Fall everything changed: they were going to be thrown out of Paradise, and henceforth they had to eat food from the cursed ground. Fruit and food was no longer handed to them from trees but they had to labour and grow their own food. They were told that on leaving Paradise they will have to eat the “Herb of th’ Field” and that they will also have to make their own bread (10.204-5). This concern for food shows itself when Michael shows future visions of the Tower of Babel to Adam; one of Adam’s main concerns on seeing these visions is how mankind would grow food for themselves at such a high altitude:

...what food
Will he convey up thither to sustain
Himself and his rash Armie, where thin Aire
Above the Clouds will pine his entails gross
And famish him of Breath, if not of Bread? (12.74-8).

So Adam has internalised the punishment and knows that in the future the cultivation of food is going to be a problem that, if not managed properly, will lead to hunger and starvation.

Correct eating and table manners seem to be a prime concern in *Paradise Lost*. Various manuals for correct eating habits were written during the sixteenth century. They seem to emphasise that one's mouth should not be too full, that temperance and moderation are ideals, and that to rashly reach out for food with one's hand is extremely bad manners.¹⁰ Caxton's *Book of Curtesye* from the fifteenth century mentions that one should

...resttreyn
 Your honde a while with manerly respite
 Fede you for necessite & not for delite
 Demene you with mete & drink so sobrelly
 That ye not be enfecte with glotony. .¹¹ (178-182)

Michael gives some guidelines on polite dining behaviour to Adam and Eve by mentioning what eating habits are like in Heaven (5.637-40). He mentions that “the meates and drinks they had suffic'd / Not burd'nd Nature...” (5.451-2); the angels had eaten plenty they had not over indulged. Eating rarely occurs alone, as it has a social function; this can be seen from all of the eating scenes before the Fall – they are enjoyed in company and conversation flows. This aspect of conversing is also an important part of polite eating as one's mouth should never be filled so full that conversation is impaired. It is only after the Fall that all these laws of civility are lost, as shall be seen in 5.2.2.

Eve has a role of a homemaker and food provider; she prepares food for Adam at the end of the working day as

¹⁰ Arvind Thomas. 'Milton and Table Manners'. *Milton Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 1, 2006, p. 38.

¹¹ William Caxton *Book of Curtesye*. (1477) available at <www.gutenberg.org/files/14761/14761-8.txt> [last accessed 28.04.07]: “restrain / your hand for a while with mannerly restraint / Eat for necessity, not for delight / demean yourself with meat and drink soberly / That you are not infected by gluttony” [own transliteration].

For dinner savourie fruits, of taste to please
 True appetite, and not disrelish thirst
 Of nectarous draughts between from milkie stream,
 Berrie or Grape... (5.304-7).

And when Raphael arrives she makes ready a feast full of taste:

What choice to chuse for delacacie best,
 What order, so contriv'd as not to mix
 Tastes, not well joynd, inelegant, but bring
 Taste after taste upheld with kindness change,
 Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
 Whatever Earth all-bearing Mother yields
 In *India* East or West, or middle shoare
 In *Pontus* or the *Punic Coast*, or where
Alcinous reign'd fruit of all kindes, in coate,
 Rough, or smooth rin'd, or bearded husk, or shell
 She gathers, Tribute large, and on the board
 Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the Grape
 She crushes, inoffensive moust, and meathes
 From many a berrie, and from sweet kernels prest
 She tempers dulcet creams, not these to hold
 Wants her vessels pure... (5.333-48)

Both quotations mention the drinks that are consumed with the meals: they are made of grape, berry or even water. The water from the streams is milky, and could even taste of nectar, as mentioned earlier. This emphasises the total nourishing ability of the water – it sounds a wholesome meal within itself. Eve also crushes berries into “meathes [mead]” and “moust [must]”.¹² Even though mead is traditionally alcoholic, according to Flannagan it can also refer to any kind of sweet beverage.¹³ So it appears that before the Fall, there are no alcoholic beverages and intoxication is not a problem – the mead and must are actually referred to as being “inoffensive” (5.345). This is worth remembering for the discussion on what happens to the appetite and manners of eating after the Fall (5.2.2) – as intoxication seems to play an important role. This is connected to temperance and controlling one’s consumption, which in Paradise, as in society in

¹² *OED*: mead: an alcoholic drink of fermented honey and water; must: grape juice before or during fermentation.

¹³ Flannagan, note 109, p. 486.

Milton's era, was an important social civility. It is also interesting to note that Eve mentions how important it is not to mix tastes and so destroy or ruin them (5.333-6). Instead, complementary tastes should be chosen that bring out the best flavours from each food. So Eve is expressing and emphasising the importance of gastronomic skills – some tastes may ruin others and *vice versa* and so it is important to know about the different tastes. This also emphasises the importance of restraint and the of resisting gluttony; cramming food and eating as much as possible not only breaks the rules of etiquette, but also breaks the rules of gastronomic delight and enjoyment. Eve seems to have a wide range of exotic and delicious fruits to work with, therefore, a wide knowledge is also needed about what foods complement each other.

When Raphael arrives, Adam invites him

...to taste
 These bounties which our Nourisher, from whom
 All perfect good unmeasur'd out, descends,
 To us for food and for delight hath caus'd
 The Earth to yield; unsavoury food perhaps
 To spiritual Natures (5.597-402)

God is referred to as a provider of food, a “Nourisher”, someone who gives and can also take away (as can be seen in Hell and later in Paradise). Adam is at first apologetic about what is on offer, as he assumes that it must be of a lower standard compared to the food in Heaven and he may even be unsure if angels do actually eat at all. Raphael emphasises that angels do eat, “concoct, digest, [and] assimilate” (5.412) and they need normal nourishment just as Adam and Eve do. In fact, everything that was created by God seems to need nourishment in one form or another in Milton's created universe – all animate and inanimate objects including the sun, which feeds on Adam's “Balmie Sweat” (7.255-6). So the food chain has been stretched to include inanimate objects that seem to need the nourishment of Adam and Eve to fulfil the chain. This use of inanimate objects partaking in animate activities is an another example of Milton's

materialism, in which all created objects take on a bodily form and are sensual. However, Adam's tentative offering of food to Raphael and shame of what they have to offer is totally unfounded, because Raphael mentions that there are trees in Heaven that supply fruit, but on earth there are so many different varieties that he is more than happy to taste the new sensations and flavours:

...though in Heav'n the Trees
Of life ambrosial frutage bear, and vines
Yield Nectar, though from off the boughs each Morn
We brush mellifluous Dewes, and find the ground
Cover'd with pearly grain: yet God hath here
Varied his bounty so with new delights
As may compare to Heaven (5.426-32).

However, after the meal Adam is again very humble and says to Raphael that the "Food [was] not of Angels, yet accepted so" (5.465), i.e. the food was not heavenly food but it was eaten as if it was. But it is Raphael who has the last word on the food in Paradise, and makes it evident what a wonderful gift has been given to them:

He [God] brought thee into this delicious Grove,
This Garden, planted with the Trees of God,
Delectable both to behold and taste;
And freely all thir pleasant fruit for food
Gave thee, all sorts are here that all th' Earth yields,
Varietie without end... (7.537-42).

And so emphasises what it will mean to lose this delectable Horn of Plenty.

5.2.1.1 Food and nourishment in Heaven

Raphael talks freely about food nourishment in Heaven (see lines 5.426-32 in 5.2.1); the situation is basically identical to Paradise: angels eat just like Adam and Eve and trees bear plenty of fruit, which are constantly replenished. However, there is a more godly feeling as ambrosia, nectar and manna are all freely available, too. Manna, the food of the gods, appears on the ground as "pearly grain" (5.430), which can be picked up freely every morning. All created things seem to need nourishment, as

mentioned above, so angels, even though they live in Heaven, are no exception (5.412).

The angels even celebrate and party when

Tables are set, and on a sudden pil'd
With Angels Food, and rubied Nectar flows
In Pearl, and Diamond, and massie Gold
Fruit of delicious Vines, the growth of Heav'n. (5.632-5).

Tables are piled with food, and the drinking vessels are made of pearl, diamond and gold. This does awaken a certain feeling of overindulgence and decadence. When this is combined with the ruby nectar, which sounds distinctively like wine, then we have to stop and re-evaluate the situation. Can the ruby nectar be wine? I have my doubts. As it is not until after the Fall that wine and intoxication becomes an issue – so the nectar is probably very innocent and the redness may only be used to describe the colour of the red berries used. The descriptions of Heaven are also usually laden with gold and are highly decorated, so it is not any wonder that the angels have the best of everything. And in regards to their tables being piled high, it is pointed out that angels also follow the rules of sensible and polite eating:

They eate, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortalie and joy, secure
Of surfet where full measure onely bounds
Excess... (5.637-40)

So they eat and enjoy themselves but are safe from exceeding the barriers of overindulgence. This physical consumption of food by the angels is another example of Milton's materialist thinking, as they bodily enjoy themselves.

A final comment on angels is that they seem to be made of similar fluids as they consume. This can be observed when Satan is wounded in battle and “from the gash / A stream of Nectarous humor issuing flow'd” (6.331-2). The blood that issues forth is like nectar and one can almost imagine being able to drink it. It is interesting

that Satan is described as having this sweet blood as it emphasises the inherent goodness that is inside the fallen angels, although this does not show from their deeds.

5.2.2 The Tree of Knowledge and the temptation of taste

...of all the Trees
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that only Tree
Of knowledge...
God hath pronounc't it death to taste that Tree (4.421-7).

