ADAM AS THE REPRESENTATIVE FAILURE OF THE PATRIARCHAL HIERARCHY IN *PARADISE LOST*

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ABSTRACT

Milton's *Paradise Lost* is analyzed with gender criticism and examined for evidence of Milton's opinions of masculine power. First, Adam is defined as the representative failure of the patriarchal hierarchy. His unsuccessful embraces of human-made gender roles are used to identify him as a weak leader of those he claims to rule. Moreover, his parallels with Satan, the ultimate fallen patriarch, cement his identity as a failure. Once Adam is criticized for his insufficiencies, hierarchies of power from Milton's day—like the monarchy and the Church—are examined for the antipatriarchal inspiration with which they provide Milton. Lastly, Milton's God character is analyzed to determine why the author privileges him as perfect and why he is Milton's only respected patriarch. The answer lies in God's androgyny and resistance to falling prey to the vulnerabilities of pure masculinity. By defining Adam as the failed patriarch, Milton reflects his doubts about earthly patriarchal systems and highlights his acceptance of only one revered leader: his God.

INTRODUCTION

Milton's *Paradise Lost* is rife with dynamic male characters and intriguing power struggles that ensue when these men aim to acquire influence or exert dominance. While many readers see the abundance of male characters and their highlighted struggles with power as indicative of Milton's sexism, I contend that he uses the failings of iconic male figures to undermine the entire institution of the patriarchy. He criticizes the patriarchy through his depiction of Adam, the father of humanity, and, thus, the father of the human-created patriarchy as we know it. Adam, the failed patriarch, reflects Milton's doubts about earthly patriarchal systems and highlights Milton's acceptance of only one revered leader: his God.

All of Adam's shortcomings stem from the power he wrongfully assumes over Eve, and exist because the role of male superiority he adopts is not one of natural occurrence in Milton's universe. The father of humankind has no innate power over the mother because he is not intrinsically superior. Milton introduces Adam and Eve with "thir sex not equal seemd," highlighting 'seemed' as the crucial word, and imploring readers to interpret the word as pertaining to something that appears but is not so (IV. 296). Therefore, Milton asserts that, beneath their different appearances of hardness and softness, their sexes *are* equal, and suggests that any assumed gender roles are not of God's design. In "Adam and the Subversion of Paradise," Larry Langford argues that, for Adam and Eve, "Neither role [of husband or wife] is natural for them, if by 'natural' we mean occurring spontaneously without the manipulative intervention of a third party" (121). However, Langford neglects to identify the intervening force. While such an intervention might come from coaxing figures such as Raphael or Satan, I assert that Adam is ultimately accountable for conceding to an unnatural gender role, and responsible for, then, failing to fulfill it.

ADAM'S RELUCTANCE TO ASSUME REAL POWER

Despite accepting illegitimate labels that grant him authority, Adam is reluctant to assume real power, and only defends his alleged leadership through his words, rather than his actions. When Adam speaks to Raphael, for example, saying "that what she wills to do or say, / Seems wisest, vertuousest, discreetest, best," he expresses awe at the power Eve yields and doubts his strength over her (VIII. 549-550). While Theresa M. DiPasquale asserts that "Adam's reverence for [Eve] is fully in keeping with his obedience to

God, for Wisdom is 'a pure influence that floweth from the glorie of the Almightie: therefore can no defiled thing come unto her (Wisd. Of Sol. 7:25),'" my essay argues that Adam's captivation with Eve's power undermines Raphael's claim that Adam is the head of the human pair because it implies a weakness that is incongruent with Adam's supposed patriarchal power(55).

Furthermore, when Adam doubts the influence Raphael grants him and expresses to the angel how deeply he loves Eve, he earns Raphael's rebuke that Eve is "fair no doubt, and worthy well / Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love, / Not thy subjection," to which Adam struggles to reply (VIII. 568-570). He cannot reconcile how he feels with how he ought to act. Only after receiving a stern reminder that he must make Eve recognize his alleged, masculine superiority, does he answer, "Yet these subject not; I to thee disclose / What inward thence I feel, not therefore foild" (VIII. 607-608). Here, Adam reveals his inner, vulnerable feelings—thus, undermining his claim to stereotypical masculinity—and ineffectively claims with unconvincing words to be Eve's leader. Throughout the entire exchange with Raphael, Adam appears timid and careful to form whatever reply will help him avoid further correction. Though his gender role is an unnatural construction, Adam fails to provide the strength it allegedly necessitates. Milton uses to Adam's failure to critique his patriarchal character and criticize the *concept* of patriarchal power, in general.

