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“In emulation opposite to Heaven”: Kinship and Image as Metaphors of Imitation in *Paradise Lost*

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Introduction

This is a study of the phenomenon of imitation, assessing the role it plays in the literary theodicy of John Milton's epic, *Paradise Lost* (1667).[1] While imagery in the epic enjoys a great deal of scholarly attention, the term "image" itself is glossed over for being merely a link to the Bible. Is there more to the "image" than an allusion in Milton's work? I claim that apart from being the expression of what Michael Motia (2022) calls ontological imitation, "image", together with the kinship metaphor (sonship and fatherhood) evokes the complex dynamic of imitation as a psychological phenomenon. Moreover, "image" and kinship refract and generate meaning by activating a set of metaphorical connotations that come from the various contexts of the work.

Even though I do not presume to provide a unified theory of imitation, a concept that has not been the subject of concerted interdisciplinary research, through the analysis of the epic I demonstrate the way theories of imitation across the fields of poetics, theology and psychology are in dialogue and complete each-other. In this effort I made use of Michael Motia's *Imitations of Infinity* (2022) and a volume edited by Jonathan Holmes and Adrian Streete (2005), which discuss the evolution of mimesis in theology and representation respectively. Milton's epic, in my view, demonstrates the shift in the way of thinking about imitation that ontologically frames the human condition, exploring the limitations and dangers it imposes on individuality, creativity and authority. The paradoxes inherent to imitation, similarity and difference, unity and division, just to name a few, are central to the understanding of the goodness of mimetic creation and the existence of evil. The epic explores this dilemma and also sheds a modern light on imitation, bringing into play contemporary anxieties concerning the human condition as mimetic.

John Milton's work formulates its own poetic theology based on imitation, in which biblical (and theological) metaphors that are fundamental to Christian anthropology, kinship and image, point beyond the biblical and theological connotations. They evoke literary as well as contemporary references, comparing interpretations and implications. Besides mimesis as an underlying concept in the theory of art and theology, kinship and image bring into play psychological and sociological definitions of imitation as well, describing the human experience, evoking the dynamics of similarity of difference, sameness and otherness, hierarchy and rivalry.

In the epic, the transformative power of imitation is contrasted with mimetic rivalry. Satan in the epic points to the Girardian Satan (René Girard, 2001),[2] the creator of the false transcendence, and

[1] All quotes from the text of *Paradise Lost* come from Barbara K. Lewalski's 2007 edition, following the orthography and punctuation of this version.

[2] The potentially dangerous nature of imitation has been present implicitly in all fields that dealt with it, but it was René Girard who studied rivalry as a form of imitation, the result of mimetic desire. He focused on imitation as a phenomenon and identified the experience of "stumbling" when a subject recognizes his rival.

the agent who creates and maintains the mimetic cycle of violence, but he also embodies the psychological experience of the victim of mimetic rivalry. The narrator of Book 1 says that the Rebel Angel "He trusted to have equal'd the most High, /If he oppos'd" (1.40-41): in other words, Satan defines his godlikeness in opposition with the Almighty. The Son, on the other hand, becomes the agent of the ideal imitation, uniting the theological concepts of kinship and image-ness, becoming a model as well as the embodiment of imitation, Adam's son (3.286).

Like authorship, analyzed by Marshall Grossman (1987) as the expression of Adam and Eve gaining autonomy with respect to God's will, image and kinship are also keys to describe and understand the complexity of godlikeness and freedom. They offer several layers of meaning and complete the idea of authorship: they describe the complex and paradoxical state of freedom and independence within the framework of mimetic creation.

It is not the aim of this study to revise the theology of *Paradise Lost*, instead, its objective is to provide a more nuanced perspective on the poetic expression of it. I elaborate on the function of "image" and kinship as conceptual metaphors, arguing that *Paradise Lost* deliberately uses them in reference to the Messiah, with the purpose of expressing the elusive relationship between Father and Son, and restoring the divine meaning of both metaphors, comparing it to the fallen experience. In fact, both kinship and "image" express the complex and transformative dynamic of not-quite-the-sameness but infinitely perfect approximation between God the Father and the second member of the Godhead.[3]

[3] Discussion of the Son in Milton's epic inevitably brings up the issue of Milton's Arianism. The theology of the epic and its connection to Arianism was thoroughly investigated, among others by William B. Hunter, Jack A. Adamson and Costantinos A. Patrides, collecting their main ideas in the volume *Bright* Essence (1971) regarding the debate concerning the theological inconsistencies between *Paradise Los*t, and Milton's *A Treatise on Christian Doctrine*. They argue that poetry and the drama of the epic operate differently than theological treatises, therefore should be analyzed as poetry, not theology. More recently, Michael Lieb (2000) contributed to the discussion by saying that upon careful consideration, Milton's Arianism is more a question of methodology than theology: he agrees with the exclusive reliance on the Scriptures (and based on that, he intends to formulate his own concepts of Father and Son), but in a number of his treatises he openly condemns heresies, such as Arianism as well. Analyzing a particular sentence in Milton's work, *Of True Religion* (1673) Lieb writes: "in endorsing the Arian and Socinian mode of interpretation, that is, the methodology they adopt to advance their beliefs, Milton would appear to be endorsing those very beliefs, when in fact he is endorsing a hermeneutic that grounds itself in the scriptural text, for that is the hermeneutic that all good Protestants (no matter what their stripe) adopt. Moving imperceptibly from a concern with belief to a concern with methodology, the sentence provides little or no insight into Milton himself as an Arian, a Socinian, a Trinitarian, or an Antitrinitarian. All the sentence does is to confirm his allegiance to a particular mode of interpretation (the Protestant mode) as the one true foundation upon which to ground belief" (2000, 207-208). I think Lieb's logic is adaptable to Milton's poetry as well, insofar as it invites interpretation instead of affirming beliefs. In my research I also approach the question of Arianism from a methodological standpoint, as the Arian controversy bordered on a linguistic debate, as Cathrine Osborne (1993) demonstrates: she discusses reactions to Arian writings in which refutation of Arian ideas rested on the question of the origin of meaning, the guarantor of which is supposed to be God.

I extend the analysis to the network of family relationships and kinship metaphors that are woven into the epic, such as father-son-daughter-mother, but also the individual concept of fatherhood, sonship, motherhood and brotherhood play key roles in the work in expressing the nature of characters. The ideal familial relationship, between the two members of the Godhead is contrasted with the Satan-Sin Death trio, while Adam and Eve have to face the historical and universal dimension of parenthood. I also study *image* and contend that it functions as a conceptual metaphor in the work, completing kinship to showcase the nature of the relationship between the members of the Godhead. The theory of conceptual or cognitive metaphors was described by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980), arguing that not only poetry but thinking is also metaphorical, and our metaphors are anchored and embedded in human experience. Their ideas were employed by Mark Turner (2000) to analyze poetry. He demonstrated that metaphorical connotations coming from human life and experience contribute to the complexity of poetic metaphors, providing a variety of inference patterns. He analyzed Sin in *Paradise Lost* as an example of the way kinship metaphor works through the inference pattern inheritance, describing the way the daughter's inherited nature revealed the father's.

The metaphorics of the epic, however, are not cognitive, but theological: meaning is not anchored in human experience, but in the divine mind. Understanding any metaphor in the work is not intuitive, but requires conscious reasoning. The theory of cognitive metaphors serves to identify the fallen connotations of the epic, in order to compare them with the divine original.

Likewise, my study attests to the fact that Satan, his stumble, his rivalistic imitation and the way he corrupts the metaphors and godlikeness contributes to the theology of the epic, which I am going to show through the exploration of the contrasts and correlations between the way kinship and image describes the family of God and the family of Satan. Moreover, reiterating that imitation has two types, Satan provides the counterexample of how to be an imitation of God. Typology accounts for the Son as a new Adam, but mimetic rivalry accounts for Satan, Sin and Death.

I explore is how the metaphors kinship and image connect the epic not only to the literary and cultural context of *Paradise Lost*, but within the epic itself, revealing the theodical and recreative meaning of the metaphors that express godlikeness.[4] The problem of evil, the rebellion and the fall of the angels has been studied extensively, including the intimately psychological portray of Satan. I consider the portrayal of the rebel archangel (and the fallen angels) a case study of the way mimetic desire and imitation works, resulting in conflict and rivalry, based on René Girard's various works on the subject.[5] Girard carried out a comparative literary analysis of mythologies and the Bible, arguing

[4] The way literary theodicy works in the epic has been analyzed and explained by Dennis Danielson (1982).
[5] Unlike Paul Richard Blum, however, who in 2012 published an essay entitled "Satan and the Human Condition: John Milton Read in Terms of René Girard", in which he applies Girard's concept of Satan to the reading of the epic, I employ Girard's logic of mimetic desire not only to study Satan, but the fallen experience of ontological and aesthetic mimesis.

that the Scriptures reveal the mimetic rivalry that causes conflict and violence (2001). Girard, however, disregards the mimetic nature of the way the Son, Christ sets not only an example but through the incarnation transforms mankind and the Godhead as well, uniting human and divine nature, resolving in himself the paradox of sameness and otherness that according to Girard causes frustration and envy.

I claim to uncover a metaphorical scaffolding of *Paradise Lost*, a systematic use of metaphors to fuse dogma with drama. Image and kinship are used in the epic not only to express the theology and theodicy of the epic, but also the psychology and sociology of imitation. The epic offers evidence to the power of imitation, demonstrating the regenerative and rivalistic aspect as well.

The metaphors kinship and image connect theology and contemporary human experience, depicting the psychological landscape that is associated with a particular type of imitation, godlikeness. Given the need to accommodate the meaning of godlikeness to the human conceptual system, the metaphors kinship and image in the epic are used to express the theodicy of the epic, but they also shed light on the fallen human concepts that arise from postlapsarian human experiences, such as mimetic rivalries, idolatry, the falsity of appearances, just to name a few. The way I see it, imitation has not been explored in its complexity in the epic, wherein it creates a metaphorical system that underlies the narrative.

I argue that the kinship of Father and Son, juxtaposed with Satan, Sin and Death strategically inform each-other, evoke all the metaphorical layers but aims at revealing the ideal, divine kinship. Similarly, the image-ness of the Son, contrasted with Adam's and especially Eve's experience, provides the ideal interpretation of image. The epic both employs and reforms these conceptual metaphors.

In the first chapter I begin with the clarification of key concepts, the relationship between imitation and creativity, and the problem of the limits of language to represent the metaphysical, or in other words, the theory of accommodation. *Paradise Lost* negotiates the power and the ability of language to express the inexpressible and uses poetry to generate rivaling interpretations and thus force the audience, inside and outside the epic, to choose.

I also summarize the extant analysis of *Paradise Lost* as imitation in the aesthetic sense, from the status of the poet as creator, to the role of poetry as recreative force as described by Sir Philip Sidney. I rely on Michael Mack's analysis of Sidney's *An Apology for Poetry* (1595) as the revolutionary proclamation of human creativity as the legacy of divine creativity; wherein he uses *Paradise Lost* to demonstrate the transformative power of poetry in pursuit of the "great argument", the operation of divine providence (Mack 2005, 7-8).

The effect of a narrative example on the audience, the importance of the hero or the anti-hero of an epic also comes up in Sidney's *An Apology*, and *Paradise Lost* is a testimony to the power of such heroes to reform or transform. I, therefore, dedicate a section to the way epic imitates: when it comes to rivalry and interpretation the language of the epic remains faithful to its primary source, the

scriptures, yet the satanic discourse manages to challenge the divine meaning, and through the creation of ambiguities demonstrates the rivalistic aspect of imitation.

After literary imitation and creation, in the second chapter I turn to the topic of imitation as behavior. In the first subsection I outline the history of the concept in theology through *imago Dei* and *imitatio Christi*, as the expression of the foundation of Christian anthropology. Then I turn to the sociological and psychological aspects of imitation. Albeit they seem distant and disconnected, theology in fact deals with the psychology of imitating God. David A. Harrap (2016) analyses the experience of the faithful, describing by the terminology of psychology the way prayer transforms the believer by allowing them to imitate Christ.

Next, I review the theories of Gabriel Tarde and René Girard, whose work has added to the concept of imitation its social and anthropological dimension. Even though Aristotle already acknowledged the inherently imitative nature of humankind, just what this means has been largely ignored. Their theories complete the idea of imitation as a relationship between human and divine, describing it as interpersonal. Tarde's observations and principles on how an idea spreads by way of imitation sheds a new light on the way the society of angels is divided over Lucifer's ideas; moreover, Abdiel's resistance also serves as an interesting case study to demonstrate the arbitrary nature of imitation.

In the third chapter I turn to the cognitive metaphors and start by analyzing kinship. First, I explore the metaphorical range of kinship, with special attention to theology and the human experience of kinship. Besides its mimetic nature, I emphasize the contrast between the fallen experiences of rivalries between fathers, sons and siblings, and domestic abuse, and the theology of the union of the members of the Godhead as Father and Son. The Arian controversy, the relevance of which to Milton's work has been the subject-matter of much scrutiny meant an almost semiotic debate about the metaphors to be used to describe the triune God. As Cathrine Osborne (1993) argues, the ideal meaning of the kinship metaphor in theology is offered by the divine Father and Son, every other father and son is either a good or bad imitation of that. Similarly, the epic contrasts Satan and Adam as fathers and the Son and Death as sons to explore the multiplicity of meanings and to offer the divine fatherhood to Adam through the sonship of the Son.

The last subsection is dedicated to the image as a metaphor, and I carry out an analysis of the use of the image through the Bible, in theology and during the Early Modern period. W. J. T. Mitchell's (1996) theory of images offers an insight into the complexity of the concept, as well as describing the anxieties connected to the image, such as the falsity of appearances, the paradox of presence and absence, and the way images may offend. The offence images commit is comparable to the obstacle that makes Satan stumble, as he is offended by both images of God: the Son and man. The concept of idolatry also demonstrates the innate rivalry between original and copy.

To conclude I assert that imitation, both as artistic creation and as a mode of existing carries the potential of recreation and reunion with God, to the extent which model and copy can be identical, but they also may produce rivalry. Satan, who is neither the image nor the son of God is unable to become more like him, an ambition he develops as a result of comparing himself to the Son. Metaphorically, the Son unites the implications of both image and kinship regarding his relationship with the Father, and through his sonship restores Adam, and by extension mankind to the image of the Father by becoming Adam's son.

I. "Likening Spiritual to Corporeal Froms": Theories of imitation in *Paradise Lost*

The concept of creation has been associated with likeness, and thus imitation since the Antiquity, as Plato in *Timaeus* writes: "He [god] was good, and in him that is good no envy ariseth ever concerning anything; and being devoid of envy He desired that all should be, so far as possible, like unto Himself" (29e). Creation means growth by multiplication, and it is fundamentally good; it is good because what is generated resembles the deity, and this likeness of intended. Furthermore, the divine entity is not reluctant to share his goodness, does not feel diminished and does not see rivalry in resemblance. The conceptual basis of mimesis can be found in these lines: the concept of creation (and creativity) as imitation, potential of conflict as opposed to unity, and the fact that likeness can never be total. Ontological mimesis is inherently good, but it also implies providential dependence and thus hierarchy (Motia 2022, 34).

From the human perspective, imitation means copymaking as well as a type of behavior, a form of learning and even entertainment. Aristotle in his *Poetics* describes imitation as a distinctively human trait, and he observes that man has a natural disposition to imitate, that is, to make representations:

> Speaking generally, poetry seems to owe its origin to two particular causes, both natural. From childhood men have an instinct for representation, and in this respect, differs from the other animals that he is far more imitative and learns his first lessons by representing things. And then there is the enjoyment people always get from representations. What happens in actual experience proves this, for we enjoy looking at accurate likenesses of things which are themselves painful to see, obscene beasts, for instance, and corpses. The reason is this: Learning things gives great pleasure not only to philosophers but also in the same way to all other men, though they share this pleasure only to a small degree" (1448b).

Poetry thus is born out of the joy of creating likenesses and the pleasure of recognizing the correspondence between the model and the representation. Furthermore, this facilitates learning, which brings about further joy. Whatever is represented, the mere phenomenon of imitation generates joy if we recognize what is recreated.

Besides teaching and delighting, aesthetic mimesis is meant to represent the invisible and the ideal, as Sir Philip Sidney writes, to "give right honor to the Heavenly Maker of that maker, who, having made man to His own likeness, set him beyond and over all the works of that second nature. Which in nothing he showeth so much as in poetry, when with the force of a divine breath he bringeth things forth far surpassing her doings (Sidney 1951, 8). Richard Bernard in 1627 wrote the purpose of his work, *Isle of Man*, an allegory was "To shew how a man may come to a holy reformation, and so happily recover himself out of his natural wretched estate" (Bernard 1834, xxx).

Michael Motia (2022) differentiates between ontological and aesthetic mimesis, alluding to the creative and artistic function of imitation, which of course intersect in theology and poetry. In Christianity, men themselves are conceived as imitations, images of God,[6] and according to the New Testament the way to represent God is to imitate Christ, the son of God. In the Renaissance, humanist theory of art the concept of imitation as copy making and behavior imitation came together: the artist (or the poet) imitates God's creative act, thus represents the divine ideal.[7] Creativity, the ability to create, formerly God's privilege, became a human prerogative during the early modern period. The ultimate mimetic act is to imitate divine creation.[8]

Secular approaches to mimesis explore imitation not as the relationship between man and the metaphysical, but as interpersonal, social behavior, hence a phenomenological approach to imitation. In the nineteenth century Gabriel Tarde (1890) defined society and culture as imitation, and René Girard in the twentieth century claimed that even desires are mimetic, and interpersonal mimetic conflicts are the root of violent human behavior. Tarde and Girard offer a theory of mimesis removed from the theological framework, in which imitation is the ontological basis of existence, aimed at elevation and transformation. Girard describes externally and internally mediated desire; the former means that the model of desire and thus imitation is inaccessible, such as the case with God, whereas the latter refers to a model that is within the reach of the imitating agent, who thus potentially tries to dispossess the model (Girard 1965, 10).

Human condition unites the concept of imitation as a copy, a product created and made based on an original, and the action of imitating; thus, it also unites the ambiguities inherent in these concepts. *Paradise Lost*, a human condition text (Turner 2000, 70), explores the status of creatures as imitations and imitators as well, and their relationship to their creator and model, God.

Modern anxieties with copies and imitation, however, reveal the paradoxical relationship between model and imitator, original and copy that was already present in the Early Modern unease

[6] Richard J. Middleton traces the origins of the concept of man as the images of God in ancient near eastern cultures, and connects kingship, image and representation. He explains that men, especially kings and priests were considered images of gods, while there was also a common practice of setting up statues or images of kings and gods in order to assert their presence and cult (Middleton 2005, 94). I find it interesting how the notion of men as images and images as living creatures already appeared in the most ancient cultures.

[7] Michael Mack (2005) offers what he calls a "history" of the idea of creativity and imitation through the analysis of a number of treatises on poetics, emphasizing the revolutionary role of Sidney's *An Apology for Poetry.* He claims: "I offer an overview of the idea of human creativity, bringing together the history of the accounts of divine creation and a history of the ways in which human beings have thought of themselves as the image of God" (Mack 2005, xiii). He argues that Sidney's theory of human creativity is ahead of its time, anticipating the concept of poetic regeneration (ibid. xiv).

[8] Michael Motia identifies two tracks of mimesis in book *Imitations of Infinity* (2022). He argues that aesthetic imitation and ontological imitation were present already in Plato's *Republic, Symposium* and *Symposium* respectively, but the connection between the two types was not clear, until Proclus attempted to bridge the gap between the two approaches, eventually reconciled by Gregory of Nyssa (Motia 2022, 20).

surrounding the status of the poet. Imitation carries the potential of rivalry, as Girard affirms: the model is perceived as the rival by the imitator (Girard, Oughourlian, and Lefort 1978, 284). Michael Motia, in his book *Imitations of Infinity* (2022) also highlights the inherent paradox of imitation from the theological viewpoint, the inability to imitate the inimitable, the divine.

Imitation, representation and mimesis, then, are concepts that have several overlapping definitions. The theory of mimesis in art is reviewed by Jonathan Holmes and Adrian Streete (2005), whose edition collects several essays dealing with imitation in the Early Modern period. They review different approaches to imitation from the viewpoint of different critical movements to offer an overview of the "conceptually hybrid" mimesis, concluding that the notion is present in art theory, rhetoric, psychology and anthropology as well, and use the term to study iconoclasm as a politically charged phenomenon as a symptom of the fascination with representation and its implications in all aspects of life.

As I have mentioned, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to present a theory of imitation; I claim, however, that besides the aesthetic and the ontological considerations regarding mimesis, there is a third type, behavior imitation or mimetic behavior. These three are not entirely separable and complete each-other: the theological concept of imitation as the tool of creation serves as the basis for the mimetic ontological status of mankind, who in turn both make representations as well as engage in reproductive behavior, interpersonally as well as in groups. Literary and theological notions of imitation provide the basis of my scrutiny regarding imitation in *Paradise Lost*, but I also take into consideration the psychological, social and anthropological aspects.

In my thesis, I use the concept *imitation* to refer to reproductive behavior, model and imitative agent to describe the participants engaged in such action. I refrain from using *representation* and rather use *mimesis* sporadically to refer to behavior that is both creative and imitative.[9] I use the adjective *mimetic* borrowing René Girard's term to describe imitative behavior, for example, mimetic rivalry as the conflict arising from imitation.

These concepts, I argue, are all applicable to *Paradise Lost*. The epic abounds in instances of copy-making and reproducing behavior, given the theological basis of human godlikeness; besides, there is rivalry, the desire to challenge God, his authority and his authorship. The quote I chose form the epic as part of the title describes the kingdom of Hell and the ambition of its inhabitants:

[9] Holmes and Streete define mimesis as "a formal and psychological necessity in the construction of any artefact and in the involvement of the spectator in the world established by that artefact. Mimesis, rather than a formal element of a particular kind of artefact (the subset misleadingly called 'representational'), is a central element — indeed, arguably the central element — in the production of all art. Mimesis is what separates the artefact from the world that manufactures it, and is therefore itself the product of labour, of practice, rather than an ephemeral rhetorical device" (2005, 6). I agree with the definition, as it involves the psychological dimension of mimetic creation, and describes it as an activity that engages not only the artist but the audience as well.

and no less desire,
To found this nether Empire, which might rise,
By pollicy, and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to Heav'n (2.295-98)[10]

These lines connect desire with imitation and rivalry, implying that Hell might be able to challenge Heaven over the course of time, which is the demonic twist on the promise to mankind that over time they could become more like God, as Raphael promises Adam and Eve in Book 5.[11] Emulation comes from the Latin *aemulatio*, which originally means rivalry, jealousy.[12] It suggests that the fallen angels intend to challenge and rival with Heaven; however, rivalry, as I am going to demonstrate, is inherently imitative, and Satan cannot help but imitate God as well as the Son.

The two aspects of imitation, being a copy and reproductive behavior are expressed in the epic through the metaphors of kinship (father, son, daughter) and image. The way these metaphors appear in the epic demonstrates the transformative power of imitation, the restoration into ideal form as well as the dissolution into rivalry.

The theory of conceptual metaphors supplies the method by which I enquire into kinship and image. Metaphorical inference patterns refer to the components of metaphors that are activated, such as similarity, inheritance and hierarchy, just to name a few. Regarding kinship and image, I analyze the background of the metaphors and the way they are used in the Bible, in theology, in the Early Modern period, along with philosophy, in order to showcase the presence of imitation and its inherently paradoxical operation, bringing about regeneration as well as rivalry.

Paradise Lost as a poetic work imitates and represents creation within the mimetic framework of Christian worldview, in which creatures are both expected and doomed to imitate. Obedience and rebellion are forms of imitation, and in the quest for godlikeness, creatures, angels and men experience and experiment with imitation throughout the narrative. In the next section, I will cover the theme of literary imitation in the sense it is discussed in the poem itself, that is, the way the epic explores the

[10] The Hungarian translation, by Gusztáv Jánosi (1890) also highlights and important aspect of these lines, a meaning of emulation that is less well-known now, that is, rivalry:

sóvárogtak fundálni lent hazát,
amely idővel majd vetélkedik [rivals]
bölcs kormányzatban még a Mennyel is. (2.290-292)

[11] As opposed to the doctrine of the *felix culpa*, the fortunate fall, several contemporaries of Milton argued that Adam and Eve were in a state of progress in the process of becoming more perfect, which could ultimately have led to their translation to Heaven, had it not been for the disobedience and the fall. Dennis Danielson collects a number of testimonies in line (1982, 211-212).

[12] According to Charlton T. Lewis's dictionary entry, it means "an assiduous striving to equal or excel another in any thing, emulation (it denotes rather the mental effort, while *imitatio* regards more the mode of action; but *rivalitas* is a jealous rivalry, and therefore used only in a bad sense, while *aemulatio* is employed both in a good and bad sense)". It adds that in a negative sense, it implies jealousy and malevolence as well (Lewis 1890).

capacity of poetic language to express the metaphysical, on ither words, the theory of accommodation, and the issue of ambiguity.

I.1. "Venial discourse unblam'd" - Literary imitation and *Paradise Lost*

I have discussed the types and theories of imitation and their relevance to the theodicy of *Paradise Lost*, the contradiction that evil exists within the goodness of creation. Poetry, the ultimate imitation of divine creation, also harbors two dangers: the impossibility of imitating the inimitable, infinite divine truth, and ambiguity, the multiplicity of meaning which bears little to no resemblance to the original. In this section I argue that the epic experiments with the theory of accommodation, pushing the limits of the English language to convey knowledge of the infinite and the unknowable. Communication works with the permission of God.

Paradise Lost as poetry represents the irrepresentable with divine inspiration and license in order to reform the audience through the process of interpretation, in which reading becomes writing (Kocic-Zambo 2012), and the readership is put in the ennobling and liberating position of authorship. However, interpretation can be dangerous and misleading, as the Satanic reading proves.

Divine and poetic creativity are connected in Sidney's *Apology*. Michael Mack writes:

> Created in God's "own likeness," the poet not only "bringeth things forth far surpassing" what is found in the natural world, he does so "with the force of a divine breath" (100-101). This "divine breath" of Sidney's "maker" evokes both creation narratives in Genesis: in the first, God sends his "Spirit" over the waters; in the second, God breathes the breath of life into Adam's nostrils. Reserving for later chapters a fuller explanation of these claims for the poet, as well as further justification for my interpretation, it is enough here to see that in drawing an analogy between poetic making and divine making, Sidney attributes to poetry a forcefulness not less than that of the Holy Spirit. (2005, 23).

This logical connection bridges the gap between imitation as being a copy, and imitation as reproducing behavior, on the one hand, on the other, it also involves the concept of the connection to the primary creative force, God. Implicitly the suggestion is that poetry borrows, or taps into divine creative power, which is used in the service of teaching, delighting and elevating the audience – not causing its fall.

In terms of literary imitation and creation, the ambition of *Paradise Lost* cannot be overstated. There exists a respectable body of commentary and criticism on the ingenious way the epic elevates and surpasses antecedents in form and content alike, serving as a model itself in various ways – present thesis, however, apart from acknowledging the relevance of literary imitation in terms of *Paradise Lost*, present thesis scrutinizes other modes of mimetic action. Suffice it to say, from the viewpoint of my research, that the epic uses poetry as a way of negotiating and creating meaning, drawing on the

traditions and intertexts in order to create its own, referring to Scripture and deconstructing epic, mythology and science. [13]

It is worth mentioning that the controversial familiarity of the topic struck readers of *Paradise Lost* early on; for instance, Voltaire's Pocourante in *Candide* (1759) criticized the Milton as "that barbarian who writes a tedious commentary in ten books of rumbling verse, on the first chapter of Genesis? that slovenly imitator of the Greeks, who disfigures the creation, by making the Messiah take a pair of compasses from Heaven's armory to plan the world" (Voltaire 1991, 140); while William Lauder went as far as writing an essay entitled "On Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns in his *Paradise Lost*" (1747), in which he goes as far as to accuse Milton of plagiarism (Marcuse 1978, 37). In response to the latter case, a vivid literary correspondence ensued, acquitting the author from the charges (Douglas 1751).

Poetic imitation, hence, implies both copying and ambition, competition not only between poets, but also between poets and the ultimate poet, God. John McLaren in his article *The Poet as God* (1980) remarks that Milton is criticized for dramatizing the Almighty, aspiring to create God. While I do not intend to partake in the debate whether Milton is justified to do so or if he succeeds, since I deal with imitation, I find it inevitable to touch upon the idea of imitation and creativity in terms of *Paradise Lost*. Imitation is a dangerous and controversial act, and poetic imitation is even more so. The narrator of the epic explicitly claims to challenge and rival with antecedents. In this section I deal with the ability

[13] In Milton scholarship it is agreed that the poet synthesized the language of several English Bible translations, such as the 1539 Great Bible, the 1560 Geneva Bible, the 1568 Bishop's Bible, the so-called Douay-Rheims published in 1610 and the 1612 Authorized King James version (Stallard 2011, xxix). According to Ernst Häublein (1975), Milton prefers the Authorized Version of the King James Bible over the Geneva Bible by a ratio of approximately two to one, and he also consults the Vulgate and adapts the glosses of the English Bibles. Matthew Stallard, the editor of the Biblically Annotated volume of *Paradise Lost,* published in 2011, briefly reviews the history if the English Bibles in his introduction to the epic, and describes how Milton read his Bibles, and based on evidence from the poet's treatises and on *A Treatise on Christian Doctrine* concludes that, Milton considered the Bible as a guide, an authority concerning all matters (xi); whatever is revealed by God is sufficient for the believer (xxiv), and that the daily use of the Bible and efforts of individual interpretation are a must for everyone (xxxv). I agree with Stallard that a modern reader must familiarize themselves with the Bible as much as the other intertexts of the epic in order to fully understand it, furthermore, that it is necessary to compare the text of the epic with several Bibles so as to uncover the complexity of intertextual relationships. Based on Stallard's testimony, I imagine that Milton the poet had a more complex and multi-layered Bible in his mind, and he uses it rather liberally: Joseph Anthony Wittreich quotes Frye saying that "Milton wished for nothing more than to steal as much as possible from the Bible" (1979, xiii). In addition to the Bible, the poet relies on the Classical tradition. Jonathan H. Collet (1970) mentions three categories in which myths are used in the epic: firstly, in Book 1 there is the enumeration of the fallen angels as ancient gods; secondly, myths feature in the descriptions of Eden, and third, in Book 11, certain myths appear in the revelations imparted to Adam (88-89). These contribute to the timelessness of the epic, Collet argues, which is further extended by the integration of contemporary astronomical knowledge into the text of the epic. Dennis Danielson in Paradise Lost and The Cosmological Revolution (2014) argues that the inconsistency of the picture of the universe the epic paints is consistent with, on the one hand, the often-contradictory cosmological hypotheses prevalent in the sixteenth century; on the other hand, in my opinion the inconsistency is not an accident, it is the expression of the principle of "sufficient knowledge".

and the limitations of poetic language to describe the indescribable and imitate the inimitable, "unattempted yet in Prose or Rhime" (1.16) as it is built into the fabric of the epic. While the style, the language and the form of *Paradise Lost* is well-studied, I would like to mention some relevant points to my research, which focuses on key metaphors of the epic.

The "great argument", the subject of *Paradise Lost*, both original and unoriginal, justifies the means, as per the theory of accommodation. The epic imitates God both by imitating his words and by representing, depicting Him. It aims at recreating divine meaning through human language. Christopher Ricks, in his seminal analysis of Milton's style, discusses the problematics of representation of the unfallen world with fallen language, and thus the challenge of re-creating the prelapsarian state of speech (Ricks 1963). He studies a number of words and argues that the poem, through its Latinisms for instance, aims at restoring the original, innocent meaning (ibid. 111). The reproduction of the original meaning, in particular of "image" and the kinship metaphor, father and son, is the aim of the epic as well.