The Tree of Knowledge stood in the middle of Paradise “blooming Ambrosial Fruit / Of vegetable Gold” (4.219-20), which seems to emphasise that it is a fruit of the gods. God gave his command forbidding Adam and Eve to taste (4.515) from the tree and if they do then the punishment will be death (4.527). When Raphael visits Adam in Paradise, he warns about

... the Tree
Which tasted works knowledge of Good and Evil,
Thou mai'st not; in the day thou eat'st, thou di'st
Death is the penaltie impos'd, beware,
And govern well thy appetite, least sin
Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death (7.542-7).

Here the idea of tasting connected to knowledge is highlighted. However, the morality of ingesting and taste is also very finely entwined as if taste is not restrained, then it may lead to sin. However, the law should have “So easily [have been] obeyd amid the choice / Of all tastes else to please thir appetite” (7.48-9). This means that the eating of the forbidden fruit should not really have been a problem as the abundant amount of fruit available in Paradise compensated for the single forbidden fruit. So the senses should have satisfied with the rich tastescape that was available in Paradise.

Appelbaum thought that it would have been provoking of God to make the Forbidden Fruit taste nice,¹⁴ but I disagree with this: everything in Paradise tasted divine and wonderful - no poisons were present - so why would God create the ultimate fruit to taste bad? Adam and Eve were warned about the fruit and would have been able to ignore it if Satan had not led them to it and awakened their appetite. Appelbaum has tried to identify the fruit on the Tree of Knowledge. As modern readers, an apple springs immediately to mind; it is interesting, however, that the only reference made to 'apple' is made by Satan "Of tasting those fair Apples" (9.585), otherwise it is only referred to as a 'fruit'. In Hebrew, it was referred to non-specifically as any kind of fruit or '*tappach*'; however, rabbinic writers also included the idea of drinking the fruit and its intoxicating properties into the tasting of it.¹⁵ The idea of an 'apple' entered through the Vulgate translation of the Bible – *malum* or apple could have contained a pun as the pronunciation of 'a' as short instead of long has the meaning 'evil'.¹⁶ This could be the reason why Satan identifies it as an apple - to play on this deliberate pun. Appelbaum rules out that the fruit could have been an apple, as they were not native to Palestine;¹⁷ he notices that when Eve gives the fruit to Adam then it is described as being "downie" (9.851) – this he interprets as being peach-like, which is, in fact, more sensual, fragrant, sweeter and juicer than an apple. He points out that a peach is also called a 'Persian Apple' or *Malum Persicum* and would be more closely associated to ambrosia, the food of the gods. Of course, the true nature of the fruit is immaterial, but we do know that the fruit was very tempting and having some idea of its physical features helps the reader to experience the longing and its appeal.

¹⁴ Robert Appelbaum. 'Eve's and Adam's "Apple": Horticulture, Taste and the Flesh of the Forbidden Fruit in Paradise Lost.' *Milton Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 4., (December, 2002), p. 224.

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 224.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

Satan whispers into Eve's ear and influences her dreams which become a foretelling of what is going to happen in the temptation scene – her appetite is awoken subconsciously, but at the same time she has also been warned. Satan uses some tempting phrases to wake up Eve's sensations and curiosities: "...O Fruit Divine, / Sweet of thy self, but much more sweet thus cropt" (5.67-8) and he says to Eve "Taste this, and henceforth be among the Gods" (5.77). So the fruit is described as being sweet and divine and the tasting of it will bring knowledge of the heavens. Smell and taste, even in Eve's dream are very closely linked; Satan seems to be playing on the baser senses to awaken gluttony, to get Eve to overindulge – "the pleasant savourie smell / So quick'nd the appetite, that methought, / Could not but taste" (5.84-6).

As the temptation scene draws closer then the language used starts to become of a more sexual nature – Satan sees Eve in the garden and says to himself that she is in a "Spot more delicious"; however, Satan does not specify what the spot is, he could be talking about the garden or about Eve. So this could be the start of the descriptions of Eve from a taste perspective. Satan then "lick'd the ground whereon she trod" (9.526). He actually seems to taste her and her scent, and invades her private sphere – it is like a sensory rape – where Eve is the meal.

Satan then leads Eve towards temptation – all the time he tries to awaken gluttony within her: he parallels Adam's earlier speech (8.309) by explaining how delicious the fruit is, and how hunger and thirst are awoken by their wonderful smell – the only possible action left is to eat as quickly as possible

To satisfie the sharp desire I had
 Of tasting those fair Apples, I resolv'd
 Not to deferr; hunger and thirst at once,
 Powerful perswaders, quick'nd at the scent
 Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keen (9.584-8).

Satan constantly insists that he has “touch’d and tasted” (9.688) and has lived – he was not punished with death and was, in fact, rewarded with speech and knowledge far beyond Eve’s understanding. The real meaning of death meant by God is exploited by Satan here; God meant that man becomes mortal and would not live forever and also that the soul would become separated from God and fall into sin. Death was not going to happen instantaneously upon ingestion of the fruit, but Satan uses this as a form of argument by saying that he had eaten and was still alive – basically calling God a liar. Eve still has her doubts and Satan has to use all of his persuasive skills and describes the apple as being “God-like food” (9.717), which of course Eve would have wanted to taste after having her appetite whetted by Raphael. The words ‘taste’ and ‘eat’ are repeated frequently like a mantra in Books IX and X, urging Eve to take the final step. Finally Satan says that “Here grows the Cure of all, this Fruit Divine, / Fair to the Eye, inviting to the Taste” (9.776-7). Even though there is no disease, Satan offers the fruit as being a divine cure; the cure will actually be the improvement of her position in the hierarchy, which seems to be the final turning point for Eve. When Eve finally takes the forbidden fruit after all the deliberation, it feels as if it is in one single, greedy action “she pluck’d, she eat” (9.781) as if the plucking and eating are almost carried out in the same moment. This is paralleled earlier by both Satan and Adam: Satan “pluckt, he tasted” (5.65) – he acts as greedily as Eve, but is still more refined as he only seems to taste; Adam, when he was first placed in the garden, was free “to pluck and eate” (8.309), which seemed to be a more languished action with the inclusion of ‘and’.

Eve upon taking and eating is

Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else
 Regarded, such delight till then, as seemd
 In Fruit she never tasted, whether true
 Or fansied so, through expectation high
 Of knowledge, nor was God-head from her thought.
 Greedily she ingorg’d without restraint,

and knew not eating Death: Sate at length,
And hight'nd as with Wine... (9.786-93)

She had become drunk and everything around was pushed from her perception she was totally focused on her taste experience. So Eve has fallen into two sins straight away: gluttony and drunkenness; line 9.790 could also mean that God was not even in her thoughts so that a further sin has been committed. Eve has now broken the etiquette rules of eating – she has filled her mouth so full and has only concentrated on the entire sensation from the food.

Eve now has to persuade Adam. She tells him that those who eat the fruit are turned into gods (9.866) and that the tree does not bring death as promised by God. She describes the taste as surpassing all other tastes in Paradise “Taste so Divine, that what of sweet before / Hath toucht my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh” (9.986-7). This means that all the tastes of Paradise praised by Raphael were now bland and even bordering on the disgusting – how could Adam not taste? However, after much heart rendering, Adam eventually eats and becomes intoxicated “As with new Wine” (9.1008) just as Eve did. The Fall seems to be associated with drunkenness, which is again surfeiting the senses by the drinking too much alcohol. Adam immediately sees Eve as something to be tasted, just as Satan did earlier:

...now I see thou art exact of taste,¹⁸
And elegant, of Sapience¹⁹ no small part,
Since to each meaning savour we apply,
And Palate call judicious; I the praise
Yeild thee, so well this day thou has purvey'd.
Much pleasure we have lost, while we have abstain'd
From this delightful Fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be
In things to us forbidden, it might be wish'd,
For this one Tree had bin forbidden ten.
But come, so well refresh'd, now let us play,
As meet is, after such delicious Fare;
For never did thy Beautie since the day

¹⁸ “Exact of taste” can also be considered a pun meaning that she has good taste – a sense of taste.

¹⁹ See 5.2.2.1.

I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd
 With all perfections, so enflame my sense
 With ardor to enjoy thee, fairer now
 Than ever, bountie of this vertuous Tree (9.1017-33).

Eve is turned into a sexual meal that Adam needs to taste immediately. He praises Eve and has his senses enflamed by her delicious beauty in a totally different way than before. So the intoxication also causes them to relish in each other, and to suffice their sexual appetite. Milton is also punning with the sense of taste in the first four lines of the above quotation: he uses the two meanings of taste (sensation and aesthetic appreciation) in juxtaposition as he says “to each meaning savour we apply” to using the sense of taste. He puns on the meaning of palate (connected with taste and its two meanings) and says that it has good judgement and sense. So even though Milton is punning, he is also raising the sense of taste to the appreciation of aesthetic beauty.

God’s initial warning to “shun to taste, / And shun the bitter consequence” (8.327-8) actually has repercussions connected with taste as from now on they will have to eat food from the cursed ground: they will need to grow their own food and will eat the “Herb of th’ Field” and “eate Bread” (10.204-5). They have to live from the dust and, as mortality has entered, to dust they will return. The cyclical nature of life and death has been established – from death comes nourishment for the plants and new life. Michael lets it be known to Adam through visions “What miserie th’ inabstinence of *Eve* / Shall bring on men” (11.476-7); so Eve’s inability to abstain from eating the Forbidden Fruit is looked on as being the root cause for the misery of future generations. Abstinence, temperance and the control of the appetites are, however, still extremely important virtues and should not be forgotten: Michael teaches Adam that

...by temperance taught
 In what thou eatst and drinkst, seeking from thence
 Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight (11.531-3)

Adam sees from Michael's visions of the future that there will be a real concern for food in the future. Michael shows the building of the Tower of Babel and one of Adam's main concerns is how mankind would grow food for themselves at such a high altitude:

...what food
Will he convey up thither to sustain
Himself and his rash Armie, where thin Aire
Above the Clouds will pine his entails gross
And famish him of Breath, if not of Bread? (12.74-8).