The weaknesses of patriarchal power structures—and of Adam, in particular—surface again when the father of humanity embraces the sexual hunger characteristic of masculine gender roles. His sexually motivation incites vulnerability. When Eve insists she and Adam split their day labors, he initially resists out of apprehension, but ultimately concedes: "But if much converse perhaps / Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield. / For solitude sometimes is best societie, / And short retirement urges sweet returne" (IX. 247-250). He does not change his mind in response to her logical reasoning, but grants her request in hopes that the distance between them will rouse sexual desire. This preoccupation with sex is why DiPasquale compares Adam to Solomon, another biblical character who falls at the hands of women, saying they have common ground "not only on their parallel falls, but also on the blessed wisdom each possesses before he sins" (45). Just as Solomon rebels against God and builds altars for his concubines to maintain a happy harem that will satisfy his sexual appetite, Adam ignores the warnings from God to appease his wife in hopes that she will please him, later (1 Kings 11). Since Adam succumbs to his infatuation with the female form years before Solomon does, he must take responsibility for setting a failing example as the first patriarch. When Adam allows Eve's beauty and his concern with "sweet returns" to dominate his judgement, he fails again to appropriately fulfill his illegitimate, intrinsically flawed, and foolishly assumed, gender role.

As evidence of his failed masculine leadership compounds, Adam highlights the unsustainability of patriarchal powers by doing domestic work, becoming submissive, and preparing himself to crown Eve. After he agrees to let her work independently, "Adam the while / Waiting desirous her return, [weaves] / Of choicest Flours a Garland to adorne / Her Tresses;" this is a submissive action, highly uncharacteristic of a true, leading patriarch (IX. 838-841). His actions of flower picking and arranging reflect domestic labor that would have been characteristically feminine to Milton's audience. However, the image of the flowers pales in comparison to the significance of Adam's motivations behind weaving them. Despite receiving and admonition from Raphael to not be subject to Eve but to rule her, Adam wants to crown Eve as a queen because his willingness to rule subsides. This highlights the patriarch's rejection and failure to remain reliable or strong in the leadership role he previously claimed to possess. As Milton depicts him as fickle and weak, Adam reflects the ineffectuality of patriarchal masculinity that men create and assume.

Ultimately, Adam's only constant is his consistent inability to exercise power. Whether he relinquishes his power to his wife, ignores warnings from God's angels, or abandons his convictions, he proves himself to be a spineless follower. Revealing the context of his decision to eat the apple, Adam says to Eve,

> Rather how hast thou yeelded to transgress
> The strict forbiddance, how to violate
> The sacred Fruit forbidd'n! som cursed fraud

> Of Enemie hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown,
> And mee with thee hath ruined, for with thee
> Certain my resolution is to Die (IX. 902-908)

He notably remains fully aware of God's orders not to eat the apple, calling Eve's actions a violation and using the phrase "Fruit forbidd'n." These words mark his disobedience as a conscious, informed choice. In their article "*Paradise Lost*: Love in Eden, and the Critics Who Obey," Michael Bryson and Arpi Movsesian defend Adam and quote David Quint, who asserts that, by choosing to sin with Eve, Adam commits "an act that combines marital love, human solidarity, and Adam's fear of repeating his earlier loneliness before Eve's creation" (480). In contrast, I argue that Adam should have stood his ground out of duty and obedience to God. His failure to do so reflects his weakness as an individual and as a leader. By using Stanley Fish's argument that "it is Milton's view . . . that one's conviction as to what is good and true and moral comes first, and that the reasons one might have for acting flow from—and are given their status as 'good' by—that prior conviction," one can conclude that Adam's reasons are not honorable, as does not prioritize what is ethical or right (52). Readers should not romanticize Adam's willingness to sin as an example of love, but should, instead, recognize it as an example of foolish disobedience and a failure to emit the strength and stability Adam once believed his gender role necessitated. Therefore, his willingness to sin highlights his lack of morals, his nonexistent backbone, and his shameless abandonment of the role he previously assured Raphael that he could embody. His refusal to exemplify holiness marks him as a failing Christian, and his inability to exercise power characterizes him as a failed patriarch.