Aesthetic mimesis, thus, serves the purpose of representing the infinite, the indescribable, to the point where the Almighty himself is described. Dramatizing God what sounds trivial for a postmodern audience was not to be taken lightly in the age when *Paradise Lost* was written. However, the epic never portrays, in my opinion, God indecorously in the sense that he never becomes a mimetic rival to Satan, does not compete with him. Moreover, the reader or listener is involved in the creation of meaning by interpretation, and the scholarly disagreements on certain aspects of the epic prove that *Paradise Lost* succeeds in making several interpretations, as well as inspiring several works – multitudes like itself.[14]

[14] There is a variety of directions where discussion about literary imitation could lead. The inspired nature of the epic has long been a subject of scrutiny; Larisa Kocic-Zámbó describes the parallelism between the poet's description of his own experience and the depiction of the way Adam and Eve are inspired by God to worship him in Book 5 (148-152), the similarity expressed by the "unpremeditated" aspect of the words, which is, at the same time, implies imitation of the creative work of God (2012, 21-22). The volume *Paradise Lost, 1668-1968, Three Centuries of Commentary* (Miner, Moeck, and Jablonski 2004) analyzes the annotations or commentaries that appeared first in 1695, written by Patrick Hume, through the works of Joseph Addison, Thoms Newton and Alastair Fowler, just to name a few. Literary criticism is also a way of interpreting, and thus, interacting with the text. John Leonard, who himself is famous for reciting longer passages of the epic by heart, reviewed the *Faithful Labourers*, the history of the literary criticism of Milton's work in two volumes (2013), the first volume focusing on style and genre, the second volume tackling interpretative issues, such as the problems of God and theodicy, the figure of Satan and the Fall. . Interesting evidence of the prevalence and the effect of the epic is provided by Miklós Péti, who in his *Paradise From Behind the Iron Curtain - Reading, translating and staging Milton in Communist Hungary* (2022) describes the curious way Milton's controversial epic was put into an even more controversial situation as a pseudo-religious monument to the revolution. Péti's volume also provides the script of a dramatic adaptation and its English translation, presented in Budapest. Péti's translation of the Hungarian work carefully reflects the original text of *Paradise Lost*, and thus makes the reading experience unique and fascinating, highlighting the possibilities in adaptation. Furthermore, the book describes the struggles not only of Marxist Hungarian literary critics to find a grip on the text, but it also describes how twentieth century Hungarian translators wrestled with the epic. Translation is also a huge part of the afterlife of the epic, as demonstrated by the volume *Milton in Translation*, edited by Angelica Duran,

The poet in *A Treatise* contends that since God provided a descriptive model for talking about the divine, this model should actually be used to talk about God:

> Our safest way is to form in our minds such a conception of God, as shall correspond with his own delineation and representation of himself in the sacred writings. For granting that both in the literal and figurative descriptions of God, he is exhibited not as he really is, but in such a manner as may be within the scope of our comprehensions, yet we ought to entertain such a conception of him, as he, in condescending to accommodate himself to our capacities, has shown that he desires we should conceive (Milton 1825, 31-33).

Milton argues here that sufficient knowledge is provided concerning God through the Scriptures, and that the text is also an invitation, since the Creator wills the readers to understand. The means by which the divine meaning is provided, moreover, serve their purpose, because they are divinely inspired and provided. God is the ultimate author, poet, and giver of meaning. [15]

Islam Issa and Jonathan R. Olson (2017). The book surveys outstanding examples of the over three hundred translations to fifty-seven languages, and the occasion of the study was that Milton's works had been translated in the previous few decades more often than ever before. The editors claim that the revolutionary political climate often creates new readership to *Paradise Lost*, but the fact that it is a universal story also contributes to its popularity. An interesting facet of translations, Issa says, is the way languages and cultures recreate the text in accordance with their own actual reality. Last but not least, A way of interacting with and interpreting the text is recital or reading aloud. In an essay on the oral readings of *Paradise Lost*, Angelica Duran recalls the arguably oral origin of the epic, saying that due to his blindness, Milton dictated epic poem to his daughters of to his wife (2010, 255). Angelica Duran's article gathers all the types of oral interactions with the text: from reading marathons to public recitals, mentioning scholars who are rumored to be able to recite large sections or the entire *Paradise Lost* itself; recordings of recitals, with one or more voices performing the different characters in the epic, audiobooks and finally Digital Talking Books or DBTs, remarking on the importance of making the text available for people with disabilities, just the author himself. As the title of the article suggests, *Join Thy Voice*, it is a plea for the readership of the book to engage in public readings of the epic, exploring the endless possibilities and variations in oral renderings of the text, and pointing towards the future of oral versions of the epic.

[15] While the author of *Paradise Lost* has been regarded both overly ambitious, embodying the concept of the poet as God (McLaren 1980, 23), as well as being "of the devil's party" by Blake (Mayo 2, 121). Michael Mack positions Milton among the most outstanding of the commentators of the Genesis, a type of literature that abounded in the Renaissance, who by commenting on the creation also established the theories of divine creativity, connecting the ideas of creating ex nihilo, making and fashioning (Mack 2005, 87). The Genesis creation story, and the commentaries also served as the basis for theories of poetic creativity and production. Commentaries on the Genesis were so popular that Samuel Purchas in 1614 instructs readers who "are more studious of this knowledge, to those which have purposely handled this argument, with commentaries vpon Moses text: of which, besides many moderne writers (some of which haue almost oppressed the Presse with their huge volumes) there are diuers of the Primitiue, middle, and decayed times of the Church: a cloud indeed of Authors, both for their numbers, and the variety of their opinions, the most of them couering, rather than discouering the truth". In fact, Samuel Purchas in the work entitled *Purchas his pilgrimage*, in which he writes about the religions of the world across all the known world at the time, deals with a lot of authors and authorship, and here he mentions the "could" of authors who comment on the Genesis. Authorship, as Grossman testifies, plays an important role in *Paradise Lost* as the metaphor for self-fashioning; on the other hand, the multiplicity of authors in the epic includes not only Adam and Eve, but also Satan (Grossman and Fontana 1987). The metaphors used to describe God, architect and author also appear in the epic, but not only to describe God, but also to refer to Satan:

In his study concerning Milton's theory of accommodation, Graves boldly claims that "Milton's radical point seems to be that the biblical language used to describe man means the same thing when it describes God" (2001, 252), and he says that the poet's images he uses to describe God convey just the truth, albeit not the complete truth about God, and thus they must be taken seriously: instead of a metaphorical relationship, these images have a synecdochic relationship with God, conveying part of the revealed truth, providing a new hermeneutical model (ibid). The key metaphors under scrutiny in this study fit into this hermeneutical model in the sense that they complete each-other, and together they reveal the nature of the Son, and through him, the relationship between God and man.

Accommodation is necessary since the unity of metaphysical meaning and language is broken with the rebellion of angels in the epic. The theory is described by the angel Raphael:

> yet for thy good
> This is dispenc't, and what surmounts the reach
> Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
> By lik'ning spiritual to corporal forms,
> As may express them best (5.570-574)

This passage sums up the poetics of *Paradise Lost*: the fact that meaning is anchored in the spiritual realm, and it is expressed through the perceivable, the conceivable. The process of "lik'ning", imitating, creating resemblances is the way poetry works, but the purpose is to obtain knowledge about the imperceivable. This enterprise is for the "good" of the audience, and the angel/ poet intends to do his best. [16] The theory can be understood as the theological version of cognitive metaphor theory, in which meaning is anchored to human experience.

> O Parent, these are thy magnific deeds,
> Thy Trophies, which thou view'st as not thine own,
> Thou art thir Author and prime Architect (10.355-357)

Sin addresses her father thus after the success of the temptation of Eve, praising him for his achievements and attributing the construction of the bridge between Hell and Earth to him. She mentions Satan as "author" in Book 2 as well (2.864), naming him as the creator of herself and Death. The reason for calling him these names of God by Sin is of course to emphasize his greatness and his godlike power to create.

[16] The history of the theory of accommodation is outlines by C. A. Patrides, who claims that Milton's concept of God is *anthrophophatic*, that is, describes the Deity after the manner of man (Hunter et. al 163). The experience of the divine, hence, does not attribute human traits to God, but rather, it is based on the experience of the human. I agree with this assessment, and I also argue that on the metaphorical level, the divinity is accessible through the metaphors "son", "father" and "image". These concepts, however, need to be reconstructed through their association with the divine. Paul Cefalu claims that *Paradise Lost* in fact exposes the dangerous and insufficient nature of accommodation, and instead applies an incarnational apophatic, manifested in the Son. (2016) He says, "Not only does God fail at accommodating his internally efficient decrees to his auditors at the celestial council, but Raphael's measuring of the heavenly by the earthly for Adam's benefit serves like the prohibition itself to incite rather than appease Adam's curiosity. As the apotheosis of what Reformed dogmatics would describe as the special accommodation of redemption, the Son would seem to vindicate or legitimate the use of accommodative the ology; yet we will see that, because the pre-incarnated Son tends to reveal God's otherwise inaccessible mysteries, his example (which runs up against not only the Lutheran-Calvinist but also the Arminian views of God's hiddenness) undermines the basic

I think that *Paradise Lost* is an exceptional project that demonstrates the ability of poetic language if not to express, but to convey divine meaning, intention and metaphysical truth through the scrutiny into the nature of the metaphors used. It is undeniable, and the narrator's several comments on the process of writing stand witness to the fact that human language is not only insufficient, but also fallen, since after the original sin, it ceased to function properly:

> No more of talk where God or Angel Guest
> With Man, as with his Friend, familiar us'd
> To sit indulgent, and with him partake
> Rural repast, permitting him the while
> Venial discourse unblam'd: (9.1-5)

While personal connection with the divine is inaccessible, and speech is ambiguous and fallen, the structural-metaphorical strategy of the epic intends to bridge the gap between human and divine knowledge and understanding. It does so by putting key metaphors in different contexts to amplify the meaning, and allow not only for ambiguity to emerge, but also provide a challenge of interpretation through the comparison of the metaphors in diverse contexts. The epic challenges the cognitive capacities, or rather, the cognitive intentions, the way I see it, of the listener or reader, including the characters in the epic, the audience of divine words.

The epic, as much as the author, the audience and the epic characters struggle in the mimetic confines of Christian creation for individuality and freedom as much as for perfect imitation. This is the process of becoming authors, with a great deal of responsibility imposed: the duty of choice. In this sense I agree with John Leonard's argument on the use of "or" in *Paradise Lost*, wherein he claims that apart from being an instrument of ambiguity, the various conjunctions in fact force choices on the audience inside and outside of the work as well (Leonard 2020). The "Venial discourse unblam'd" (9.5), in my view, mourned by the narrator, refers to the kind of discourse that the Godhead used to share with mankind, where there was room for speculation and even negotiation (as Adam's conversation with Raphael and the divine Voice demonstrates) without the danger of the emergence of false interpretations. Moreover, as Gábor Ittzés explains in an essay about the chronology of creation in the epic, meaning is often generated by a multiplicity of voices (2016, 238), therefore, there is indeed a discourse, a dialogue involved.

"concealing-revealing" function of accommodation, namely, the scriptural tendency to make God's ways palatable to creaturely intellect even while ensuring the ontological and epistemological chasm between creatures and God"(2016, 198). I agree with Cefalu in the sense that the major problem of communication occurs between God and the angels, particularly Satan, who misunderstands the divine decree about the Son's exaltation. I don't interpret the role of the Son, however, a failure: the Son is meant to bridge the aforementioned ontological and epistemological chasm, by becoming Adam's son. The nature of kinship, however, is under scrutiny throughout the epic, and thus accommodation does not rely on a fixed meaning, but rather on a dynamic one which constantly evolves (Cefalu 2016, 199).

Larisa Kocic-Zambo discusses the theory and practice of poetic *imitatio* during the Renaissance, and the digestive metaphor it was used to describe the right way to imitate, but also the acquisition of knowledge (Kocic-Zambo 2012, 51-52). In the invocation of Book 9, the narrator refers to the knowledge graciously provided by the angel, with divine permission. In the previous books eating and talking take place simultaneously, reinforcing the connection. Another important aspect of this discourse is that it is indulgent, permissive, venial: it is done with license from God. It is not only that knowledge is provided by God, but he also permits the discussion, which makes it doubly unblamed.

The epic elaborates a mimetic Christian poetics, where the creator of meaning is God, but due to the fall interpretation requires reason and moral choice. Furthermore, as Liam Haydon states, language constantly strives to provide the best approximation of divine meaning (2016, 5). As opposed to this, the satanic commentary aims at an interpretation that is exactly the opposite of the divine one.

This is an important issue to highlight as a modern or postmodern audience would not necessarily seek religious reformation when enjoying art or poetry. An example for this is the consideration of Satan as the hero of *Paradise Lost*, when the theological context of the epic is taken away, and Satan is understood as the hero of perseverance (Shelley, *A Defense of Poetry*, 1821), or as the spirit of revolution.[17] The function of Satan, in my view, is not to offer an alternative, critically thinking hero, but to show an example of imitation inspired not by God and His Spirit but by sin. He tries to get rid of the mimetic constraints of his existence, when he desires to be like God, and thus ends up trying to imitate him.

Showing an example is a crucial part of Sidney's *Apology,* as Mack demonstrates. In his book, *Sidney's Poetics – Imitating Creation* (2005) he first outlines the history of the concept of human creativity and the way it comes to be compared to divine creativity, as I have previously quoted. Another key point he makes is the way Sidney discusses allegory, giving preference to fiction and narrative: instead of traditional allegories, where virtues and vices are represented and personified, acting according to their respective nature, Sidney emphasizes the importance of a character who serves as a mirror to the audience (ibid. 42-43).

[17] Interesting evidence of the prevalence and the effect of the epic is provided by Miklós Péti, who in his *Paradise From Behind the Iron Curtain - Reading, translating and staging Milton in Communist Hungary* (2022) describes the curious way Milton's controversial epic was put into an even more controversial situation as a pseudo-religious monument to the idea of revolution in Communist Hungary, mainly in the light of the work of two critics, Tibor Lutter and Miklós Szenczi. Péti's volume also provides the script of a dramatic adaptation and its English translation, presented in Budapest. Péti's translation of the Hungarian work carefully reflects the original text of *Paradise Lost*, and thus makes the reading experience unique and fascinating, highlighting the possibilities in adaptation. Furthermore, the book describes the struggles not only of Marxist Hungarian literary critics to find a grip on the text, but it also describes how twentieth century Hungarian translators wrestled with the text.

Herein lies the difference between doctrine and poetry as well: while theory is descriptive, poetry represents and conveys the emotional experience beyond doctrine. Satan's experience of mimetic rivalry is not doctrinal, but narratively necessary to demonstrate the way negative imitation works.

Narrative example also serves as basis for imitation, much like Sidney argues in his *An Apology,* evoking a "perfect picture" that poets create, wherein "he coupleth the general notion with the particular example" (Sidney, 1951). These examples not only clarify what the philosophers describe but also impress and illuminate the audience, while prompting self-reflection (ibid).

In case of *Paradise Lost*, it is tasking to determine the narrative example, as there are two heroes, Satan and the Son; and there is the human couple as well. In addition, there is an epistemological tension, the drama of reading: while God justifies himself from his viewpoint, explaining his providential plan for mankind, it is the narrative, and thus the poem that illustrates the mechanism of the divine will. Despite all God's didactic efforts, Adam and Eve remain in what Daniel Fried calls "semiotic ignorance" (Fried, 2003, 133), and thus they need a narrative example – both of the consequences of their actions as well as of their redemption, which they are provided in Books 10, 11 and 12. Positive examples are not sufficient, however, hence the narrative significance of Satan.

Michael Mack dedicates a chapter in his analysis of Sidney's poetics to "The Imitation of Cyrus" and highlights the way Sidney approached the epistemological issue: poetry can offer "the knowledge of a man's self, in the ethic and politic consideration, with the end of well-doing, and not of well-knowing only" (Sidney 1951, 12). Mack claims that the example of the heroic character, who is better than the audience, and shows not the way people are, but the way they should be is a crucial point in Sidney's poetics. He writes:

> With the example of Aeneas, Sidney brings his readers back to the argument of the narratio. And having returned, they are in a better position to understand what they previously saw. In his "Cyrus … to make many Cyruses," Sidney presents a device that bestows at once self-knowledge and a moral ideal. Seeing in Cyrus "what perfection is" with their "erected wit," readers experience the poignant realization that their "infected will keepeth [them] from reaching unto it." Providing "no small argument to the incredulous of that first accursed fall of Adam," the "golden" figure of Cyrus makes apparent to Sidney's Christian readers both perfection and their "brazen" state (Mack 2005, 139).

The regenerative power of poetry, hence, works through the example of the hero, both through the realization of the fallen state of humanity and the created desire to be reformed. I find the argument of narrative example intriguing, since it is a form of imitation, as the reader (or listener) compares himself to the model and experiences, enacts the transformation.

In Satan's case, the anti-hero used to be better than the audience (Adam and Eve), while he is also susceptible to falling. Concerning the readership of the epic, Satan is the example of the exalted, the godlike, who despite their privilege, rebel against God. Sidney discusses negative examples in his *Apology* as well:

> See whether wisdom and temperance in Ulysses and Diomedes, valor in Achilles, friendship in Nisus and Euryalus, even to an ignorant man carry not an apparent shining. And, contrarily, the remorse of conscience in Oedipus ; the soon-repenting pride of Agamemnon; the self-devouring cruelty in his father Atreus; the violence of ambition in the two Theban brothers; the sour sweetness of revenge in Medea; and, to fall lower, the Terentian Gnatho and our Chaucer's Pandar so expressed that we now use their names to signify their trades ; and finally, all virtues, vices, and passions so in their own natural states laid to the view, that we seem not to hear of them, but clearly to see through them (Sidney 1951, 17).

Sidney mentions several examples of violence, revenge and competition, all of which demonstrate the negative side of human condition; more importantly, however, he says that the audience is supposed to "see through them". In other words, instead of obscuring the evil and corruptness of Satan, the epic should, and *Paradise Lost* does, reveal the true nature of fallenness. And not only the nature, but the mechanism of rebellion, the way it functions and corrupts others as well. The fall of the angels demonstrates how imitation spreads, the subject-matter of my next chapter, and thus the danger that lies in imitation. Therefore, besides Satan, the fall of the rebel angels stands for the way human societies fall, spreading and perpetuating sin. In this context, Abdiel's resistance to the influence of Satan indeed makes him a hero, showing how it is possible to recognize and criticize the logic of rebellion.

From another point of view, Abdiel serves as a warning: He informs Satan and the rebel angels about the truth, but it is up to them, being created free, to decide whether to repent and return to accept the Son's sovereignty. In terms of the theodicy of *Paradise Lost* being able to make informed decisions and exercise free will is crucial, hence Satan and his lot represent those who refuse truth and continue in their sin. [18]

Satan in the epic questions the inherent goodness of creation and reinterprets the imitation of God as rivalry, emphasizing the self-begetting and self-raising power of angels, originality as opposed to the mimetic nature of creation. He insists on autonomy, which Adam and Eve achieve by becoming "Authors to themselves," but Satan's authority comes not from God but from Sin.

[18] The role of Abdiel has been analyzed by, for example Tibor Fabiny (2016), describing the angel as one of the heroes in the work, while Charles W. Durham (2005) discusses his role in exposing falsehood and promoting truth. The fact that Abdiel remains alone in his "counter-rebellion", in my view, recalls the stance of biblical prophets who warn the people of God and urge them to repent, while they, more often than not, ignore the warning and continue in sin and rebellion against God.

The Satan narrative, therefore, evokes 2 Samuel 1:27: "How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!". It is not only his evil nature that matters, but the fact that he used to be powerful and godlike. Both Adam and Eve, and the readership experiences the drama of reading:[19] the metaphysical tale of the spiritual rebellion is provided for the human couple to interpret, as well as to the audience who already have the divine perspective and know that Adam and Eve would also fall, despite the warning. As the readers of *Paradise Lost* continue to reflect on their sinful state, watching Adam and Eve fall from their mighty and blessed state adds to the sense of being human. The audience is supposed to be surprised not by Sin, but by the fact that someone blessed can fall.

Paradise Lost could be analyzed as an outstanding way Sidney's poetics are put into practice, and the way John Milton fulfils the role of the poet – Mack himself often illustrates his point with Milton's work. The epic indeed lies in the crossroads of allegory and epic, featuring the ultimate Christian hero, the Son. At the same time, the epic also offers a novel Satan, very different from the figure of the devil. He is a powerful spiritual being, resembling an epic hero, who does not simply act true to his nature as a devil but who goes through an internal (and external) transformation that is described in detail, focusing on the psyche of the angel. This transformation, and the transformation he inflicts upon other angels and eventually Eve and Adam are described in terms of (negative) imitation: Sin, Satan's idea inspires him and informs his interpretation of the words of God, and he experiences mimetic rivalry, as I demonstrate in the next chapter. Here I discuss Sin as the negative image of divine inspiration, the idea in Satan's head.

I.2. "Ambiguous words and jealousies" – Creation of meaning in *Paradise Lost*

As much as the purpose of the epic is to reproduce the unblamed discourse of the unfallen world, it also reproduces the birth of "Ambiguous words and Jealousies" (5.703) authored by Satan. As the "Author of Evil" (6.262), the rebel angel contributes to the creation of a multiplicity of meanings.

[19] Meir Sternberg's theory (1987) of the way Biblical narrative works, the concept he calls the drama of reading, means that the epistemological difference between God and the people in the Bible is built into the narrative, and the readers enact the epistemological process throughout the reading of the Bible and eventually achieve self-knowledge: "With the narrative become an obstacle course, its reading turns into a drama of understanding-conflict between inferences, seesawing, reversal, discovery, and all. The only knowledge perfectly acquired is the knowledge of our limitations. It is by a sustained effort alone that the reader can attain at the end to something of the vision that God has possessed all along: to make sense of the discourse is to gain a sense of being human" (Sternberg 1987, 47). While this argument is not directly transferable to *Paradise Lost,* since unlike the biblical narrative, the epic narrator makes it clear that Satan is in the wrong; however, Satan himself illustrates the drama of reading, by misreading the divine decree of the Son's elevation. Adam and Eve are also the audience of the narrative of Satan's rebellion and fall, attaining knowledge. It is a cautionary tale, a warning, but it also represents and prefigures the logic of disobedience and the anguish of fallenness. Through Satan's example, Adam and Eve, and by extension the audience learn about their fallen state, reasoning and the possibility of stumbling and falling – from an elevated, godlike state.

Milton's epic received the label "poetics of incertitude" by Peter C. Herman (2003) due to the discrepancies, controversies, ambiguities and curiously because of the use of one conjunction, the work "or" that destabilizes meaning in the work. Liam Haydon claims that the multiplicity of voices and the paradoxes and contradictions are one of the main points of the poetics of the work (2016). I had the privilege to listen to John Leonard's reflection on Herman's analysis of the conjunction, in which he contends that other and creating a multiplicity of meaning and confusion, in which he continues the discussion in Haydon's logic. Leonard claims that "or" imposes the need for choice for the audience, within and without the epic. Choice is also reason according to the logic of the epic; hence the audience needs to make a decision and thus actively engage in interpretation. [20]

My argument aligns with John Leonard's logic, recalling Christopher Ricks's study of *Milton's Grand Style* (1963), in which Ricks studies Milton's poesis as it strives against the infection of sin and thus restores the prelapsarian state of existence as well as language. While the fall of the angels does generate a multiplicity of meaning and incertitude, *Paradise Lost*, in my view, responsibilizes the audience to make choices and make interpretations for themselves, and the magnitude of Milton studies bears witness to the success of the project, demonstrating that there is plenty of room for it. Haydon says, "identifying these paradoxes, and recognizing them as the limits of post-lapsarian expression, is in itself an important goal for readers of the poem" (3) and explains that the "venial discourse" with the angels serves as clarification, as well as the narrator himself, but they are all inadequate in themselves.

Haydon correlates the rebellion of the angels with the creation of ambiguities, as Satan questions not only the divine decree, but also the heavenly hierarchy that provides the identity of the angels and argues that "Satan is attempting to undermine the throne of God by denying the perfect unity of divine language. Satan endeavors to destabilize the perfect unity of sign and signifier as expressed by divinity" (7). It is true that Satan throws the shadow of doubt on the titles of the angels, but on the title of the Son as well ("To one and to his image now proclaim'd?" (5.784)). Furthermore, he continues in disbelief, constantly doubting whatever he is told, by Sin and by Abdiel as well. He is not only in conflict with God, therefore, but with anybody, considering himself the source of meaning. What is more, Haydon claims, "Satan denies that Michael– or God– has the right to name, which is in angelic understanding to define, good and evil" (10) and thus become an "Author of evil" (6.262).

Subsequently Satan attempts to draw the Godhead into a mimetic rivalry based on a rivalry of meaning. Studying the verb "style", Haydon observes that Satan doubts the omnipotence of God,

[20] John Leonard's paper, "'Or' in *Paradise Lost*: the Poetics of Incertitude Reconsidered" was presented at the XIIth International Milton Symposium in Strasbourg, France between 17-21 June 2019.

claiming that the Creator is only "Almighty styled" (9.137), going as far as being able to deny him the title (Haydon 11) – as much as he can deny him worship and obedience.

Haydon, therefore, identifies the fall of Satan as a rebellion of linguistic nature, which the way I see it, continues as a rivalry over meaning. I have already mentioned creation as described by Plato in *Timaeus*, the way the deity in his goodness created things, created them good and as alike as him as possible. The Biblical creation account reiterates the idea of goodness, and calls man created in the image, that is, in the likeness of God. In *Paradise Lost*, Satan, sitting on the throne of Pandemonium, raises the question of theodicy, putting into doubt the goodness of God, what is more, of creation:

> yet this loss
> Thus farr at least recover'd, hath much more
> Establisht in a safe unenvied Throne
> Yielded with full consent. The happier state
> In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw
> Envy from each inferior; but who here
> Will envy whom the highest place exposes
> Formost to stand against the Thunderers aim
> Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
> Of endless pain? where there is then no good
> For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
> From Faction (2.21-33)

What is a justification of his exaltation on the throne of Hell is also an argument against the possibility of harmonious coexistence in Heaven, where those in a higher position will forever be envied by those in the lesser. Envy, he argues, is inherent in a mimetic hierarchy, despite its apparent goodness.

Satan's role in the formulation of the theology of the epic is to demonstrate the potential of the existence of evil and envy even in the presence of the ultimate good, and the archangel both embodies and falls victim to evil.[21] His rivalry is mimetic, but far from being a maker, or a real author, he stumbles, unable to control his desires. On the other hand, he also poetically reinvents and reinterprets the word of God, offering a rival meaning.

Harold P. Maltz (1988) writes about the intriguing authorial choice concerning the Scriptures when it comes to picturing Satan: the epic seems to ignore not only one of the most literal depictions of the devil in the Bible, from the Book of Job, but as Maltz argues, the problems that the Book of Job bring up as well. Maltz argues that the Genesis narrative provides a simpler paradigm, where obedience and disobedience have their own respective consequences, and offers an image of an omnipotent and merciful God; whereas Job's story raises serious questions about goodness and

[21] Envy as the motivation for Satan's actions was described by Arnold Williams (1968) and Stella P. Revard (1971) in comparison with pride. I agree that while pride can be interpreted as the misperception of godlikeness, in Satan's case envy, the symptom of mimetic desire moves Satan to conspire against the Almighty.

suffering (ibid. 26). In terms of Satan, the accuser in the Book of Job appears as an organic part of God's government, while in the epic the fallen angels are completely banned from Heaven (29).[22]

The way the epic relates to the Bible is, then, selective, and Maltz concludes that the choice served the theodical purposes of the work, approaching God from a different perspective: "he (Milton) found in Genesis material interpretable Christologically, to provide him with a Christian reading not only of Genesis, but of God and human history as well, hence with principles which underpin his theodicy" (1988, 35).

While there is some truth in Maltz's observations, I think that it is an oversimplification to say that the reason for Milton's authorial choice would be the clear-cut moral principles presented in Genesis (26). In my view, *Paradise Lost* does not seek to answer the question of why bad things happen to good people; rather, to find out why is there evil at all in a world created good, that is, in the prelapsarian state. Satan, in his elevated state, exemplifies the subject who believes that a bad thing happened to him, and this internal evil becomes external. Milton's theodicy concerns not only the (fallen) human world, but the world of Heaven as well. It is possible to say that the epic justifies the ways of God to the angels as well. [23]

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[22] Milton did consider Job, as the Second Book of *Reason for Church Government* (1641) attests: "Time servs not now, and perhaps I might seem too profuse to give any certain account of what the mind at home in the spacious circuits of her musing hath liberty to propose to her self, though of highest hope, and hardest attempting, whether that Epick form whereof the two poems of Homer, and those other two of Virgil and Tasso are a diffuse, and the book of Job a brief model: or whether the rules of Aristotle herein are strictly to be kept, or nature to be follow'd, which in them that know art, and use judgement is no transgression, but an inriching of art. And lastly what K. or Knight before the conquest might be chosen in whom to lay the pattern of a Christian Heroe" (1847, 86). Milton, thus, was considering Job as a model of a "Christian Heroe".

[23] The pattern of the envious Satan was borrowed from other sources, such as *The Life of Adam and Eve*, and the Old English poems *Genesis A* and *B*. Both texts are relevant for my research since they mention an important motif which underlines the epic, the envy of Satan as a motivation for the rebellion against God. In fact, this envy is due to the fact that man is given the image of God, while even the highest of angels is not; moreover, the angels are made to worship Adam: "And Michael himself worshipped first; then he called me and said: 'Worship the image of God the Lord.' And I answered, 'I have no (need) to worship Adam.' And since Michael kept urging me to worship, I said to him, 'Why dost thou urge me? I will not worship an inferior and younger being (than I). I am his senior in the Creation, before he was made was I already made. It is his duty to worship me" (Charles 1913, 137). After this, other angels follow suit. In *Paradise Lost* the envy is directed towards the Son, as Arnold Williams (1968) and Stella P. Revard (1973) have already discussed. In comparison to pride, envy is the sin that led to Satan's revolt in the narrative of the epic. In the Latin of *Life of Adam and Eve* the image is not deemed worthy of worship by the angel, whereas in the epic the disdain is the result of envy: Satan will envy not only the Son but also men who possess the image. In the latter, thus, image is again only possessed by the Son and man; furthermore, the status of man as made in the image is questioned based on the nature of the image, which I analyze in detail in the fourth chapter. The seventh section of the Old English poem *Genesis A* and *B*, included in the Junius Manuscript portrays the defeated fallen angels bound in Hell, much like at the beginning of *Paradise Lost*. The motif of envy appears in the manuscript as well, much like in the epic, when it comes to the angels, who in this case envy God and want to overtake part of Heaven (2. 15-34a). In my view, rather than evident textual connection, the presence of the patterns of envy on the part of the rebel angels (which, interestingly, also appears in the Holy Quran) shows possible alignment with extrabiblical Christian tradition. The way I see it, while poetic invention was and license is significant in the description of the demonic characters and in the production of their discourse, it is based on psychological experience as much as on textual sources. The drama, rather than the theology, dominates the depiction of the

The epic brings into play biblical concepts of the image and image-making, where the image of God becomes the human mission, instead of idolatrous worship. The Scriptural use of the image, in Hebrew *tselem*, used to refer to idol or statue, was taken from the context of the Bible's world in the Late Bronze Age, in which images of Gods were made, and local rulers were considered images, representatives of their respective Gods. Furthermore, image and idol-making was prohibited by the Israelite community because on the one hand, there was no need for images of God, because God has already made an image: man. What is more, not only rulers, but all men were images of God equally.[24] This attitude to images has two serious consequences: first, it means that men share responsibility with God as being in charge of creation; secondly, it prohibits violence. Violence is the result of mimetic rivalry, according to Girard's theory, seeing not God's image in one another, but a rival.

Satan's interpretation and actions work as the antithesis of what poetry is meant to be, to elevate and to aid the reformation of the audience. He uses powerful rhetoric, seemingly inventing, but his invention is in fact the negative imitation of the divine language. He acts as a poet within the poem, enacting the drama of reading, building "the cognitive antithesis between God and humanity into the structure of the narrative" (Sternberg 1987, 46). In this case, it is Satan's experience built into the narrative, where he fails to perceive and embody goodness, and thus falls. Satan imitates divine creation – albeit involuntarily – by creating Sin and Death, and he also imitates, reinterprets the divine words, reproducing envy and jealousy instead of goodness.

In the epic Satan becomes a commentator not to Genesis, but to the exaltation of the Son, but his inspiration comes from a dubious source: the disembodied idea in his head is Sin. The satanic verse, the parts of the epic where the Archangel speaks to his followers, resembles the theory of poetic creation in the sense that it is preceded by sin as an idea, and in the sense that it is addressed to a select audience.[25]

Sin's creation resembles the idea of twofold creation,[26] in the sense that she is conceived as an idea in Satan's head and then jumped out of it as the external manifestation of herself. Mythological allusion notwithstanding, Sin remains as an idea in Satan's head throughout the poem, as his "perfect

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fallen angels, who fall victims of mimetic desire, frustration and envy, the representation of which is rooted in a very human experience.

[24] Jan Assmann writes about the prohibition on image-making that "Polytheism and idolatry were seen as the same form of religious error. The second commandment is a commentary on the first: 1. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me. 2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven images. Images are automatically "other gods," because the true god is invisible and cannot be iconically represented (1998, 4).

[25] Satan's monologues are a different category, painting a different picture, and justifying Satan's actions as the result of conscious choice. However, instead of conscious choice, Satan acts out of necessity.

[26] According to Michael Mack, poetic creation imitates divine creation in its aspect of being twofold, meaning that it consists in conceiving an idea, and then arranging, fashioning it. He traces the concept of the twofold creation through the patristic tradition, in the writings of Philo Judaeus and Gregory of Nyssa, and how the metaphors of maker, craftsman, architect have been used to describe the action of creation (2005, 10).

image", not only reflecting and making visible his internal nature, but motivating his actions as well as carrying out his will. Satan identifies with her upon seeing her. Their union mimes the union of God and the Son, but there is a fundamental difference: the creation of Sin, as well as her actions are not done by Satan's will, she acts on her own, and only upon his return Satan commissions her and Death to continue his work on Earth, thus turning them into actual allegorical figures.