So Adam is extremely concerned about the danger of hunger and starvation, something that he has never experienced before. Food changes after the Fall and as Adam laments "All that I eat and drink, or shall beget, / Is propagated curse" (10.728-9) – from being expelled from Paradise they will have to work for the food and till the land.

5.2.2.1 Tasting and knowledge

It is interesting that the Latin word '*sapio*' means 'to know' and 'to taste'.²⁰ Milton uses this aspect in both its meanings through physical tasting and the Tree of Knowledge: "But Knowledge is as food, and needs no less / Her Temperance over Appetite" (7.126-7). This is paralleled in *Samson Agonistes* when Samson says "The way to know were not to see but taste."²¹ The thirst for knowledge, like gluttony, needs to be kept in control, because if not then

...as one whose drouth [thirst]
Yet scarce allay'd still eyes the current streame
Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites (7.66-8).

Once one has drunk from the stream of knowledge, then the thirst just increases as more and more is needed all the time to satisfy. Raphael tells Adam about Heaven, this

²⁰ *Oxford Latin Minidictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. And the OED says that *Homo sapiens* is also derived from the Latin verb *sapere* which means sapient (wise). Interestingly, the verb is also etymologically connected to 'taste'.

²¹ Flannagan, *Samson Agonistes*, p. 1091.

knowledge to Adam's ears is "...sweeter ...to my eare / Than Fruits of Palm-tree pleasantest to thirst" (8.211-2). This can be compared with "How sweet are thy words unto me taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth".²² And Adam expresses how important it is to have a partner

...as when we need
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
Of looks and smiles (9.236-9).

It is hard to separate between physical food and food of the mind: both are necessary for wellbeing. Adam needed Eve at the beginning of creation for companionship and someone to talk to – to complement the physical food in Paradise.

5.3 Conclusions of taste

The sensation of taste is not used as much when compared to the other senses, but it does have a very important role throughout *Paradise Lost*. Firstly, and most importantly, it is a sense that leads to the Fall. Satan describes the forbidden fruit as being extremely tasty, and when combined to the other senses the fruit is irresistible. Milton juxtaposes Renaissance table manners and the sin of gluttony into the temptation scene, by which he makes a reader think about temperance and the control of the senses. It is interesting that Satan is compared to a cormorant (4.196), which was traditionally associated with gluttony and greed,²³ which is exactly one of the main sins that is employed for the bringing about of the Fall. The references to taste culminate in the descriptions of Paradise, where the descriptions of abundant fruits and food in Paradise eventually leads to the Fall scene in Book IX which is overflowing with taste references (approximately fifty references).

²² Ps. 119.103

²³ Flannagan, note 2, p. 441.

After the Fall, the harmony of God's creation is affected as the world turns from a vegetarian diet carnivorous/omnivorous one. It is also very interesting that the sensation of taste is perverted and it becomes more sexual in nature. The original idea that aesthetic taste is intimately morally good is mixed in with the gustatory images of Eve and gluttony in 9.1017-33: so that aesthetic taste and beauty are also being defiled and debased morally. Therefore, the harmonious role of beauty in God's created universe is disrupted. Before the Fall, there was nothing ugly in the world – everything was beautiful; after the Fall ugliness enters the world for the first time. However, according to Plato ugliness does not infer that something/someone is intrinsically bad – the moral worth of something has to be viewed not only by the physical senses, but also by the use of internal discernment and inner-sight.²⁴ Hence the senses themselves do not lead to cognition, but inner-sight is needed too. This can be seen when Satan appears as a serpent “To lure her Eye” (9.518): Eve was not able to discern the evil inside the beautiful animal, which according to the aesthetics should have been morally good as it was created by God. So aesthetic taste, together with physical taste are used to challenge the senses and highlight the need for internal discernment.

²⁴ Eco, p. 50.

6. TOUCHSCAPES

It has been noted by Anzieu that touch and its cognates have a central importance in the English language in that ‘touch’ has one of the longest entries in the OED.¹ Metaphors of touch abound: our emotions are feelings and when something strongly affects then it ‘touches’; and of course there is a physical perception usage that gives the body feedback and information about the surrounding environment. So ‘touch’ is a multifaceted concept that gives us an idea of self – we are given information from the receptors in our skin and also our cognitive thoughts are expressed with the same expressions. But despite this range of definitions, according to Mazzio, it still defies depiction in literature.² Throughout early medicine and during the Renaissance the sense of touch was viewed as something that was experienced throughout and all over the body, i.e. it was not restricted to a single sense organ: so unlike eyes, ears, nose and tongue, a hand was not used to symbolise the associated sense of touch.³ This means that the sense of touch lacks symbolic representation in the form of synecdoche and metonymy, and therefore is at a disadvantage compared to the other senses. I will return to this later in the conclusion after looking at how the sense of touch is actually represented in *Paradise Lost*.

The only commandment given to Adam and Eve by God is repeated throughout *Paradise Lost*: “not to touch the interdicted [forbidden] Tree” (7.46) and “Ye shall not eat / Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, least ye die” (9.662-3). Adam and Eve seem to have internalised this command as Eve repeats the same phrase like a mantra before the Fall, “But of this Tree we may not taste nor touch” (9.651). And at the scene

¹ D. Anzieu. *The Skin Ego: A Psychoanalytical Approach to the Self*. New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1989, p.13.

² Carla Mazzio. ‘The Senses Divided: Organs, Objects, and Media in Early Modern England.’ in David Howes (Ed.) *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Cultural Reader*. Oxford: Berg, 2005, p. 88.

³ Ibid.

of the Fall, Satan disguised as a serpent emphasises “mee who have touch’d and tasted” (9.688): he has touched and tasted the fruit, the exact actions that were forbidden; he emphasises that he is not dead as was promised as a punishment for breaking the commandment, but very much still alive; and that he has been given new powers of speech and has seen the realms of gods. All these arguments weaken Eve’s resolve as the serpent appears to be telling the truth and God appears to have lied. In the end, Eve is so overcome “with desire, / Inclinable now grown to touch or taste” (9.741-2) that she is no longer able to resist the fruit, reaches out for it and eats. After the Fall Michael explains to Adam that all future generations that stem from Adam and Eve, “who never touch’d / Th’ excepted tree” (11.425-6) will suffer. These are all very interesting quotations because none of the other senses are included: it is as if the ‘lower’ senses are being looked on as the weakest and the easiest led. It seems as if it is these ‘lower’ senses that need to be kept under control as touching and tasting leads to gluttony, however, it is more logical to forbid touching and tasting as one does not occur without the other and the results are more concrete. It would seem strange to forbid the looking at or the smelling of the fruit as smelling is more passive and looking can sometimes be more accidental. The other senses do, however, play an important part in the temptation: the smell of the fruit is extremely tempting; it looks wonderful; and Satan’s persuasion is orally transmitted. But as I mentioned, it would seem illogical to forbid them, as they do not physically cause one to sin.

Finally, I include thermal perception and pain into this chapter because they are concepts that cannot be separated from the sensation of touch as the receptors are situated in the skin and give sensory feedback about the body’s condition in the environment. The concept of pain, especially, plays an important role in *Paradise Lost* and is symbolic of the changes that occur after the Fall. And I will not be focusing

specifically upon the cognitive meaning of ‘touch’ or ‘feel’ as I would like to focus more on the physical perception of touch, however, various cognitive examples will be used in conjunction with physical meanings where I feel it is appropriate and necessary.

6.1 Physical touching

According to Synnott, touching is the most important non-verbal communication channel for humans.⁴ Our most receptive and sensitive areas are our hands and lips, which we not only use for gaining information about the environment, but also use for touching others. The body as a whole acts as a sense organ which acts as a feedback system for its position and condition in space. Alper noticed that Rembrandt often took blindness as a subject for his paintings and wrote:

Blindness is not invoked with reference to a higher spiritual insight, but to call attention to the activity of touch in our experience of the world. Rembrandt represents touch as the embodiment of sight...⁵

So touch becomes the manifestation of sight for a blind person; it becomes attuned to the environment and creates a cognitive image based on the tactile sensory input. A person responds to the touch of another in a similar way as the plants do to Eve’s touch: “And toucht by her fair tendance gladier grew” (8.47).⁶ Like people the plants need contact and seem to grow more readily and happily. Adam and Eve touch each other throughout the text; their “soft embraces” (4.471) and holding of hands are used to express the emotion, passion and love that they feel for each other. The holding of hands symbolises their unity – the fact that they do everything together and share each moment as when they “into thir inmost bowre / Handed they went” (4.738-9). The gentleness and love speaks as a non-verbal language as they talk “hand in hand alone”

⁴ Synnott, p. 156.

⁵ From Svetlana Alper. *Rembrandt’s Enterprise: The Studio and the Market*. (1988). Quoted in Diane Ackerman. *A Natural History of the Senses*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995, p. 94.

⁶ “Toucht” can also be understood to be a pun – so that the plants are emotionally affected.

(4.689) and when Eve wakes Adam up by “her hand soft touching” (5.17) him. Kissing is also expressed as Eve gently “press’d her Matron lip / With kisses pure” (4.501-2); kissing can be a very erotic and sexual act, but Eve’s kisses are emphasised as being pure and innocent – they express the deepness of the love. Adam expresses how the sense of touch is totally enthralled when he is “transported” and experiences

Transported⁷ touch; here passion first [he] felt,
 Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else
 Superior and unmov’d, here openly weake (8.527-32).