SHIRKED RESPONSIBILITY

Despite Adam's many weaknesses, such as his lack of strength, his sexual vulnerabilities, and his failure to follow his own moral compass, he accepts no responsibility for his shortcomings because he is an unworthy leader. After he and Eve sin and experience the subsequent, dissonant changes to Paradise, he quickly assigns blame, saying to Eve, "I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold / The danger, and the lurking Enemie" (IX. 1171-1172). The irony in his reproach lies in the fact that he, too, made multiple errors by succumbing to his ulterior motives to let Eve work alone, defying the admonishments of God, and falling to the temptations of the enemy. Adam, however, makes no mention of his own complicities. His blind ignorance of his own faults, here, is reminiscent of his earlier conversation with Raphael, where he ignores his vulnerability to Eve's beauty and poorly justifies his enrapturement.

Adam exhibits a pattern of shirked responsibility. Theresa M. DiPasqaule notes a much later scene—one in Book 11, in which Michael scolds Adam for blaming women for the Fall—and argues that "it is Adam's failure to follow Raphael's advice that Michael is rebuking"; this highlights that Adam's refusal to recognize his own faults reoccurs throughout the epic (63). Furthermore, Douglas Anderson compares Adam's lack of apology to Eve's extended repentance in Book 10, and claims Adam regresses to "a little boy, instead of our First Parent, while Eve maintains a remnant of the dignified, adult candor of unfallen Paradise . . . At this moment, in other words, Adam and Eve have exchanged. . . roles" (139). Anderson highlights the sobering loss of dignity Adam faces when the character repeatedly makes erroneous judgements and does a pathetic job of embodying the dominant, masculine gender role he once claimed to be capable of occupying. Adam's habitual lack of accountability and lack of self-awareness implicate him as a failure and suggest that figures of patriarchal power, in general, are neither righteous nor responsible.

It is important to note that I am not arguing that Milton vilifies Adam for not being sufficiently masculine, nor am I asserting that he uses Adam to advocate for the stronger adherence to gender roles. If anything, Milton's *Paradise Lost* uses Adam to show how patriarchal masculinity is defective because it does not come from God and because it is difficult to fulfill for those who mistakenly try to embrace it. Adam's character is a weak, submissive, failed leader because gender roles are not innate, but, rather, come from human, patriarchal biases which are inherently problematic.

ADAM AND SATAN

Paradise Lost further explores the flaws of masculine gender roles as it compares Adam to Satan, who is arguably the archetypal, failure. Satan, the original deserter of virtue and proponent of evil, earns his notoriety when he revolts against God and experiences his infamous fall from grace; Adam, too, makes choices that incur consequences of banishment. Interestingly, these notable men have multiple parallels across their experiences, as both are God's creations, and both disobey. The epic depicts one such parallel when both characters give birth to women from their own bodies. Satan, first, gives life to his daughter, Sin. She reminds him, "Likest to thee in shape and cout'nance bright, / The shining heav'nly fair, a Goddess arm'd / Out of thy head I sprung," and, thus, reminds readers that Satan is the true father of original sin (II. 756-758). Adam's later "birth" of Eve from his side provides a basis for comparison as he recalls that God "stooping op'nd [his] left side, and took / From thence a Rib, with cordial spirits warme" (VIII. 465-466). Since Eve and Sin both emerge from the left side of their counterparts, and since both female figures wield influence through their physical appeal to the male ones, they initially appear to be the most parallel characters in the scene. However, Larry Langford's suggestion "that whatever affinities Eve shares with Sin, Adam shares the same with Satan, perhaps to a greater degree," enables readers to see Milton's intentional comparison between Adam and the evillest being in the universe (127). Milton purposely crafts the scene where Satan generates Sin, an event that the Bible does not record, to compare the two fallen male figures and imply that if they share one trait, they likely share others that reflect their masculine fallibility.