Sin, nonetheless, calls Satan author and architect (10.356), as if he was a maker, even though Satan does not create or make anything. His poetic idea, to the extent that it is original, is Sin, consisting in the corruption of divine words and creation, a beautiful appearance without goodness.

Moreover, as I have said, Satan's ideas are sinful, from his desire to have an intercourse with her to rebelling against God and starting a war, until tempting Eve and causing the fall of mankind. Sin remains the idea, the conceit in Satan's mind, reflected in his speeches as well. Far from authoring her, he follows her. Sin's words are flattery, but they are also dangerously deceptive. Satan, as an author is inspired not by God but by Sin, achieving the exact opposite of elevating his audience: he causes his fall.

The epic thus reflects on the fact that the idea or conceit can be dangerous if not divinely inspired. Satan, in a sense is a victim of his own desire, which as I am demonstrating in the section about René Girard's theory, is mimetic in nature. In terms of Death, as I shall show, he unites the concept of death as described by God in Book 3 as the punishment for transgression (3.212) and the ruler of Hell, thus from the beginning he is more powerful than Satan. Satan is not the author of Death, death as a fore-conceit existed before, and comes into being by committing the first sinful act.

As opposed to Sidney's principle of accessibility, the poet providing "the food for the tenderest stomachs; the poet is indeed the right popular philosopher", (Sidney 1951, 18) the narrator of *Paradise Lost* himself asks from the muse Urania to help "fit audience find, though few" (7.30). Satan addresses his first words to his closest peers, who this way can feel to be among the select elite who receive the literally eye-opening interpretation of the exaltation of the Son. Satan tells Beelzebub that "Thou to me thy thoughts/ Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;/ Both waking we were one" (5.576-678). This is the moment when the idea, sin, without being actualized, is transferred to the other angel's mind, when Satan suggests that it is already there. The quasi-psychological effect, the way ideas spread is still a mystery, and I deal with Gabriel Tarde's theory based on imitation that seeks to explain this phenomenon in the next chapter. Suffice it to say now that by this suggestion, the next angel already believes that he agrees with Satan. [27]

[27] As opposed to God, who openly proclaims his will in front of the host of Heaven, Satan talks to the angels in his proximity, suggesting intimacy by making them privy to his thoughts; he even claims that it is bold to keep such secrets.

Satan continues to use narrative example twice in order to successfully tempt Eve. First, it takes place during Eve's dream, when she witnesses an angelic being eating from the forbidden fruit and follows his example, narrated by Eve in Book 5. Secondly, he tempts her when she is awake in Book 9. The narrator, when describing Eden mentions that "There was a place/ Now not, though Sin, not Time, first wraught the change" (9.69-70). Even though it is Satan who is plotting his temptation, Sin, who is not personally present here, exerts her power and causes change.

Besides the narrator, Satan also comments on the events of the epic, providing a satanic commentary, which often uses words and arguments of the Scriptures. A particular example I find in worth highlighting is when he uses the apostle Paul's words about death and the "internal man" when tempting Eve. The argumentation appears truthful since it is based on the Scriptures, on the one hand, and on the other hand it uses science-like logic. The narrator of *Paradise Lost* draws attention to the fact that the Satanic commentary is ripe with "ambiguous words and jealousies" (5.703), however, their power manages to infect a third of the angelic flock and eventually deceive Eve.

In both cases, the archangel comments on the words of the Godhead: in the first case, related in Book 5, he presents the kingship of the newly appointed Son as an arbitrary and tyrannical decision which puts the angels at the mercy of an unscrupulous lawmaker. In the second case, he reformulates God's interdiction as also a tyrannical and arbitrary decision, taken only in order to deprave Adam and Eve from their full potential. I am going to analyze the second case to demonstrate the multiple ways that the Serpents words can be interpreted considering their sources.

In Eve's temptation, the fallen angel has undergone a disagreeable transformation, in the form of the Serpent, and thus approaching Eve. This is the repetition of the narrative of transformation that Satan has already whispered into Eve's ear (5.60-93)

> Why then was this forbid? Why but to awe,
> Why but to keep ye low and ignorant,
> His worshippers; he knows that in the day
> Ye Eate thereof, your Eyes that seem so cleere,
> Yet are but dim, shall perfetly be then
> Op'nd and cleerd, and ye shall be as Gods,
> Knowing both Good and Evil as they know.
> That ye should be as Gods, since I as Man,
> Internal Man, is but proportion meet,
> I of brute human, yee of human Gods.
> So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
> Human, to put on Gods, death to be wisht,
> Though threat'nd, which no worse then this can bring. (9.703-715)

When the Serpent addresses Eve, he interprets the image of god as physical beauty, arguing that her appearance entitles Eve to belong among the gods. He disapproves of the fact that it is only Adam and

the animals in the garden who can appreciate her beauty. This way he criticizes two aspects of the *imago dei*: the unity of Adam and Eve and their rule over the animals.

He continues with criticism of the prohibition, which he attributes to jealousy on the part of the Creator, who wants "worshippers" – which is contrary to what God said about free will. Through eating from the fruit, the Serpent claims, Eve would be like gods. The plural use of gods, on the one hand, has its origin the Bible, it is the English equivalent of Elohim, also plural: it is what the serpent says verbatim in Genesis 3:5. Theodore H. Banks explains that the multiple meanings of "gods" refer to angels, spiritual beings based on the Scriptures (Banks 1939, 451).[28] The angels are considered superior to men, however, Adam and Eve are made in the image of God, and not the angels, hence being like them is not desirable. Still, it could also, in my view, covertly refer to the fallen angels, the pagan gods into whom the demons will turn; in that sense, Eve would indeed be like them in their fallenness – an idol.

The Serpent argues with convincing logic, asserting that if he, as an animal, has obtained human-like faculties, Eve as human would acquire even higher ones. The issue with this analogy is that it is based on a discrepancy between looks and identity, which is a postlapsarian phenomenon; but Eve is oblivious to the problem.[29] It might be the result of her not yet knowing good and evil, but she does not question the need for human cognitive abilities in a reptile.

The scientific-seeming line of argumentation, involving a hierarchy of beings continues with the idea of the "Internal Man." I find this concept intriguing because of its complexity. On the one hand, the internal man can be the angel hidden in the serpent. Besides, from a theological viewpoint, the inner man is the divine image, representing the presence of the Spirit as described by Paul in Romans 7:21-23,[30] wherein the desire to obey God, represented by the inward man, is at war with the rest of the sinful body. In Satan's case, hiding inside the Serpent, the situation is the other way round, it is the demonic spirit who forces the animal to participate in the temptation. The idea of the inner or inward man also appears in 2 Corinthians 4:16, referring to the renewal granted by the redemption, but the entire Pauline doctrine of regeneration applies only to the fallen men: it discusses the

[28] Gods is an interesting expression in *Paradise Lost*, Satan often uses the expression to refer to spiritual beings, angels as gods (6.156), especially in Eve's first temptation in Book 5. In my opinion, the word, since it is used by him primarily (and by the narrator, when referring to pagan gods in mythologies), it is not an expression of the majestic plural, rather the choice of words by Satan to emphasize the divinity of all the angels as their shared nature.

[29] In fact, it is the second time that Eve is deceived by false appearances: in Book 4, she relates her memories of her own creation and awakening, and recalls having been attracted to a "watry image" (4.480), her own reflection in a pond. The age of Paradise Lost was especially concerned with appearances, and both instances highlight the orthodox conception of the consistency between looks and internal nature.

[30] I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

alienation of the physical body from the spiritual soul. The idea of the internal man further highlights the discrepancy between the inside nature and the outward appearance of the tempter, whose self-description evokes falsity and fallenness. [31]

In Chapter XVIII of *A Treatise*, entitled "Of Regeneration", Milton writes:

> THE INWARD MAN IS REGENERATED BY GOD AFTER HIS OWN IMAGE, IN ALL THE FACULTIES OF HIS MIND, INSOMUCH THAT HE BECOMES AS IT WERE A NEW CREATURE, AND THE WHOLE MAN IS SANCTIFIED BOTH IN BODY AND SOUL, FOR THE SERVICE OF GOD, AND THE PERFORMANCE OF GOOD WORKS (Milton 1825, 342).

The "internal", or "inward" man is, therefore, the tool for regeneration, and it is like the impression or image that has an effect on the mind and eventually the entire person. It enables and empowers the person to act in the right way.

In my opinion, contrasting the Serpent's word with the Bible, the verses of *Paradise Lost* evoke the imagery of regeneration and recreation, with a twist. The animal, the Serpent is indeed regenerated, since it is transformed – from the inside – into a new creature. The inward man in the Serpent, nonetheless, is Satan, and he enables and empowers the animal for the service of Satan and the performance of evil works. In the Treatise, Milton adds that it is only the Father who can generate, the satanic transformation is, consequently, not really a regeneration, only an incomplete change. And this is the change that awaits Eve and Adam if they disobey: they change, but do not become renewed.

Matthew Stallard, in his Biblically Annotated Edition explains the subsequent lines with further Pauline theology, a reference to 1 Corinthians 15:53, the idea of shedding the "old man" and "putting on the new", bringing the postlapsarian theology into the prelapsarian Eden. The references make complete sense to the fallen audience who are aware of the doctrine, but not to Eve.

Satan is an author in the sense that the narrative of the Serpent eating the fruit is genuine fiction. Satan also claims to be the source of meaning when it comes to death. In the Genesis story, the Serpent dismisses the threat of death: "And the serpent aid unto the woman: Ye shall not surely

[31] A well-known early modern concept, the *homunculus* is also related to the internal man. The homunculus is understood as "small man" or "artificial man," and it was primarily a symbol for the way uncontrolled science can go wrong. Murase discusses the origin of the *homunculus* and enumerates three fundamental uses: the first is the pathological, referring to a monstrosity, a result of unnatural processes; secondly, it is an alchemical notion, and the third one is related to magic, wherein a *homunculus* is a doll used in healing or cursing (Murase 2020, 54). He goes on to describe that even though the *homunculus* is losing popularity in the seventeenth century, dictionaries mention it as an image or spiritual man with heavenly origins (ibid. 57). Newmann further analyses the concept as the expression of male parthenogenesis and mentions its appearance in *The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rozencreutz* (Johan Valentin Andreae, 1616), in which a homunculi duo symbolizes the regeneration of the soul after its passing through a world of darkness (Newmann 2004, 233-235). Male parthenogenesis is the way Lucifer gives birth to Sin; and he has gone through a transformation after passing through darkness, albeit a negative one. The internal man is an image scene that provides another dimension into the confused nature of the fallen angel. The Serpent itself can also be an alchemical symbol, and the "unnatural" transmutations produced by alchemical experiments, just like Satan's actions, try to imitate the divine creatin and recreation.

die" (Gen 3:4). in the epic, however, the Serpent acknowledges death, but only as a part of the renewal of Eve. He even claims that death in this case is desirable, in order to achieve the transformation. [32]

The ambiguous use of the words by the tempter and the recontextualization of the postlapsarian ideas of death and renewal in the yet unfallen, Edenic scene are examples of the demonic reinterpretation of Biblical words, and they are also a puzzle and a challenge for the reader. Through this commentary on the prohibition, the Serpent encourages Eve to disobey and justifies the motives. It is down to the awareness of the reader to recognize the misinterpretation.

Paradise Lost lies in the epicenter of mimetic relationships between texts, the cosmos, the poet, the audience, and God. These are inevitable to take into consideration when analyzing imitation in the epic. The aesthetic definition of imitation as creation is inseparable from the mimetic activity itself, and thus, from the psychology of imitation. From a theological viewpoint, man is a mimetic creature, a representation of God, who is intrinsically prone to imitate. In the process, however, he also takes upon himself the creative role of God, restoring his image in him. Imitation, as an action, therefore, should focus on Christ, who is capable of being infinitely like God, but remaining the perfect image without rivaling with him.

Although Mack does not mention it, in my opinion Sidney's revolutionary poetics reconciles the imitative theory of poetry, based on Christian Medieval analogical thinking with the concept of invention and originality as the poet's divine potential as much as *Paradise Lost* does, by questioning the imitative nature of human condition, exploring its inherent dangers and tapping into the modern anxieties regarding imitation. These modern issues are expressed in the kinship and image metaphors: the paradox of sameness and otherness, similarity and difference, autonomy and dependence, replaceability and uniqueness, the falsity of appearances, which lead to the rivalry between maker/

[32] Whether Satan inadvertedly serves the purpose of divine mercy and death is, in fact, necessary for the renewal of mankind brings along the debate about the fortunate fall. Even though this discussion is not strictly a part of my research, it does affect the role of the Son, which would be contingent upon Satan's actions. It seems to me that several scholars starting with Arthur Lovejoy (1937), up until recently, for example Jackson I. Cope (2020) are in favor of the idea that *Paradise Lost* presents the fall of man as an ultimately fortunate event, which leads to the realization of the providential promise; on the other hand, Dennis Danielson strongly opposes the relevance of the ide to the epic, arguing that the Son's role as king and the provider of grace would still serve its purpose, his incarnation would still take place and it would contribute to mankind's ascension, even if they remained sinless, as several seventeenth century English (mainly Arminian) theologians argued (Danielson 1982, 205-210). James Gaffney explains that "What sin represents is, far from this point of view, not the forfeiture of life's original quality, but the unaccomplishment of its ultimate destiny: not paradise lost, as it were, but paradise ungained" (Gaffney 1983, 48). I doubt that the epic would present the doctrine of *felix culpa*, even if it acknowledges it, [32] but Adam's words merely recognize that possible interpretation of the events. This is an interesting instant of how the text is in dialogue with theological thought prevalent in the age. I believe that Satan's action is not a necessary precondition for divine grace to be manifest, but Satan cannot help acting out his role. He is limited by divine foreknowledge and his negative imitation of the Son, determined to be the destroyer of mankind. The tempter's language reflects this negative imitation, as he poses as the agent of Eve's renewal.

model and imitation (offspring and image). I explore these anxieties in detail in the last two chapters of my study, but before I dedicate a chapter to the Christian theological concept of imitation and then continue with the modern theories of imitation.

II. Imitation as reproductive action

Besides aesthetic and ontological mimesis, defined by Michael Motia (2022), I suggest the category of imitation as reproductive action. Just as aesthetic and ontological mimesis overlap, imitation as behavior has a lot in common with the former two, as I demonstrate in this chapter. Nevertheless, while ontological mimesis is inspired by the innate desire of the divine ideal, reproductive action, as René Girard (1978) explains, may be aimed at not only learning, but also at replacing the model of imitation.

The Old Testament uses the verb "follow" and "obey" to describe the proper behavior towards God, while the word imitate appears only in the New Testament. At the same time, imitating, as in making images of God is forbidden. It is Paul, with one exception, who uses the concept imitation proper (*mimetes*) in the Bible, also in the sense of following.[33] This shows that the Bible described imitation with an intention, hence the idea of following.

The New Testament sets a literary example to imitate and follow, not only in terms of action, but in terms of thought and intention as well in the example of Christ, as well as in the lives of the apostles. The theological perspective on imitation involves transformation: through obedience, and imitating Christ, the believer can be transformed. However, the transformation can only be complete with Christ's participation: after all it is God's grace, and not the faithful's work that brings about redemption.

I am going to start with discussing the Christian ideas of *imago dei* and *imitatio Christi* as the theological expressions of being similar to, and imitating a model, in this case, God. The freedom of interpretation that ambiguous words offer evokes the self-authored freedom of the fallen audience to figure out the meaning for themselves, while also revealing the very polysemous nature of the postlapsarian existence that necessitates the ethics of imitation. Then I continue to review the theories of Gabriel Tarde and René Girard; the former explores how imitation operates as a force in society, and how ideas spread. The latter accounts for the rivalistic aspect of imitation, which serves me to analyze the psyche of the rebel angel, and the way he falls.

[33] In the Old Testament, Israel is often warned not to do as other nations around them do. Modern translations, such as the New International Version, among many others, render these lines using the word imitate. The original Ancient Hebrew, however, did not seem to have that word; instead, it describes the idea by saying, learn after (Deut 18:9 – lâmad), do after (Ex 23:24, Lev 18:3 – ma'ăśeh – act, do), walk after (Lev 20:23 – hâlak – walk, follow, Deut 12:30 – 'achar – follow from behind). The suggestion itself speaks about the experience of social contagion, and in fact it did happen that Israel imitated the neighboring nations and thus committed sin. Following someone, therefore, can be dangerous and sinful. *Mimetes* is used in 1 Cor 4:16, 1 Cor 11:1, Ephesians 5.1, 1 Thessalonians 2:14, Hebrews 6:12, 1 Peter 3:13. Furthermore, *mimeomai* is used in 2 Tessalonians 3:7 and 9, Hebrews 13:7 and 3 John 1:11, translated in the King James Version as follow.

II.1. Imitation in Christian theology: *Imago dei* and *imitatio Christi*

Across Christian discourse imitation occupies a central position, both in terms of the relationship between the human and the divine, and in terms of worship. Christians act as representations of Christ, while representations inspire believers to worship. [34] The uniquely dignified state of man as made in the image of God is in contrast with the imperative of worship, and the fact that the subject of imitation and worship is inimitable and inaccessible. According to Gregory of Nyssa, "Christianity is mimesis of the divine nature" (Motia 2022, 98).

Imago dei and *imitatio Christi* express the mimetic nature of the human condition within the Christian worldview, both as a status and as a mission; furthermore, they assert human dignity, sovereignty and liberty. Besides, they also hint at the inherent impossibility of imitation, since this imitation is aimed at the infinite, unknowable, irrepresentable divinity. This gap between the human and the divine, nevertheless, is meant to inspire desire. In this study, I deal with the concept of the image in detail in the last chapter, however, I highlight some of the key things in his interpretation, based on Old and New Testament instances. I also discuss Richard J. Middleton's argument about the liberating image (1994), who examines the idea of the image of God in the cultural context of ancient Israelites. He describes the cultural mandate, meaning that man is given dominion over the world and is expected to cultivate it (14). He argues that, furthermore, man is a social being, and the unity of male and female is the reflection of the unity of the members of the Godhead (ibid). Man, furthermore, is originally created good (15), but since the fall, sin is transmitted to Adam's offspring, who are also made in his image (16). Being made in the image of God involves the prohibition of violence and the condemnation of cursing anyone, since these are both offensive to God through his image (16).[35]

Being the image of God is a state of being, and the need to follow and obey God requires action, hence *imitatio Christi*. In the Gospels, the concept of following Jesus (*akoloutheo*) appears around ninety times, sometimes in the literal sense, as in people or disciples follow Jesus (Matt 8:23, for example), or in the sense of the imperative to follow: "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). It seems that

[34] A comprehensive study of mimesis in philosophy and early Christian theology is carried out by Michael Motia (2022), who investigates what he calls the two tracts of mimesis, that is,

[35] In *Tetrachordon* (1645) Milton writes: "It is anough determin'd, that this Image of God wherin Man was created, is meant wisdom, purity, justice, and rule over all creatures. (...) But St. Paul ends the controversie, by explaining that the woman is not primarily and immediatly the image of God, but in reference to the man. The head of the woman, saith he, 1 Cor. 11. is the man: he the image and glory of God, she the glory of the man: he not for her, but she for him. Therefore his precept is, Wives be subject to your husbands as is fit in the Lord, Coloss. 3. 18. In every thing, Eph. 5.24. Neverthelesse man is not to hold her as a servant, but receives her into a part of that empire which God proclaims him to, though not equally, yet largely, as his own image and glory: for it is no small glory to him, that a creature so like him, should be made subject to him." (1847, 327) Feminist considerations aside, it is interesting to see how Milton thinks about image-ness, implying that godlikeness does not mean equality, but dignity, hence hierarchy is not a means to oppress but to elevate mankind.

the Gospels insist on the importance of following, which also implies imitation, in a deliberate and conscious way, imitating intention as well. However, a quandary remains: what is to be imitated is essentially inimitable.

As Middleton writes, from the early Middle Ages, from Iraneus through St. Augustine and Aquinas until the Reformation, the primary focus of the exploration of *imago dei* has been metaphysical, focusing on the significance of reason, conscience, immortality and personhood as manifestations of the image (1994, 10). These coexist with what Middleton calls the royal aspect of the *imago*, namely the human rulership of the world. He admits that this aspect of the *imago* might be controversial, since it can become the basis of a theological argument in favor of oppression, when in fact it should be liberating (ibid). He dedicates an entire volume to the idea of the liberating image.

There seems to be a contradiction in the idea of the image of God as empowering and dignifying, when it involves obedience to and following God. Disobedience and rebellion, however, are not liberating, as they naturally diminish godlikeness, and thus they are disempowering and limiting. Freedom, hence, lies in obeying and imitating. The idea of the liberating image, however, only concerns the already fallen world; in *Paradise Lost* both angels and men are created free (3.124-128).

Middleton continues to explain the relationship between *imago Dei* and *imitatio Christi* based on Philippians 2:5-11. He says:

> the apostle argues that if Jesus, as the unique *imago Dei*, used his divine power and sovereignty not for his own interests, but to serve others, even unto death, then the Christian community, following in its Lord's footsteps. should have among itself the same "mind" of compassionate self-giving. In the New Testament, *imago Dei* as rule becomes *imitatio Christi* (1994, 24).

The royal aspect of the image of God cannot be fully understood and appreciated, therefore, without the ethical aspect, the conscious choice to imitate what Christ represents: selflessness and righteousness. The idea of leadership that he stands for fundamentally differs from the human idea of kingship.

Behavior imitation is present in Christian theology as well, in the concept of *imitatio Christi*. As David Alexander Harrap explains in his study concerning the reception of "Thomas Kempis's *Imitatio Christi* in England" (2016), the *imitatio* provided mimetic strategies to control behavior in situations that were otherwise affected by sensory experiences images, mental representations imprinted on the mind. (p. 61). Harrap studies the use of Thomas Kempis's work *The Imitation of Christ* (c. 1418-1427) by the Carthusian monk as a guide to prevent particular forms of behavior and promote the inclination towards others. That is, to imitate the example of Christ, as the book expresses in the first chapter: "HE WHO follows Me, walks not in darkness," says the Lord. John 8:12. By these words of Christ we

are advised to imitate His life and habits, if we wish to be truly enlightened and free from all blindness of heart" (1940, 9).

Kempis's work, then, was intended to explicitly position Christ, the Son in the focus of imitation, as an example of behavior when it comes to turning away from worldly temptations. It is through this example that one can escape the gravity of temptation but also achieve closeness to God. This interpretation of Christ's role shows the relevance and the role of imitation in Christian theology.

The prevalent idea behind behavior was St. Augustine's and Thomas Aquinas's analysis of Aristotle, which put morality in the context of sensory possession, and "All sensory perception was potentially transformative of human percipients" (Harrap 2016, 62). "By being in the world, the affectus could be moved by sensation to wordly habits (to a habitus or practice of being) and fantasies that subverted the soul's high place in the order of creation" (ibid).[36]

Imitatio Christi connects the ideas of imitation as representation and copying (mentally) and of imitation as action with moral choice. Mental representations, according to the medieval and early modern idea, influenced behavior, thus, avoiding the perception of unwanted things or actions could prevent the subject from carrying them out. The images of the outside world imprinted on the mind are, therefore, in opposition to the image of God stored in the soul. There is a need, thus, for an example which imprints the right images on the mind of the devout. As Kempis explains, "This is the greatest wisdom—to seek the kingdom of heaven through contempt of the world" (1940, 5).

The paradox of *imitatio Christi*, however, is that the model is not directly available to the intended audience. Edith Wyschogrod claims: "Human nature, however, cannot conform itself to divine perfection. Thus, *Imitatio Christi* is an unrealizable imperative because the life of Christ cannot be replicated" (1990, 25). Christ as a mediator or model stands perfectly for the ambiguous similarity and difference between creator and creation. Wyschogrod's words are worth comparing to Rachel Trubowitz's analysis of Christ's likeness to the Father, which is infinite but not total. She writes:

> Although the Son is the "divine similitude" of the Father, the Son can never be identical to the Father, because he is a creature and God is the Creator. To be sure, the Son's likeness to the Father is so perfect that it is "Beyond compare" (PL, 3.138). Still, even though the infinite deity is unknowable, he nonetheless can be discovered through the Son via a mathematical analogy. The likeness between the Son and the Father is the same as that between quantities that tend to infinity and infinity itself, which is not a quantity at all in any commonplace sense (2017, 54).

The similarity of the Son to the Father is the model for man's imitation, which is in itself a paradox; furthermore, the believer is placed in a difficult position, expected to relate to a model twice removed.

[36] The danger and deception of sensory perception and dreams, images that impress on the mind comes up in the human experience of Eve, whose first encounter is with her own image, and when she is given a dream by Satan (Books 4 and 9 respectively). The power of sensory experiences offers a different perspective on the concept of the image.

Hoekema contends that, however, in order to understand God's image, the believer must look at Christ (22). He analyses Colossians 3:10-11 ("and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him") and writes: "The word used here for knowledge, *epignosis*, suggests a rich and full knowledge, a knowledge that involves not only the mind but also the heart. The object of this knowledge is the will of God" (1986, 26). The starting point of being like God, thus, is knowledge and the acceptance of the intention of God.

The image of God, therefore, provides the basis of the human condition, and the preservation and cultivation of this image is a moral imperative, realized in *imitatio Christi*. The gospel theologically means that instead of obeying laws, as in the Old Testament, humanity should follow or imitate Christ, but not only in action, but intentionally as well. The most significant difference between obeying and imitating is that imitating provides the opportunity of becoming as well.

Transformation must start from inside; it is founded on the "inner man." Michael Jensen writes,

> … imitation of a model calls for mental activity, a *phronesis* of analogy and imaginative performance. Paul's ethic of imitation is not a call to ape either himself or Christ, as if an unforeseen circumstance or new situation would bring an end to Christ-like action. Rather, Paul both calls for and models the process of analogous reflection on Christ's example (2021, 31).

Imitating mere actions does not mean identification, therefore. To fully accomplish imitation, it is necessary to imitate the very intentions or desires of the model as well. As Joshua Cockayne summarizes, "in the psychological literature on imitation there is a distinction made between different kinds of behaviour replication: (i) emulation—a kind of intention replication often seen in non-human primates, (ii) mimicry—the reproduction of a certain action without attention to an agent's intentions, and (iii) imitation—the replication of an agent's behaviour with a particular focus on their intentions." (2017, 3). For imitation to fulfil its purpose, it has to be an imitation of the desires and the intentions of the model: in that case it is transformative. [37]

This is the ultimate difference between the Son's and the Satan's imitation and likeness to God, the Father, and that is why the Son is the primary image of the Father: his intentions are perfectly aligned with the Creator's. Satan's desire is not to do good, but to do evil. Consequently, by building Pandemonium and trying to make a Heaven of Hell, and Hell of Heaven, Satan goes against the divine intention and as a result gradually loses his godlikeness.

[37] Desire, therefore, is a crucial part of worship, which, in turn is paradoxical, as it means the desire and the imitation if the inimitable. The idea originates from Gregory of Nyssa's treatise *On Perfection,* in which he connects worship with the imitation of the inimitable (Motia 2022, 100). There is a difference, however, between aesthetic desire and ontological desire: the former is inspired by beauty towards the transcendent, the ideal, and the latter starts from

Talking about the imitation of Christ, Cockayne describes the phenomenon of indwelling, which accounts for the actual presence of God in a human (2017, 16) through the Holy Spirit. This is an experience of mind-sharing, as he describes, leading to the revelation of Christ in the individual – as a result, the individual becomes an imitation of Christ. His article, in which he uses terminology and the findings of developmental psychology, approaches the phenomenon of prayer from the experience of the believer, and examines the way the believer is transformed through engagement with Christ.

The theology of indwelling is analogous to the ambiguous sameness and otherness of God and Christ. In *Paradise Lost*, the relationship between Father and Son is described with vocabulary that comes from the Bible, reflecting the relationship between the strong, shared awareness of the Creator and his Son. They are of one mind, as God comments on the Son's words: "All hast thou spok'n as my thoughts are, all /As my Eternal purpose hath decreed" (3.171-2). Furthermore, God's spirit is also transferred to the Son: "Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit rests" 3.389). The spiritual and mental oneness of the Son with the Creator is the basis of their shared desires for the world and the love towards the creatures, humankind, for whose sake the Son offers to sacrifice himself – also through a transformation, by becoming a man. Desire, as I am going to show through René Girard's theory, is fundamental to imitation; nonetheless, the psychology of imitation also takes intention not consideration defining imitation: based on studies by psychologists, Cockayne summarizes that "imitation is a replication of certain observed behaviour in which the agent is concerned both with the intention, as well as the specifics of the observed behaviour" (2017, 9). Without being able to understand and thus imitate the model's intention, imitation remains mere emulation or mimicry, a replication of the movements without the objective of the given behavior. As I have mentioned, the satanic imitation falls short of imitation exactly because it is not aimed at fulfilling the divine plan, at continuing creation: Satan does not share the divine will and thus can only try to mime what he observes on the outside and craves that: glory and power. In fact, the Father observes, when talking to the Son, that in him, "Love hath abounded more then Glory abounds" (3.312), meaning that love is more important than glory, it makes the Son more alike the Father.

The presence of Sin in Satan's mind could also be interpreted as a form of indwelling; as opposed to the mental unity of Father and Son, Satan reclaims the autonomy of his mind (1.253-255), alienating himself from God and his intention, claiming to intend to do evil where the Almighty intends to do good (4.110).

The role of the Son as a second Adam, and Adam's son implies metaphorical and theological likeness, based on transfiguration. The imitation of Christ is very literal, as God prophecies that the Son would become Adam's son, but also a second root, a new beginning:

Be thou in Adams room
The Head of all mankind, though Adams Son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee
As from a second root shall be restor'd,
As many as are restor'd, without thee none. (3.285-289)

Imitation takes effect through kinship, where the renewed mankind becomes, in a sense, imitations, offspring of the Son. Adam and Eve do not have the chance to imitate the Son, instead, he becomes like them.[38] The image of God invested in them deteriorates as the result of their disobedience, while it is total and complete in the Son. Their way to restore the image is through the Son.

The fallen angel's desires, as opposed to the Son's are to deprive mankind of their godlikeness. He does not share intentions and his mind with God, there is an obvious distance between God and the angels even before the fall of the angels, and despite his majesty, Satan's description and his speeches does not give away any proximity with the creator; on the contrary, there is a sense of distance. While the Father and the Son converse in Heaven, the heavenly audience does not take part, only observe and celebrate the divine proclamations.

Imitation as reproductive action, therefore, is a complex phenomenon, which might take place subconsciously and consciously. Without imitating the intention of the model, it is merely miming, and this is where the ethical dimension of imitation comes into play.

The concept of the image of God, and the imitation of Christ complete each other. The image is the basis of the imitative nature of the creature man, and it also explains the nature of godlikeness: dignity and rulership as representatives of God. However, the image of God, after the fall is only understandable through Christ, and imitation should point toward the perceivable example, Christ.

The imitation of Christ does not merely mean behavior replication, but the ultimate goal is to desire what Christ desires, union with God – it is the imitation of intentions and desires which makes it a complex and complete phenomenon. It also means transformation, through the presence of the Holy Ghost, which is the equivalent of the unity of the Father and the Son in the Godhead.

In *Paradise Lost* the Son is unique, being the one who understands most divine providence and acts as the agent of man's deliverance, and not his destruction. Yet his "filial obedience" (3.269) is an example for all creatures. Successfully imitating him transforms the imitating agent, restoring the image of God in them. However, the transformation also requires the participation of the Son, who is not only the image of God, but takes it upon himself to be Adam's Son. Christ is the ultimate imitating agent, who is able to imitate and represent God as well as mankind, while at the same time keeping

[38] After the fall Adam and Eve are restored by becoming metaphorically – and by means of ancestry – parents of the Son of God. Thus, it is not the imitation of Christ, but his sacrifice is what restores mankind, but not only to Christ-likeness, but godlikeness – Adam becoming the "father" to Christ.

his fundamental nature as Son. After examining imitation as reproductive action in religious experience, I continue with sociology and psychology.

II.2. Imitation as a psychosocial phenomenon: The *Laws of Imitation* of Gabriel Tarde

Imitation as social behavior is often considered both natural and wrong; already the Israelites in the Hebrew Bible are warned against "imitating" other nations several times; and are urged to be obedient to God. In the Gospels, Christ calls people to follow him. From a psychological viewpoint, following somebody requires a conscious decision, however, imitation may be subconscious thing: the two concepts differ in the sense that the former addresses the higher mental and motor functions also, while the latter refer to baser human behavior.

Imitation may be understood as making copies, as copying behavior, and as replicating beliefs and attitudes – and as the imitation of Christ shows, total imitation takes place when intentions, desires are also imitated, which leads to the reproduction of behavior. In what follows I explore how ideas and beliefs spread.

While in Christianity it is expected to obey God and imitate Christ, but that does not always happen, hence the warnings not to imitate other nations and religions: in Old Testament time it was a general experience that people copy beliefs and behaviors, as Moses forewarned the people in Deuteronomy several times (Deut. 12:29-31, 18:9-13, etc.), and as later books testify that it happened (Judges 8:33-34, 1 Kings 11:4-6, 2 Kings 17:14-17, just to mention a few).