Adam experiences extreme joy and is totally overcome by Eve when they touch and embrace. This is the first time that he experiences true passion and is truly brought to his knees by the feeling. This is what Adam asked God to give to him when he initially found himself alone in Paradise – a partner to share his life. They go everywhere together, feel everything together (emotionally and physically) and experience everything together. However, if they would have continued to behave in this way, then in the end their relationship might have become unnaturally symbiotic: as neither of them would have been able to develop outside of their relationship, experience things separately and make decisions for themselves. This is observed when Eve decides it would be better for their own independence to separate and work apart and therefore have different experiences to share. This moment is symbolically represented when Eve “from her Husbands hand her hand / Soft she withdrew” (9.385-6); Adam and Eve have been constantly described as being hand in hand in Paradise and it is only now that they release each other’s hands and walk off in separate directions to carry out their day’s work. Eve realises that to become independent human beings, who make their own moral decisions, then a separation is necessary. However, after the Fall their relationship is jeopardised as Eve’s actions separates them – mortally, spiritually and

⁷ OED 2: “Overwhelm (someone) with a strong emotion, especially joy.”

morally. Eve has made a choice – she touched and ate the Forbidden Fruit, which brought sin upon her and made her mortal. The unity of their relationship and how important it is for them both is how Eve persuades Adam to eventually taste the fruit. The thought of being alone again is a huge torment for Adam when combined with his love for Eve. This is made more concrete when Eve “embrac’d [Adam]” (9.990) and still experiences and expresses extreme love: the embrace symbolises their strength and love that they share together and it is this that eventually causes Adam to Fall too. Eve also shows repentance and genuine sorrow for what she has caused when she “at [Adam’s] feet / Fell humble, and imbracing them, besaught / his peace” (10.911-3). This is reminiscent of Mary Magdalene’s washing of Christ’s feet and asking for forgiveness;⁸ and this is exactly what Eve wants and requires from Adam – his forgiveness.

However, because of their transgression they have to leave Paradise. Initially they are prolonging the moment of leaving – they are very reluctant to leave as they know that the future will bring hardships. This reluctance means that Michael has to take each of them by the hand and lead them to the perimeter of Paradise (12.637-8). This is the last time that God and his angels concretely give support to them, as upon leaving Paradise they are alone. There are two other previous examples of Adam being helped, however, they are not physical, but symbolic: the first is when Adam is dreaming and God helps Adam up from the ground, acting as his guide in Paradise (8.300); and the second is when Adam is helped to his feet when he has been put to sleep by Michael (11.421-2). These are symbolic because in both of these situations Adam is slipping into a helpless, dreamy, drugged state as he “Sunk down and all his Spirits became intrans” (11.420) and his “droused sense ... /... passing to [his] former

⁸ Luke 7:36-48

state / Insensible” (8.289-91). Adam slips out of reality and into a dream state: a heavenly guiding hand leads him on into the realms of visions. This is probably what happens to Eve in the dreams given to her by Satan when “Forthwith up to the Clouds / With him [she] flew” (5.86-7). Eve’s account does not mention that Satan takes her by the hand, but as he is her guide (which is also how God and Michael refer to themselves) it can be imagined that they are holding hands as they fly. Therefore, the time of dreaming is when spirits good or bad can affect the “Organs of ...Fancie” (4.802) or the faculties of imagination. Adam realises this and talks about the dangers of dreams:

But know that in the Soule
 Are many lesser Faculties that serve
 Reason as chief; among these Fancie next
 Her office holds; of all external things,
 Which the five watchful Senses represent,
 She forms Imaginations, Aerie shapes,
 Which reason joyning or disjoyning, frames
 All what we affirm or what deny, and call
 Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
 Into her private Cell when nature rests.
 Oft in her absence mimic Fancie wakes
 To imitate her; but misjoyning shapes
 Wilde work produces oft, and most in dreams,
 Ill matched words and deeds long past and late (5.100-13).

Adam explains that reason is aided by other lesser functions such as fancy or imagination. This imagination plays around with the sensory inputs that have been received by the senses and creates false perceptions; usually while conscious or awake, reason is able to control these misconceptions or imaginings, however, when a person sleeps then reason rests and this is the time when imagination becomes more dominant in the form of dreams. So dreams are an ideal time for the spirits to influence and show visions as reason is resting and the mind is free to fly. Prophetic visions were often given during sleep, when human reason is more open to supernatural phenomena.

The most important touch in the whole poem comes at the end when Adam and Eve are being thrown out of Paradise as “They hand in hand with wandering steps and slow / Through *Eden* took thir solitarie way” (12.648-9). They have sinned, they have lost Paradise, they will have to work for their food and they have seen visions of the suffering that they have brought into the world, all these, of course, weigh heavily on their minds, but they can face the future together. The fact that they are also alone is emphasised when they have to go their solitary way: God has separated Himself from them and is not going to concretely aid them anymore. However, after all that they have lost they still find solace in their companionship. This is a wonderful final teaching from the whole poem that no matter what problems are encountered then the firm foundations of a relationship will support and carry the two individuals onwards. This holding of hands actually shows the power of touch as a powerful non-verbal symbol signifying unity, strength and support.

Adam and Eve’s love making is mentioned a few times in the poem and referred to as “the Rites / Mysterious of connubial Love” (4.742-3). The impression is of a romantic liaison where their “Nuptial imbraces sweet” (10.994) are innocent in nature as Eve

...half imbracing leand
On our first Father, half her swelling Breast
Naked met his under the flowing Gold
Of her loose tresses hid (4.494-7).

Erotic images are used, but the whole situation is guiltless and innocent. This form of making love seems pure and is non-obsessive – it is an act of pure love with the other person. The topic of love-making is brought up by Adam when he asks about angelic love-making from Raphael:

Love not the heav’nly Spirits, and how thir Love
Express they, by looks onely, or do they mix
Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch (8.625-17).

Adam is inquisitive about pure, angelic love-making and probably wonders if they make love like he and Eve do with physical contact or do they only mix their light virtually.

Raphael answers that

...if Spirits embrace,
Total they mix, Union of Pure with Pure
Desiring; nor restrain'd conveyance need
As Flesh to mix with Flesh, or Soul with Soul (8.626-29).

This is total love making, which incorporates body and soul – which is presumably the kind of love making that Adam and Eve experience. It is a harmony that resonates in a relationship: the *musica humana* – the music that binds the body and soul together (see 3.3). So love-making is part of God's harmonious creation and is a pure act before the Fall. Raphael, however, gives a warning that

... if the sense of touch whereby mankind
Is propagated seem such dear delight
Beyond all other, think the same voutsaf't
To Cattel and each Beast (8.579-82);

thus if love making becomes an obsession or too pleasurable then it debases the action and moment to an animalistic function. So Adam and Eve are warned about the dangers of sex too, that however pure an action it is, it still can still be turned into a gluttonous act, which can become sinful. This warning can be seen to be a prophecy that comes true as immediately after the Fall, there is a very concrete example of how touching has changed: it is no longer soft and loving but Adam “Her hand he seis'd” (9.1037). This is more aggressive and represents the different relationship that has been caused by the disharmony. The following love making session feels more of a gluttonous act as

There they thir fill of Love and loves disport
Took largely, of thir mutual guilt the Seale,
The solace of thir sin, till dewie sleep
Oppress'd them, wearied with thir amorous play (9.1042-5).

They take their fill of love making which means that they surfeit in its pleasures. They use sex as a comfort and escape for their sinfulness until exhausted they fall asleep – a sleep that seems sweaty and less innocent compared to before the Fall. So the whole nature of love making and touching has changed in Paradise – which is another representation of the disharmony that is brought into being by the Fall.

6.2 Thermal sensations

The imagery concerned with warmth has a dualistic sensual quality: physical because of actual heat perception; and metaphorical expressing internal religious feelings of enlightenment, righteousness and love. Milton uses imagery of the sun in Book III's invocation when he "feel[s] [the] sovran vital Lamp" (3.22). This lamp can be interpreted as being the sun – a holy light – and is symbolic of God's ultimate goodness.⁹ The warmth of this 'holy light' can be felt both physically and metaphorically and so the overlapping of two interpretations based on the same sense word is plainly evident. Milton expands this physical interpretation in a way that awakens sympathy for him: as he is blind he cannot see the sun and therefore only feels its warmth. He also expands the spiritual metaphor as he is feeling the warmth, righteousness and holiness internally.¹⁰

The body is a sense organ *per se*: sensory perception occurs all over the body. As Adam and Eve are naked in Paradise, they are not restricted by clothing and so feel any temperature changes. The noon sun actually proves to be too hot for the pair and they need to retire "from the heat of Noon" (5.231); and when Raphael is coming to talk to them he finds Adam

⁹ It could also be understood to be a pun on 'son' so that Christ is evoked at the same time.

¹⁰ Light: A metaphor for the spirit and divinity, symbolizing inner enlightenment and the presence of a cosmic power of ultimate goodness and truth. By extension, light is a symbol of immortality, eternity, paradise, pure being, revelation, wisdom, intellect, majesty, joy and life itself. Light became synonymous with "good" or "God". Thus Christ is the Light of the World. Tresidder, p. 289.

... in the dore ... sat
 Of his coole Bowre, while now the mounted Sun
 Shot down direct his fervid Raies to warme
 Earths inmost womb, more warmth than *Adam* needs (5.299-302).

Adam and Eve do not have clothing to provide shade; they are totally receptive to the heat that radiates from the sun and need to shelter either in their home or under the trees. The warmth is expressed as being more than Adam needs and some kind of equatorial climate is brought into mind where a *siesta* is almost compulsory. This aspect of there being too much heat is also interesting, as it is the only discomfort in Paradise; but, of course, the fact that it is sometimes too warm may not necessary be a discomfort as it controls the work day and allows one to rest.