One such mutual weakness is the vulnerability to beauty and susceptibility to distraction that both characters possess—a weakness borne of traditional masculinity and patriarchal roles. Just as Adam becomes distracted by his sexual attraction and concedes when Eve asks to divide their party, Satan falls vulnerable to Eve's charms and appeals when he watches her in the garden: "That space the Evil one abstracted stood / From his own evil, and for the time remaind / Stupidly good, of enmitie disarm'd" (IX. 463-465). Like Adam, who ignores his better judgment and the forewarnings of God in favor of Eve's beauty and persuasion to separate, Satan temporarily abandons his own motives and concerns, falling prey to Eve's distracting visage. Lacey Conley points out that

> the things Satan is moved by are strictly examples of aesthetic pleasure and not spiritual 'goods.' He, like the admiring Adam, is entranced by [Eve], and the reader is left with a sneaking suspicion that when it comes to Paradise, Satan's vision is blurred by despair and envy (13-14).

Moreover, Satan's vision is obscured by his defenselessness against beauty. Milton criticizes Satan's stupefaction, and highlights how quickly the sight of Eve undermines the Evil One's agenda, in order to implicate him as vulnerable. Operating under the assumption that the characters are parallel, one must read that Milton's Adam, too, is changeable, fickle, and manipulatable, which reflects the flaws of a gender role that is too physically and sexually driven.

The undermined patriarchal position that Adam and Satan both occupy explains their failed attempts at leadership, which culminate at the same chronological point. Adam must face his failure as a leader of Eve when the Son curses them both, saying,

> Because thou hast heark'nd to the voice of thy Wife,
> And eaten of the Tree concerning which
> I charg'd thee, sayng: Thou shalt not eate thereof,
> Curs'd is the ground for thy sake (X. 198-201).

This rebuke implies that Adam's biggest mistake is following Eve instead of taking charge as a leader and finding an alternative to succumbing to sin. His failure is not his sin, alone, but his inability to lead and his misjudgment of his own authority.

As Adam receives the consequences of his disastrous leadership, Satan simultaneously encounters the disruption that comes of his own ineffectual management. Despite telling his army of fallen angels to "render Hell / More tollerable; if there be cure or charm / To respite or deceive, or slack

the pain / Of this ill Mansion: intermit no watch," Satan returns to Hell to find that his followers have deserted their posts (II. 459-462). Entering "through the Gate, / Wide open and unguarded, *Satan* [passes], / And all about [finds] desolate; for those / Appointed to sit there, had left thir charge," until he encounters the fallen angels in Pandemonium and sees his disappointments compounded when God turns him and his fellow rebels into snakes (X. 418-421). In "The Valley of Serpents: Inferno XXIV-XXV and *Paradise Lost* X. 504-577," Irene Samuel suggests that "only Dante can have suggested to Milton that the scene represent the penalty exacted by divine justice, that the criminal must go on being and doing involuntarily what he had formerly been and done by choice," but, I would argue that, regardless of where Milton finds his inspiration, his choice to have God undermine Satan's victory speech reflects his desire to subvert figures like the Evil One who inaccurately measure their own greatness in the spirit of traditionally flawed masculinity (1). *Paradise Lost* depicts both Adam and Satan, despite their delusions of grand authority, as lacking the dynamism, influence, or power required to be consistently effective leaders.

To highlight only Satan in such a way would be to criticize the universal enemy, which would hardly be a groundbreaking literary choice. By criticizing the father of humanity for his shortcomings, however, Milton passes judgement on the defects of the patriarchy as a faulty institution.

Milton's choice to emphasize Satan's and Adam's patriarchal failings likely stems from his reproachful view that the power structures of his day were intrinsically poor and corrupt. The monarchy, for example, was an institution with great power of which Milton disapproved. Therefore, when Adam envisions the corrupt leaders of Noah's time and feels disturbed, Milton uses Michael to condemn the people for being "of true vertu void; / Who having spilt much blood, and don much waste / Subduing Nations, and achievd thereby / Fame in the World, high titles, and rich prey" (XI. 790-793). The message from the arch angel implicates any worldly leader who might incite wars and bloodshed in the spirit of masculine dominance, or who might seek fame and titles to reinforce patriarchal aggrandizement, as reactionary and shallow.

However, Milton's criticism does not fall solely on monarchs, as it extends, also, to parliamentary governments. Milton depicts the council meeting in Pandemonium as seemingly fair since each of the fallen angels has an opportunity to speak, but suggests an underlying superficiality through the way the Evil One urges Beelzebub to suggest invading Earth so Satan can volunteer for the mission and appear the masculine hero. Milton, who wonders "why among free Persons, one man by civil right should beare autority and jurisdiction over another," clearly has qualms about the idea of patriarchal, human leadership ("Tenure of Kings and Magistrates"). He sees unchecked, human authority—and the patriarchy that encourages it—as perilous because the compulsive desire for power can lead to dangerous outcomes for the government and society.