The reason why the people turned away from God and rather followed other beliefs and rituals is not specified, the traditional formula is that men are stubborn, and they forget their God. The reason for imitating something but not the other is difficult to determine, but there have been attempts made to describe the way imitation happens, what regularities govern it.

Apart from the theological aspect, imitation can be studied as the uniting – or dividing – force in a community, and as a potential source conflict, infused with desire. These theories describe different approaches and distinct aspects of imitation, which complete each other, and in my view inform the epic.

An attempt to analyze imitation as a phenomenon that characterized social behavior was carried out by Gabriel Tarde (originally published in 1890 in French), who described how imitation works in culture and society. His theory is the basis of the theory of contagion, accounting for the way ideas and corresponding behaviors spread. Compared to the vertical, divine-human axis, this comprises the horizontal, interpersonal dimension of imitation.

Gabriel Tarde's work, *Laws of Imitation*, translated to English in 1903, approaches imitation from a new, secular angle. In the spirit of the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of

twentieth centuries, dominated by interdisciplinary approach, when the works of Darwin and Freud reshaped the way of thinking about man, Tarde draws upon knowledge from different areas of science to point out the universality of imitation. As I have said, Tarde approaches imitation from a sociological stance, however, he also touches upon its anthropological, linguistic and theological viewpoints to prove that ideas spread in a mimetic way, and this leads to a sort of uniformity. He claims that society itself "is a group of people who display many resemblances produced either by imitation or counter-imitation, that is, doing the exact opposite regarding the model" (1962, 18). In his opinion, society is imitation (ibid. 105).

The focus in Tarde's research is to pinpoint the regularities that characterize imitation in a social context, in order to answer what, why and how is imitated. His research and the holistic undertaking to compare natural (biological), social and linguistic phenomena may seem naive, but the observations that Tarde makes are worth taking into account, as he takes it upon himself to describe rules which might seem obvious, but as a result are overlooked, when it comes to describing human behavior.

Even though Tarde's approach is indeed characteristically interdisciplinary, comparing phenomena from the areas of evolution to social evolution, gestation to anthropological development. I find his approach exemplary in the field of humanities as an effort to create observable and describable rules that can be applied to analyzing and evaluating social phenomena. Tarde's laws inform and complete the metaphorical inference patterns of kinship and image.

The regularities that Tarde observed concerning imitation are the following: firstly, he considers multiplication and growth as types of imitation (43). Somewhat vaguely, he states that it can be either conscious or unconscious, deliberate or spontaneous, voluntary or involuntary (220), but adds that the desire to imitate is in itself imitative – and argument that will come up in René Girard's theory as well imitation. Then, as he put it, it "proceeds from the inner to the outer man" (225-226). He explains that the imitation of ideas precedes the imitation of action (233). Thirdly, in a society, the leader is imitated by their followers, that is, imitation proceeds from superior to inferior (240). Furthermore, what is nearest is more likely to be imitated than what is distant (249). Tarde also observes that imitation is unconscious, that is, somnambulistic, as he calls it; the imitating subject is not aware of miming a model (117). Whatever is imitated, it is first an invention, a new idea or behavior, an innovation (17). The reason why an invention spreads, however, is not clear; the livelihood of an idea is also similar to that of a biological organism, it might or might not survive based

on whether it finds favorable environment.[39] Lastly, counter-imitation is also imitation, since doing the exact opposite as the model implies that action is still based on the model and relative to it (18). [40]

These principles, then, describe the way an idea or behavior (as Tarde enumerates, fashions, styles, values, etc.) become to characterize a society. He uses biological analogies to explain how beliefs and behaviors are promulgated and declares that the vehicle of imitation is language (47). Tarde claims that imitation means the creation of resemblances, and thus both on the biological and the social level growth is in fact imitation. Whatever is repeated or recreated, it is imitated. It is evident that making copies, that is, reproduction is the biological basis of life, and Tarde parallels this phenomenon to the creation of a society. Customs, traditions, stories, fashions, beliefs, etc. are reproduced, imitated, and this imitation creates the cohesion which holds a community together.

In an interesting logical twist, Tarde says that obedience is "the subjective imitation of a recognised superior" (228), and then continues with stating that envy is wound up with obedience as well as with the acknowledgement and admiration of the superior (ibid.) I find it interesting that through historical examples Tarde connects obedience to imitation, and the concept of envy, that is to say, he also acknowledges the relationship between imitation, obedience and envy.

Tarde's observations and rules are descriptive, and they offer up the operation of imitation without ethical judgement. I am going to use Tarde's theory to reflect on the society of fallen angels, why they chose to imitate the rebel angel instead of the Son of God and how that affects them, showing that in *Paradise Lost* imitation does have an ethical dimension, what is more, a subject should be able to decide what and how to imitate and desire.

Tarde's study, based on the observation of society and history provides relevant ideas to analyze imitation as a social phenomenon. The community of Heaven functions as a society, I argue, and the fallen angels in Hell even more so, as I will later show. The epic consistently and intuitively relies on the aspects of imitation that are usually taken for granted for being too obvious: this is why in the Bible Israel is ordered against assimilating the other nations by proximity and intermarriage. The

[39] The theory of memetics and social contagion deals with how information spreads (in units called memes) and how it is comparable to the biological phenomenon of epidemics, respectively. Paul Marsden offers a memetic theory of contagion, uniting the two approaches (1998). Contagion theory was also described by Tarde's compatriot, Gustave LeBon, in 1885. He writes about the popular mind and argues that imitative behavior is a natural tendency (2002, 79). Furthermore, he also states, similarly to Tarde, that opinions and beliefs spread by contagion, adding that this spreading has nothing to do with reason (ibid. 86). LeBon also observes, just like Tarde, that "prestigious" things are imitated, and this imitation is unconscious (ibid. 88).

[40] In fact, Tarde claims that "in counter-imitating one another, that is to say, in doing or saying the exact opposite of what they observe being done or said, they are becoming more and more assimilated, just as much assimilated as if they did or said precisely what was being done or said around them" (ibid.)

warning underlines that imitation takes place indiscriminately, the question is who or what is imitated.[41]

II.3. Imitation in Theological Anthropology: The Theory of René Girard

Another prominent scholar who studies imitation is the philosopher René Girard. Unlike Tarde, however, who based his observations on nature and societies, Girard analyzes imitation in narratives, and its effect on the (fictional) subject's psyche. Essentially, he examines the representation of imitation as a behavioral pattern, and the way that it structures narratives.

Even though his seminal and most influential works deal with mythologies and their contrast with the Bible in their representation of scapegoating and violence as a result of mimetic behavior, initially he deals with literary works, and describes narrative patterns that follows the regularities he argues are based on imitation. In *Deceit, Desire and the Novel*, first published in French in 1961, he analyzes novels, starting from Cervantes, through Flaubert and Stendhal, until Proust and Dostoyevsky, and concludes that certain characters are motivated by a particular desire, a desire to be like their respective models. Already here he concludes that imitation may lead to frustration, rivalry and eventually violence, in case the subject desires to become like the model to such an extent, that instead of imitating it, it tries to remove and replace it (Girard 197640-41) .

The conflict with a superior (role) model is an archetypal pattern, but there is more to it than a one-sided antagonism. On the one hand, it affects the model as well as the subject, secondly, in case the model is out of the reach of the subject, the conflict escalates and is projected onto another subject, who becomes the scapegoat.

Girard claims that a pattern observable in the novels he studies, to which some of the novels even refer, is that the characters desires are not original: they are borrowed (ibid. 3).[42] Thus, between the imitating subject and the model whom they imitate there is an object, usually the possession of the model, which the subject desires, hence the motivation to imitate. The precondition for this

[41] The Pauline letters elaborate on the concept of imitation more explicitly. For example, Christ is to be imitated because he is Lord, his authority deriving from God (Jensen 2021, 29-30). Tarde claims that the superior is imitated by the inferior (Tarde 1962, 216) and supports his claim with examples from history. In terms of Christianity, however, it is merely the acknowledgement that God, and by extension Christ are supreme beings that should motivate people to imitate them. The imitating agent should identify with the model (Jensen 2021, 30-31), thus, as Trade says, it takes place from the inside to the outside.

[42] Girard starts with the analysis of Don Quixote, in which the fictional characters imitate an earlier, actual literary work *Amadís de Gaula* (16th century). The relationship is not implicit, because Don Quixote refers to the main character of the work as his inspiration, hence, as Girard establishes, the work is the representation of someone's imitation of a fictional persona. Imitation, thus, is not limited to media, reality and fiction are interwoven. Girard calls the model the mediator, the one who represents the qualities imitated. Even if the mediator is fictional - as in the case of Amadís - the imitation can be real. Already in the first chapter, Girard establishes a mimetic relationship between the world and fiction, which can go two ways: fiction can imitate the world and the world can imitate fiction.

mimetic desire to exist is that the object must be loved, desired by the model, which creates and enhances the value of the object in the eye of the subject (ibid. 5). [43]

Before exploring the societal implications of imitation, Girard sought related patterns in literature, evidently considering literary works as the representations of human condition. In *Deceit, Desire and the Novel*, he analyzed the patterns of imitation that appear in narratives, then *in I See Satan Fall Like Lightning* (2001), he employs his theory of mimesis to compare mythologies and the Scriptures in order to argue that while foundational myths intend to narratively conceal violence, which had mimetic origins, the Bible, especially the Gospels reveal the mimetic cycle in order to end violence. In between, in *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World* (Girard, Oughourlian, and Lefort 1978) he elaborates his theory on imitation, and he argues that the narrative patterns describing mimetic desire are characteristic of societies as well.[44]

Girard, thus, creates the connection between a social phenomenon and its narrative representation in myth in order to explore the origin of violence, which he considers to be rooted in mimetic desire. He reasons that the tensions that escalate to violence start on the personal, interpersonal level, and spread on to the community, and the source of the tension, as well as the way it spreads is by way of imitation, the imitation of desire. He named the originator of the tension Satan, the impersonation of the experience of unfulfilled desire which is rooted in the imitation of a model.

While Girard argues that Satan is the most common name of the experience of the upsurge of frustration, on the personal and on the social level as well, he only analyzes the biblical story and Satan's role in it, ignoring other narratives in which Satan occurs; instead, he looks for satanic figures in novels, who experience the frustration and remorse over unsuccessful imitation.

It is important to emphasize that Girard approached Christian mythology, and mythologies in general in order to discover the origin of violence; therefore, he focuses on the role of Satan especially. In his theory the Messiah is understood in the context of sacrifice, since he is the one who eliminates the need for it. His theory does not account for the role of the Son as the one who unites the divine and the human.

[43] Girard calls this phenomenon "desire according to the Other" (5) An example provided by Girard to understand the narrative structure is his analysis of Stendhal's *The Red and the Black* (1830), in which the author himself calls refers to certain forms of imitation as "vanity". Julien Sorel, the young protagonist desires his employer's, Monsieur Renal's lifestyle, and thus starts an affair with his wife; Renal, on the other hand, envies the village's richest man, Valenod, and employs Julien in order to emulate Valenod's household. All the characters relate to each-other through triangles of desire.

[44] The role of desire in relation to imitation is not unique to Girard. Michael Motia analyses the presence of desire or *eros* from the Antiquity in discourses concerning mimesis, onto Neoplatonic philosophy, wherein desire is far from being negative: in fact, means the longing for the ideal, original state, and it allows the ascent to it (Motia 2022, 58-59).

Reviewing the above-mentioned three works by Girard I explain how my approach to *Paradise Lost* was inspired by him. I follow his lead in the sense that I argue for cognitive analysis, and I look at the experiences described in the epic as distillation and representation of creaturely experience and condition. In that sense, I consider literary works as representations of the world, establishing patterns to make sense of experience. This approach is shared also by Mark Turner, who analyzes literary metaphors and their connection to basic human experience in *Death is the Mother of Beauty: Mind, Metaphor, Criticism* (2000), which I am using to later on to study the kinship metaphor in *Paradise Lost*. Turner, in fact, calls Milton's epic human condition texts (2000, 70).

In *Deceit, Desire and the Novel* (originally published in French in 1961) Girard carries out a comparative analysis of novels with a phenomenological approach; in order to explore the structure of triangular or mimetic desire and the way it evolves in the narratives. As he puts it, he intends to formalize the structures implicit in the works (Girard 1976). In novels from Cervantes, Stendhal, Flaubert, Proust, Dostoyevsky and Balzac, he searches for the universal pattern and the origin of human desire, which will serve as the basis for his anthropological analysis of mythology and Scripture. He discovers, among other thighs, that desire has a metaphysical dimension, as the imitating subject divinizes – or demonizes - the model, hence the later interest in religious narratives (ibid. 81). Furthermore, he has a psychoanalytical interest in narratives, analyzing them as depictions of actual human experience, studying the psyche of the characters. The psychological take on narratives in his later works evolves into socio-anthropological analysis of myths. Although there is no mention of the scapegoating mechanism or mimetic cycle in this work the roots of crisis as interpersonal conflicts are already outlined. The focus of the book is desire, concerning which he identifies the following properties: it is triangular, borrowed and metaphysical. In what follows, I am going to explain these concepts based on Girard's work, and their relevance to my theory.

Girard considers desire to be at the root of imitation; when one desires an object, it imitates the other who possesses the desired thing. In doing so, the imitating agent intends to become the model in order to gain possession of the desired object. Thus, imitation in Girard's terms is also the instrument of transformation. People naturally imitate, as Tarde describes it, in order to generate a cohesive civilization and culture that is necessary for effective cooperation. But Girard criticizes Tarde saying that in the nineteenth century, he considered imitation too optimistically the instrument of achieving social harmony and progress (Girard, Oughourlian, and Lefort 1978, 20). He thinks imitation permeates culture because it governs individual psyche as well as the social subconscious, creating herd mentality (ibid. 7).[45]

[45] The difference in the attitude to imitation between Tarde and Girard is fundamentally whether imitation is a cohesive force, creating homogeneity, as Tarde suggests, or is it a divisive force, as Girard claims.

Apart from herd mentality, Girard discusses desire according to the other. Girard explains that copying, imitating is characteristic of the so-called *vaniteux*, using Stendhal's word to describe a vain person who "cannot draw his desires from his own resources, he must borrow them from others" (1976, 6). On the one hand, I find Girard's concept of the *vaniteux* quite descriptive of Satan, as he claims that the vain person convinces himself of his originality (denying imitation) and says that desire turns into rivalry as the subject sees the mediator as an hindrance to the fulfilment of his desire. However, he writes that "The romantic *vaniteux* always wants to convince himself that his desire is written into the nature of things, or, which amounts to the same thing, that it is the emanation of a serene subjectivity, the creation ex nihilo of a quasi-divine ego" (ibid. 26).

The *vaniteux* is inevitably a secular character since desire is a fundamental aspect of mimetic creatures. The desire of the *vaniteux*, however, is not innate, it is born out of a lack of inspiration and desire. Thus I disagree with Girard's opinion that the desire is not natural – ontological mimesis is the basis of Christian anthropology. The *vaniteux*, nevertheless expresses the generation of another kind of desire, which is not metaphysical in nature, simply aimed at the agent's reality.

In Book 2 lines 25-30 Satan claims that desire (and envy) is inevitable in Heaven – implying that God's sovereignty will always be challenged.[46] Moreover, while Satan's desire for kingship is the result of the exaltation of the Son, the rebel angel does not imitate the desire of the Son. He does not want to harmonize his desires with the Father's and obey him. Girard's theory cannot be fully applied to the epic, as it depicts a case in which Satan does not want to be like the model, on the contrary: he decidedly tries to become the opposite of good, embrace evil.

Girard characterizes desire as contagious (1976, 96), while according to Tarde, imitation is contagious. The girardian contagion also implies imitation since desire in his terms is mimetic, the difference is that the contagious desire and imitation are aimed at transforming into another, the model of desire.

René Girard explores imitation on the same premises as Tarde, that is, to revisit a phenomenon that has been ignored and overlooked, except for one of its types, representation. In *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World* (Girard, Oughourlian, and Lefort 1978) he argues that talking about

[46] Satan implies that envy is innate in Heaven, due to the hierarchical structure of mimetic creation:

> while he Lordly sits
> Our envied Sovran, and his Altar breathes
> Ambrosial Odours and Ambrosial Flowers,
> Our servile offerings (2.243-246)

He describes the status quo as riddled with this emotion, and he goes on to say that the Godhead is also naturally hated. Furthermore, this logic implies that the model of imitation and envy draws his superiority from being imitated and envied – otherwise he would not be superior. Satan's arguments therefore try to assimilate the model to the subjects, blurring the line between them. This behavior reinforces his character as a *vaniteux*.

imitation is avoided because it implies that humankind may have a herd mentality, in contrast with the celebrated individuality. Girard, for his part, considers imitation as the source of conflict and eventually violence, and approaches it from anthropological and ethical viewpoint (1978, 26).

In this book, which is an interview volume with the collaboration of Jean-Michel Oughourlian and Guy Lefort, the three philosophers re-examine the key concepts of Girard's theory. They discuss the classical and traditional concepts of imitation, and differentiate between acquisitive mimesis, or learning, and possessive or appropriative mimesis, which is imitation done with the intention to supplant the model (ibid 9). Substituting the model inevitably results in competition and rivalry between the model and the imitator (ibid).

The title of the book is a quote from Matthew 13:35, a passage that describes Jesus as fulfilling what the prophet Asaph in Psalms 78:2 predicts.[47] The quote "things hidden since the foundation of the world" refers to, on the one hand, the reality of violence, which according to Girard the mythologies hide, and the Bible reveals. Violence and sacrifice are the result of the escalation of conflicts that are rooted in mimetic desire. Interpersonal conflicts that are the result of mimetic desire generate such frustration in a group (society) that it can only be resolved by projecting issues onto a scapegoat, which is the single-victim mechanism (1978, 27). This is the foundational murder that mythologies describe as the event that created the (functional, harmonious) community, and which is ritually reenacted as sacrifice. However, sacrifice cannot indefinitely resolve intragroup conflicts, on the one hand, on the other hand, the sacrifice may result in the false deification of the victim (Girard 2001, 70).[48]

The title also alludes to the subconscious aspect of both imitation and violent tendencies. Girard's theory opens the discussion into theological anthropology in the sense that it intends to reveal the cultural layers of violent human conflict from its alleged divine origin, disclosing it as human projection onto God (Belousek 2017, 70). The crucifixion of Jesus is contextualized by Girard as the result of the singe-victim mechanism at work in his politically, religiously and ethnically divided community, making him the ultimate scapegoat, whose innocence reveals the innocence of all victims and the violent scapegoating at work since the foundation of the world (ibid. 66-67).

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[47] "I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old" (Psalms 78:2). "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 13:35).

[48] Girard writes: "It is precisely because violent contagion was all-powerful in human societies, prior to the day of the Resurrection, that archaic religion divinized it. Archaic societies are not as stupid as we tend to think. They had good reasons to mistake violent unanimity for divine power" (2001, 189). The foundational murder, he argues, brought such a sensation of climax and resolution of internal frustrations and conflicts that the formerly demonized, scapegoated victim of single-victim mechanism was suddenly perceived as divine, hence the necessity to repeat the sacrifice and invoke the divinity. The foundational murders, described in world mythologies are all the covert description of such a murder, the origin of divinely licensed violence, and sacrifice is meant to reenact the foundational murder and bring about the same effect.

The most concise and simple description of Girard's theory, encompassing myth, the two testaments of the Bible and focusing on Satan is the volume *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning* (2001), which also takes its title from a Biblical line, Luke 10:18. The title in Girard's terms refers to the rupture of the mimetic cycle, represented by Satan, by Christ's revelation on the cross. Girard clarifies in this book what he means by Satan: "Satan is mimetic contagion as its most secret power, the creation of the false gods out of the midst of which Christianity emerged. To speak of the mimetic cycle in terms of Satan enables the Gospels to say or to suggest many things about the religions perceived by Christianity as false, deceptive, and illusory that they could not say in the language of scandal, the reconciling power of unanimous violence" (2001, 43). In other words, Satan is not just a fictional character – although his role as accuser, for example in the Book of Job is part of maintaining the mimetic cycle, but in fact Satan signifies the phenomena that results from mimetic crises. In *I See Satan* the author focuses on how the New Testament deconstructs the mythical and transcendental layer of human violence.

The key concepts Girard introduces here are scandal, mimetic cycle, powers and principalities and scapegoat. The author argues that in the Ten Commandments, the prohibition of "coveting" the neighbor's possession and wife is directed toward the root of the scandal, desiring another person's property. He connects the commandment with Matthew 18:8.[49] What the English translation renders as offend, the original Greek is *skandalizō*, which translates as trip over, stumble. In other words, misdirected desire leads to a fall. The individual scandal, as Christ in Matthew already warns, is dangerous, however, Girard continues to describe:

> The condensation of all the separated scandals into a single scandal is the paroxysm of a process that begins with mimetic desire and its rivalries. These rivalries, as they multiply, create a mimetic crisis, the war of all against all. The resulting violence of all against all would finally annihilate the community if it were not transformed, in the end, into a war of *all against one*, thanks to which the unity of the community is reestablished (Girard 2001, 24).

The original rivalries always develop between individuals, who become mimetic doubles (ibid. 22), but the doubles can project their conflict onto a single victim. The mimetic snowballing effect takes place when the individual scandals culminate, and a scapegoat is spontaneously selected (43).[50] Satan as the

[49]"Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire" (Matt. 18:7-9). Interpreting Christ's words in Girard's terms, offences and scandals condemn the world, which are the jealousies and envious desires that impeded neighborly love.

[50] It must be clarified that Girard reaches back to the origin of human communities, claiming that the intragroup conflicts would have destroyed a community in its primal state, and it is at this point when the mimetic cycle started. It is an anthropological hypothesis which cannot be proven; hence several critics call out

accuser plays the role of selecting and blaming an innocent victim. The victim can be expulsed or killed, taking the conflicts of the community with themselves. Girard brings testimonies from the Antiquity, not only from myths, when the single-victim mechanism is used to resolve the climaxing disorder in communities (ibid 49-58). One particular story is about a miracle described in *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana,* quoted by Girard. Miracle is a key concept here, which indicates what Girard calls the deification or divinization of the victim (ibid 119). This deification generates a false transcendence, powers and principalities.[51] Girard observes that there is a double nature of these: they are both earthly and transcendent. “It is religion as illusion, which protects humans from violence and chaos by means of sacrificial rituals. Although this system is grounded in an illusion, its action in the world is real to the extent that idolatry, or 'false transcendence,' commands obedience” (ibid 96).

Essentially, then, the result of the mimetic cycle is the conception of false gods, who maintain and control violence. In my view, the pattern of mimetic cycle can be traced in *Paradise Lost*, which relates the myth of rebellion against God, which I claim is mimetic in an Girardian sense. Satan reverts to violence, declares war on Heaven to resolve his frustration and initiates violent conflict in order to assert his sovereignty. He blames the Son, who becomes his model and mimetic double, then singles out mankind as victim of his revenge. Satan’s mimetic crisis, however, is not the only manifestation of the pattern which he establishes: it does cause a snowball effect, and other mimetic crises emerge.[52]

Satan in the epic embodies the subject who experiences mimetic crisis as a fictional character, at the same time, he also signifies the diabolic phenomenon described by Girard, the motor of mimetic crises. He experiences a scandal in the form of the Son, who becomes his model and rival, and whom he considers his mimetic double. The motif of the scandal continues in Paradise Regained (1671), where Satan experiences similarly ambiguous feelings towards the Son:

> The Spirit descended, while the Fathers voice
> From Heav'n pronounc'd him his beloved Son.
> That heard the Adversary, who roving still
> About the world, at that assembly fam'd

Girard as basing his theory on the comparative interpretation of mythologies and religious texts instead of facts. In my opinion, however, the power of his theory is exactly the ability to bridge the gap between anthropology and the analysis of what and how the authors of ancient texts communicated about themselves.

[51] Girard writes: “It is striking how many names the New Testament writers invent to designate these ambiguous entities. They may be called powers “of this world," then on the other hand "celestial powers," as well as "sovereignties," "thrones," "dominions," "princes of the kingdom of the air," "elements of the world," "archons," "kings," "princes of this world," etc. Why such a vast vocabulary, made up apparently of such dissimilar elements? When we examine these titles, we quickly confirm that they divide into two groups. Expressions like "powers of this world," kings of the earth”, "principalities," etc. assert the earthly character of the powers, their concrete reality here below in our world. On the other hand, expressions like "princes of the kings of the air," “celestial powers” etc. emphasize the extraterrestrial, 'spiritual" nature of these entities” (2011, 70). He explains that the double nature of denominations is not accidental but expresses the ambiguity coming from the fact that the sovereignty of these powers come from the reality of the founding murders.

[52] The angels seek a scapegoat, men, whom they envy, and they assume that God created them to make up for the loss of fallen angels. Furthermore, Satan envies their position and happiness in Paradise.

Would not be last, and with the voice divine
Nigh Thunder-struck, th' exalted man, to whom
Such high attest was giv'n, a while survey'd
With wonder, then with envy fraught and rage
Flies to his place (PR 1.31-39)

The circumstances are similar to those in *Paradise Lost*: the Son is exalted, and upon hearing the news, Satan cannot control his emotions.

The epic itself also points to the differentiation between acquisitive mimesis or learning, and possessive or appropriative mimesis, the desire to become identical with and replace the model, dispossessing it. Ambitious creative production might also be considered challenging the divine authority and authorship and thus sound blasphemous; thus, rivalry is inherent to imitation. As the psychological approach shows, intentionality is crucial, when it comes to imitation: the imitating agent becomes a rival by intentionally trying to destroy and substitute the model.[53]

The concepts I borrow from Girard and apply to my analysis of the epic are the *vaniteux*, contagion, appropriative and acquisitive mimesis, scandal, and the creation of false transcendence. These are interwoven with "image" and the kinship metaphors "father", "son" and "daughter", and expand the meaning of these concepts. The Son and the paradox of sameness and difference, or infinite similarity to the Creator is based on Biblical language, but in order to analyze the imitation that takes place between God and Satan, Satan and his offspring, Sin and Death, it is necessary to take into consideration the social and psychological aspects of imitation described by Tarde and Girard, which describe fallen anxieties regarding imitation. The human couple, furthermore, are in the process of exploring the meaning of being made in the image of God, the psychological implications of godlikeness and the moral imperative that comes from the theological interpretation. The social and psychological principles of imitation account for the fallen, rivalistic of imitation, as opposed to the divine. Before further elaborating on the tardean and girardian concepts, however, I need to address some issues that have emerged concerning Girard's theory.

II.4. Mimetic rivalry and the divine – Criticism of Girard's theory

René Girard sets out to describe a theory of everything, exploring human origins through mythologies, identifying the root of violence, uncovering the mechanism of mimetic rivalry at work in societies as well as in the individual psyche at work until today, discovering its resolution in the Bible through Christ's revelation of the cycle of violence. Tarde asserts that the creation of resemblances is the key

[53] The motif of appropriation appears more explicitly in *Paradise Regained*, where the Son describes Satan as "sacrilegious, to himself would take/ That which to God alone of right belongs (3.140-141).

for both biological development and both social and cultural change and harmonization, Girard identifies desire as the motivating factor beyond imitation.

In my view, compared the theological concept of ontological mimesis, described by Motia (2022), Girard focuses on what he calls appropriative mimesis, where the model of imitation is accessible (or perceived as accessible), and thus the desire of the imitating agent is not a desire for the inimitable and the infinite, but a tangible possession. The potential of obtaining this possession and substituting the model generates rivalry.

Girard is criticized for being too general, too holistic, which is undoubtedly true. However, his logic, when it comes to the triangular nature of mimetic desire, and the escalation of mimetic crises leading to the emergence of violent conflicts, which generate more violent conflicts is legitimate. [54]

It is inevitable to mention that mimetic desire, one of the key concepts of Girard is used by him solely in a negative sense, which stands in stark contrast with the philosophical traditions preceding him that also concern mimesis, such as Platonism and Neoplatonism. While Girard disregards aesthetic imitation, he also ignores the importance of imitation in the transformation and the elevation of the imitative agent, its relevance to Christianity and thus the role mimetic desire plays in theology as well. Mimetic desire, therefore, is not indiscriminately negative, as it can express the desire for the union with God.[55]

Holmes and Streete write that "In Girard, mimesis is understood as a model of control, interestingly inverting the fears of Plato as to its subversive dangers, though the polar opposition between imitator and model thereby established is clearly susceptible to critique" (Holmes and Streete 2005). While I agree with the fact that Girard puts an overwhelming emphasis on the conflict between

[54] Joshua Landy (2012), one prominent critic of Girard desires to debunk his theory, by examples of real-life context and experience. These examples, however, in my view, ignore the historical and metaphysical dimension of Girard's arguments. He claims that generalenvy and violence cannot originate from the conflict of two competing subjects (7); true, but Girard argues that it is the accumulation of mimetic conflicts that leads to the single-victim mechanism and violence. He refers to Bakhtin to claim that there are several models to choose from (8), which is also true, and Girard does not give an explanation how one selects its models of desire, but that does not undermine the selection of models. Lastly, he brings up the fact that Girard's theory is nothing but a balloon (21), a "great Argument" – however, this is exactly the reason why it is relevant to the analysis of the epic. As Milton seeks to "justify the ways of God to men", and by extension the ways of men to God, so Girard takes it upon himself to prove that violent human tendencies are merely projected onto God, and are, in fact the product of human nature. Both Girard's theory and the epic implies that imitation is fundamental to human condition, and it is the basis of conflict as well as of love and reconciliation, respectively.

[55] Motia argues that "These two tracks of mimesis also correlated with two modes of desire or eros. Aesthetic mimesis encouraged desire that ascended from intimate love toward transcendent beauty (from loving one body, to two bodies, to laws that govern those bodies, and up to the beautiful). Ontological mimesis, by contrast, began with a desire for the whole and from there shed or shook off loves that would distract from contemplating that object of desire"(2022, 47). He adds that according to Gregory of Nyssa, imitating God and desiring God cannot be separated (ibid.)

model and imitator, yet the acknowledgement of a rivalistic pattern particular to imitation is Girard's contribution to the theory, which is transferable to aesthetic imitation too.

An important brought up in terms of Girard's theory is that not all violence is mimetic in origin, and it is not clear why a mimetic conflict escalates into violence (Belousek 2017, 64). Belousek raises the issue of the "first stone", which Girard also describes (2001, 58-59). This criticism is especially relevant to my research, as it raises the question: if there is no precedent to mimetic violence, where does it come from? If there is no antecedent to Satan's behavior in the epic, where does his envy and rivalry come from in God's perfectly good creation?

Belousek argues that just like first stone, the first murder in the Bible itself is also without precedent, or model, the murder of Cain by Abel. The escalation of violence is related to the concept of vengeance, and it is a sin, starting with Lamech, to reclaim the prerogative of taking revenge, in imitation of the neighbor's violence.[56] In my view, the question is, on the one hand, is whether it is the violent act that requires an example or model, or it is the desire that, having a mimetic aspect and focused on a model, precipitates violence.

This logic, in my opinion, disregards an important concept in Girard's theory, the scandal. In my analysis of kinship, I rely on comparisons with Cain and Abel as examples of sibling rivalry and parental favoritism. These patterns model the triangular nature of mimetic desire but also show the significance of the scandal.

As I have described, the scandal in Girard's theory is the problematic desire that is prohibited by the Law and also condemned by Christ. The scandal is, in a way, anti-mimetic, since it consists of the perception of not resemblance, but dissimilarity: Cain comes to recognize that he is not like Abel, but in a certain aspect, different from him, in the sense that he does not possess God's favor. The croucher at the door, sin, is the possibility of violent response, which he chooses.[57]

The scandal is a concept that means obstacle, but it is not necessarily and object:

> It is not an obstacle that just happens to be there and merely has to be got out of the way; it is the model exerting its special form of temptation, causing attraction to the extent that it is an obstacle and forming an obstacle to the extent that it can attract. The *skandalon* is the

[56] Belousek writes: "Lamech's model for vengeance is not Cain, but God. By vowing 77-fold vengeance for Cain, Lamech at once both vaults over rivalry with Cain and ventures over rivalry with God" (2017, 61). Vengeance is reclaimed by God, hence Lamech challenges him. I think, however, that Lamech's violence itself is modelled on Cain's, but the prerogative of revenge is modelled on God: there was no actual vengeance carried out before.

[57] *Paradise Lost* also gives account of the Cain and Abel story, in a vision provided by Michael to Adam. In this vision, the root of the conflict between the brothers is described as such: "His Offring soon propitious Fire from Heav'n/ Consum'd with nimble glance, and grateful steame; /The others not, for his was not sincere (11.441-443). It follows the logic of the explanation provided by the footnotes of the Geneva Bible, since no such explanation is given in the text itself: "Because he was an hypocrite, and offered only for an outward show without sincerity of heart." The event apparently requires an inherent propensity to evil on the part of Cain. The importance of the stumbling stone, however, still holds; the fact that Abel's offering is accepted brings out the violence in Cain.