It is only after the Fall that the seasons and their accompanying climatic changes are noticed. After the Fall, a disharmony falls upon Paradise which affects the weather. As mentioned above, days were constantly warm and ‘comfortable’ before the Fall and nights were pleasantly cool. However, after the Fall Adam laments that

Through the still Night, not now, as ere man fell,
 Wholesom and cool, and mild, but with black Air
 Accompanied, with damps and dreadful gloom (10.846-8).

Night has changed – it has become darker, colder and has a dampness that was unknown before. Adam and Eve realise they now need clothing to keep warm as

Th’ inclement Seasons, Rain, Ice, Hail and Snow,
 Which now the Skie with various Face begins
 To shew us in this Mountain, while the Winds
 Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks
 Of these fair spreading Trees; which bids us seek
 Som better shroud, som better warmth to cherish
 Our limbs benumm’d, ere this diurnal Starr
 Leave cold the Night (10. 1063-70)

Winds¹¹ carrying rain have been created and their bodies now become numbed from the changed climate; they need the warmth of not only clothes but also fire, which “sends a

¹¹ Winds were associated with demons that were thought to ride them, bringing illness and evil. Wind is also a powerful symbol of change and inconsistency. Tressidder, p. 518.

comfortable heat from farr¹²” (10.1077) and which they hope might even replace the heat of the sun in the cold nights. Paradise before the Fall was “Guiltless of fire” (9.392), but, afterwards, it becomes necessary for survival: no longer will they only eat fruit, but will become omnivores and will need to cook their food; no longer will they be able to keep warm without artificial help; and no longer will the light from the moon and stars be self-evident at night. So the flames of fires and lights will be a necessity – an added bonus of which will be comfort and security from its warmth and flames.

Temperature effects are also mentioned in Hell. There is a frozen continent within the realms of Hell where the “cold performs th’ effect of Fire” (2.595) and the devils “feel by turns the bitter change / Of fierce extreams” (2.598-9). As they move from extremely hot to extremely cold climes then one punishment replaces the other – both give a burning sensation and have the same effect on sense receptors. Therefore, ice far from alleviating the suffering experienced from burns, is perceived in the extreme and has the same effect as fire.

6.3 Pain

Whatever pain achieves, it achieves in part through its unshareability, and it ensures this unshareability through its resistance to language. “English” writes Virginia Woolf, “which can express the thoughts of Hamlet and the tragedy of Lear, has no words for the shiver or the headache ...” True of the headache, Woolf’s account is of course more radically true of severe and prolonged pain that may accompany cancer or burns or phantom limb or stroke...Physical pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it, bringing about an immediate reversion to a state anterior to language, to the sounds and cries a human being makes before language is learned.¹³

Scarry, in the above quotation, argues for the way in which extreme pain reverts a human being into a pre-language state in which primitive reactions such as

¹² The fact that the heat from fires is comfortable from afar could be a pun as the devils have to live in the flames of Hell– which makes life uncomfortable.

¹³ Elaine Scarry. *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985, p. 4.

screams, cries and other ways of showing discomfort take over rational language. This is very true for immense pain, however, we do try to linguistically express pain, for instance pain can be piercing, stinging, stabbing, splitting and burning to name but a few. Pain in *Paradise Lost* is felt by two groups: the fallen angels initially experience pain in the battle for Heaven and then eternal pain in Hell – this pain is predominantly physical, but a few instances of metaphorical mental pain can also be observed;¹⁴ Adam and Eve experience both mental and physical pain after the Fall.

The pain in *Paradise Lost* also falls into the realms of Scarry's quotation – it is constantly only referred to as 'pain' in general and lacks any linguistic definitions – it is only referred to as "perpetual agonie and pain" (2.861) and "lasting pain" (1.55). And as Scarry mentions the sounds of anguish and pain replace linguistic explanations due to the prolonged duration and the overbearing nature of the pain: this can be observed when pain creates "yelling Monsters... with ceaseless cry" (2.795); "everlasting groans" (2.184) and when the angels hear "Noise ... [of]/ Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage" (8.243-4) within the realms of Hell when they are nearby. The pain of Hell may be only referred to in general but it is extremely powerful. As Teppe wrote:

Pain, of all the psychological states, is one which takes over the entire being, both in the flesh and the spirit, with the greatest of urgency and force. It is a disposition which sweeps away, blots out, and annihilates all the rest. It does not allow for cheating or compromise.¹⁵

This is exactly what is happening in Hell: pain disrupts all other thoughts; it is ever-present as Satan says "lost happiness and lasting pain / Torments him" (1.55-6). This is the whole purpose of the torment of pain – that it is constant and disrupts being, thought and the quality of life as much as possible. And it is exactly this "pain of

¹⁴ Which again emphasises Milton's materialist idea of angels and devils.

¹⁵ Julian Teppe quoted in R. Rey. *The History of Pain*. L.E. Wallace, J.A. Cadden, and S.W. Cadden (trans). Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1995, p. 318.

inextinguishable fire” that “must exercise [the devils] without hope of end” (2.87-8) in Hell, which is referred to metaphorically as a “dark and dismal house of pain” (2.823). But the devils in Hell are not totally incapacitated by pain: Satan is “though in pain / Vaunting aloud” (1.125-6); and the fallen angels had no other choice but to “...perceive the evil plight / In which they [are], or the fierce pains not feel” (1.335-6), but they are still able to act and find a certain amount of relief from the action. As Akerman says “concentrating on something outside oneself seems to distract the mind from the body, and the soul from suffering and time.”¹⁶ This concept will be returned to later in this subchapter. This pain relief is also very short lived, however, and could be used to increase mental or cognitive pain eventually by awaking hope that is always dashed.

Pain relief is an obvious aim for those who are held within the confines of Hell. One of the main ways of escaping this pain seems to be actual escape from Hell itself, which is what Satan manages to do. This is emphasised in the confrontation between Satan and Gabriel where Satan argues:

...Lives ther [someone] who loves his pain?
 Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,
 Though thither doomd? Thou wouldst thy self, no doubt,
 And boldly venture to whatever place
 Furthest from pain, where thou mightst hope to change
 Torment with ease ... (4.888-3).

He challenges Gabriel by saying that if anybody actually experiences pain, would they not try their hardest to find a way of removing its source or symptoms; and even if Gabriel were in the same predicament, then he would do exactly the same by trying to escape the cause of the pain; even if the cause was ordained by God. But Gabriel counters Satan by asking:

But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
 Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them
 Less pain, less to be fled, or thou then they

¹⁶ Diane Ackerman. *A Natural History of the Senses*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995, p. 101.

Less hardie to endure (4.917-20).

As Satan left Hell first, Gabriel questions Satan's abilities for enduring pain and he also spars verbally with Satan when he wonders if all the devils who are left in Hell experience less pain because they stayed behind. This a direct provocation of Satan to which he retorts, "Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain" (4.925); he explains his leaving Hell by saying that he is the leader, and must therefore face all dangers first and alone. Realistically this argument has a good basis as if the devils broke out of Hell in a large group, what could they actually do? The angels in Heaven have beaten them back once and could easily do so again and also no physical harm or pain can be felt by Adam and Eve. So it does make more sense for Satan to work by subterfuge and injure Adam and Eve by disrupting their relationship with God.

Further ways of escaping pain are contemplated by Belial when he mentions suicide or losing oneself in total nothingness, but are rejected as

..for who would loose,
 Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
 Those thoughts that wander through Eternity
 To perish rather, swallowed up and lost
 In the wide womb of uncreated night,
 Devoid of sense and motion? (2.146-51).

The first two lines have been interpreted by Flannagan as referring to an "intellectual sensitivity" that "causes a pain which makes us aware that we are alive."¹⁷ And Flannigan also argues that the last two lines refer to the uncreated night of Chaos that is devoid of sense.¹⁸ However, the first lines refer to the fact that no matter how much an individual is in pain, who would rationally want to lose life and the intellectual capabilities. And the final two lines refer to a person who feels nothing and has all sensations removed due to either killing themselves or by metaphorically losing themselves in nothingness. So in fact this is a diatribe against suicide: who in their right

¹⁷ Flannagan, note 35, p. 385

¹⁸ Ibid.

mind would want to lose this intellectual being to float in nothingness no matter what extent of pain is experienced. So even if the devils were capable of floating in blackness without sensation suicide would not be a rational choice, even if it were a possibility, as they are still immortal beings doomed to eternal damnation. Belial also later argues that if they only wait and bide their time then they would become accommodated to the pain and

Our purer essence then will overcome
 Their noxious vapour or enur'd not feel,
 Or chang'd at length, and to the place confound
 In temper and in nature, will receive
 Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
 This horror will grow milde (2.215-20).

So Belial argues falsely that if they just wait then their senses will become accustomed to their surroundings and Hell will become less of a torment. Mammon also argues along the same lines later that

Our torments also may in length of time
 Become our Elements, these piercing Fires
 As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd
 Into their temper; which must needs remove
 The sensible of pain (2.274-8);

The concept of the elements is alluded to in both of the above quotations, in which there is a four-part distribution of the Elements. However, strictly speaking, there are only three states of matter: earth, water and air; the fourth, fire, is the agent that brings about the transformation of one state to another.¹⁹ So Mammon and Belial could be referring to the fact that their elemental make up may have been changed by the fires; or alternately that they become like the element of fire itself. Both arguments are based on the fact that if they endure their punishment, then they will become like their environment or will be changed by it and will become accommodated to their pain and

¹⁹ Cirlot, p. 95.

torment. However, as readers, we know this to be false as the torments of Hell are everlasting and are never alleviated.