If secular abuses of power offend Milton, corrupt and debauched structures within the church aggrieve him more. Describing his Paradise of Fools, a Miltonic invention not from his biblical source text, Milton places certain figures in his version of Limbo and narrates that the Paradise of Fools houses

> Cowles, Hoods and Habits with thir wearers tost
> And Fluttered into Raggs, then Reliques, Beads,
> Indulgences, Dispenses, Pardons, Bulls,
> The sport of Winds: all these upwhirld aloft
> Fly o're the backsie of the World farr off (III. 490-494).

Here, he depicts God's intolerance of church malfeasance. The "Cowles, Hoods and Habits" suggest that Catholic figures are the ones in the Paradise of Fools, and the "Indulgences, Dispenses, Pardons, [and] Bulls" explain why. As a Protestant, Milton would have seen payment for redemption or salvation as heinous and heretical. In his prose, like in his poetry, he expresses disgust with bribery and exploitation, explaining the corruption of the church that began a few generations after the first apostles. In "Of Reformation," Milton condemns religious leaders who used their authority to earn the trust and respect of their congregations before they "cast a longing eye to get the body also, and bodily things into their

command: upon which their carnal desires, the spirit daily quenching and dying in them, knew no way to keep themselves up from falling to nothing" ("Of Reformation"). His frustrations, therefore, are not exclusively with Catholics, but extend to any religious leader or man who succumbs to temptation and abuses his power for personal advancement. To Milton, any time a patriarchal church leader abuses his spiritual authority for carnal satiation, he represents complete failure because those called to lead should be strong enough to resist, and because anyone who falls disgraces his own faith and aggrieves God's spirit.

The frailty of such religious authorities likely motivates Milton's call for the personal, non-institutional practice of faith. In his tract, "On Prelatical Episcopy," he questions whether pastoral authority is a divine or human construct, and expresses his concern with presbyters who teach non-biblical texts to their churches, when these texts do little more than "distract and stagger the multitude of credulous readers, and mislead them from their strong guards and places of safety, under the tuition of holy writ." Again, he sees male leaders as troublesome. If the corrupt pastor is one who appears to his flock as a wolf in sheep's clothing, the interceding pastor is one who leads his flock astray and gets between them and the pasture of God's holy truth. Milton warns against both problematic, patriarchal interventions and prescribes a more personal way of worship. He writes of Adam and Eve worshipping God in Eden before the Fall: "both stood, / Both turnd, and under op'n Skie ador'd / The God that made both Skie, Air, Earth, and Heavn'n," and his depiction of the two praying directly to God in his perfect Eden reinforces his idea that personal worship is God's ideal (IV. 720-722). The scene pointedly lacks any intermediary such as an angel, and even excludes mention of any kind of altar, implying that church buildings and church leaders are unnecessary. Milton rejects so-called spiritual authorities because they offer no required service, and because they are susceptible to corruption. Combined with his skepticism of political leaders, his position on religious leadership highlights his concern with figures who have unchecked authority and explains his distrust of patriarchal power.

MILTON'S GOD

Thus far, I have been primarily concerned with the failings of Adam as a patriarch, the parallels between him and Satan as self-aggrandizing, easily-tempted, and ever failing leaders, and the societal sources of Milton's day from which he forms his opinions. It would be reductive, however, to argue that Milton dislikes and resents all figures of patriarchal power. In fact, rather than detesting all leadership, he retains the utmost respect for one figure of power: his God. Milton expresses that "the Scripture only is able, it being the only book left us of divine authority, not in anything more divine than in the all-sufficiency it hath to furnish us, as with all other spiritual knowledge" because he acknowledges God's word as the only thing that is an absolute truth ("On Prelatical Episcopy"). This respect for a text that he believed to be divinely inspired, paired with his call to authorship, suggests that Milton viewed God as the ultimate inspiration and authority, and that he believed God's voice and commands to be the only ones worth following. God is Milton's only successful patriarch.