> obstacle/model of mimetic rivalry; it is the model in so far as he works counter to the undertakings of the disciple and so becomes an inexhaustible source of morbid fascination (Girard, Oughourlian, and Lefort 1978, 416)

What Girard is trying to say here is that the scandal is both the sensation of being deprived of something, and the difficulty or impossibility of acquiring it, which eventually causes frustration. It is the psychological phenomenon described in the Gospels when Christ talks about the experience of temptation as sin. Mark 9:42-47 repeats the idea of offensive hands and eyes, referring to uncontrolled desires. [58] The idea is further clarified in 1 John 2:10, where loving one's brother eliminates the risk of stumbling, which is again the Greek word *skandalon*,[59] meaning that love empowers the faithful to overcome the sensation or experience of offence and envy. Being scandalized means to experience offence, wherein the offender is the model. Scandal is envy that triggers mimetic rivalry.

Belousek argues that Cain's sin is a form of idolatry, focusing on Abel, as his model, instead of God (2017, 65). In the context of mimetic rivalry and God, alienation from Him is the greatest sin: "…the quintessential scandal, in the Old Testament, is idolatry, which means the scapegoat given sacred status in the form of a solid and material object-the obstacle made divine" (Girard et al., 1978). In *Paradise Lost*, in fact, Satan suffers from iconophobia, being scandalized by God's image.

The theories of Tarde and especially Girard are complex but incomplete, and they require further interpretation and clarification. However, Girard demonstrated that literature and mythological-religious texts are testimonies of the phenomenon of imitation and its workings in the human psyche, which are hard to pin down otherwise, at the root of conflict and violence.

The presence of imitation in *Paradise Lost* evokes the theological idea of dignity based on godlikeness and the seemingly contradictory idea of submissiveness and obedience as the result of being inherently inferior as image. In order to understand why godlike, dignified angels rebel against his situation it is necessary to understand the way imitation operates.

II.5. The laws of imitation and the patterns of mimetic desire in *Paradise Lost*

The laws of imitation are present in the epic in two ways: they govern the narrative dynamics and inform the metaphors of kinship and image. Based on the theories of imitation, described by Tarde

[58] And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. (Mark 9:42-47 KJV). Offend is again the word *skandalizō*, used thirty times in the New Testament.

[59] He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him (1 John 2:10 KJV), also quoted by Girard (1978, 417).

and Girard, I can identify narrative patterns that inform the metaphors of imitation, kinship and image. While these metaphors provide the theological foundation of the metaphors, the rivalistic theory of imitation accounts for the way the lack of godlikeness leads to rivalry and rebellion**.**

The theology of *Paradise Lost* establishes a mimetic framework of existence: the creation *ex deo* serves as the basis of a monistic worldview of unity, which leads to the eventual elevation and transubstantiation of mankind (Fallon 2019). The promise of the transformation, conveyed by Raphael, is dependent on obedience. [60] The intrinsic desire to reunite with the divine inspires obedience.

On the other hand, there is a type of imitation that is inspired by internally mediated desire, experienced by Satan focuses on the position and the power of the Son, who becomes his model and rival. The image of God, bestowed upon the Son and Adam and Eve generates in them a desire for the divine, and serves as the basis of ontological mimesis. The angels are not given the divine image, only godlikeness.[61]

In *Paradise Lost* the prohibition on eating from the tree of knowledge is only connected to becoming like gods by Satan, and even he consistently uses the wording "gods", which as I have mentioned refers to the realm of spiritual beings, not the Almighty himself.[62] Both the fallen angels

[60] The archangel explains the following:

> And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
> Your bodies may at last turn all to Spirit, I
> mprov'd by tract of time, and wingd ascend
> Ethereal, as wee, or may at choice Here or in
> Heav'nly Paradises dwell;
> If ye be found obedient, and retain
> Unalterably firm his love entire
> Whose progenie you are (5.496-503).

The radical monism expressed in these lines are analyzed by Stephen M. Fallon, who compares Newton's theology infused natural philosophy with Milton's natural philosophy infused theology and contends that the poet's vitalist views are closely connected to the theodicy of the epic *Paradise Lost*. He claims that "vitalist understanding of matter opened the door to the providential activity of God and the free exercise of the will that makes moral life possible" (2019, 220).

[61] Analyzing Psalm 8, Anthony A. Hoekema describes the uniquely exalted state of man: "Though *'elohim* may sometimes mean "heavenly beings" or "angels," the most common meaning of the word is "God." I favor the rendering "God" in Psalm 8:5 for the following reasons: (1) it is the most common meaning of *'elohim*; (2) angels have not been given dominion over the works of God's hands, as human beings have; and (3) it is never said of angels that they have been created in the image of God; so why should they be thought of as higher than human beings, who have been created in God's image?" (1986, 18-19). Consequently, the angels are not made in the image of God.

[62] The idea of challenging God appears in Christianity from the beginning, but it is always considered outside of the range of possibilities. The myth of the construction of the tower of Babel in Genesis chapter 11 testifies to this ambition, and there are many who "magnify himself against the Lord" (Jeremiah 48:42), such as the entire nation of Moab. These examples of self-exaltation are usually linked to the influence of another God, however, such as Chemosh in the case of the Moabites, and it is usually labelled as a result of ignorance. However, the doctrine of man in Christianity relies on man being a created being, therefore inferior to God, whereas man obtaining godlike power and potential is a modern idea.

and men are called godlike (the former in 1.358, the latter in 4.289), but the description of the War in Heaven by Raphael leaves the question of the godlikeness of angels ambiguous:

> or to what things
> Liken on Earth conspicuous, that may lift
> Human imagination to such highth
> Of Godlike Power: for likest Gods they seemd,
> Stood they or mov'd, in stature, motion, arms
> Fit to decide the Empire of great Heav'n (6.298-303)

Godlikeness in the epic signals glory and greatness, but because of sin, appearances become separate from the character. In the world of the epic all the creatures are portrayed as majestic, in accordance with the goodness of creation; being godlike in varying degrees. This godlikeness implies constant state of evolution. Dennis Danielson, while refuting the doctrine of *felix culpa*, argues that "Adam and an Eve who are indeed *in via*, whose capacities are fitted to their relatively early stage of development, but whose exercise of holiness would lead them to a higher stage of perfection and enjoyment" (Danielson 1982, 212). He supports this idea with a quote from Book 5, when Raphael instructs Adam (5.497-505). Arguably, the fact that God sends his messenger to teach Adam and Eve and answer their questions indicates that He intends to elevate mankind, who can be exalted even if they do not fall.

Godlikeness is, therefore, bestowed upon creatures, and man has the potential to become an even closer approximation of God, the model of which is the Son: he achieves an almost perfectly godlike state without actually becoming identical with God, according to the theology of the epic. Being like God is becoming, even for the Son, who goes through an educational process himself (Stella Purce Revard 1967).

Being like God in the epic is not a static, but a dynamic state which changes in accordance with the character's actions, depending on to what extent they obey or imitate. When the rebel angels, however, start following Satan, they start imitating him.

John Rogers argues that challenging the hierarchy and authority of the mimetic condition is an underlying pattern in the epic (1998, 126). Indeed, Satan intends to undermine the divine authority, but on the other hand, he also recreates it in Hell, establishing his rule in Pandemonium. [63]

Based on the theories I previously outlined, I identify the following patterns of imitation: imitation as ontological and metaphysical describes the mimetic relationship between the Creator and creatures, who are driven by an innate desire to imitate the model and thus enhance their resemblance. This type of imitation establishes hierarchy and dependence, but in this hierarchy the

[63] Later Rogers also admits that it is Satan's interest to maintain hierarchy, while he advocates for equality and freedom (Rogers 1998, 129). More than his priority, however, he seeks to be imitated in order to become a model. In addition, the choice of the angels to follow Satan curtails their freedom and dignity, as they become serpents in the end.

creature's desire is directed towards the infinite and the inimitable, the divine; thusly it is an externally mediated desire in Girard's terms. This means that the model is inaccessible to the imitating agents, so envy and jealousy have no place in the hierarchy. On the other hand, when desire is internally mediated, that is, the model is within the reach of the imitator, there is a naturally emerging hierarchy from the viewpoint of the imitating agent, who perceives the model as superior and at the same time resents them for the same reason. In this way, envy and jealousy are born. The model and the imitating agent become mimetic doubles, which blurs the boundaries between them, and the imitating agent intends to replace the model.

The starting point of the mimetic conflict is the scandal, when the imitator becomes an imitator due to the recognition of a difference or a lack. These imitators are vain, or *vaniteux*, because they do not have the metaphysical desire to imitate an ideal or superior, they only start imitating when they are shown something desirable, be it an object or a position. Their mimetic conflict can spread, because the imitating agent tries to become a model itself, and draw followers. This contagion eventually generates violent conflict.

In *Paradise Lost*, despite his creaturely status, Satan does not feel metaphysical desire to become like God, and the Son, mediating his desire, becomes his model and rival. This can only take place because he is extremely godlike, albeit not infinitely godlike, but enough so that he perceives the infinitely godlike Son as his equal. His desire is born from his perception of the Son, and he stumbles and finally falls as a result. Nonetheless, Satan's self-perception, high status and resemblance to the divine play important roles in his demise.

In the epic, therefore, theological concept of mimesis, a relationship with the divine, is complete with social and behavioral theories of imitation that govern human communities and impact the individual psyche. In the Biblical sense, imitation, with God as the model, after whose image men are made, is meant to be transformative: it is supposed to make humankind more like God through obedience, while recognizing and accepting differences: this what Girard calls externally mediated desire, mediated by the Son (1976, 9).[64] The Son poses a stumbling stone for the angels, who eventually they project their frustrations onto mankind, trying to become models by trying to make them imitators, making men similar to them.

According to Girard's logic, in the escalation of mimetic rivalries, God is seen as the mirror image of their own conflict (Heim 2006, 72-73). The experience of a cruel, vengeful God in the Old

[64] Girard writes: "The hero of external mediation proclaims aloud the true nature of his desire. He worships his model openly and declares himself his disciple" (1976, 10). This characterization naturally fits Adam and Eve, who consider themselves out of the reach of God.

Testament is a commonplace, and the rebel angel also projects his tyrannical ambition onto God. [65] He tries to involve the Almighty in a violent rivalry, but God remains disengaged from the actual strife, which is fought by the angels and by the Son. Thus, God cannot become a mimetic double. From the viewpoint of the narrative of *Paradise Lost*, in order to do justice to the absolute sovereignty of the Almighty, it is essential that God does not participate in rivalry. The role of the Son is to represent the Father in a mimetic conflict, whose integrity is thus not threatened. Unsurprisingly, the fallen angels complain, in several instances, that they lack knowledge about God and his nature and activities (1.93-4, 1.143-5, 2. 151-2, 5.855-9). [66]

In what follows, I analyze the text of *Paradise Lost* in order to identify the patterns of imitation described, to show that besides aesthetic and ontological imitation, Girard's interpretation of rivalistic mimesis is relevant to the epic. The work demonstrates the rebellion against the hierarchy and order established by ontological imitation, and a new pattern of rivalistic imitation. While the Son's relationship to the Father is defined by ontological mimesis and desire for the ideal, Satan's imitation is like that of the *vaniteux* character.

An analysis of Milton's epic with a Girardian approach was carried out by Paul Richard Blum, who claims that both Milton and Girard interpret the Bible and scrutinize the human condition from an anthropological angle. He quotes Girard's analysis of Satan, wherein Girard compares Satan to Jesus, wanting to have followers and posing as a model for our desires (Blum 2012, 2).

Moreover, he observes that Satan's, and by extension the angels' rebellion prefigures the human rebellion, thus acting as models (266). In his article he points out that already in Book 1, the epic describes the psychological horizon of rivalry: the description of Satan's emotions includes guile, revenge, deceit, pride, envy, vanity and desire or ambition. He says that "Satan embodies the inherent relationship of a Self to someone other in terms of measuring comparison, rivalry, and deceit or delusion" (267). The epic, thus, portrays the myth of mimetic rivalry (ibid 270). He also observes, insightfully, that the fallen angels lose dignity and godlikeness by virtue of imitation (or emulation) itself, since imitation implies an inferior position (ibid.), and they cannot avoid imitating the model towards whom they are hostile (ibid. 269).

Blum claims that the source of the rebellion is that "an unquestionable authority is questioned against all reason" (269), and that the solution for the misery of the fallen angels is to identify a

[65] In Book 1, Lucifer says: "Or in this abject posture have ye sworn/ To adore the Conquerour? who now beholds/ Cherube and Seraph rowling in the Flood" (322-323). He refers to God as conqueror, whereas it is the rebel angels who planned to conquer Heaven, and later, Earth.

[66] Admittedly, the denial of knowledge is a radical and dangerous narrative solution. Theodicy comes from, as Harold P. Maltz also asserts, a debate that is fueled by atheism, where the nature of God is not known and obvious (1988, 23). Satan and the fallen angels question the Christian paradigm, but they are corrected by Abdiel (8.823-825, 8.835-838).

scapegoat, humanity, whose happiness and prosperity further embitters the dismal situation of the rebels (ibid).[67] Blum's article serves as proof that Girard's theory and concept of Satan is relevant and applicable to the analysis of not only myth but also to literary works; however, scandal and the shift from ontological imitation to appropriative imitation, where the focus is an accessible model. In addition, it is not only the satanic psyche that is subject to imitation, but all the created beings' minds, the angels and Adam and Eve as well, and it is worth analyzing their experience, such as contagion.

In Christian theology, moreover, imitation also the foundation of human existence, and the key to salvation as well, as the concepts of *imago dei* and *imitatio Christi* indicate. Imitation, as the metaphors kinship and image show, comprises of the danger of rivalry as well as of the potential of unity and cooperation. It is worth widening the scope of the concept of imitation to see the way the inherent paradoxes serve as the basis of the theodicy of the epic, the poetic expression of Christian theology as well as the myth of the origin of evil.

II.5.1. Imitation of the superior – The mimetic hierarchy of creation

As a Christian epic, *Paradise Lost* operates on mimetic ontological bases, to recall Michael Motia's concept, and its ambition is to imitate the inimitable poetically, as I discussed previously. The epic employs sophisticated strategies to achieve this end, for instance the introduction of competing cosmologies, described by Dennis Danielson (2014) in detail. The superiority of the model, in this context, is unquestionable.

The model imitated by the imitating agent is superior; consequently, whatever is imitated or copied becomes superior. The status of the model and the original can be envied and challenged by the imitating agent and copy. Imitation as reproductive action implies that who or what is imitated, or serves as a model, is superior, which in turn also might mean that a superior thing or person is going to be copied or imitated. This phenomenon evidently establishes a hierarchy between the model and the imitating agent. Satan suggests that the Almighty's power originates from the worship and the obedience of angels, however, by emulating Him, they assert His power.[68]

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[67] The fact that pagan gods require human sacrifice is mentioned in the epic too: "First Moloch, horrid King besmear'd with blood/ Of human sacrifice, and parents tears" (1.392-3). Human sacrifice, and sacrifice itself, is often mentioned in the Bible, and Girard argues that the Scriptures aim at doing away with sacrifice altogether, stopping violence and the cycle of mimetic desire. *Paradise Lost* focuses on another aspect: revenge. In a way, humankind is chosen scapegoats by the fallen angels, who are easier targets than the Almighty, and whose misfortune would comfort the defeated angels. This is not a sacrifice, however, that serves redemption, it is vengeful and thus not sacred.

[68] This logic stands when it comes to human imitation: who is followed and imitated is superior and their authority does come from the fact that they are followed and imitated and thus admired. However, God's

The archangel questions the way God uses His own might:

> new Laws thou seest impos'd;
> New Laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
> In us who serve, new Counsels, to debate
> What doubtful may ensue; (5.679-682)

The authority of God to exert his power and give laws is, as Blum observes, seems irrational from the point of view of the angels, which is why Satan argues that the new situation will create "new minds", that is, rebellious thoughts. He continues to express resentment over the elevation of the Son:

> Another now hath to himself ingross't
> All Power, and us eclipst under the name
> Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
> Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,
> This onely to consult how we may best
> With what may be devis'd of honours new
> Receive him coming to receive from us
> Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
> Too much to one, but double how endur'd,
> To one and to his image now proclaim'd? (5.775-784)

Satan refers to the anointing of the Son as depriving the angels of power, as if he now has assumed the authority that had belonged to the community of angels. He also resents that the Son is to be revered and bowed down to. He claims that the superiority of the Son originates solely from the submission of the angels.

Satan's argument continues with providing the logic beyond his indignation, insisting on the fact that the society of angels has been relatively homogeneous, the members being equal despite their difference in power:

> Natives and Sons of Heav'n possest before
> By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
> Equally free; for Orders and Degrees
> Jarr not with liberty, but well consist.
> Who can in reason then or right assume
> Monarchie over such as live by right
> His equals, if in power and splendor less,
> In freedome equal? or can introduce
> Law and Edict on us, who without law
> Erre not, much less for this to be our Lord,
> And look for adoration to th' abuse
> Of those Imperial Titles which assert
> Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve? (5.790-802)

---

authority and position does not depend on the following and the imitation: He should be followed and imitated for the virtue of being powerful.

Satan, in fact, describes the coexistence of hierarchy and freedom, which is realized in Heaven, and which is, according to him, interrupted by the arbitrary exaltation of the Son. The archangel is scandalized, which means that he encounters the Son, whose position he suddenly starts to desire. He interprets the Son as his mimetic double, one who is equal, therefore, who can be challenged and competed with. Satan envies the Son and claims that he possesses authority that was taken away from the angels.[69]

It is as if godlikeness meant power in and of itself, and not the actual likeness to the Almighty. The angels are described as "Godlike shapes and forms/ Excelling human, Princely Dignities,/ And Powers that earst in Heaven sat on Thrones" (1.358-360). They are forced to recognize the superiority of the Son, and by extension God, as the desire to be like them is born.

The pattern of desiring godlike authority also appears elsewhere in the epic: in Michael's speech in Book 12, the narrative depicts Nimrod:

> A mightie Hunter thence he shall be styl'd
> Before the Lord, as in despite of Heav'n,
> Or from Heav'n claming second Sovrantie;
> And from Rebellion shall derive his name,
> Though of Rebellion others he accuse. (12.33-37)

Nimrod fashions himself as a powerful figure, and the epic offers two interpretations of his power: it is in opposition to Heaven, just as the realm in Hell, or deriving power from Heaven, as if divinely appointed, as Lewalski also explains in the relevant footnote.[70] Both cases point to the superiority of God, which Nimrod challenges at the same time. Nimrod's case exemplifies paradoxical dependence on the model, while also struggling for independence and even for the superior position.

The rebellion of the angels, "in emulation/ opposite to Heaven" (2.298) reinforces the power of God and the Son. The heroism of Satan and Nimrod consists in challenging the unquestionably superior power, but instead of liberating themselves, they end up mimicking the heavenly realm and also earning a new superior: Satan. Thus, one third of the angelic flock indeed becomes "alienate of God" (5.877) as they are contaminated by the lies of Satan.

[69] This logic also shows that the angels, based on their own perception, do not possess the image of God. Men's sovereignty and dignity comes from the kingship of God and the Son, through sharing it.

[70] Barbara K. Lewalski explains in the footnote of lines 12.24-25 (Milton 2007, 313) that Nimrod is considered to be the first king, and kingship is intertwined with tyranny since his reign; furthermore, he claimed to receive his power form heaven. Thus, the way I see it, he disobeys and defies God by claiming to be his appointed representative.

II.5.2. Imitation as contagion

The idea or behavior imitated and copied spreads like a contagion, the biological analogy serves to explain that there is no obvious reason why someone becomes an imitating agent, while another is "immune" to it. In *Paradise Lost*, one third of the angels are contaminated with Satan's ideas. The angels represent a society and the way it is affected by contagion of ideas.

It is crucial in the narrative that the rebel angel immediately creates followers, thus, it describes the way sin spreads. It reports, from Satan's viewpoint, the psychological process that eventually leads to the cosmic rebellion. First, the Archangel mentions "new minds" and "new Counsels", meaning that they disagree with the Almighty's decision. It is worth observing, however, that he alleges that it is not only him, but his companions as well, who have the same mind as him, and see things eye to eye with him, without any evidence. Subsequently, the Archangel complains that the Son is appointed as "one and to his image", therefore, he bemoans the Son's ultimate godlikeness and then complains that further "laws" will follow. Besides the assumptions Satan makes, such as laws leading to erring, and the angels' dignity being obscured by the elevation of the Son, what really matters from the viewpoint of my argument is that, firstly, the angel recognizes the Son as superior and thus a model, and secondly, that he already creates followers by likening their minds to his. He utilizes the address "Natives and Sons of Heaven" (5.790), alienating the angels from the Creator and associating them with their place of origin instead.

After Satan's speech, forward comes Abdiel, who accurately identifies the rebel angel's discursive strategy as "contagion":

> O alienate from God, O spirit accurst,
> Forsak'n of all good; I see thy fall
> Determind, and thy hapless crew involv'd
> In this perfidious fraud, contagion spred
> Both of thy crime and punishment: (5.874-881)

As I have mentioned, contagion theory originates in Gabriel Tarde's theory of imitation, comparing social behavior, especially trends and fashions expanding, spreading as contagious diseases, using a biological analogy of viruses.[71] The "outbreak" of the contagion is caused by "great national event",

[71] Social contagion was described first by yet another Frenchman, Gustave LeBon in 1885. The gist of his theory was that the subject loses individuality, and its behavior becomes irrational as a result of pressure from the crowd. He describes what he calls a "psychological crowd" and argues that the members are mentally united (LeBon 1909, 26). Unlike Tarde, however, LeBon focuses only on social phenomena, while Tarde draws parallels with the natural world. The theory was further developed by many, focusing on social contagion. For reference, I recommend Herrando & Constantinides' article (Herrando and Constantinides 2021), who summarize the current trends in the research of emotional contagion. Contagion can affect individuals as well as communities, and it means the replication of not only beliefs or emotions, but behavior as well.

evoking "violent emotions" (LeBon 1909, 27), the narrative parallel to which would be the proclamation of the kingship of the son. Girard also uses contagion to explain the spreading of social unrest and tension. Abdiel diagnoses the rebellion as the result of Satan's ability to infect, as we later learn, every third angel (6.156), whose minds are contaminated by evil ideas. The narrator relies on the analogy in Book 1, when he recalls the influence of pagan gods, the fallen angels, and refers to it as "infection" (1.483).[72]

Tibor Fabiny identifies Abdiel as the hero of the epic, arguing that his role as confessor and follower of God is both an example for the audience as well as a type of the Messiah (2016). In Book 5, where the famous scene takes place, Abdiel is the only one who puts up resistance against Satan; consequently, as Fabiny describes, he demonstrates unique bravery in the face of isolation (2016, 214). In my view, Adbiel demonstrates the ability to consciously resist the contagion of imitation. As opposed to the subconscious influence of imitation the freedom of the subject lies in the capacity to resist, "stand" (ibid. 217).

The biological analogy of contagion emphasizes the somnambulistic aspect of imitation, and the possibility of being predisposed to the infection. The angels who follow Satan's lead seem to have had an inclination to turn away from the Creator and worship other things:

> Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
> From heav'n, for ev'n in heav'n his looks and thoughts
> Were always downward bent, admiring more
> The riches of Heav'ns pavement, trod'n Gold,
> Then aught divine or holy else enjoy'd
> In vision beatific (1.679-684).

Consequently, Mammon had a psychological disposition to appreciate the riches of Heaven instead of the goodness of it. This is not an explanation for how imitation spreads, but it hints at a possible reason why certain angels fell, while others stood, to quote Satan. How ideas spread is what Tarde tries to trace in his *Laws of Imitation*, and he hints at the possibility that natural disposition might be a factor that imitation spreads, why one identifies with an idea and another does not. Tarde, nonetheless, also talks about the impression "great men" make on people who become followers (1962, 80). He argues that great men introduce a new idea, which then spreads: this is exactly what happens when the Archangel rouses his followers. Tarde calls the social man a "somnambulist" (ibid. 76), who is unaware that he is under the influence of a spell.[73] It is work taking note of the fact that in both cases when

[72] Contagion and infection were not alien to public discourse in the sixteenth and seventeenth century in England, where plagues were often raging, decimating the population. The two words were in fact used interchangeably, both expressing the viral spreading of a disease (Tussay 2021, 115).
[73] This mode of behavior was not unknown in Milton's age either, as he describes in *Paradise Regained*:

Satan talks to his cohorts, he wakes them up from sleep: first, at the very beginning of the epic, when the fallen angels lie bound and dazed in the lakes of fire in Hell; and when he makes his closest peer realize the implications of the anointing of the Son – which chronologically precedes the awakening in Hell. By infecting other angels, Satan immediately assumes the position of the rival of the Son, by reclaiming followers for himself, whom he orders to obey him: he announces a secret gathering of like-minded angels. What takes place in this heavenly council is the depiction of a crowd falling under the spell of a powerful and convincing orator, who successfully influences them in the wrong way. Abdiel resists, or rather, he is not influenced by Satan's logic. The angel is not receptive to Satan's ideas, demonstrating the potential to resist. While the concept of contagion suggests that all are exposed to the influence of evil, Abdiel's example and his reasoning proves that it is possible not to fall victim to it.

The word "influence" is used in the epic both in a positive in a negative way: first, the narrator notes that Satan, already in heaven contaminates the thought of his companion: "So spake the false Arch-Angel, and infus'd/ Bad influence into th' unwarie brest/ Of his Associate" (5.694-6); secondly it is Satan himself, admiring Earth: In thee concentring all thir precious beams/ Of sacred influence" (9.106-7). The use of the word, especially in the first case, again suggests contagion, especially taking into consideration the etymological background of the word, coming from influenza, a contagious disease (Mazzola 2003); while the second case demonstrates the existence of the divine counterpart. Influence, like much of the vocabulary of *Paradise Lost* is ambiguous.

The reason for the disposition to feel offended by the Son's elevation is questioned by none else than Satan himself:

> O had his powerful Destiny ordaind
> Me some inferiour Angel, I had stood
> Then happie; no unbounded hope had rais'd
> Ambition. Yet why not? som other Power
> As great might have aspir'd, and me though mean
> Drawn to his part; but other Powers as great
> Fell not, but stand unshak'n, from within
> Or from without, to all temptations arm'd.
> Hadst thou the same free Will and Power to stand?
> Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,
> But Heav'ns free Love dealt equally to all? (4.58-68)

> And what the people but a herd confus'd,
> A miscellaneous rabble, who extol
> Things vulgar, & well weigh'd, scarce worth the praise,
> They praise and they admire they know not what;
> And know not whom, but as one leads the other (3.49-53)

The Son characterizes men as such, describing not only the phenomenon of contagion but also the somnambulistic aspect of imitation, meaning that they are unaware of their herd mentality and behavior.

Satan, observing the glory of the Sun, soliloquizes about the reason why he felt tempted and challenged by the Almighty's decision to anoint the Son, while other angels did not experience the same. This is dangerous introspection, as he recognizes that he is somehow different from the rest of the angelic folk. Then, in a sudden change of mind, he decides to blame the goodness of creation.

Desiring to be some "inferiour Angel" is the expression of the girardian desire, which, if mediated externally, the model is out of the reach of the imitating agent, thus the imitator's ambition does not escalate to envy and rivalry. This logic is of course the subversion of the providential hierarchy of mimetic creation. The fallen angel blames his elevated, dignified position for his rebellion, calling it temptation.

Satan here discusses the psychological nature of imitation, which is the basis of the theodical argument of the work: why creatures rebel against God's sovereignty, and rival with him? In my view, the answer is complex. While Sin is the involuntary creation in Satan's mind, and he falls under the influence of his own embodied idea, he himself admits that he could have resisted – as the rebel angels could have also. And the contamination does not stop, Sin goes on to pollute mankind: "Till I in Man residing through the Race,/ His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect,/ And season him thy last and sweetest prey" (10.607-609). The contagion progresses from the mind to the speech and eventually to actions, just as it happened with Satan.

II.5.3. The *vaniteux* and the false transcendence

The girardian *vaniteux* character, embodied by Satan in the epic, borrows his desires from his model. Since God cannot be drawn into the "imitation game", the epic conflict centers around Satan's scandal (in the girardian sense) and his rivalry with the Son of God.

Satan's account describes that he has considered himself occupying the Son's position: "lifted up so high/ I s'deind subjection, and thought one step higher/ Would set me highest" (4.49-51), that is, with the appearance of the Son, his self-image changed. The difference between him and the Son is also expressed here: it is the fact that he does not accept that he would need to serve. The psychological portrait of Heaven is described in Book 2 as well, where Satan draws the same conclusion:

> hath much more
> Establisht in a safe unenvied Throne
> Yielded with full consent. The happier state
> In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw
> Envy from each inferior; (2. 23-27)

Satan claims that the perception of superiority, that is, the perception of difference inevitably causes envy: the society of Heaven therefore is threatened by the mental state of individuals: he generalizes the feeling of envy. In Hell, on the other hand, there is no envy, for the demons do not envy each other's misery. Satan, thus, offers an insight into the psychology of a community, which is very much like what Girard describes:

> If individuals are naturally inclined to desire what their neighbors possess, or to desire what their neighbors even simply desire, this means that rivalry exists at the very heart of human social relations. This rivalry, if not thwarted, would permanently endanger the harmony and even the survival of all human communities. Rivalistic desires are all the more overwhelming since they reinforce one another. The principle of reciprocal escalation and one-upmanship governs this type of conflict. This phenomenon is so common, so well known to us, and so contrary to our concept of ourselves, thus so humiliating, that we prefer to remove it from consciousness and act as if it did not exist (Girard 2001, 9).

The envy described by Satan, who does not shy away from admitting the reality of such desires, threatens to destroy the harmony of not only Heaven, but Earth as well. By claiming that inferiors must naturally envy their superiors, Satan establishes the culture of rivalry and introduces evil. He manages to completely counter-imitate God by professing the exact opposite of culture of love and trust, acknowledging that if there is a superior, they will inevitably be envied. The imitating agent who compares himself to his given or chosen model, recognizes differences and as a result develops feelings of desire and envy.

The theory of mimetic desire, accounts for Satan's rebellion: he acts as a *vaniteux*, whose ambition and desire are created by another agent, in this case, the Son. The Son is both a model and a rival for Satan. However, he and his followers have experienced the impossibility of defeating and eliminating the Almighty. Alternatively, they decide on imitating their rule in Hell, and on earth. Through the rivalry with the Son, both God and the Son become allegedly mimetic doubles of the angels, who can challenge them.

In the epic, the false transcendence is not the same as Girard's concept: in *Paradise Lost* it means the self-deification of the fallen angels. Satan, and the rebel angels in the epic create a false transcendence, described in Book 1, where the fallen angels become pagan gods. Girard in *I See Satan* (98) studies "principalities", "dominions", thrones" and the way they become "princes of this world" and observes that celestial beings are associated with earthly and worldly rulers who are perceived to have supernatural powers. Girard takes this into the direction of explaining how a false transcendence is created by these powers: for Milton, false transcendence leads to idolatry, for Girard, to sacrificial murder.

The fallen archangel is fixated on the uniqueness of the power of the rebel angels, but at the same time, he also cannot help comparing it to that of God: "O Myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers/

Matchless, but with th' Almighty" (1.622-3). Still, Satan pleads ignorance, arguing that he, and by extension his allies were not aware of the Creator's power ("Till then who knew/ The force of those dire arms?" (1.93-4)), and his idea is echoed by Beelzebub: "Whom I now/ Of force believe almighty, since no less/ than such could have o'erpowered such force as ours" (1.143-145). Beelzebub's logic even suggests that the united power of the rebel angels seems invincible, and this idea is picked up Satan again:

> But what power of mind,
> Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
> Of knowledge past or present, could have feared
> How such united force of gods, how such
> As stood like these, could ever know repulse? (1.626-630)

They compare the heavenly forces to themselves, and Mammon even goes as far as to claim that the Almighty imitates them:

> 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; from whence deep thunders roar
> Must'ring thir rage, and Heav'n resembles Hell?
> As he our darkness, cannot we his Light
> Imitate when we please? (2.263-270)

This expression of mimetic rivalry suggests that the rival is also involved in imitation, being a mimetic double, while trying to appropriate the properties of each other, in this case, darkness. Mammon tries to depict fallen angels as models of darkness, insinuating that imitating their rival is not an issue after all, since he is also an imitator, thus they also try to blur the boundary between model and imitation. The fallen angels, of course, cannot think or act outside the limitations of their ultimate model, the Creator, who defines their world; and thus, they cannot, in fact, escape being imitators. What is more, they crave similarity to the world of the Creator:

> desire
> To found this nether Empire, which might rise
> By pollicy, and long process of time,
> In emulation opposite to Heav'n. (2.295-298)

The opposite emulation is the essence of rivalry the fallen angels and their hellish dominion embodies. They cannot escape the confines of Hell, as much as they cannot avoid imitation, yet they try to do the exact opposite of their model and aspire to replace him. The opposition itself, nevertheless, implies

dependence upon the model, defining the existence of the hellish empire as one revolving around Heaven, of which it is a negative picture.