However, there are other methods that seem to alleviate pain in Hell at least for a short time. When the devils were marching to "...soft Pipes that charm'd / Painful steps o're the burnt soyle" (1.561-2), their pain was charmed and their legs moved as if in a trance. This awakens the idea of a battle-weary army marching to the rhythm of drums or wind instruments: the only thing giving them strength to carry on is the music – it lifts their heavy feet and makes them forget their woes. This charming of the senses is also noticed when the "harmony" that "Suspended Hell" (2.552-3) "with a pleasing sorcerie could charm / Pain for a while or anguish, and excite / Fallacious hope" (2.566-8).²⁰ The devils play music and sing and this alleviates the torture by the sheer harmonious beauty of the music – the senses become charmed and bewitched for a short period of time. There is one more way of reducing pain that is mentioned and that is by obtaining forgetfulness. The pain involved in this instance would more likely be cognitive in nature, as the devils are also tormented by their memories of what they lost when they were thrown out of Heaven. This alleviation is, however, an option that is not open to them as they cannot take "one small drop to loose / In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe" (2.607-8) from the River Lethe as it is guarded by Medusa.²¹

Pain is not something that is inherent in God's created world, it comes into existence when sin is committed; Ackerman notes that "pain really is a sign that we're out of harmony with Nature."²² Hence in Heaven, no pain exists before the angelic rebellion – it is only during the battle that the rebellious angels feel pain for the first

²⁰ See 3.4.

²¹ The Lethe or "Forgetfulness" is a river of the Greek underworld from which the dead drank to erase the memories of their past lives. Tresidder, p. 286.

²² Ackerman, p. 107.

time. This can be noted when Raphael is recounting the story of the battle and the rebellious angels

Then first with fear surpris'd and sense of paine
Fled ignominious, to such evil brought
By sin of disobedience, till that hour
Not liable to fear or flight or paine (6.394);

i.e. it is only the sin of disobedience that causes pain to be created – a concept unknown to the fallen angels before. This pain surprises all of the rebellious angels and feels terrible. “*Satan* first knew pain” that “writh’d him to and fro convolv’d” (6.326-7) when the archangel Michael first smites him;²³ and Moloch, who is hit by Gabriel, with “uncouth paine fled bellowing” (6.362). Pain is so unbearable and new that they do not know how to cope with it and as can be seen from Moloch’s reaction causes extreme fear. However, the fallen angels are still immortal and so no matter how serious the wound then they can never die, but only experience and perceive the pain. This is in total contrast to the pure, unfallen angels who fight just the same as the fallen angels but

Such high advantages thir innocence
Gave them above thir foes, not to have sinnd,
Not to have disobei’d; in sight they stood
Unwearied, unobnoxious²⁴ to be pain’d
By wound ... (6.404-8).

Flannagan thinks that ‘unobnoxious’ is connected with the word ‘wound’ and so interprets this to mean that the angels are ‘not capable of being wounded’.²⁵ However, the last two lines from the quotation above actually say that they are not capable of

²³ However, this is not the first time that pain is experienced by Satan. Pain is felt when the first sin was committed by him – the actual birth of Sin brought about by his betrayal of God: “All on a sudden miserable pain / Surpris’d thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzie swum / In darkness” (2.751- 3) – so pain is immediately associated with sin. However, this pain was more allegorical and was only experienced by Satan; this could be why it was not mentioned by Raphael in his epic narrative of the rebellion. It could also mean that Milton had trouble fitting the allegorical birth of Sin into the narrative a second time, or that he simply missed the fact that he had mentioned it earlier.

²⁴ OED 1: unobnoxious: not exposed to or liable to something.

²⁵ Flannagan, note 126, p. 519.

feeling the pains from their wounds, not that they cannot be wounded. Satan, in his speech after the first battle in Heaven, notices that

...now we find this our Empyrean form
 Incapable of mortal injury
 Imperishable, and though pierc'd with wound,
 Soon closing, and by native vigour heal'd (6.433-6).

It seems as if when wounded, the fallen angels feel the pain of the wound, but due to their angelic forms the wounds close and heal. It seems more probable than that Milton imagines that the 'good' angels do get wounded like the fallen angels, but the pain is absent and like the fallen angels the wounds heal immediately. If the 'good' angels did not show any signs of the battle then the fight would be totally pointless for the fallen angels; they would undoubtedly comprehend the futility of the whole situation and would simply admit defeat. This, however, is not the case, and the fallen angels do feel that they have a chance of winning the battle with the cannons that they invented. However, Nisroch does express the unfairness and difficulty of having

...to fight in paine,
 Against unpaid, impassive ...
 ... for what availes
 Valour or strength, though matchless, quell'd with pain
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
 Of the Mightiest (6.454-9).

So the fight is hard against an enemy that does not feel pain, because pain, due to its nature of distraction, causes mistakes. He goes on to say that "pain is perfect miserie, the worst / Of evils, and excessive, overturns / All patience" (6.462-4). Satan illuminates the power and influence of pain upon body and soul when he contemplates Adam and Eve in Paradise; he realises "so much hath Hell debas'd, and paine / Infeeb'l'd [him], to what [he] was in Heav'n" (9.487-8) when he compares himself to their beauty and magnificence. Pain and the tortures of Hell have reduced his angelic stature and glory to ugliness and feebleness. He realises that they are a "foe not

informidable, exempt from wound” (9.486). Adam and Eve are still immortal at this point in the story, and so would presumably be like the angels in Heaven and not feel pain. When Satan says that they are “exempt from wound” this seems to support Flannagan’s argument about angels not being able to be wounded. However, it would still make more sense that it would be possible to wound them but there would be no pain involved and the wound would heal immediately. So wound here could just mean ‘to harm’ as no physical harm can actually come to the sinless angels or Adam and Eve. However, there is another dimension to the word ‘wound’ – it can also mean an imperfection or a flaw.²⁶ This could change the meaning in the angels being unable to be “pain’d / By wound ... (6.407-8); the fallen angels “pierc’d with wound” (6.435) and even Adam and Eve’s being “exempt from wound” (9.486) from a physical meaning to a metaphorical meaning of imperfection and sin. This means that Adam, Eve and the angels are free from blame and sin at this moment in the narration and that the fallen angels are wounded both physically and metaphorically by sin.

But sin does enter the world, and metaphorically the “Earth felt the wound” (9.782) when it does and metaphorically, Sin notices that she “feel[s] new strength within me rise” (10.243): her powers were once diminished but now due to the Fall start to return again. As has been seen in the previous chapters, the harmony of God’s creation becomes disharmonious when the Fall occurs. This disharmony causes the world to also feel the wound. Theologically, this means that the whole of nature lapsed when Eve lapsed, which exemplifies the close symbiotic, harmonious relationship that existed between Adam, Eve and nature. This also means that when “Earth felt the wound” then this again could be interpreted as above in a physical way so that the world has become mortal, and metaphorically in that the world felt the sin

²⁶ *OED*, ‘wound’: definition 6.

occur. Adam also “the faulting measure felt” (9.846): he feels the rhythmic discord in the universe and possibly the mortal and moral separation from his wife caused by sin. Of course, it is difficult to determine whether this is actual physical perception (so that Paradise changed in some way) or a cognitive, inner-sixth sense that perceives the Fall. Either way, it does not matter – the only thing that matters is that Adam feels something is wrong and goes off to find Eve. Pain enters the world and causes the disruption of the symbiotic relationship of the whole ecosystem: a predator-prey food chain is created and Adam and Eve also have to grow their own food and become omnivores. And for the first time the pain of hunger and starvation enters the world as Adam observes in the visions of the future (5.2.1). There are also climatic changes that cause pain and suffering due to coldness. So it is at this point that the future suffering caused by natural disasters and the climate enter the world.

After they have both fallen, Adam realises that death was not instant upon sinning, but that they have become mortal; he laments that

... a slow-pac't evill,
A long days dying to augment our paine,
And to our Seed (O hapless Seed!) deriv'd (10.963-5);

and

...I fear least Death
So snatcht will not exempt us from the paine
We are by doom [judgement] to pay (10.1024-6).

Their death is not instant, but is inevitable in the future. The pain mentioned in these two quotations could be physical, but would be more poignantly understood as mental anguish, guilt and suffering for disobeying God's commands. This guilt and suffering is not only for themselves, however, as this mortality, suffering and sin is also passed onto future generations as Adam knows “The evil on [future generations] brought by [him]” (10.734); and through the futuristic visions he suffers further anguish when he sees Cain

murder Abel: “O sight / Of terrour, foul and ugly to behold, / Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!” (11.463-5). Physical pain is also concretely shown to have entered Adam and Eve’s reality when Eve is punished with the “Pains ... in Child-bearing” (10.1051). But even this pain would “soon [be] recompenc’d with joy, / Fruit of thy Womb” (10.1052-3) as a result of the pain will be a child. So both mental and physical pain enters the world after the Fall. The only relief for this pain will be Christ who will be sent to remove the debt of sin from the world and hence heal the wound.²⁷

6.4 Tactile conclusions

As mentioned at the start of this chapter the sense of touch lacks symbolic representation in the form of synecdoche and metonymy, and is therefore in a literary sense at a disadvantage compared to the other senses. This can be seen in the way that touch has been portrayed in *Paradise Lost*: it has only really been referred to by the usage of the verb ‘to touch’ or the joining of hands. The sense of touch is being used in *Paradise Lost* to exemplify the effects of the Fall and the disharmony that ensues. Initially, the contact between Adam and Eve is pure, innocent and loving, however, this changes immediately after the Fall into a more sinful touch: which is illustrated by love-making becoming more gluttonous. There are temperature changes that affect Adam and Eve’s daily existence and finally the creation of pain. This is the most used aspect of sensory perception, that is both physically, metaphorically and theologically important to the loss of Paradise: when sin entered the world then pain entered too. The devils were entirely focused on their pain and suffering as it was so overpowering, but according to chivalry pain was meant to be ignored: saints, martyrs or soldiers were able

²⁷ Ackerman (p.106) makes a very poignant discovery that is worth mentioning here: the “word ‘holy’ goes back through Old English to ‘haelan’, meaning ‘to heal’, and the Indo-European ‘kailo’, which meant ‘whole’ or ‘uninjured’; and the *OED* derives ‘holy’ from **hailo-*, OE. *hál*, free from injury, whole.

to focus on something nobler and higher, therefore, their sense of pain was clouded.²⁸ This could be another way of expressing how cowardly and base the devils were compared to Christian saints or martyrs who experienced pain to purify their spirits. Finally, since the Fall, pain has been a part of human existence; everyone tries to avoid it, but like sin, it is very difficult to evade. It appears that from the descriptions of Paradise and Heaven, that true happiness, peace and love is an existence without pain and pain can never be removed totally from the world until the Final Judgement.