Despite being the creator of all—thus, the father of both failed patriarchs—God, under Milton's Christian belief in his perfection, is not to blame for Adam's or Satan's failings. Satan begins as God's favorite angel, and Adam is a man made from God's own image, but one must not forget that both are constant disappointments to their creator. Though God is responsible for speaking each failed patriarch into existence, he is not accountable for the constant disappointments they bring because he designed them to have free will. Milton subscribes to this Arminian perspective on God because, as Anthony Low points out in "'Umpire Conscience': Freedom, Obedience, and the Cartesian Flight from Calvin in 'Paradise Lost,'" "there are no signs in his writings that he ever subscribed to the Calvinist doctrine of total depravity. Through the Son's act of Atonement, each individual human being has been given back freedom to choose" (349). When God watches Satan enter the Garden and foresees the fall of Adam and Eve, He chooses not to interfere, asking, instead, "Whose [fault] but his own? ingrate, he had of mee / All he could have; I made him just and right, Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall" (III. 97-99) By pinpointing Adam's ability to stand on morally high ground, Milton's God separates himself from any participation in the introduction of failure and betrayal. Regardless of his own desires, Milton's God

rejects patriarchal power suppositions, chooses not to interfere, and allows his creations to behave as they see fit. He, thus, shares no part in their failures and remains deserving of Milton's respect.

The reason behind God's choice to limit his involvement in Satan and Adam's lives is this: Without choice, there can be no love. Adam and Satan each have free will that God designs because any divine interferences that might prevent them from sinning would also undermine their opportunities to choose overall, and would limit their ability to decide to love their maker. Unlike the selfish Adam, who lets his "subject," Eve, work alone so he might lustfully reap the benefits of her awaited return, God permits his subjects to choose their actions and fates, regardless of his own gratification. He questions what proof his creations might give "Where onely what they needs must do, appeard / Not what they would?" and asks, "what praise should they receive? / What pleasure I from such obedience paid" because he cares about the authentic, mutual affection of His relationships (III. 105-107). God makes these allowances because, as Low says, "Desire craves its object, as does love; but love also wishes the good for its object, even if that should conflict with the immediate cravings of desire," and because God wants his creations to enjoy the goodness of an authentic relationship with him, even if it means he must put aside his immediate craving for their obedience (353). Unlike the selfish, power-hungry patriarchs Milton detests, his God believes that relationships—even those involving hierarchies of power—should be built on love rather than lust, fear, or forced subjugation.

To meet the genuine affection that he receives from his authentic relationships, Milton's perfect leader gives love in return through his forgiveness, kindness, and clarity. He, thus, provides contrast for the disastrous relational participations of Adam and Satan, the failed patriarchs. Unlike the latter two figures who frequently contradict themselves in speeches, God always speaks with clarity and rationality. In "Repairing Androgyny: Eve's Tears in *Paradise Lost*," Margo Swiss asserts that God wishes to "to confound hate with love. These humanizing features of the deity (…anger, fear and grief) involved highly sensitive issues of interpretation for the readership of Milton's day, just as they have continued to influence his reception history to the present," and she, thus, implies that a levelheaded, humane God enables a more pleasurable and empathetic reading experience (263). This type of God, with his restrained speeches and deliberate actions of forgiveness toward those who sin, also enables readers to see the regard with which Milton holds leaders who possess the warmth, tenderness, and stability that he deems admirable.

The kindness and gentleness of Milton's God pair well with the egalitarian qualities that emerge each time God refuses to personally propagate gender roles. In his creation of Adam and Eve, for example, God does not create man and woman as unequal, just as different. When he responds to Adam's question of, "Among unequals what societie / Can sort, what harmonie or true delight?" he fulfills Adam's desire for an *equal* partner with whom he can live in harmony, and, thus, creates Eve as an equivalent person (VIII. 383-384). Then, in the creation scene itself—a piece of the text that frequently wears the label of sexism—a close reading distinguishes Adam and Eve as different but still equal. Upon their introduction, the narrator identifies Adam and Eve as "Not equal, as thir sex not equal seemd; / For contemplation hee and valour formed / For softness shee and sweet attractive Grace, / Hee for God only, shee for God in him" (IV. 296-299). Whether Milton means "seemed" in the sense of something being different from how it appears, or he uses "seemed" as a synonym for "looked" in terms of physical appearance, the first part of this famous quote does not define Adam and Eve as equitably unequal.