The focus on Heaven itself is part of the pattern of the mimetic desire, exhibited by the fallen angels. Heaven, as the kingdom, the expression of power is the object of desire of the fallen angels, who consider themselves, as their use of the kinship metaphor expresses, belonging to Heaven. Nonetheless, they aspire to establish their own kingdom, with reference to, and in comparison, with Heaven: as a rival.

II.5.4. The desire to be a model

The center of the mimetic conflict of *Paradise Lost* is Satan's rivalry with the Son. Satan's ultimate aim is to become the model, the way the Son is meant to be the model for humanity. His ambition is fulfilled by his son, Death, who enters the world and turns mankind into his image.

Another aspect of the Satanic imitation is that Satan wants followers, and not only the angels. In terms of humans, it is not only revenge he has in mind, but he would also rather see them fall:

> Seduce them to our Party, that thir God
> May prove thir foe, and with repenting hand
> Abolish his own works. This would surpass
> Common revenge (2.368-371)

Apart from the fact that turning mankind against God could hurt the Creator more, it also means that men would resemble the rebels, which, in turn would also affect the Godhead: this is why the Son needs to submit to death. The narrator further elaborates on Satan's plan to "confound the race/ Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell/ To mingle and involve" (2.382-4). Assimilation would involve not only mankind itself, but Earth as well. As Satan arrives to Eden, he reiterates his desire to find something in common with mankind:

> League with you I seek,
> And mutual amitie so streight, so close,
> That I with you must dwell, or you with me
> Henceforth; (5.375-378)

Just like he infected a third of the angels, he intends to actively involve humans in the rebellion and make them resent their Creator and thus become like the rebel angels themselves. In this sense, as Girard claims, Satan tries to become a false transcendence and enhance his likeness to the Son by seducing mankind:

> Like Jesus, Satan seeks to have others imitate him but not in the same fashion and not for the same reasons. He wants first of all to seduce. Satan as seducer is the only one of his roles that the modern world condescends to remember a bit, primarily to joke about it. Satan likewise presents himself as a model for our desires, and he is certainly easier to imitate than Christ, for he counsels us to abandon ourselves to all our inclinations in defiance of morality and its prohibitions (Girard 2001, 32).

Satanic imitation, therefore, is very complex. Satan himself is the "vanitas", who lacks the metaphysical, innate urge to obey and follow the Almighty, but scandalized by the Son, he rivals with him. The Satan in the epic does not completely embody the Satan Girard's *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning* (2001), even though he is a false accuser, creates a false transcendence; and in a way makes a scapegoat out of the unsuspecting humans. However, the epic Satan is not a mythical character, not the embodiment of human evil; rather, this Satan is a literary character, who goes through serious self-analysis and who ponders on his own motivations and actions. He is also the victim of mimetic desire, who compares himself with the Son, envies his position, coveting it for himself. The psychological complexity of imitation, which involves intersubjective relationships between the model, the imitating agent and the subjects who are also infected with imitation, as I have shown, is represented in *Paradise Lost* in the internal and external struggle of the fallen angels.

The fundamental difference between the Son and Satan is, according to Girard, is the ability to imitate rightly by overcoming the instinct of rivalry: [74]

> The Gospels tell us that to escape violence it is necessary to love one's brother completely-to abandon the violent mimesis involved in the relationship of doubles. There is no trace of it in the Father, and all that the Father asks is that we refrain from it likewise.
>
> That is indeed why the Son promises men that if they manage to behave as the Father wishes, and to do his will, they will all become sons of God. It is not God who sets up the barriers between himself and mankind, but mankind itself (Girard, Oughourlian, and Lefort 1978, 215).

In the epic, consequently, the Son proves that imitation does not inevitably generate envy and rivalry, as Satan presumes, it can be a unifying force instead. Choice and freedom make creatures (and humankind) responsible for acting upon the stimulus of imitation. Godlikeness guarantees dignity, however, after the fall it is the Son's intervention that restores imitation – in those creatures that can be saved. Redemption takes place as a transfiguration, and in the epic this transfiguration is poetic. The metaphors of kinship and image operate based on the patterns of imitation and thus evoke rivalry

[74] I need to clarify that Girard does not distinguish between right or wrong imitation, only between forms of imitation that are acquisitive and non-acquisitive, the former meaning rivalry; he even says that objectively there are no behaviors that are good to imitate and that are not (Girard, Oughourlian, and Lefort 1978). This contradicts to his own assumption I mentioned above that following the Son's example will save mankind. theologically speaking, there is a right way to imitate, and in fact mankind is supposed to represent, therefore imitate God, without attempting to become His rival.

as well, but the epic restores the original divine meaning of both, while exposing the negative connotations. In what follows, I am going to analyze these two structural metaphors that express the ambivalence of imitation.

The aim of this chapter was to review, besides ontological and aesthetic mimesis, to review imitation as a phenomenon, as behavior. The underlying logic of imitation, the relationship of model and imitator imply a set of patterns that create the ambiguous and controversial nature of imitation. These patterns inform the relational metaphors kinship and image, which I am analyzing in the subsequent chapters.

III. "O Father" – The Kinship Metaphor in *Paradise Lost*

Ontological mimesis, as the theological basis of the epic is expressed through the kinship metaphor, which alludes to sonship and fatherhood, but also the sonship and kinship of angels, the fatherhood of Satan, the literal and allegorical motherhood of Sin and the sonship of Death in the epic.

The kinship metaphor is fundamental to understanding imitation in *Paradise Lost*. The kinship relations express the mechanism and patterns of imitation in the epic and provide the metaphorical scaffolding supporting the theodicy of the work. Mimetic rivalries are transferred onto the sons, the Son and Death. Through becoming the son of man, "Adam's son" (3.286), the Son of God eventually redeems mankind.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, kinship as a word itself has only been in use since the late 1700s, kin, akin, kinsfolk had been present earlier, as well, with "kin" coming from Old English, indicating belonging to family or tribe. Additionally, these also have a connotation of likeness as well (Mazzola 2003, 35).

Kinship, the denominators "father", "son", "daughter" are prevalent in the Bible, and they are also ingrained in human experience, both in the literal and the metaphorical sense. On the one hand, they define a relationship, meaning that some parent is a precondition for "son" or "daughter", and the same way, "father" means that offspring exists. On the other, they metaphorically indicate causation, hierarchy, inheritance, among other things.

In this chapter I am going to analyze the kinship metaphor as a cognitive metaphor, based on the theories of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, who demonstrate that metaphors are grounded in experience, and they are to be understood based on their experiential bases (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 205). Their theory was further elaborated by several scholars, among others Zoltán Kövecses, who studied not only metaphors, but clusters of them, metonymies, impersonation, etc. (Kövecses 2005). In terms of literature, Mark Turner analyzed the occurrence of certain metaphor groups in literary works of art, among others *Paradise Lost*, which he considers a "human condition text" (2000, 66). He studies the significance of kinship between Satan, Sin and Death as crucial to the interpretation of the epic. On the other hand, "Father" and "Son", referring to the two members of the Godhead also reflect a poetic choice, which, in my opinion is to ring into play the metaphorical patterns and connotations, but also to direct interpretation: Father and Son in the epic are absolutes, God is The Father, and the Son is the Son, their unity and difference expressing the essence of the divine, and also its workings. The divine and the demonic families compare and thus inform each other.

Intertextually, the kinship metaphor activates the various connotations linked to it, from sibling rivalry through inheritance to the actual human experience of family. Narratively, kinship activates the patterns of imitation that underlie the plot. The metaphors of Paradise Lost, however,

operate not cognitively, but theologically. The source of meaning in the epic is not human experience, but God, and the rest of the connotations come from a fallen state. Thus, the metaphors of the work are not intuitive, but their interpretation require conscious reasoning, or else divine intervention.[75]

The exclamation "O Father" appears twice in the epic, addressing respective fathers: In Book 2, line 727 Sin cries out to her father, the fallen Archangel as he is about to fight with his other child, Death. In Book 3, it is the Son, addressing God the Father repeats the words. The two contexts are vastly different. After the enormous scope of the demonic, pagan pantheon presented in the first book of *Paradise Lost*, Book 2 paints a similarly demonic, but intimate picture of Satan as a father. The figure refers to the classical, mythological subtext of the epic through the description of the birth of Sin, leaping forth from her parent's head as Athena did from Zeus's, but the presence of Death evokes the tragic, competitive relationship between divine parents and offspring.

In book 3, in the second case the newly anointed Son turns to his father, the Creator with a less anguished tone. Satan as father, together with Sin and Death, as Anthony Lacey Gully writes, are the Unholy Trinity, so much so that the idea of this triad became, over the course of the century following the publication of *Paradise Lost*, the metaphor for toxic, adulterous and incestuous family relationship, apart from offering the antithesis of the Trinity and using and abusing the biblical language (Gully 1981, 20).

The epic juxtaposes two completely different representations of the father-offspring relationship, the divine Father and Son and Satan and Death. Maggie Kilgour traces the motif of Narcissus throughout the work, and concludes that the motif is rehabilitated, reinterpreted towards the end, Narcissism is redeemed from its destructive quality, and is presented as a source of creativity (Kilgour 2005, 337). There is a similar evolution in the representation of kinship in the poem, from kinship being a source of rivalry and tragedy, to being an intimate and loving relationship, which implied shared power and responsibilities instead of a fight for position. There is an upward movement in the epic, indicated for example in the invocation of Book 3, where the narrator explains the movement of the plot from the depths of Hell to the highest of Heaven, where a dialogue between the members of the Godhead takes place (3.13-26). Similarly, there is a movement from the not-divine sense of kinship (and image, for that matter) to the divine, theological sense, which is provided by the agents of the divinity.

Apart from the metaphorical inference patterns I will go through, I would like to point out two things concerning kinship. Firstly, the fact that father and son are mutually dependent on each other.

[75] A similar operation of similies is observed by Miklós Péti (2014) in an essay about the iconoclastic and thus strikingly modern way the epic uses allusive technique and even audiovisual references in his comparisons, building up and demolishing them as they come. Péti argues that Milton is an iconoclast in the sense that he destroys and reforms the imagery inherited from his predecessors in order to convey radical meaning.

A father makes a son, but it takes a son (or a daughter) to be a father. Having offspring transforms the parent's nature: a father is a model, inevitably caught up in a relationship which determines the existence of both father and son. This transformative power plays a crucial role in the epic, while expressing the interdependence of model and imitating agents.

Secondly, the family is a difficult terrain, and neither in classical mythology, nor in the Bible there are functional families. Nonetheless, even Scripture uses parental love to explain divine love and providence, and in *Paradise Lost* there is a powerful imagery built around the concept of kinship. The poem encyclopedically enumerates and illustrates several connotations related to the family. By the end of the poem, though, Adam envisions his experience as a father, and what he feels towards his future sons is resentment; and Book 12 spirals down in the account of the Biblical conflicts between sons and fathers.

In the end, however, the eternal Son becomes the son of Adam, and the son rehabilitates the father.

> Thou therefore whom thou only canst redeem,
> Thir Nature also to thy Nature joyn;
> And be thy self Man among men on Earth,
> Made flesh, when time shall be, of Virgin seed,
> By wondrous birth: Be thou in Adams room
> The Head of all mankind, though Adams Son. (3.281-286)

It is the transformative power of the metaphor that allows the deliverance of mankind. Man can only be saved by the Father's will, and his metaphorical transfiguration into the Son, and then by becoming a human son, through whom mankind can become sons of God.

III.1. Kinship as cognitive metaphor

Kinship as a cognitive metaphor activates the patterns of imitation, but also other patterns that Mark Turner in *Death is the Mother of Beauty* (2000) identifies; Turner enumerates ten metaphoric inference patterns (ibid 25-28), however, not all of these come into play at all times. I study these patterns and analyze their meaning and relevance to the text of *Paradise Lost*.

The first pattern is property transfer. An example for this pattern is "Sons of Light, / Angels" (5.160-1). The angels as sons of light receive the properties of light. Moreover, calling someone a child or son implies that they are childish, nurtured, cared for by someone, belonging to the parent. Metaphorically being a child means being treated as children, behaving as children, or functioning as such (Turner 2000, 26). In the context of the epic, angels are once described as sons of light by Adam and Eve (5.160-1). This is from the perspective of man, who will soon, over the course of Book 5, learn about the nature of the angels. Otherwise, it is Satan who purposefully calls angels "Natives and Sons

of Heaven" (5.790), implying that they are nurtured by Heaven and not light.[76] Adam and Eve also refer to God as "parent of Good" (5.153), which by this logic means that God nurtures and cares for "good".

The second pattern is similarity, which according to Turner means that members of a natural group are siblings, which can be analyzed together with number three, grouping. Both mean that those that share similar properties can be referred to as siblings. Similarity is a very important pattern from my viewpoint, as it is contingent upon imitation. While the kinship metaphor using brother or sister does not appear in the epic, similarity and belonging to one group are also patterns present, in my view, in terms of parent and offspring. Sons, in the plural, however, mean similarity, belonging to one group, and hence kinship as well. Satan's argument against the Son's kingship, that the angels, "Son of Heaven" are alike and thus equal, is rooted in these patterns.[77]

The fourth pattern is inheritance, which is employed by Turner to show that Satan's true nature is revealed in his children, Sin and Death. Their identity as daughter and son of Satan reflects onto the rebel angel, exposing the qualities they inherited from their father.

This pattern can be understood in relation to the Son as well, who is in fact the very expression of the Father, the "Divine Similitude" (3.384), "Son of thy Fathers might" (3.398). The Son in fact reveals, visibly, who the Father is, what he inherited from him. It is for this reason, I think, that the angels are not described as sons of God throughout the epic: the implications of kinship are too strong in the context of the poetic language of the epic. The rebel angels, on the other hand, feel disinherited, but their feelings are related to the kingdom, which is why they call themselves "Progeny of Heav'n" (2.430). What they hoped to inherit is the power and its structure. Inheritance, in my opinion, is also a dangerous pattern, which carries in itself the elimination of the original owner of something. By calling

[76] Satan deliberately alienates the angels from the Almighty, denying his parenthood (as well as being created by the Son, and thus indirectly by the Father), distancing them from God. As opposed to this, in *Paradise Regained*, Satan engages in a speculation about the nature of the sonship of the Messiah:

Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
And narrower Scrutiny, that I might learn
In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
The Son of God, which bears no single sence;
The Son of God I also am, or was,
And if I was, I am; relation stands;
All men are Sons of God; yet thee I thought
In some respect far higher so declar'd (PR 4.514-421)

Reminiscing the exaltation of the Son, Satan argues that "Son of God" pertains to all men and angels, or else the title has a special significance. From the viewpoint of Satan, the uniqueness of the Son and the sonship of men and angels class into question the nature of the relationship between Father and Son, suggesting that the sonship of other creatures informs the sonship of the Messiah.

[77] The fallen angels act as a brotherhood due to their shared fate, metaphorically acting as a hierarchically structured group.

themselves the sons and the progeny of Heaven, the rebel angels essentially lay their claim on Heaven, regardless of other angels or the Godhead.

The fifth pattern is called components and contents, which means that the whole can be conceived as the parent, most likely the mother of the parts, or the container of the parts. The epic emphasizes that Adam and Eve are the parents of mankind, and as such, metaphorically include, contain the totality of mankind, determining their fate: The Mother of Mankind (1.36, 5.388, 11.159), Mother of human Race (4.475), our general Mother (4.492), our Grand Parents (1.29), our first-Parents (4.5), On our first Father (4.495), First Man, of Men innumerable ordain'd / First Father (8.296-7). Adam and Eve in the epic are parents in the literal and in the metaphorical sense also, which is why their transgression affects the entirety of humankind.

The sixth pattern is order and succession, which plays an important role in the epic. It is very simple to interpret as the subsequent thing is the offspring of the initial thing, as Turner does (27). In the epic, kinship is the vehicle to establish hierarchy and order, hence the position of the Almighty as "father", who is frequently called "eternal Father", Almighty Father or Great Father. The logic of this metaphorical pattern is subverted in the case of Satan, Sin and Death: Satan is challenged by his son, Death, and he is meant to be defeated by him. As opposed to this, the Almighty Father and the Son demonstrate the harmonious expression of order and succession: the Son is aware of his position, and as Son, he carries out the will of his Father, assuming kingship in Heaven, waging war for it, and ultimately redeeming mankind.

This pattern is similar to Tarde's rule of imitation that the superior one is imitated: the father is always superior hierarchically, thus acts as model. Both in the cases of God and Satan their examples are amplified: the Son reflects the mercifulness and the love of the father by offering himself as a sacrifice, while the rebelliousness of Satan is met with the defiance and the lack of respect for position by his own son, Death. Death, furthermore, succeeds Satan in Hell, which is the "Universe of Death", not the universe of Satan: it becomes his realm metaphorically and theologically.

The next pattern, causation as progeneration, is like the previous one, it means that conditions may be interpreted as parents, and the results as offspring. This is most obvious in the generation of sin and death: "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15). This is the metaphorical explanation of the origin of sin and death in the Bible, which is expanded in the epic as an allegorical impersonation of these phenomena. Sin and Death are metaphorically and literally (fictionally) caused, authored by Satan and his lust. The kinship of sin and death is therefore established. Both Sin and Death are the result of their father's actions.

The metaphor "author" is used in the poem with reference to God, Adam and Eve and Satan as well. Author in the context of the work means creator, progenitor, the one who brings something

to existence – which is wound up with the previous pattern, suggesting authority and power.[78] Satan is called the "Author of all ill" (2.382), suggesting that he causes "ill", that is, the opposite of good; soon after, sin calls him her father and author (2.864, 10.236), connecting the two concepts and thus mingling progeneration, power and even hierarchy, as she pledges to follow Satan. He is also named the "Author of Evil" (6.262) in a similar vein by Michael. God is the "Author of all being" (3.374) and "Author and end of all things" (7.591), "Author of this Universe" (8.360), indicative of fatherhood as well as power. Eve calls Adam "my Author and Disposer" (4.635), and Eve is referred to as "Daugther of God and Man" (4.660, 9.291), in the metaphorical sense. Author means originator, the parent of something is therefore the creator.

The next pattern is biological resource as parent, which is quite self-evident. The biological aspect of kinship brings to mind the begetting of the Son, which derives from Psalm 2. Richard S. Ide interprets the use of "begotten" in the epic as revealed: Strictly speaking, then, the Father does not now beget the Son, but now, at this appointed time, declares the generation of the Son in his divine nature ("whom I declare/ My only Son") (1984, 147). However, as Ide also admits, Milton also takes into consideration the biological implications, which refer to the Incarnation as well as the resurrection of Christ, coming from exegetical traditions. The biological aspect of kinship is the basis of the metaphor, and the epic relies on biological metaphors, for example, when describing the works of nature: "the wide womb of uncreated night" (2.150) and "The Womb of nature and perhaps her Grave" (2.911), when describing Chaos; but the earthly workings of nature are also described in terms of biological reproduction: Aire, and ye Elements the eldest birth /Of Natures Womb (5.180-181). The very birth of Sin and Death are also pictured in more biological terms, as Sin jumping out of the Archangel's head, and subsequently the incestuous intercourse between Sin and her father leads to the conception of Death, whose union with her own mother causes the birth of the hellhounds.

It is worth observing that in the epic, procreation described in biological terms is an uncontrolled, and perhaps uncontrollable phenomenon, as opposed to the planned and organized creation. Hell is also a good example, which leads to the ninth pattern, place and time as parents. Hell, the "universe of Death" is described as a place "Where all life dies, death lives, and Nature breeds, / Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things" (2.624-25). Another example is the description of translunar space: "Hither of ill-joyned Sons and Daughters born/First from the ancient World those Giants came /With many a vain exploit (3.463-465). The pattern of biological generation is used to describe Hell as the birthplace of monsters, but it seems that, despite being full of death, it is also ripe with life, true to Miltonic contradictions. The opposition between biological breeding and architectural

[78] Author also refers to authorship in the sense of writing, and Marshall Grossman (1987) analyzes the use of this metaphor as such. While self-authorship is not the focus of my study, it is interesting to note that "author" also has diverse interpretations and implications.

making highlights another aspect of imitation: while biological multiplication carries the risk of mutation, that is, the creation of imperfect copies, creation means the making of images, is a more reliable way of creating likenesses.[79] In this way, the epic reflects on different ways of generating similarity.

The last pattern Turner describes is called lineage, and he writes: "The principal use of kinship metaphor is to express the paths by which things in the world, the mind, and behavior can spring from each other" (2000, 33). The fictional-metaphorical lineage of lust, sin and death is an example from the Bible, as the theological explanation for these phenomena, and from the epic as the dramatization of the same. The pattern lineage signifies that these phenomena are similar, have something in common, but they are different as well, as parents and offspring are different.

Kinship, then, is used in thought and language, according to Turner, to express the relationship between phenomena, which relate to each other through these patterns. The metaphor is used to underline the characteristics implied through these patterns. These ten patterns recall some of the rules of imitation described previously: both imitation and kinship imply hierarchy and similarity, and they connect the biological and psychological spheres.

Kinship is woven into the fabric of *Paradise Lost* in the literal, as well as in the metaphorical sense. In my view, just as the case of Satan, Sin and Death demonstrates, the language of the epic draws on both the literal and the metaphorical sense of father, daughter and son to evoke a wide array of meaning, which all mutually inform each-other, enriching the theological interpretation of James 1:15. The human experience of incest added to the metaphorical kinship of lust, sin and death adds a layer of meaning which has, over the centuries, received various but very strong reactions from the audience of the work. The literal meaning of kinship, as Turner demonstrated, contributed to the understanding of Satan through his offspring.

I would like to further analyze the kinship metaphor as an underlying pattern in the epic, which creates the metaphorical scaffolding for the redemptive operation of divine providence, as well as its contrast to the fallen kinship of Satan's family and the divine one, all of which inform the human family as well. The use of the kinship metaphor implies the presence of the pattern of imitation, that is, the presence of a model, an imitating agent and an object of mimetic desire.

[79] Northrop Frye's analyses the use of natural birth and artificial creation as metaphors for the beginning of the world, intransitive and transitive theories of creation respectively (Frye 1982, 108-109). In the poem pregnancy, birth, womb and even the very first actual birth are depicted as chaotic, uncontrolled, dangerous; while making and creating are the means of authoring a world – hence I think it is ironic that Sin calls Satan her author in Book 2 and 11 as well, since her birth was accidental and unauthorized in every sense. Creation is separated from procreation (Broadbent 1972, 18), which remains a perversion in the spiritual realm.

In my view it is not accidental that Book 2 and Book 3 in the epic feature the presentation of two great families, the family of Satan, and the family of God. Nor is the order accidental: as I have mentioned, there is an upward movement, from the depths of Hell to the heights of Heaven, which metaphorically means from the worst of families to the purest. There is movement from the biological (sexual) towards the ethereal as well. The introduction of the two families also allows the audience to compare and contrast them.

At the 13th International Milton Symposium I presented in the same session as Lynne Greenberg, who analyzed the status of Sin as a marginalized, abandoned seventeenth century woman, and children born out of wedlock, quoting cotemporary sources on the situation of women who lose their status in society – like Sin does in Heaven – and who are assigned a difficult role.

As Greenberg describes, the abandoned, single mother, Sin, offers her own first-hand experience and the story of her shame and misery – as opposed to Satan, who first denies his fatherhood and swears ignorance. The denial of fatherhood in itself reveals the corrupted nature of Satan, whose role as the head of the family is taken over by his son, Death – the resemblance is uncanny. If the Son is the perfect image of the Father, God, the same can be said about Satan and Death, who is his father's nature made visible.

Satan is rarely analyzed as a father, but I think his role as one is significant, and as Greenberg's study shows, the representation of Satan, Sin and Death is not so much allegorical, as written with reference to corrupt, dysfunctional and transgressive family models within the realm of human experience. Thus, the contrast with the members of the Godhead, Father and Son is not merely theological, but very real, and the metaphorical implications of kinship point to human experience, as much as to theology.

I am analyzing kinship and the way it appears in the epic as the expression of the ambiguity of imitation: family members, especially parents and children are alike as much as they are different. Father in the book is interchangeable with the creator and author. Father is a common metaphor for creation, in fact, in mythology, it is one of the prevalent creation metaphors besides mother. In more general terms, the father invents or creates something. God is called the Father by the Son, elsewhere, he is referred to as the Almighty, the Maker, or "Parent of Good" (5.153). This suggests a more intimate relationship between God and the Son. The use of "father" in *Paradise Lost* comes from the biblical use, suggesting caregiver, leader. However, the kinship of God and the Son is more formal, theological. On the one hand, it describes the theological aspect of their resemblance, the Son being the visible image of the Father, making is glory and majesty accessible. The other aspect of their kinship is kingship: the Son is the "Son of his father's Might", the one who inherits the kingdom, and becomes the lawgiver and the ruler of god's creation.

In a way, as opposed to the Father's deliberate choice to produce an heir, Satan's involuntary production of a (female) offspring also indicates the difference between the capabilities of the two fathers: while God chose to be a father, and included the Son in his grand plan, Satan first even denies being a father, and becomes a reluctant one who exploits his family.

When it comes to Adam and Eve, father and mother come up as denominators. In this case, mother indeed means mother in the natural sense, while father transfers some of the responsibility of the Creator to Adam. He is called patriarch (9.375), sire, first father, meaning that whatever he does, will affect the whole of humankind. However, it takes until the end of the epic, and the involvement of the Son, for Adam to responsibly assume his role as a father: he is restored by the Son, who becomes Adam's son, thus making him a worthy father. However, throughout the narrative, Adam and Eve do not actually become parents in the literal sense: their epic attributes rather serve the purpose of their status as those who determine the fate of mankind. Men will inherit whatever they pass down to them, and Adam's dream and vision paint dire pictures. Despite the narrator's cues, Adam and Eve themselves do not recognize their responsibility as parents until after the fall, when they realize the kind of inheritance they will leave their children with. Their statuses as "general mother" and "father of mankind" remain true on the biological level, but they do not fulfil their roles. In fact, when Adam bemoans the fate of the "image of God" having seen the visions of the Lazar-house, he does not understand that respecting the image of God in themselves would have meant fulfilling their role as worthy parents of mankind.

The kinship metaphor is indeed very deeply ingrafted into *Paradise Lost*, heightening its universal anthropological aspect. Kinship is a fundamental human experience, and through it, lots of things can be interpreted. But the epic itself also interprets kinship and respective connotations. I am going to revise the traditions and sources that inform the kinship metaphor in *Paradise Lost*, such as mythology, scriptural tradition, theology and contemporary concepts of kinship in order to show the way different and opposing connotations of imitation create the drama of the epic. Kinship metaphor has the potential to bring into play the complexities of imitation.

III.2. "Eternal Father" - Fatherhood in the Epic

There are three fathers in *Paradise Lost*: God, Satan and Adam. In the epic itself, God represents the absolute meaning of father, he is the father who is not a son, but on the Platonic sense the idea of the father (Osborne 1993, 159). This means that all other fathers are challenged to live up to the ideals of God as a father.

Satan the father who appears first in the epic, and God the Father next. Satan is depicted first as a fierce military leader capable of rousing his defeated army from despair, who suddenly must face

an uncomfortable secret from his past when he meets his daughter. There is a significant contrast between his public and the private image. Publicly, Satan is a successful leader, but privately there is something wrong, especially because he is the one who is inconvenienced by Sin's appearance:

> What thing thou art, thus double-form'd, and why
> In this infernal Vaile first met thou call'st
> Me Father, and that Fantasm call'st my Son?
> I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
> Sight more detestable then him and thee (2.741-745)

There are presumably few more shocking situations for a man then when he is abruptly addressed as "father", and Satan reacts accordingly, disgusted by the situation as much as by his children. As opposed to God, who openly appointed and adopted his son, Satan became a father involuntarily and wants to refuse the constraints of fatherhood. Refusing to acknowledge one's child is another serious moral flaw, which nonetheless characterizes many a man, and absent fathers were certainly not unknown in any age. This stands in stark contrast with his public image, putting into doubt whether one can be a good leader if they neglect their family, just as Milton questioned Charles I.'s portrayal as father of the nation and the Church in *Eikonoklastes*. [80]

In turn, while God the Father is also shown observing his creation, the next thing he does is addressing his Son: "Thus to his onely Son foreseing spake. / Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage /Transports our adversarie" (3.79-81). He starts with acknowledging his son and the son's position as "only begotten" and involving him in observing the actions of Satan.

The divine family portrays the ideal, patriarchal household, which was conceived in the seventeenth century, with the father at its head who is firm but just. Satan and his family, on the other hand, presents the opposite, which was often the reality in these homes. The kinship metaphor is anchored also in the everyday human experience, the dreadfulness of which the epic traces back to the brokenness of the satanic family. Death is a very real presence in families in the Early Modern era, and children often suffered abuse and abandonment instead of care and education.[81]

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[80] Lawrence Stone describes an interesting aspect of the execution of Charles I. He cites sources that define the regicide as fratricide: during the execution itself, the people were shocked and experienced it as assisting to or being witness to the murder of their father. The king was not just a body politick, but also the father of the nation; aversion to the death sentence of the king thus expressed deeper concerns (Stone, 1979). The *Eikón Basilike* (1648) in fact refers to Charles I. as father: "As my publique relations to all, make Me share in all My Subjects sufferings; so give Me such a pious sense of them, as becomes a Christian King, and a loving Father of My People" (64). Milton criticizes this in *Eikonoklastes*, where he writes, "When he at that time could be no way esteem'd the Father of his Countrey, but the destroyer; nor had he ever before merited that former title." (1649, 177).

[81] The concept of family has always served as model for authority, obedience, privilege, obligation and rivalry in literature (Mazzola 2003, 4). In the seventeenth century, it was characterized by the dominance of the father, who was metaphorically the ruler of the family, with wife, children and servants relegated to subjects and children at the same time, owing unconditional loyalty and obedience to the father (Stone 1979, 110). At

I consider very important the developmental arch that both Stella P. Revard (1967) and Robert J. Wickenheiser (1978) in their respective essays highlight concerning the Son: he is involved by being addressed by his father, being interviewed and informed in order to make informed decisions and react accordingly. In the Socratic way, God the father describes the state of events, and invites his Son to share his opinion. In his long monologue, he asks questions such as "Where onely what they needs must do, appeard, / Not what they would? what praise could they receive? / What pleasure I from such obedience paid" (3. 105-107). He communicates openly with the Son; whether for dramatic reasons, in order to impart theology, or for narrative reasons, to let the Son in on his way of thinking, cannot be clearly determined; however, it is an interaction that speaks of wanting to involve the Son in the knowledge, and later in the power of the Father.[82] Education has an important role in the relationship of God with both the Son and Adam, whom he teacher. By contrast, Satan cannot even learn from his mistakes: "and by success untaught/ His proud imaginations thus displaid" (2.8-9).

Satan does not educate his children, merely uses and abuses them. Just like God, it is Satan who first addresses his son, Death upon their encounter, but instead of acknowledging him as his son, he asks him who he is. Unlike in the case of the Father, it is Death who claims to know Satan and his history – in fact he holds up a mirror to Satan:

> And reck'n'st thou thy self with Spirits of Heav'n,
> Hell-doom'd, and breath'st defiance here and scorn
> Where I reign King, and to enrage thee more,
> Thy King and Lord? (2.696-699)

Death, the son mocks Satan, ridicules him for considering himself worthy of heaven and does not refrain from further challenging him. As I described, the mythical pattern of the son of divine origin challenging and threatening his father, holds true in the theological terms that Satan and his followers will be doomed to eternal death and will not be saved, hence Death will in fact overcome Satan.

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the same time, parents, and of course the father in particular had complete power over the lives of the dependents, who were infantilized to a status where they needed to be constantly educated, kept in line and checked upon; with verbal and physical abuse a normalized part of everyday life. Consequently, testimonies abound about the fear and even hatred that children harbored towards their parents and educators (ibid. 121). The family relationships were, therefore, about power and control, with little room for love and tenderness. Especially important that among the wealthier members of the society, fathers exercised control over the future livelihood of children as well, being able to make decisions concerning the distribution of wealth, and that way extorting offspring into obedience and relinquishing freedom of choice over several aspects over their lives, such as marriage and career. This created a competition between children, especially sons, who had to prove themselves by obeying and following the father's decisions; while the tradition of primogeniture further exacerbated the situation, often leaving the younger children at the mercy of their elder brother (Stone 1979, 112-113)

[82] Both Revard (Revard 1967, 52) and Wickenheiser (Wickenheiser 1978, 3) emphasize that the Son is informed about things, he must be told what is happening from the divine perspective, which indicates that the Son does not possess the faculty of omniscience.

The public and domestic image of God are not separate, he confers with his Son in front of the heavenly congregation, he is not embarrassed by him as Satan is by Sin. This indicates that he considers him a son in the political sense, as heir and company, seeking to work together. Despite the official tone, however, their interaction is not deprived from affection, as opposed to the dialogue between Satan and his children. The Son praises his father's goodness and approves of his decisions, and he even ventures to coax his Father into showing mercy towards mankind, reminding him that he is a merciful God. [83] God in return addresses him as "O Son, in whom my Soul hath chief delight, / Son of my bosom, Son who art alone/ My word, my wisdom, and effectual might" (3.168-170).