Finally, it might be worth mentioning that intellectual beings are always given a physical form in *Paradise Lost*. The devils and angels are represented in a bodily form, which gives them a sense of self, suffering and orientation in the environment: the angels according to Raphael participate in physical sex and the devils sense of pain is entirely physical – internal and external – they are “All Heart they live, all Head, all Eye, all Eare, / All Intellect, all Sense” (6.350-1). St Augustine argues that the “soul itself can suffer pain, while being incapable of death”.²⁹ So in principle, the devils and angels could be expressed as purely soul, without a physical body. However, Milton could be expressing these beings as materialistic forms to aid reader comprehension, as happened when light was created *per se* and the representation of God (2.1).

²⁸ Ackerman, p. 101.

²⁹ St Augustine. *City of God* Book XXI, Ch 3. Available at <<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120112.htm>> [last accessed 18.5.07].

7. CONCLUSION

As I mentioned in the introduction, no full sensory study or sensual reading has been carried out on this text before, and it has become apparent that Milton's sensorium in *Paradise Lost* is an extremely full-bodied experience, as well as being a moralistic and spiritual journey. I have not seen any previous research that finds all the senses so intimately entwined with the Fall – so that there is a sensory harmony before the Fall which is disrupted by sin. This is where this thesis offers a new reading of *Paradise Lost* and offers some new insights for Milton scholarship. Furthermore, there have been abundant studies on the use of visual cues, but the other senses have been relatively ignored. This research incorporates all the senses into one sensorium and, by in this way, offers new insights into Milton's theological uses of the senses and the whole harmonic nature of the senses. There are four main findings in this thesis: the use of the senses to convey the effects of the Fall; the role of the senses in the Fall and sin; Milton's scepticism of the senses – that perception alone does not lead directly to cognition; and finally Milton's materialistic views. I am going to conclude by drawing together the main sensual themes that become evident in the poem and consider how these are still important for today; considerations for future expansion of this thesis will also be mentioned.

One of the main themes is the sensual harmony of God's created universe and its corruption by sin. Initially, the senses can be observed to be in a harmonious relationship with God. In fact, if Boehme's sensory cosmology involving the seven controlling spirits that gave birth to the senses is considered in relation to Milton's use of the senses before the Fall, then the similarity between Boheme's theory and Milton's sensorium can be observed – as the seven spirits and senses are one and the same with

God.¹ Therefore, the senses were considered to be pure and in harmony with nature and God before the Fall. I will now review how the senses are portrayed in Paradise before and after the Fall. I will concentrate on Paradise, because it offers a concrete sensual insight into how sin actually disrupts God's harmony of the senses – as a before and after situation is available through the events in the poem.

Light is represented in a physical form throughout the poem but should be understood metaphorically:² it is a symbol of God's goodness in Paradise – it carries connotations of holiness, moral goodness, purity and love. There is never total darkness in Paradise – not even at night – and it is ironically Satan who first describes Paradise as a “new world of light and bliss” (2.867). Therefore, the influence of God's glory is constantly present. However, after the Fall darkness enters the world for the first time and God's harmony is disrupted – this darkness is connected to Satan and is weighted with evil and sinful connotations.

The soundscape of Paradise resonates with *musica humana*, the music that keeps body and soul together and in unison with God. However, this soundscape has been ignored in previous research, and this is something that this thesis adds to Milton scholarship; the use of sounds to describe the change brought about by the Fall and the use of musical harmony has not been documented before. The angelic choirs' overflow from Heaven and join the natural sounds of Paradise; and Adam and Eve's prayers are heavenly music (5.148-52). All of these natural and holy sounds of Paradise vibrate in tune with *musica humana* and attune the whole world and nature including Adam and Eve, who have “Harmonie ... / More grateful than harmonious sound to the eare” (8.604-5). When the Fall occurs disharmony enters the world which is expressed as a

¹ See 1.2 Sensory cosmologies.

² See chapter 2.

“faultring measure” (9.846). The choirs of angels are no longer heard and nature sounds different, as Adam seems to realise when he laments his fortunes,

O Woods, O Fountains, Hillocks, Dales and Bowrs,
With other echo late I taught your Shades
To answer, and resound farr other Song (10.860-3).

So the whole musical harmony of God’s creation has been disrupted. One of the most concrete changes in hearing can be observed in regards to God’s voice: before the Fall, Adam and Eve were able to listen to his voice, but after the Fall “...the voice of God / To mortal eare is dreadful” (12.235-6). This means that God’s voice was once perceived as loving and fatherly; however, after the Fall there are two possibilities for explaining the change in perception of God’s voice: it could be God’s anger actually being expressed through his voice or the fact that the conscience plays an important role in how something is heard. If it is the conscience influencing perception, then this is an interesting point which I will return to later.

Paradise is filled with pleasant scents and smells. They are an intrinsic part of the whole environment and seem to be another one of the sensual harmonies that “attune / The trembling leaves” (4.266). Paradise is so highly infused with perfumes and scents that according to Knott, it offers a bliss too great to be understood.³ However, no matter how much *Paradise Lost* is infused with scents, they have still been ignored and the relationship between the sense of olfaction and the Fall has not been documented. From the perspective of olfaction, the whole of Paradise seems to be a scented offering to God as,

From th’ Earths great Altar send up in silent praise
To the Creator, and his Nostrils fill
With grateful smell... (9.193-7).

³ Knott, p.68.

However, the scents and smells are not only there to be experienced literally, they also had metaphorical connotations of moral goodness and badness.⁴ After the Fall, body odours are perceived as corrupted smells – flatulence and sweat. Smells become negative – the scentscape becomes noisome and infused with “damps” (10.848).⁵ Noxious smells and sickness have gained access to the world which represent human mortality, sin and moral decay. After the Fall, the scentscape seems to change – I say seem because apart from the use of negative smells there is also a tacit feeling of change in the scentscape: before the Fall there is an abundance of scent descriptions in Paradise, however, after the Fall there are no natural olfactory descriptions at all. So the extreme abundance of scent before the Fall is in total contrast to the post-Fall situation, which could imply that the scentscape has changed. The only scent that is mentioned after the Fall is incense, which is used to make the now olfactory bland world acceptable to God. Incense is being used as a supplication to God and helps with the reconciliation between Adam and Eve and God. So to summarise, the divine harmony of the scentscape is disrupted by sin, and the once naturally fragrant world which was an offering to God *per se* needs to be supplemented with incense.

The tastescape of *Paradise Lost* is highly concerned with eating, temperance and table manners. Paradise is a Horn of Plenty: there is more food than Adam and Eve need and it is constantly at hand without the worry of cultivation. Correct table manners and temperance are important issues in Paradise before the Fall and are repeated as guidelines and warnings several times throughout *Paradise Lost*.⁶ These all change with the Fall: food needs to be cultivated upon the expulsion from Paradise and gluttony prevails. Another vital difference in the gustatory nature of Paradise can be seen with the change from an herbivore diet to a carnivorous or

⁴ See 4.1.1.

⁵ See 4.1.1.

⁶ See 5.2.1.

omnivorous one. Hence, sin affects the food chain and the moralistic eating habits of Paradise.

Finally, the touchscape of Paradise is also altered by sin. Initially, Adam and Eve touch each other in a loving, sensual way; Paradise is also a warm environment where there is no need for clothing and pain is totally nonexistent. However, after the Fall a symbolic change in touching occurs between Adam and Eve – it initially becomes more sexual and aggressive.⁷ They also require clothing, because of the shame of being naked and due to the climatic changes that occur in the world. But most significantly, pain enters the world. Eve is told she will have to endure the pain of childbirth, and for the first time they encounter both physical and mental pain. The tactile harmony has been debased by sin – a result of which is punishment as previously immortal man becomes mortal. However, the aspect of pain is most concretely observed as a punishment with the fallen angels as they rebel in Heaven, as soon as God is disobeyed or rejected, i.e. sin is committed, then pain exists. This pain takes the rebellious angels totally by surprise and overcomes their entire being. Pain is therefore a direct outcome of disobedience to God.