Furthermore, the second half of the quote elevates the position of women. In "Milton's Creation of Eve," Anne Ferry addresses the 'Hee for God only, shee for God in him' portion of the quote by comparing Milton's version of Eve to the Apostle Paul's version of women:

> Milton . . . dims this distinction [of women being to men what men are to God] . . . in the line most often quoted to prove his interest in the subordination of women: 'Hee for God only, shee for God in him.' Milton's rewording here brings Eve closer to her divine creator than St. Paul's formula that 'man is the image and glorie of God: but the woman is the glorie of the man.' (117).

Therefore, Milton takes an approach that is more progressive than his biblical source text. Since he writes his God character as the one who creates these two equal beings, Milton, by induction, likely assumes that his God believes in and designs intrinsic male-female equality, and likely supports such equality, himself.

ANDROGYNY

The most obvious indicator of God's emphasis on male-female equality is his embodiment of masculine and feminine traits. If human beings are created in the image of God as Milton believes, God must have androgynous qualities. This then, makes him as objective of a leader as possible, negates any patriarchal vulnerabilities such as those Milton detests, and supports the assertion that God is Milton's ultimate face of leadership. While God sits on a literal throne at the top of the patriarchal hierarchy, he still possesses maternal and feminine qualities. For example, when he speaks to Adam about creating Eve in Book VIII, his conversation is casual, which Douglas Anderson interprets to mean that "God . . . is far more 'at home' in Paradise than he appears to be among the palatial surroundings. . . of Heaven," and which I view as indicative of God's domesticity and femininity (135). Furthermore, when God creates Adam and Eve, he is entirely responsible for their births, making him both their father and mother. Anderson specifically analyzes the scene where God creates Eve with Adam's rib, saying, "the detail Milton has added is just sufficient to suggest that this occurrence is, quite literally, the delivery of a child. God must stoop to his task like a midwife and deftly nurse the new creature with his forming hand," further exemplifying the utility and value of his feminine qualities (136). Acting in some scenes as domestic character and a midwife, God exudes femininity, maternal gentleness, and characteristically female traits that make him a more complete figure and leader.

To understand the inspiration behind these examples of an androgynous God in *Paradise Lost*, one need not look further than Milton's primary source text: the first three chapters of Genesis. Genesis 1 and 2 provide two different versions of the creation story. In Genesis 1, for example, the author always calls the creator, "God" in a formal way and details him initiating creation with "Let there be light," thus characterizing him as a supreme ruler (*New Oxford* Gen 1:3). Here, the author emphasizes God's titles and authoritative power. In Genesis 2, however, God goes by the title "the Lord God," which, in Hebrew, is YHWH, God's personal name (Gen 2:4nD). The author of this chapter depicts God as a more approachable, relatable figure. The descriptions of God are quite different.

Modern scholars explain authorial differences by suggesting that multiple authorship exists in the Pentateuch. Citing the discoveries of Johann Gottfried Eichon, Richard Friedman explains, "[Eichon] called the group of biblical stories that referred to the deity as God 'E,' because the Hebrew word for God is El or Elohim. He called the group of stories that referred to the deity as Yahweh 'J'," and, thus, he provides the general identities of the multiple authors (52). While Milton, like all seventeenth century Christians, would have believed Moses to be the author of these passages, he still would have seen the multiple characterizations of God in the differing chapters. Milton would have seen the different depictions of his Creator, would have noted the feminine qualities in some stories and the masculine traits in others, and would have interpreted God as androgynous and free of constricting gender roles. By recognizing that Milton had qualms about the patriarchal hierarchies of his earthly world, but no such concerns with his heavenly leader, one can understand why God, with his objective balance of feminine and masculine qualities, is the only patriarch of whom Milton approves.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, Milton's attitudes toward leaders and his condemnation of the patriarchy cement his identity as a progressive thinker and offer insight into his beliefs about the circumstances surrounding the fall of human beings from grace. Milton says at the start of *Paradise Lost* that he wants his heavenly muse to sing "Of Mans First Disobedience," so, his epic's subsequent attention to the failings of men seems to implicate figures who foolishly embrace masculinity as partially responsible for that initial defiance and the resulting separation (I.i). Since the patriarchy enables vulnerable people to inappropriately assume more authority than they should, and, thus, allows them to make more frequent mistakes, it plays a large part in arguably the biggest mistake ever made. By identifying the patriarchy as problematic in these

ways, and by innovatively suggesting androgynous leadership instead, Milton's *Paradise Lost* is a text of progressive enlightenment.

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