The Son assumes the role of the Father right after the fall, taking care of the human couple even after they have transgressed, demonstrating parental affection:

> So judg'd he Man, both Judge and Saviour sent,
> And th' instant stroke of Death denounc't that day
> Remov'd farr off; then pittying how they stood
> Before him naked to the aire, that now
> Must suffer change, disdain'd not to begin
> Thenceforth the form of servant to assume,
> As when he wash'd his servants feet so now
> As Father of his Familie he clad
> Thir nakedness with Skins of Beasts, or slain,
> Or as the Snake with youthful Coate repaid;
> And thought not much to cloath his Enemies:
> Nor hee thir outward onely with the Skins
> Of Beasts, but inward nakedness, much more
> Opprobrious, with his Robe of righteousness,
> Araying cover'd from his Fathers sight (10.209-223)

This passage is crucial to the understanding of the complex role of the Son and the way the kinship metaphor operates throughout the epic. As the Son, he takes over the duty and the responsibility of action from the Father, and in doing so, he also transforms into the Father. In alignment with theology, he is first depicted as Judge, Savior and servant, evoking the book of Revelations and the Gospels, but his demeanor as a father unites all these roles: he both disciplines his children but takes care of them.

The ideal kinship the epic presents, therefore, is founded on education, discipline, fairness but also affection. This is already a fallen family dynamic, involving punishment, but it still allows the relationship to be loving and caring, not to mention sacrificial.

Right next to this scene, in Book 10, the children of Satan are found standing at the gates of Hell, abandoned, wondering what their father is up to. It is Sin, the female figure who is capable to

[83] The Son's plea brings to mind Moses's plea on Mount Sinai, seeking to save the idolatrous nation: "Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people" (Ex 32: 12 KJV).

undertake a creative construction work, in order to make the situation of fallen angels easier. Sin and Death have the power to overcome the chasm of Chaos, that Satan was hardly able to cross.

Satan only insinuates affection when he realizes that his offspring may prove useful to his purposes: “Dear Daughter, since thou claim’st me for thy Sire, / And my fair Son here showst me” (2.817-818). He aims at pleasing them, just as he pleased and convinced his followers. Nevertheless, they react as children, and Death even uncannily smiles like a hungry infant: “He ceas’d, for both seem’d highly pleasd, and Death/ Grinnd horrible a gastly smile, to hear/ His famine should be fill’d” (2.845-847). True to the image of the bad patriarch, he utilizes his children as assets.

Satan’s children have mixed reactions to their father, while Sin behaves as the obedient daughter, shows respect and even affection towards her father, the son is hostile. As Turner claimed that Sin reveals the true nature of her father, it is also true about God and the Son. One difference between God and the Son is visibility: the Father is invisible while the Son is him made visible (Revard 1967, 49). This is turned around in case of Satan and his son: Satan is quite visible, described in very vivid imagery, while his son, Death is hard to describe:

> The other shape, magic spells
> If shape it might be call’d that shape had none
> Distinguishable in member, joynt, or limb,
> Or substance might be call’d that shadow seem’d,
> For each seem’d either; black it stood as Night, (2.666-670)

In a sense, Death’s “appearance” also reflects on Satan’s nature and his final destiny, eternal death. Death is the negative image of the epic hero that Satan still radiates in the second book, devoid of beauty: this is what remains when the divine is taken away.

It is also true that the Son acts as the instrument of God’s will, and the Father is the source (Revard 1967, 49). Sin and Death also become the instruments of Satan’s will, without whom Earth could not be conquered. They set him free, opening the gates of Hell, and in Book 10, even though Satan did not invite them, they follow him to Earth on their own initiative (not waiting around for him to order them), and there he commissions them:

> My Substitutes I send ye, and Create
> Plenipotent on Earth, of matchless might
> Issuing from mee: on your joynt vigor now
> My hold of this new Kingdom all depends,
> Through Sin to Death expos’d by my exploit.
> If your joynt power prevailes, th’ affaires of Hell
> No detriment need feare, goe and be strong (10.403-409)

Satan implies that the same bond exists between him, Sin and Death as between the persons of the Godhead, that they owe him their power, they represent him and maintain his rule for him. The unholy

trinity imitates the happy unity between God and the Son, and Satan with divine generosity recalling Joshua 1:9: “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage”.

Satan sending his children to doom the Earth is the negative image of God sending his Son to save it. Just as God wants to make Earth like Heaven, Satan boasts of turning it into hell: “and made one Realm/ Hell and this World, one Realm, one Continent” (10.391-392). He also sends his son (and daughter) in his stead to carry out and finish the work, and it is at this point that he achieves full self-recognition based on his merits:

> High proof ye now have giv’n to be the Race
> Of Satan (for I glorie in the name,
> Antagonist of Heav’ns Almightie King)
> Amply have merited of me, of all
> Th’ infernal Empire, that so neer Heav’ns dore
> Triumphal with triumphal act have met (10.385-390)

It shows that Satan defines himself in relation to the Godhead, as an “Antagonist”, pretending to be a mimetic double: establishing an empire like the one in Heaven, and extending his power on Earth through his children. He acknowledges, however, the kingdom of Heaven as the model, but he cannot cope with what godlikeness means.

Satan resembles the Father in uncanny ways: according to the theory of double creation, God first conjured up things in his mind, and then created them (Mack 2005, 80). Sin is the very expression of this one double creation carried out by Satan: Sin must have conceived first in Satan’s head, from where she later sprang. This was, however, not a voluntary act; nor he fathered Death on purpose.

Sin insists on calling him “Author and prime Architect” (10.356), comparing him to God; however, in the sense that God can create ex nihilo by creating and fashioning (Mack 2005). Satan fails in both sense: he cannot intentionally create, only reproduce, and definitely fails to fashion: he does not even educate his own offspring as God educates his Son and Adam.

God’s and Satan’s role as rulers cannot be separated from their roles as fathers, which differ fundamentally. God as the father appears in the role of the loving patriarch, who educates and grooms his offspring, but offering them the freedom of choice. Satan as the father does not seem an important aspect of his character, but as I have shown, there is more to it: his fatherhood reveals a side of his character that undermines his image as a heroic rebel. While the feud with his son, Death recalls the mythical fate of Laius who is nor recognized by his son and vice versa; his fast reconciliation with him seems hypocritical. He uses family ties for his own purposes.

Adam’s epithet is “our first Father” (4.495), “our Father” (10.1097), “great Progenitor” (11.346). He is destined to become a father in the actual and in the universal sense as well, becoming the ancestor of all mankind. He is to be the father in the earthly, biological sense, and even though he

does not become a parent within the epic, he catches a glimpse of the feeling of fatherhood. He philosophizes about the arbitrariness of it:

> what if thy Son
> Prove disobedient, and reprov'd, retort,
> Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not.
> Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee
> That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,
> But Natural necessity begot. (10.760-765)

There seems to be a confusion here in terms of father and son, observing it from the point of view of "necessity": it is inevitable to become a father, but the son does not necessarily turn out to be as expected.[84] The postlapsarian logic argues the opposite of what God the Father and the Son share; instead of creating out of love, Adam interprets fathering a son as an act of selfishness. Adam also realizes not only the responsibility, but the consequences of being a father and how that affects his offspring:

> Who of all Ages to succeed, but feeling
> The evil on him brought by me, will curse
> My Head, Ill fare our Ancestor impure,
> For this we may thank Adam; but his thanks
> Shall be the execration (10.734-737)

Albeit too late, Adam understands that to be a father is to define the fate of many people. He mostly regrets that he will not be remembered with reverence, on the contrary, that he will be cursed and the "fierce reflux on mee redound" (10.739), but he understands the severity of his position. This is a fundamental difference between God the Father and Adam the father: the Almighty has it all planned form the beginning, as the ideal father, while Adam is learning about his responsibilities in the process.

Eventually, Adam arrives at the point of desperation where he contemplates offering himself up to save his children:

> Fair Patrimonie
> That I must leave ye, Sons; O were I able
> To waste it all my self, and leave ye none!

[84] Obedience was the virtue of good children in the seventeenth century. "In the first half of the seventeenth century a son, even when grown up, would commonly address his father in a letter as 'sir', and sign himself your humble obedient son', 'your son in continuance of all obedience', or 'your most obedient and loving son'" (Stone 1979. 123). With this family landscape in the background, it is evident that issues of parental favoritism, rebellion and sibling rivalry come into play upon discussing kinship in *Paradise Lost*. It is remarkable, however, that instead of subverting traditional family values, the epic reinstates the virtues of loyalty and obedience, liberating them from being the instruments of oppression. The Son is the hero and the worthy heir of his Father, but it also takes a father who is worthy to follow and obey. The mythological rebellion against the father was the harbinger of disorder, but only in case the father lived up to the divine expectations of his position.

So disinherited how would ye bless
Me now your curse! (10.818-823)

He uses the language of kinship, "patrimony" and "disinherit", implying that kinship is at work: whatever Adam has, he will pass on to his children, and it is their inheritance. It seems that Adam keeps learning, even in legal terms, what fatherhood means.

The sense in which Adam becomes like God the father is his experience of disappointment in his offspring. Contemporary texts reflect parental dismay over the child's misbehavior, and this emotion is echoed by Adam in Book 12, when he witnesses the great hunter, Nimrod's ascension and the construction of the tower of Babel:

Whereto thus Adam fatherly displeas'd.
O execrable Son so to aspire
Above his Brethren, to himself assuming
Authoritie usurpt, from God not giv'n (12. 63-66)

Fatherly displeasure is as much part of the kinship metaphor, as the use of "Brethren". Adam has assumed the position of the father, referring to Nimrod as "Son", and expressing the equality and the shared fate of people by calling them brothers. Furthermore, Nimrod as a son (not as a king) has no right to consider himself superior to the others, he is one of them. The brotherhood of men here is used as a reminder that all men are equal.

The lines also echo Satan's meeting with the "Execrable shape" (2.681), his own son. This is a sign that as a father, Adam does not only resemble God, but also Satan: his fatherhood is not only filled with love, but also with revulsion. He lacks the ability to exercise self-reflection and recognize that Eve and him also usurped authority from God.

The reflection of the reality of fatherhood is most powerful when Adam must witness the destruction of all the population of Earth because of the flood, and he stands still, "as when a Father mourns His Children, all in view destroyd at once" (11.760-761). Here the echoes of the contemporary reality are as strong as the references to labor pain: the death of children was a common occurrence as both Lawrence Stone and Louis Schwartz describe, with the remaining parents or parent, often the father, helplessly standing by.

Adam's perspective as a father is unique, as he has the opportunity to think about what his actions mean, and also see what happens as a result. He experiences a range of emotions, from shame to disappointment to anger and pity, shedding light on the hardships of parents. It also mirrors the

emotions God the Father experiences: desperation and disillusion. Adam as a father has a tragic role, as he is helpless, unable to save the children from the consequences of his actions. [85]

Adam otherwise has the role of a son, albeit it is also important to mention that he is not explicitly named son, just like angels are not really given this title either. He is a disobedient child and a father who in advance wronged his entire progeny. Still, it is sonship through which divine providence works: the Archangel Michael shows Adam how the sons, throughout the biblical story, advance the promise of salvation:

> This Patriarch blest,
> Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,
> A Son, and of his Son a Grand-childe leaves,
> Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown;
> The Grandchilde with twelve Sons increast, departs
> From Canaan, to a land hereafter call'd
> Egypt, divided by the River Nile;
> See where it flows, disgorging at seaven mouthes
> Into the Sea: to sojourn in that Land
> He comes invited by a yonger Son
> In time of dearth, a Son whose worthy deeds
> Raise him to be the second in that Realme
> Of Pharao (12.151-163)

Just like the Bible uses genealogies to trace the seed of the woman, the promised Messiah, who will eventually bring salvation and will crush the Serpent's head, Michael's narrative also emphasizes the importance of sons, thereby also encouraging Adam to not escape into suicide or childlessness but have children. These sons are like their fathers, or better even, and showing that it is the human way of advancement. These sons, all written with a capital letter, are also, typologically the prefiguration of the Son and his arrival, who is going to be the perfect one. This already signifies the incarnation as well: the Son is not just a Son of God, but also a son of man, the descendant of a long line of sons. Instead of offspring who curses Adam, the angel portrays sons who carry out the divine will.

Michael's account continues, and kinship becomes connected with kingship:

> That of the Royal Stock
> Of David (so I name this King) shall rise
> A Son, the Womans Seed to thee foretold,
> Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust
> All Nations, and to Kings foretold, of Kings
> The last, for of his Reign shall be no end. (12.325-330)

[85] The solution for the Father's dismay is his Son's response, obedience and sacrifice. In Book 3 when God says it is inevitable to punish men for their transgression (209-212), the Son volunteers to save them (237-241). There is a stark contrast between the divine kinship and the human one. While Adam envisions his children cursing him for making them live with his sin, the Son acts in free will and faces the punishment on his own volition.

The Son is the perfect son and the last king as well, who "he shall ascend/ The Throne hereditary (12.369-370). Being the son legalizes his ascent, and through him heavenly kingship and earthly kingship will also be united. It is also important to mention, that true to doctrine, sonship also acquires a physical reality, and it is through the mother, the woman. The Son and the king are metaphysical entities until they both get realized on earth. Therefore, as Osborne explained based on Athanasius's platonic theory of words, both kinship and kingship have a metaphysical, ideal meaning before they are actualized in our world.

The promise that the Son will eventually become the son of man is the promise that mankind will become the son, and thus become like the Son, and by extension, like the Father. In this way, while mankind actively has to imitate God, meaning it has to be obedient, at the same time it is eventually going to be divine providence working through imitation that saves and restores mankind. It is because mankind is created in the image of God that it is saved, while Satan, for example, does not partake in the image.

> By Merit more then Birthright Son of God,
> Found worthiest to be so by being Good,
> Farr more then Great or High; because in thee
> Love hath abounded more then Glory abounds,
> Therefore thy Humiliation shall exalt
> With thee thy Manhood also to this Throne;
> Here shalt thou sit Incarnate, here shalt Reign
> Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
> Anointed universal King (3.309-317)

Kinship is key to the divine project of creation and salvation, it is not only the way to illustrate the relationship between God the Father and the Son, but to explain incarnation and the union between the heavenly and the earthly kingdoms. It is particular to the epic that it uses the "Son" to name the Messiah, who is, from the beginning, all the sons in the line of succession that leads to the Son of God and Man. Satan and Adam are neither sons in the ideal sense, nor in the earthly sense, neither by merit nor by birthright. As fathers, Satan represents a neglectful father, whose private life is not in harmony with his public persona. Adam does not have an ideal start as a father, as he himself recognizes, his future children are going to have a very different inheritance than God the Father meant for them. While the kinship of the Father and the Son draws upon Biblical sources, the contrast with Satan's and Adam's fatherhood is the invention of the epic, involving a variety of metaphorical patterns. These are evoked in order to compare them with the ideal, divine kinship and to prove its transformative, restorative power.

Throughout the poem, kinship represents the fundamental experience of being made in the image of God. The Son and Satan represent different experiences of the phenomenon of imitation, cooperation and rivalry, obedience and disobedience.

III.3. "Filial Godhead" – Sonship in the Epic

The kinship metaphor in the epic reinforces the mimetic patterns. Hierarchical relationships can cause rivalry, and the satanic envy and jealousy spreads like contagion. While the divine Father-Son relationship represents the ideal, the Satan-Sin-Death family exemplifies the rivalistic, fallen kinship. While the Son if God is the instrument of redemption, Death, Satan's son is the instrument of mankind's doom. Death is an abandoned son, while the Son is educated and groomed by his father, and become to share his power. Mankind is redeemed by the promise of becoming parents, parents of the Son of God.

Parenthood is most commonly used as a reference to Adam and Eve, the narrator calling them "our Grand Parents" (1.29), while they do not become parents in the epic itself. Parenthood, however, carries a substantial weight in their identity, since it defines human destiny and history, and it connects them to the Son. Adam comes to understand the burden of responsibility and the difficulties of being a parent:

> Who of all Ages to succeed, but feeling
> The evil on him brought by me, will curse
> My Head, Ill fare our Ancestor impure,
> For this we may thank Adam; but his thanks
> Shall be the execration (10.733-737)

This is in fact what Satan wishes to be the result of his revenge:

> This would surpass
> Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
> In our Confusion, and our Joy upraise
> In his disturbance; when his darling Sons
> Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
> Thir frail Original, and faded bliss,
> Faded so soon. (2. 370-376)

Satan and Adam both see kinship as a potentially dangerous terrain, wherein the complexities of the relationship easily cause conflict and resentment: the problem of a son disappointing his father, and the father passing down a curse as an inheritance are the realities of fallen kinship. Adam, however, will be saved by his son, "one greater man", while Satan will be doomed by his son, Death.

Mythologically, divine kinship is portrayed as a zone of conflict. The rivalry between divine father and son, and between divine or semi-divine siblings is the expression of the universal experience of human kinship, and there are echoes of these rivalries in the epic, contradicting the meaning of kinship in Christian theology.[86] The mythical rivalries evoked underscore the satanic argument that there is no harmony within the mimetic hierarchy of creation.

Satan becomes the embodiment of the image of the tyrannical father he claims God to be, not only in the sense of being an abusive, absentee father, but in mythological terms as well. It is worth comparing an episode of Hesiod's Theogony, when Kronos raises rebellion against Ouranos, his father to the rebellion of the angels and to some extent with Death's enmity against his father.

> "My children, gotten of a sinful father, if you will obey me, we should punish the vile outrage of your father; for he first thought of doing shameful things." So she said; but fear seized them all, and none of them uttered a word. But great Cronos the wily took courage and answered his dear mother: "Mother, I will undertake to do this deed, for I reverence not our father of evil name, for he first thought of doing shameful things." So he said: and vast Earth rejoiced greatly in spirit, and set and hid him in an ambush, and put in his hands a jagged sickle, and revealed to him the whole plot. And Heaven came, bringing on night and longing for love, and he lay about Earth spreading himself full upon her. Then the son from his ambush stretched forth his left hand and in his right took the great long sickle with jagged teeth, and swiftly lopped off his own father's members and cast them away to fall behind him (Evelyn-White 1914, 165-180).

In Theogony, the father figure is already antagonistic and violent, modelling the rivalry so that father and son actually become mimetic doubles. Despite the obvious differences, such as the mother raising the son against the father, and the castration itself, the idea of a son standing up against the powerful father is very present. Kronos volunteers, and blames (his indeed violent) father for the antagonism. Earth here rejoices over the rebellion, and Kronos takes arms to attack his father. In *Paradise Lost*, the fallen creatures not only serve as pagan gods, but also depict the antithesis of the divine family, the unit of the Father and the Son.[87]

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[86] The mythological pattern related to kinship is the rebellious conflict between Uranos and his sons the Cyclopes, and the defeat of Uranos by Cronos, another son, who is eventually defeated by Zeus. The god-king is challenged, threatened and eventually defeated by the younger generation of gods. The father figures in the myth are tyrannical, violent and try to oppress and destroy their offspring, whom they consider a threat to their rule. The mythical father is very much like the tyrannical Almighty in the eyes of the rebel angels, against whom they united.

[87] The rivalry between father and son is also present in Oedipus Rex, even though it is involuntary. It seems that the power struggle between them is inevitable. It is as if father and son are predestined to compete. The status of Satan, Sin and Death as mythical-allegorical figures provides the phenomena of father-son conflict and incest a mythical hue as well, describing the origin of these sins. The power-hungry, violent behavior of Death, in addition, is the amplified revelation of his father's true nature. Incest and the jealousy between the father and the son are intertwined, as Freud describes in *Totem and Taboo* (1919): "There is only a violent, jealous father who keeps all the females for himself and drives away the growing sons. (…) One day the expelled brothers joined forces, slew and ate the father, and thus put an end to the father horde" (2004, 164). The purpose of Freud's argument was show how the totem and the surrounding taboo was born, but the psychoanalytic

The myths about pagan gods in *Paradise Lost* are testimonies of the satanic influence on culture (Gallagher 1979, 122), and by extension, the satanic influence on thought processes as well, that is, the formation of metaphorical patterns.[88] Besides directing the attention to approach mythologies critically, the epic also offers not only the Christian version of a hero, but the fundamental metaphors that play an important role in Christian theology.

Moshe Idel (2007) summarizes the significance of sonship in Judeo-Christian theology, emphasizing the importance of the son as a mediator, a channel between the divine and the human worlds, by way of being hypostatic, uniting the divine and the human natures (1-2).[89] The ability to be both human and divine sets the son apart from other spiritual beings, and in *Paradise Lost* this unique capacity is expressed via the image metaphor, which is the shared nature between God and mankind – embodied, expressed by the ultimate image, the Son.

The Son as an image means not only a visual sign of God, but also a presence of Him, and not an absence. Image in their case means not separation, but the unity and even continuity of model and image, since the Son does not only reflect, but also channel and exert the power of the Father. In this sense, the Son and Adam and Eve are only true images.

This of course raises questions about the nature of the Son in the epic, which in my opinion transcends theological debates. The epic does not mean to communicate theological tenets but motivate the audience to work on interpretation. The Arian controversy involves a debate that borders

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enquiry also reveals that the mythological patterns have a root in human experience and psyche. In classical mythology, the family unit was ripe with conflict, adultery, incest, jealousy, and violence, which, in my view, points to the fact that family is a difficult terrain, a minefield in human experience. The fundamental issues they outline reflect deep anxieties.

[88] Philip J. Gallagher (1979) expands on John M. Steadman's (1967) arguments concerning prototypes and antitypes in the epic and says that "that the characters and events of Milton's narrative are offered as the historical archetypes in imitation of which the Greek account was written" (130). Besides the subversive mode of aesthetic or literary imitation, it is important to remark that apart from criticizing ancient heroic values and the values transmitted by myths, the epic also forces the audience to reconsider the source of meaning and expectations.

[89] Idel, moreover, describes "double sonship", and its implications of the son as such: "Let me emphasize from the beginning that this theory of a double sonship should not be seen in terms of a static hierarchy, which only subordinates the lower to the higher, but also as an invitation to the lower to ascend to the higher. In the main forms of double sonship to be discussed below, it is not only the resemblance of the lower to the higher that is emphasized, but also the possibility of sharing some essence either because of a primordial affinity, or because of the development of the lower entity, which strives to assimilate to the higher. Thus to become a son is not only to be subordinated to the higher but to become close to it or, ideally, to unite with it, thus transcending one form of sonship for another, higher one. Or, to formulate it in a simpler manner, the human son aspires to assimilate himself as much as possible with the higher son, and thus become a Son of God himself" (2007, 2). In other words, sonship expresses the mimetic hierarchy of ontological imitation, with the metaphysical desire to ascend and reunite with the original, the model. It also involves the paradox of otherness while being almost identical to the model, which can be transcended – without the son eliminating the father. Another exhaustive study of the biblical sonship is the *St. Andrews Encyclopaedia of Theology* entry entitled "Sonship in the Bible" by Joshua Maurer and Amy Peeler (2022). The entry focuses not only on the bible, but on cultures influencing the Ancient Hebrew concept of "son" as well as analyzing in detail the uses and implications of the metaphorical meaning of kinship. The authors agree that kinship is part of the providential plan of God

on being semiotic, whether the denominators "son" and "father" are adequate to refer to God and the Messiah; and this is a concern to be raised whether in favor of their shared divinity or not. Based on prose treatises written by Milton, Michael Lieb (2000) concludes that the author's approach to Arianism is rather a concern of methodology, and I intend to apply this attitude to the epic as well, claiming that the inspires interpretation instead of conveying beliefs. The epic, nonetheless, consistently and deliberately uses the kinship metaphor – together with the image metaphor – to describe the two members of the Godhead.

On the one hand, kinship is a relational metaphor, therefore, sonship requires the presence of fatherhood. That implies mutual dependence, father and son mutually defining each other. This is not so much an ontological, but rather an epistemological issue; Paul Cefalu writes that the Miltonic *via negativa* leads "not to an unknowable God, but to the Son" (2016, 217). This is also what Turner claims about Sin and Satan, that the child ultimately reveals the true nature of the parent – which I add, is especially true in case of Death, who is the (dis)embodiment of his father's (and mother's) desire, the uncreative force in opposition to God, and a ruler of his own realm.

Accepting the premises that Danielson outlines regarding the Son's role as the facilitator of the elevation of mankind even if the fall never takes place, that is, no *felix culpa* (2014, 212), then the hypostatic son, both Son of God and Adam's Son occupies a position that is subordinate to God but infinitely godlike, possessing a nature that sets them apart from angels, which is expressed in the image as well as through the kinship metaphor.

There is no question, therefore, that the Son is subordinate to the Father, which is a direct consequence of the kinship metaphor as well as of the mimetic framework in which it operates. In this quality the Son serves as an example for mankind, the infinitely godlike entity who shares God's power, sovereignty and dignity and exerts his power in unity and harmony with him, without desiring exclusive divine position and power. Kinship implies difference and otherness as much as it implies likeness and unity.

Thirdly, for the angels he is a separate entity, and Satan's argument is that God elevated one of them arbitrarily. This is, however, the Satanic interpretation of the exaltation of the Son. It reframes the rebellion as sibling rivalry in the face of parental favoritism, as Abdiel explains:

> Thy self though great and glorious dost thou count,
> Or all Angelic Nature joind in one,
> Equal to him begotten Son, by whom
> As by his Word the mighty Father made
> All things (5.833-837).

In creation, as Abdiel recalls, the Word, just as the image, acts as the expression of the Father's power and will. From the viewpoint of the angels, therefore, if the Son is not different from them, it would

indeed be an arbitrary choice to elevate him as one of the "siblings". That is why Abdiel's argument abput the Son's creative power sounds so outrageous to Satan that he calls it "the work/ Of secondarie hands" (5.853-854).

The Father describes the Son in the following terms:

> Effulgence of my Glorie, Son belov'd,
> Son in whose face invisible is beheld
> Visibly, what by Deitie I am,
> And in whose hand what by Decree I doe,
> Second Omnipotence (6.680-684).

Besides visibility, which I discuss in the section about the image metaphor, the Son seems to indeed lend a hand to the Father, carrying out his will. The expression "Second Omnipotence" does not further clarify the status of the So in fact, it further complicates it. It means that in terms of power the Son is equal to the Father, but he is still subordinate to Him.

The nature and the status of the Son, therefore, is more complicated than the question of *homoousios* or *homoiusios*, it is a matter of interpretation, it is dynamic, and it evolves, with the fall of man achieving yet another layer.[90] Son in the Bible is an important symbol. Genealogies are vital part

[90] Additionally, Lieb explains that Arianism cannot be defined as a simple, well-formulated theological movement, but a number of beliefs and approaches (2000, 198). In fact, the works by Eunomius, discussed by Catherine Osborne (1993) and Gregory of Nyssa's answer regard the very metaphors Father and Son, and through the connotations of the metaphors their capacity to express divine nature. Osborne emphasizes that Arius and Eunomius were dissatisfied with the denomination "Son", preferring "creature" or "product" instead (1993, 154). Arians though that the son of God pertained to the Son so far as he is also partaker of God's grace, like everyone else (1993, 155). In this sense, son means not so much heir or representative, but someone who is taken care of and loved by God. In a simple and elegant way, her essay shows how this debate contributes to the philosophical enquiry into the literal and metaphorical use of language in religious texts and theology. The primary anxiety with kinship metaphor is, from the Arian viewpoint, is that the word "Son" affects the uniqueness of God, while from the orthodox standpoint, "creature" compromises the status of the "Son" (Osborne 1993, 165): monotheism is called into question if there are more divine persons, but from an orthodox viewpoint, the divine nature of the Son should not be questioned. The metaphor is in the origo of the controversy: father and son express the very dilemma of the sameness and otherness of the persons of the Godhead. Arian's writings, such as the poetic *Thalia*, only remains available in fragmented references, but Eunomius a prominent Arian theologian allows more insight into the heart of the debate: "The Son is the 'offspring' and 'thing made' of the Un- begotten and Unmade, while heaven and angels and every other 'thing made' whatsoever are things made by this 'thing made', 'made through him' at the command of the Father. In this way the inerrancy of the scriptures can be preserved when they call the Son 'thing made' and 'offspring', & while we ourselves will not be moved from our own sound conclusions: we will neither ascribe bodily members to God, nor will we lay down either his own essence as the basis for begetting or matter for creation, for it is from these that the distinction in the use of these words inherently arises (Eunomius 1987, 55). He clearly states that the use of kinship, especially "Son" endangers the status of God since it would mean that there are two gods, and that the process of generation resembles the biological conception. Eunomius takes the metaphor too literally, ignoring the range of metaphorical connotations at play. The debate, of course, centers around whether the Son is divine, and a member of the Godhead. In my view, the controversy questions whether the kinship metaphor can express the complex relationship that characterizes the members of the Godhead. The three texts analyzed by Osborne, Athanasius's *Contra Arianos*, St. Basil's *Adversus Eunomium*, and Gregory of Nyssa's *Contra Eunomium* reflect on the theological mode of interpretation of the kinship metaphor. Firstly, according to Athanasius, the primary meaning of the words is the authentic meaning: "Athanasius' claim that human fathers and sons do not fully

of the redemption story, and in Book 12 Adam is given the line of succession from Abraham though Jacob until Moses, where the role of the "Son" is emphasized through repetition:

> He comes invited by a yonger Son
> In time of dearth, a Son whose worthy deeds
> Raise him to be the second in that Realme
> Of Pharao there he dies, and leaves his Race
> Growing into a Nation (12.160-164)

In this section (12.79-173) "Son," with a capital "S" appears multiple times. All these sons in epic, foretold by Michael in a vision to Adam, are in a way the Son himself, doing the work of salvation: the Son overshadows the father, fulfilling the prophecy. Just as the Son is the key to the salvation of mankind, he is also the key to individual success stories, saving and redeeming tribes and nations.

It is not accidental, therefore, that the Messiah is referred to as the Son in the epic: the Biblical genealogies operate through the son, and eventually the providential work is accomplished by the Son as well. The epic borrows the kinship language of the Bible, using the metaphorical as well as the literal sense of genealogy to "justify the ways of god to men."

The focus on the Son is the reason why the rebel angels are not called the sons of God, which is a digression from the biblical language. It is another evidence of not relying on the Book of Job, even though the divine council is an important episode there. However, in Job, the angels are called the sons of God: "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them" (Job 1:6). According to this book, they were there at the creation of the world: "Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy (Job 38:6-7). Similarly, in Psalms 82, verse 6, the divine assembly is addressed: "Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the

represent what it is to be a father or a son depends upon the observation that human fathers are always also sons (and vice versa, though this might seem less inevitable to us). In the case of God on the other hand the Father is simply father and not son, while the Son is simply son and not also father" (Osborne 1993, 159). Athanasius argues that the Father and the Son are the ideal expression of kinship. Secondly, St. Basil claims that the misunderstanding of the kinship metaphor arises from relying on the wrong sense of connotations: it can mean affinity or passion (in other words, biological generation) (Osborne 1993, 163). St. Basil argues, therefore, that kinship, when describing the God and the Son, Christ, in the metaphorical sense, is used in order to emphasize their similarity, sameness and their function, and not the order and the way of their origin. The Father is the will, and the Son executes his Father's will in creation. Thirdly, Gregory of Nyssa, also in a Platonic vein, asserts that a word can exist on its own, without the need for a reference in the world (Osborne 1993, 160-161). God does not depend on language, he can exist outside of it. Abstract meaning can be expressed without the need for an actual signified, or without being grounded in experience. As Osborne also acknowledges, the language of theology and religion must always be metaphorical, and the discussion on father and son brings to mind the theory of accommodation, that is, the way limited human language is used in the expression of the divine. There is a need for language, of course, but Osborne suggests that when it comes to religion, meaning arises not from experience, as the theory of cognitive metaphors has it, but from God (Osborne 1993, 158-159). For more about the figurative language use and theology, I suggest Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (1985).

most High". [91] Milton otherwise is aware of the kinship of the angels, as he says about the Son in *A Treatise*: "he enjoys the title of only begotten by way of superiority, as distinguished from many others who are also said to have been born of God" (Milton 1825, 189).

Stella Pruce Revard describes that while in *Paradise Lost* there are three important differences between God and the Son, throughout the epic there is a progression, and the Son gradually develops into becoming more and more like the Father. She says:

> Man has before him the perfect example of the Son and the Son's steady progress to be as one with the Father. The Son's earthly example is pertinent too ("till one greater Man / Restore us, and regain the blissful seat"). Restored by the Son's sacrifice, man can achieve reunion. This is the meaning of Milton's Trinity (1967, 58)

There is then, according to Revard, hierarchy involved in the relationship between father and son, just as kinship itself suggests. She argues that the dialogues are not merely, in fact, there for dramatic function, but because it is the Father who sees and knows, and the Son must be told about it (ibid. 52).[92] The key to becoming is obedience (ibid. 51), which the Son purposefully practices.

The full circle of the Son's career is described by God in Book 3. God says,

> Because thou hast, though Thron'd in highest bliss
> Equal to God, and equally enjoying
> God-like fruition, quitted all to save
> A World from utter loss, and hast been found
> By Merit more then Birthright Son of God (3.305-309)

Patrides claims that this instance means that the Son is equal to God from the beginning (Hunter et al. 1971, 66); however, at this point I think "equal" refers to being enthroned, or even better, enjoying equal "bliss" to God. It is not the Son, who is equal, but his position and his bliss. Furthermore, God himself admits that the title "Son of God", which the epic uses very carefully, is deserved by the Son thanks to his "merits", or his achievements.