But where does Milton stand in the hierarchy of the senses? Does he highlight a certain sense above the others? The sense of vision is used the most throughout the whole poem and touch the least, but this usage is not related to the traditional hierarchy of the senses. The sense of vision, olfaction and taste all have spiritual/moralistic connotations, as well as literal interpretations, which means they were used quite freely throughout the poem with varying meanings. The use of the sense of touch, as was mentioned in chapter 6, is harder to convey through lack of symbolic representation and does not have any spiritual/moralistic connotations, and

⁷ However, the importance of touch and marriage is emphasised at the end of the poem, as they face and share the future hand in hand together. This touch seems reassuring and supportive and gives them the strength to carry on.

this is the reason for its lack of usage in the poem, not that it was viewed as being in a lower position in the hierarchy. In fact, all of the senses seem to be equivalent and have their own place in the perceptive sphere – Milton does not discriminate between the senses.⁸ Milton's philosophy of the senses is actually close to Hobbes' philosophy. Hobbes postulated that everything has to pass through the senses to be conceived mentally – the senses are the initial building block for cognition. Milton also follows Hobbes' idea that the senses are the foundations of a perfect society and builds upon the theory by adding that an ideal sensory paradise is available when God's harmony of the senses is re-established. However, Milton is more sceptical than Hobbes – Milton does not believe that sensory perception leads directly to cognition – there needs to be discernment from the 'sixth sense'. This discernment is another major topic in *Paradise Lost* as Milton believed that pure perception alone is not trustworthy and a certain amount of inner-sight by the 'sixth sense' is needed to process all sensory information. This 'sixth sense' incorporates reason, conscience, understanding and insight – and when all these are used in conjunction with faith in God, then appropriate moralistic/spiritual decisions should be reached. This can be seen when Adam mentions

... that in the Soule
 Are many lesser Faculties that serve
 Reason as chief; among these Fancies next
 Her office holds; of all external things,
 Which the five watchful Senses represent,
 She forms Imaginations (5.100-5).

The soul contains this 'sixth sense' which controls and keeps the perceived sensory information in order for cognition. However, when this 'sixth sense' sleeps, i.e. when a person falls asleep, then all the controlling factors sleep too. Milton thinks that when in a dreaming state, the role of fancy or imagination takes over, which can lead to dreams being untrustworthy or to a vulnerable state that can be controlled by

⁸ In fact, the senses are given equal weight when they have all been involved equally in the Fall – so that the Fall becomes a full sensory experience with no single senses being blamed.

external forces. This moral and spiritual control of the senses by this encompassing ‘sixth sense’ is something that is stressed by both Gabriel and Michael: temperance and control of the senses is important in everyday life. It can also be observed that Adam and Eve’s lack of discernment and control of the senses is how Satan managed to bring about the Fall – he tempted and tricked all the senses including the ‘sixth sense’. But as only God is able to truly discern peoples’ hearts, then it would have not been possible for Adam and Eve to ‘see through’ Satan’s disguise and lies – they would only have needed to control their senses from being tempted, which did not happen. So the sensorium in *Paradise Lost* is being used to express the effects of sin, but how is this sin to be combated in the future? Milton actually alludes to and mentions the role of Christ in the text. It is Christ’s glory and brightness that beats back the rebellious angels in Heaven and it is Christ’s light that will shine in the world so that

Beyond compare [He] was seen
 Most glorious, in him all his Father shon
 Substantially expressed, and in his face
 Divine compassion visibly appeared (3.138-41).

This is echoed in the Gospel of John when Christ actually says that he has “come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in [him] should not abide in darkness”.⁹ So the only way to bring back personal harmony is to atone and find the unity and reconciliation with God through God’s light that is sent to the world – Christ. However, there is also a false shepherd, Satan, who shines falsely and attracts followers to him – one has to discern the real light from the false. It should be remembered that *Paradise Lost* is not a theological treatise, but a poem that has a theological teaching; Milton uniquely orders and uses the senses in a way that conveys the whole symbolic meaning of the Fall – the Fall is expressed as a sensual change and redemption is obtained

⁹ John, 12:46.

through Christ returning this sensual order. However, it is also the control of the senses and the avoidance of temptation and gluttony of the senses that also plays an important moralistic role in Adam and Eve's life once expelled from Paradise. These facts have not been concretely highlighted in previous Milton scholarship and this thesis offers new insights into Milton's sensory philosophy.

Milton's materialistic views are also similar to Hobbes' philosophy: Hobbes asserted his materialism and the absolute value of the senses by saying that: "there is no conception in a man's world, which hath not at first, totally, or by parts, been begotten upon the organs of sense".¹⁰ Milton, like Hobbes, has all things incorporeal existing in a tangible, perceptive form. This can actually be seen in Milton's created universe – God actually takes on a more material form, as do the angels and devils – they all have bodily functions and the fact that they are sensible beings is constantly stressed.

But what exactly does a text from the seventeenth century have to give to modern readers? Sensually, our world is becoming more artificial and we are even starting to ignore some of our senses. Classen argues that in the postmodern world smell, especially, is notable by its absence: "Odours are suppressed in public places, there are no smells on television, [and] the world of computers is odour-free"¹¹ and "[c]ommercially produced synthetic odours pervade the marketplace, enveloping consumer goods in ideal olfactory images".¹² However, this is also true for the other senses: our sense of sight is bombarded by commercial images and rarely seems to find rest in this increasingly, so-called, visual society; our hearing is filled with artificial, digital sounds and noise pollution is becoming a bigger problem; tastes are becoming

¹⁰ Thomas Hobbes. *Hobbes Selections*. F.J.E. Woodbridge (Ed.). New York: Scribner's, 1930, p. 139.

¹¹ Constance Classen, David Howes and Anthony Synnott. *Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell*. London: Routledge, 1994, p.203.

¹² *Ibid*, p.204.

more artificial, as fast food and ready commercial meals take over the family dining table; and the sense of touch is being deprived more and more – people touch less and have less contact in the postmodern world, as we are surrounded by visual images on screens that we cannot touch.¹³ There is a general overall feeling today that vision has hegemony over the other senses in this increasingly technological society, which is true if we think how important information technology and the media have become. However, in the accounts from the collapse of the World Trade Centre – the closest anyone can get to a modern idea of Hell in the centre of urbanised American society – it was noticed that many of the ‘eye’-witness accounts were “strikingly non-visual” and that people described more “the sound of falling bodies hitting the ground, the smell of burning jet fuel, and the particular texture of the ankle deep dust that filled the street”¹⁴ This is interesting, because in a time of emergency the previously dormant senses instinctively come into action and the chaos, tragedy, or trauma is perceived and cognitively processed in a full-bodied sensual experience. So instead of relying on a single sense in this traumatic experience, all the senses try to understand and cope with it: it may take a traumatic experience in the modern, civilised world to evoke the senses again – which was self-evident and part of everyday life in pre-industrial societies. Milton’s *Paradise Lost* stresses the importance of all the senses, the harmony that is needed for spiritual and bodily wholeness, which is missing from our society today. Reading *Paradise Lost* incorporates a reader into its sensorium, where one has to construct a meaning for this sensual world in one’s own consciousness. To help people return to this harmony, the representation of the senses, today and throughout history, needs to be investigated further to establish what they mean personally, culturally and socially. It might also be worth investigating if such a phenomenon as a universal

¹³ Constance Classen (Ed.). *The Book of Touch*. Oxford: Berg, 2005, p.2.

¹⁴ Georgina Kleege. ‘Blindness and Visual Culture: An Eyewitness Account’. *Journal of Visual Culture*. Vol. 4(2). 2005, p. 183.

sensorium exists, as the western sensorium seems to be the dominant in the cultural world.¹⁵

Future research could be carried out upon the amount and nature of reader participation in a sensual text. Tadié mentions that reading about a gesture and seeing that gesture performed are not radically opposite and can be considered the same experience: readers visualise actions through a text.¹⁶ Stewart also adds that

[t]he flux of sense impressions has a transitive and intransitive aspect. What propels us outward will also transform us, and it only by finding means of making sense impressions intelligible to others that we are able to situate ourselves and our experiences within what is universal.¹⁷

From these perspectives, it is interesting to speculate how much a sensual text actually influences a reading experience – does a reader perceive the smell of flowers in *Paradise Lost*; hear the screams of pain in Hell, feel the warmth of the sun; taste the fruit; and see Eve in her beauty. Of course, perception is subjective, as sense impressions are internal sensations entirely dependent upon the perceiver – every experience is personal. However, it could be worth speculating if sensual experience was more acute in Milton's era, compared to our desensitised postmodern world? It was observed in 1.1 that St. Ignatius of Loyola's sensory exercises were of an extremely full-bodied sensory experience, just as Milton's text is, so sensory imagination may have been stronger in the past. However, in our modern world, there is a need to return to this sensory imagination before it atrophies. This is why appreciation and recognition of the senses is timely and necessary. This is why appreciation and recognition of the senses is timely and necessary.

¹⁵ Michael Syrotinski and Ian Maclachlan (Editors). *Sensual Reading: New Approaches to Reading in its Relation to the Senses*. London: Associated University Press, 2001, p. 10

¹⁶ Alexis Tadié. 'From the Ear to the Eye: Perceptions of Language in the Fiction of Laurence Sterne' in Michael Syrotinski and Ian Maclachlan (Editors). *Sensual Reading: New Approaches to Reading in its Relation to the Senses*. London: Associated University Press, 2001, pp. 113 and 119.

¹⁷ Susan Stewart. *Poetry and the Fate of the Senses*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002, p. 3.

To broaden the scope of this research for future considerations, all of Milton's works could be investigated sensually: is there a sense of harmonic, sensual-healing in *Paradise Regained*?; does Milton's philosophical usage of the senses form a continuum between his work before he went blind and afterwards? Finally, it is worth remembering that

defects, disorders, diseases ... can play a paradoxical role, by bringing out latent powers, developments, evolutions, forms of life, that might never be seen, or even imaginable, in their absence.¹⁸

Blindness causes limitations the same as any other disability, but it also awakens new possibilities and perceptions. It would be interesting to fully investigate Milton's texts before and after blindness to see if there are any concrete sensual differences.

¹⁸ Oliver Sacks quoted in Schor, p. 104.

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