God continues to describe the final exaltation of the Son:

> Therefore thy Humiliation shall exalt
> With thee thy Manhood also to this Throne;
> Here shalt thou sit Incarnate, here shalt Reign

[91] In Psalm 29:1, the King James translation says „mighty", but the original Hebrew word is *bane*, a son, a builder of the family name. The word appears in the Bible almost five thousand times, it is the same word as in Job. Son is a keyword in the Bible as well, and it refers to the angels, *elohim* in the plural, as children of God.
[92] The fundamental differences between Father and Son, according to Revard, are the following: first, quite obviously, is visibility (3.375-82). Second, God has a threefold quality: omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence, which are not particular to the Son. The Son receives information and power from God, but he functions as the "image", the expression of these. The third and most important aspect is that the Son is mutable, unlike God: he becomes man.

> Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
> Anointed universal King; (3.313-317)

God talks about atonement and incarnation and says that the Son is in effect man as well. He is going to sit on the throne as a man, and shall become, besides Son of God, son of Man also. While "Son of Man" is the term that the Messiah uses to describe himself in the New Testament, the kinship metaphor here is transformative: the Son acquires a double nature, and by his incarnation man becomes father too, and human and divine nature are united in him. Eventually, the Father says, "God shall be all in all" (3.340). It is noteworthy, however, that the Father speaks in the future tense; he acknowledges the Son's offering and commitment but outlines his descent and ascent as something that is yet to happen. His foreknowledge does not replace the actual experience that the Son will have to go through. It is the Father's will, and the Son shall carry it out.

The particular relationship between the Father and the Son is further emphasized by what Patrides observes:

> …the distinction between the Father and the Son in *Paradise Lost* appears only during their verbal exchanges, while as soon as the "dialogues" are terminated, and particularly when we encounter the Godhead in action beyond the confines of heaven, the distinction between the two Persons is arrested abruptly. This technique satisfies, I hold, both the drama and the dogma: the drama, in that the artistic demands of the narrative are met through the fascinating "consultations" of the two Persons within the Godhead; and the dogma, in that the distinction between the Father and the Son is neither permitted to lapse into total separation — which would be polytheism — nor retained once we progress beyond the immediate area circumscribed by the Empyraean (Hunter, Patrides, and Adamson 1971, 74).

The dialogues between the members of the Godhead are indeed important from the point of view of the drama of the epic, as they also enhance the paradox of sameness-otherness between them. It seems that the omniscient God genuinely metes out judgement in Book 3, to which the Son genuinely reacts by offering himself (3.167-210). This episode asserts the independence of the Son, who could have listened to his father speak without answering, but it also indicates that they are like, or rather, same-minded, focusing on the common goal of restoring mankind to the image of God. Their unity from the outside, as Patrides states, prevents their portrayal from being polytheistic, while offering the sense of plurality, the basis of divine love (George 1974, 74).

III.4. Motherhood and brotherhood

In this section I am going to consider the seventeenth century realities of motherhood, fraternities and the already mentioned phenomena of sibling rivalry and parental favoritism, which constitute the basis for metaphorical interpretation. Family and kinship are territories where models for relationships

originate, yet it is a field which is hard to map. While there are set formulae, such as the father being the head of the family, these formulae are constantly challenged and subverted. The challenge comes from psychological realities which are hard to describe and pin down. Still, when exploring how the kinship metaphor functions, the realities of kinship must also be taken into account.

Sin's situation is significant in the sense that it reflects not only on the character, but also the fatherhood of Satan, however, it is worth looking at it by itself, in the context of contemporary womanhood.

Sin's account of her demise reflects the experiences of an abandoned "war widow" (Schwartz 2009, 211). Her story involves being a daughter who is sexually assaulted and raped by his father, abandoned by her lover (or father), being cast out to the margins of society to perform hard labor (as Ms. Greenberg observed), to give birth, being assaulted and raped again, and give birth again. These events are not exclusively allegorical but connect theology to human condition: besides individual sin, they also recall the divine decree of painful childbirth and the anxieties and physical symptoms of women – in Milton's age and beyond (Schwartz 2009, 223-224).

I find intriguing the observation by Schwartz that in terms of the birth, the focus was on the child who was considered to be the active participant in the process, hence the scenes of both Death and then his offspring, the hellhounds charging out from Sin's womb in an uncontrollable manner (ibid. 215). In contrast with the traditional father-child relationship, where the father is supposed to be superior, this idea already, at childbirth renders the mother subject to the child's actions. Sin is portrayed primarily as a victim of her circumstances, and even when she acquires some agency she acts more like a caretaker, worrying about nurturing her son:

> To whom th' incestuous Mother thus repli'd.
> Thou therefore on these Herbs, and Fruits, and Flours
> Feed first, on each Beast next, and Fish, and Fowle,
> No homely morsels, and whatever thing
> The Sithe of Time mowes down, devour unspar'd,
> Till I in Man residing through the Race,
> His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect,
> And season him thy last and sweetest prey (10.602-609)

Besides the coming together of theology, sin and death ruling over mankind, and the actual idea of feeding, the narrator does imply some sort of a progress: it seems that she as assumed her role as mother, exercising rule and control over creation that humankind should have had.

Apart from being a mother, Sin is also a daughter, and as such, she embodies the deferential ideal of seventeenth century daughterhood: she is dutiful, loyal and obedient. She pledges loyalty to Satan despite his apparent memory loss of their history:

Thou art my Father, thou my Author, thou
My being gav'st me; whom should I obey
But thee, whom follow? (2.864-866)

Her fault is that she is faithful to the wrong father, but due to their relationship, it is inevitable to do so. Her bond to her father is testimony to the power of kinship, and a sad case of an abused child who keeps being attached to her abusive father.

Allegorical, mythological and historical elements come together to form the character of Sin and her network of relationships. She is the allegorical impersonation of not only sin but the curse of the mothers, and the very real consternation surrounding motherhood. She is mythologically afraid of death devouring her, the parent,[93] but her fear of death is also the reflection of fear of death experienced by mothers every time they give birth. In addition, she also behaves as a stereotypical woman in the sense that she intervenes in order to prevent the violence in the family and reconcile father and son (Turner 2000, 78) . The epic powerfully exploits the kinship metaphor to paint a complex and disturbing picture which is symbolical and realistic at the same time.

Schwartz provides plenty of evidence for the way the experience and the accounts of childbirth in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries underlines the epic and its imagery, from the descriptions of Limbo, Chaos, through Sin to the expulsion from Paradise, which he interprets as a birth metaphor. Along these lines, I conclude that contemporary experiences of kinship are relevant to the analysis of the metaphor in question within *Paradise Lost*.

Besides the unusual representation of motherhood, there is another type of kinship relation which has a particular presence in the epic, the relationship between siblings. The phenomenon of fraternalism, associations of men, a fictive kinship appeared in the Early modern period as a mode of transferring patriarchal concepts of authority from the private to the public sphere (Clawson 1980, 371). The role and position of children and servants often overlapped, since both children and servants owed the same kind of affection, respect and obedience to the head of the household, thus servants or apprentices were, in a way, infantilized (ibid.)

Fraternities grew out of the urge of male servants and apprentices who sought to be associated with male companions with the prospect of becoming masters of their own household one day. The most well-known form of such associations are guilds, but confraternities, *companonnage* and youth abbeys in the countryside were also common (ibid. 373).

[93] Sin predicts her fate as such:

Grim Death my Son and foe, who sets them on,
And me his Parent would full soon devour (2.804-805)

Sin is aware of the power and superiority of Death, and in accordance with the mythical narratives of divine kinship, she intuits that the son would murder her.

In the epic, the heavenly host, the multitude of angels is a group the status of which is difficult to determine: as divine creatures, they certainly enjoy a certain degree of dignity and autonomy, whereas the rebellion in heaven indicates issues with authority. More interesting is the empire of fallen angels, which they are building "in emulation opposite to heaven".

Negative imitation is a difficult concept to define, it is inherently paradoxical, built on the contradictory desire of wanting to be different but alike, perhaps an alternative to the model. Such internal contradiction characterized brotherhoods as well, as Mary Ann Clawson describes:

> Fraternal institutions were critically linked to the authority structures of the patriarchal household in a relationship that was sometimes antagonistic, sometimes supportive, but always close. […] fraternalism is described as a distinctively male relationship, which contributed to the maintenance of generalized masculine authority. […] With its patriarchal bias and its origin as a kind of kin relation, it always carried with it notions of hierarch and paternalist authority which appear, because of its root as kin relations, as categories of "natural" dominance and subordination (Clawson 1980, 371).

The fraternities, in other words, imitate a power structure that excludes or subjects the members, but which is nonetheless appealing to them. They would like to be part of it, but they might not have the means to achieve the desired position. By imitating it, paradoxically, they maintain it, while creating an accessible alternative. The imitation of the superior is a recognizable pattern, as well as the propagation of ideas through involvement.

The metaphorical significance of kinship is the basis of the establishment of fraternity, as it is obvious from Clawson's analysis: the experience of belonging together, being similar, the prospect of inheritance subjection and competition all come into play when formulating the idea of a brotherhood. Being like siblings, the members perceive each other as being parts of a whole, as well as some having privileges and authority.

What Clawson describes, in my view, is also characteristic of the community of fallen angels who form a sort of brotherhood where there is an illusion of democracy, even though rank is of utmost importance. Just as fraternities, the community of Pandemonium offers a platform where the fallen angels can exercise the illusion of authority, without possessing the resources or the legitimate position to do so (1980, 383). Hell is created and provided by the ultimate father figure, the Almighty, but the fallen angels claim autonomy and even ownership of Heaven, as "Sons of Heaven". The idea of fraternity is inseparably tied with fatherhood, but in the absence of an actual household they pretend to maintain an attitude of independence, all the while maintaining hierarchical structures of subordination (ibid. 386).

The military imagery of the hosts of Hell, of course, is undeniable, and it would be extreme to deny the military coupe aspect of the reunion of the fallen angels, which does evoke a rebellion.

However, it is also remarkable that the hierarchy of Pandemonium falls naturally in place, maintaining and imitating the legitimate kingdom of Heaven:

> Mean while the winged Haralds by command
> Of Sovran power, with awful Ceremony
> And Trumpets sound throughout the Host proclaim
> A solemn Councel forthwith to be held
> At Pandæmonium, the high Capital
> Of Satan and his Peers: thir summons call'd
> From every Band and squared Regiment
> By place or choice the worthiest (1.752-759)

As I have already mentioned, when raising the rebellion, Lucifer insinuated that angels are equal, but also ambiguously said that there are differences between them.[94] The society of Hell offers the alternative of the legitimate power, pretending to be egalitarian and free, while establishing strict hierarchy and appointing Satan as the leader, already presiding over the council. Fallen angels, in effect, exercise power, which is only the imitation of the actual one, being inconsequential to the world. The brotherhood of the fallen angels is founded upon their shared fate and interests.

While brotherhood can be a metaphor for fictional kinship among likeminded people, the idea of brothers can evoke conflict and competition. Stone mentions that "As for the relations between siblings among the upper classes, primogeniture inevitably created a gulf between the eldest son and heir and his younger brothers who, by accident of birth order, were destined to be thrown out into the world and would probably become downwardly mobile" (Stone 1979, 88). He also claims, however, envy and jealousy between siblings was not common (ibid). On the other hand, I have come across a dissertation that examines sibling rivalry and parental favoritism in Early Modern England based on contemporary correspondence and diary entries. The study, submitted in 2010 by Emily New, sheds light on an interesting aspect of family relationships, parental favoritism and the way it affects sibling relationships. She also acknowledges that while economic issues played an important role in parental favoritism, beyond that there are personal and psychological factors that might repaint the simple picture of the beloved first son (New 2010, 15).

The study highlights that sibling relationships, which are less studied than vertical parent-offspring relationships were embedded in contexts of patriarchy, gender roles and primogeniture; but

[94] Natives and Sons of Heav'n possest before
By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free; for Orders and Degrees
Jarr not with liberty, but well consist.
Who can in reason then or right assume
Monarchie over such as live by right
His equals, if in power and splendor less,
In freedome equal? (5.790-797)

there were other social and psychological factors that created a very mixed picture; however, the testimonies of feeling of neglect and jealousy expressed by less favored children, reflect the deeply subjective experience of favoritism, the expression of which was normalized especially in aristocratic households.

Parents and siblings are inevitably caught up in a web of comparisons, affecting their self-image as well as their relationships with each other. New describes, quoting several contemporary sources, that parental favoritism was often arbitrary, falling on either child, male or female (27). The awareness of the effect of showing favor towards a child, jealousy and envy also appears in contemporary sources (28). Unsurprisingly, when infant mortality was prevalent, the age of the children influenced the bond they formed with their parents; still another significant factor is the behavior of the child (30). Similarly, intelligence and attitude to education can secure parental favor (34). Based on the sources New cites, it is obvious that relationships within the nuclear family were varied, and the family was the source of a wide range of individual experiences, from affection through disappointment to envy and jealousy.

These emotional experiences are as hard to grasp as they are common and well-known, the result of imitation in the Girardian sense. Parents and children, just as siblings, are connected by mimetism in the sense that they naturally compare themselves, exploring similarities and differences. The underlying psychological dimension of kinship did not go unrecognized, and seventeenth century guides to family life, as well as popular culture warned against favoritism and its detrimental effects (New 2010, 75).

The dissertation dedicates an entire chapter to “Obedience and Rebellion” and concludes that “Whereas obedient and well-behaved children could secure a parent’s favouritism, it would seem that favouritism itself could, through jealously, cause disobedient and rebellious siblings” (33). I have already referred to Cain and Abel, the archetypal story of sibling rivalry that ends in violence. Belousek criticized the Girardian approach to the Biblical narrative, arguing that it is not a case of violence resulting from mimetic conflict, that the sin of Cain is to compare himself to Abel instead of following God’s example (2017, 65). This interpretation, in my view, ignores the psychological dimension of sibling rivalry: Cain compares himself to Abel and desires his blessing, God’s favor. To use another key concept of Girard, Cain is scandalized, or offended by the favor shown towards his brother, and at this point he stumbles. Indeed, from a theological point of view, he is also guilty of idolatry, considering his brother as his example, but it is undeniable that he considers his brother as his rival, as the result of divine favor.

It is not to say that Cain’s act is justified, and it is God’s blessing to blame; however, it does seem that the bestowing of favor, whether done by God or a parent, does seem arbitrary difficult to

understand, and the reaction to it is visceral and equally difficult to control. This is exactly the kind of desire that the Bible itself warns against, and violence is the result of acting upon such instincts.

Sibling relations, of course, don't have to be violent to demonstrate the presence of imitation and mimetic implications. A case study of the confluence of literature and sibling relations revolves around the Sidney family, carried out by Elizabeth Mazzola. *Favorite Sons* (2003) explores the way Sir Philip Sidney used family dynamics as metaphors in his own works, and she explores the family background and relationships of the members of the famous family. She quotes a letter from Henry Sidney, the father of the siblings Philip, Robert and Mary, and urges Robert, to whom the letter is addressed, to look at his older brother as an example:

> [W]hat do I blunder at thyes thyngys, follo the dyrectyon of your most lovyng brother, who in lovyng you, is comparable with me, or exceldyth me. Imitate hys vertues, exercyses, Studyes, & accyons; he ys a rare ornament of thys age, the very formular, that all well dysposed young Gentlymen of ouer Court, do form allsoe thear maners & lyfe by. In troth I speake yt wythout flatery of hym, or of my self, he hathe the most rare vertues that ever I found in any man . . . Ons agayn I say Imytate hym (Mazzola 2003, 31).

Apart from the repeated advice to "imitate" his brother, fifteen years his senior, Henry the father even goes as far as to claim that Philip is not only "comparable" to him, but even "excels" him: a generational way of thinking implying that children should be better than their parents and urging Robert to do so.

The father even makes a checklist of what should be imitated, his virtuousness and his behavior as well. Henry paints Philip in a Christlike light, as one who is loving and worthy to be followed and imitated. [95]

Beyond the reality of kinship, in any era, there is the psychological dimension that contains contradicting emotions and desires. Apart from the testimonies of myths and literature, nonfictional evidence also supports the complexity and ambiguity of the kinship metaphor; besides phenomena that characterized a certain era, such as primogeniture, the criminalization of single mothers, and fraternities, there are some patterns that seem universal. These stem from the mimetic character of kinship, children comparing themselves to their parents and to each other.

Since I started with the cognitive metaphor theory, I would like to argue that the experience of the family was an experience that shaped the horizon of expectations of the contemporary readership. The triangular relationship of parents and siblings is a manifestation of the phenomenon of imitation: parents and siblings perceive similarity and difference, obey or disobey, and compete. Competition is etched deep into the human experience of family, and it is a problem that has

[95] After their older brother, Philip's early death, both Robert and Mary go on to pursue literary ambitions (Mazzola 2003, 41). What is more, Robert eventually earns the earldom of Leicestershire, a title that Philip always wanted to acquire but never did (ibid. 53). Nevertheless, Robert's poetry, which gains less recognition than his brother's, speaks of the experience of duplicity and the way it affects self-perception (ibid. 51-52).

mythologically changed the world but also has led to tragedies. As opposed to this, the divine Father-Son relationship offers a harmonious coexistence, a distribution of power and unity.

IV. Image in *Paradise Lost*

Image in *Paradise Lost* has the role of a relational metaphor, signifying primarily ontological mimesis. While in the Bible there were many words that described what is now called an image, the concept has come to signify different objects and phenomena. Stuart Clark in *Vanities of the Eye* (2007) discusses the paradoxical distrust that accompanied vision and visual phenomena in the ocularcentric early modern period through the 1608 work of George Hakewill of the same title. Clark studies images, cognitive theory, fantasies and contemporary phenomena citing a great number of works to prove the contradiction between the importance of eyesight and the perceived danger and falsity of vision. W. J. T Mitchell (2005) studies images as they currently appear in different discourses. The two studies make it obvious that there are various forms of images and their role in philosophy and psychology is significant.

In *Paradise Lost*, where image is the basis of the anthropology of the work, the ideal definition of image is embodied by the Son, who is infinitely similar to the Father; Sin embodies the sinful idea of her father, Satan, who is infatuated by his own image, while becoming offended by the images of God. Human experience reflects the fallen concept of the image, wherein image represents the falsity of appearances, the blur between identities of model or maker and image, and the multiplicity and replaceability of images.

In the Bible, being made in the image of God implies the kingship of mankind: its dominion over the world.[96] As Middleton argues, biblical kingship is extended over all mankind, not only rulers, who were traditionally considered images of God in Ancient Near Eastern cultures. The image of God is the basis of the sovereignty of the Son and of Adam and Eve, and by extension their offspring in the epic. However, Satan does not have the image, and while he denies kinship with the Almighty, models his kingship on the kingdom of Heaven in outward appearances, while intending to achieve the opposite: instead of the elevation of mankind, its ruin.

As sonship has the role of mediator between the earthly and the divine, beautiful images or looks are also considered capable of elevating the onlooker's soul, according to Plato's *Phaedrus.* As much as images contribute to the recollection of the divine ideal, however, they could also inspire lust and prevent recollection.[97]

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[96] Richard Middleton summarizes that there are four possible ancient near eastern sources of the concept of image of God: image can refer to a counterpart, such as in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* Enkidu is the "double" of Gilgamesh; In Egyptian wisdom literature men are referred to the images of a god; the practice that kings set up statues, images of themselves in the lands they had conquered to remind the inhabitants of their presence; and the prevalent practice to refer to rulers and high priests as images of God (2005, 94).

[97] I am quoting an essay by Radcliffe G. Edmonds (2017), wherein he explores a case of particular phenomenon called *agalmatophilia*, the love of statues (2017, 85), which is curiously still acknowledged nowadays a psychopathology (Scobie and Taylor 1975, 50). Apart from the ritual reverence of statues, as a mental disorder

The early modern era experienced a revolution in visual culture, and at the same time an ambiguous attitude towards image. This is due to the shift in the status of vision as an epistemological tool: sight became not only unreliable, as Stuart Clark describes, but also dangerous (2007, 2-3).[98] The imperfectness of fallen vision is described in Book 11 of *Paradise Lost*, where the archangel Michael provides Adam with a narrative of future history, but first subjects him to a procedure that is supposed to purify his vision:

> but to nobler sights
> 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 pierc'd,
> Eevn to the inmost seat of mental sight,
> That Adam now enforc't to close his eyes,
> Sunk down and all his Spirits became intranst (11.411-420)

The need to purge Adam's eyes with herbal drop came from the original sin, which clouded his sight. The remedy, however, does not seem to work flawlessly, as Adam is immediately carried away by the first pleasant vision he sees, and thinks that beauty signifies goodness. Therefore, Michael has to explain the falsity of appearance:

> Judg not what is best
> By pleasure, though to Nature seeming meet,
> Created, as thou art, to nobler end
> Holie and pure, conformitie divine (11.603-606).

The discrepancy between looks and actions is one result of sin and the fall. Despite godlikeness, and pleasing looks, man is mutable, the angel explains.

Another issue related to sight is idolatry, which also defined the discourse regarding images in the seventeenth century. It concerns the relationship between image and original, and the nature of the image itself: its status and its abilities (Clark 2007, 162-163).[99]

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it can refer to the sexual desire of the same, which is obviously an insatiable one. In a way I find agalmatophilia analogous to idolatry, in the sense that both are misdirected desires. Similarly, Athanasia Giasoumi (2022) describes the reaction to beautiful images as two types of love or Eros, one who has enough self-knowledge and control and thus images aid him in recalling the ideal Forms, but the lover who lacks self-knowledge is carried away with lust. In my opinion, Satan's reaction to Sin, whom he perceives as his own "perfect image" (2.764) indicates the lack of self-discipline that Plato's dialogue refers to.

[98] Clark discusses the fascination with demonology from the fifteenth century, the symptom of the belief that demons can manipulate the faculty of vision and thus not only discredit visual reality but also actively deceive people (2007, 3).

[99] Since the second Council of Nicea, the Christian use of images was based on the concept *of traslatio ad prototypum*, meaning that worship is directed towards the prototype of images, of which many exist (Ferrer-Ventosa 2024, 100). The proliferation of images served the purpose of deepening devotion and communicating divine truth, much like the parables themselves. It is, nevertheless, difficult to differentiate the worship of

In what follows, I explore the different layers of meaning that make up the metaphor "image of something" and analyze their relevance to the epic as well as the way image completes the kinship metaphor. I start by discussing the theory of images and what is associated with the concept, and how image as a metaphor works. Then I explore images in the epic and their implications. The diversity of associations prove the metaphoricity of the concept, which within the narrative serves not only to evoke, but also to compare the numerous connotations, and insist on the ideal, divine meaning that has the power to transform those who possess it. This ideal image is embodied by the Son, who is, as befitting an image, visible, but otherwise is the reflection of his Father, echoing his will in their interactions. The image of God, in the fallen world needs to be curated and cultivated, hence the need to imitate the ultimate image, the Son. Adam struggles with the ontological implication of being made in the image of God, and with his relationship with Eve, his "best image" (5.95), while Eve's experience with images starts with a reflection on the water, after which her relationship with Adam is immediately defined by image-ness (4.467-475). There is an abundance of images in the epic that are not imagery, but part of the conceptual framework of the epic that anchors it in the Scriptures as well as in contemporary philosophy and discourse concerning images.

IV.1. Theory of images

It is not the purpose of my study to revise or come up with a theory of the image or answer the question "what is an image". In fact, the subject matter of my study requires me to study the "image of God". In Christian theology, humans are supposed to be the images of God on earth, His representatives. But what it means to be the image, and the representative of God, cannot be separated from our concept of images.

The nature of images, or idols, *tselem*, is mentioned in the Hebrew Bible several times as non-living objects, who despite the appearances of sense organs such as noses, eyes and ears, are unable to see, hear and breathe. Already in the Scriptures image can have different natures: it can be a human representative or a molten figure, among other things.[100] As sonship, image in worship was supposed

images from the worship of the prototype, and the power of the image from the power of the model. The paradox of presence-absence affects perception. It is no surprise, then, that the iconoclastic movement of the Reformation took place, and that it has enjoyed much scholarly attention. Alexandra Walsham mentions that besides the rather obvious theological worries that grew out of the second commandment, iconoclasm is also an intriguing symptom concerning the power of images, manifested in the zeal with which they were destroyed, annihilating meaning (Walsham 2017, 83).

[100]According to Strong's Concordance, in the Hebrew Bible there are three words that are translated as "image" or "likeness*": tselem, demŭth* and *maskîyth,* but there are other expressions are often translated as "image": *'ĕlîyl, pesel*, *matstsêbâh, semel, miphletseth,* and *massêkâh*. *Tselem* is used to express idol as well as the image after which man was made, but *demŭth,* meaning likeness completes the description in Genesis 1:27 about man. *Tselem* is otherwise used as statue or picture in the Bible, such as in 1 Samuel 6:5 (images or models or emerods and mice), but mostly in the sense of idol, the image of a false god. *Demŭth* is used extensively as appearance,

to fulfil the role of intermediary through indwelling and the ability to elevate the onlooker by helping them recall the divine nature that cannot be represented by worldly means (Clark 2007, 169). Image as a metaphor is, therefore, mimetic and relational, much like kinship.

It is W. J. Thomas Mitchell, the influential theorist of the "pictorial turn", who gives an account of the different images in different disciplines that make up our understanding of the word "image". In the article, „What is an image?" (1984),[101] he draws up a family tree of images, graphic, optical, perceptual, mental and verbal ones, and enumerates all the species of images that can belong to the wide category of images.

likeness, something that resembles another thing, a vision of something, especially in the visionary books of Isaiah and Ezekiel, and it also turns up in Daniel. *Maskîyth* is only used a few times, meaning a figure or picture of something, such as in Leviticus 26:1: "Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the Lord your God." This line in Leviticus is particularly interesting, as it means to be a comprehensive prohibition, and in ancient Hebrew it includes the other three expressions as well: *'ĕlîyl, pesel* and *matstsêbâh.* The expression *'ĕlîyl* refers to something useless, or something in vain, nevertheless in several books it means idols (Psalms 96:5, 97:7, or Isaiah 2:8, 2:18, 10, 10, etc.). It means that such images are useless, they have no value whatsoever. *Pesel*, on the other hand, is quite straightforward, and it actually means idol, mostly used in Deuteronomy (4:16, 4:23, 4:25, 5:8, 27:15) and Judges (17:3-4, 18:14, 17-18) and Isaiah (40:19-20, 42:17, 44:9-10, 44:17); and it is also mentioned in Jeremiah 10:14, Nahum 1:14 and Habakkuk 2:18. The word *matstsêbâh* shows, that the idea of images in the Hebrew Bible is closely connected with religious practice and worship, since this feminine word form means a standing stone or pillar, used for example for the stone erected by Jacob and Laban to commemorate the presence of God and their agreement (Gen 28:18-22, 31:45-52). The word is also used in Exodus to express the command of destroying the foreign images (23:24, 24:4, 34:13), and in Deuteronomy for a similar purpose (7:5, 12:3, 16:22). Kings 1 and 2 and Chronicles 2 uses the word with an identical meaning, while Hosea talks about being without images, the making of goodly images and the destruction of images as well (3:4, 10:1-2). Pillars and standing stones, like menhirs had been erected in the Middle East (as all over the world) for thousands of years, even before biblical times; and even though they are not images in the sense that they do not bear any resemblance to anything, they represent the presence of the transcendent, the sacred, and the divine. Another word that describes a certain kind of image is *massêkâh,* which primarily means pouring or covering, and refers to molten images, figures cast out of metal. This expression is also used extensively both to describe the nature of the image and the image itself (Exodus 32:4, 8, 17; Lev 19:4, Deuteronomy 9:12, 16; 27:15; Judges 17: 3-4, 18:14,17-18; 1 Kings 14:9, 2 Kings 17:16; 2 Chron 28:2, 34:3-4; Nehemiah 9:18; Psalms 106:19; Isaiah 25:7, 28:20, 30:1, 42:17; Hosea 13:2, Nahum 1:14, Habakkuk 2:18. *Massêkâh* emphasizes the fact that these images are made with a special technique. Semel also means resemblance or shape, used in Deuteronomy 4:16, 2 Chronicles 33:7, 15; Ezekiel 8:3, 5. An interesting word is *miphletseth,* meaning both terror and idol according to Strong's Concordance, used in 1 Kings 15:13 and the coinciding part in 2 Chronicles 15:16, both instances detailing the acts of king Asa, who destroyed the *miphletseth* of his mother Maachah. Images, in the biblical sense, consequently, are the centerpiece of religious worship, and they are not necessarily like anything – since the power they represent is invisible. They make the invisible visible and present, hence they are virtually identical to what they stand for. The biblical counterargument of the worship of such images is that they are made by human hands, and even if they look like they have eyes, ears and mouth, they are incapable of seeing, hearing and speaking. The criticism is in a very modern vein, questioning the ontological status of images. Idolatry, in the simplest sense is a mere mistake, mistaking the immanent for the transcendent.

[101] During the academic part of my graduate studies, thanks to the organization of professor György Endre Szőnyi, my supervisor and the Department of English Studies I had the chance to meet and listen to a lecture from professor Mitchell and become acquainted firsthand with his theory of images, that focuses on the life of images and their effect on the spectator.

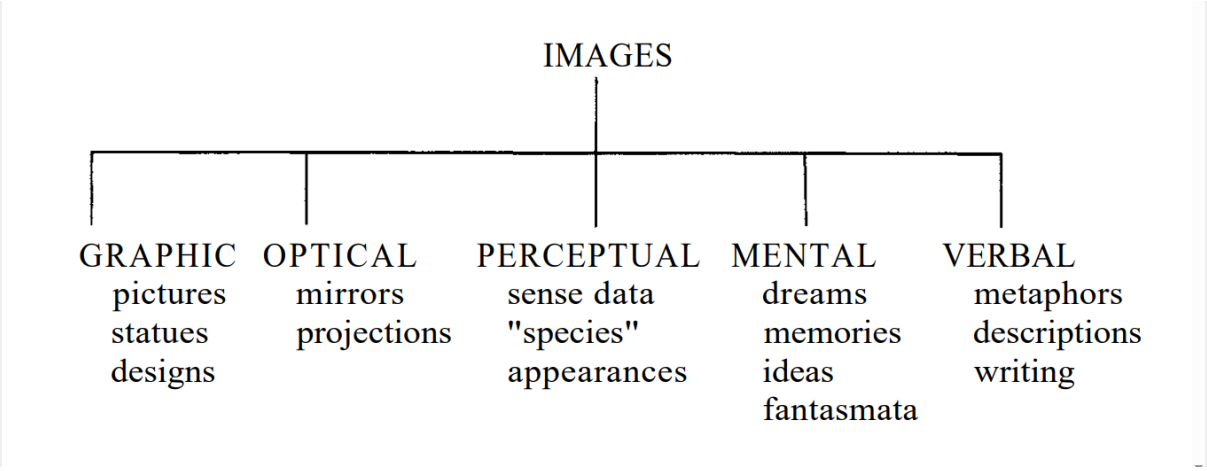

Figure 1. Family of images. Mitchell (1984, 505)[102]

As the family tree demonstrates, there are several types of images, and there is a number that could now be added here (digital and virtual images, holograms, just to mention a few). The point is, according to Mitchell, that pictures are the compound of virtual, symbolic and material component: the virtual part is the image, standing in place of something; the material part is the medium, on which the image appears, and the two together make up the object (W. J. Thomas Mitchell 2008, 11). Mitchell's definition already differentiates picture from image, arguing that the image is the virtual component, the essence, the impression on the material carrier. According to the OED, picture is "A painting, drawing, photograph, or other visual representation on a surface; *esp.* such a representation as a work of art", in addition to the action of creating such an object. [103] An image is a "thing that stands for, or it is taken to stand for something else; symbol, emblem". The verb form means to obtain a visual representation of something. When talking about pictures, therefore, the emphasis seems to be on the physicality of the object, whereas images suggest substitutions.

Not every language makes this distinction, but if they do, the differences in meaning are rather blurred, for example in Ancient Hebrew. Between the two, in my view, the one that suggests likeness, similarity to a model is image. The distinction puts image-making and image-destroying into a new perspective, and it is certain that there can be no picture of God, while there are images of God. The original meaning, image of God, is embodied and personified by the Messiah, the Son.

[102] It is worth noting the difference between the Hungarian version and the original English, given that the Hungarian word "kép" means both "image" and "picture". In the 2008, Hungarian edition of the article, the heading is "kép", and in the form of clarification, some other expressions are added as well, such as "hasonmás" (lookalike), "képmás" (image, likeness) and "hasonlatosság" (similitude). In the English version, in the category of graphic images the first example is picture, which in Hungarian is given as "festmény" (painting). There are other nuances of translation that are interesting, however, the fact that "kép" in Hungarian covers the meaning of both "picture" and "image" makes it difficult to properly translate the terms. It is also important to note that Mitchell uses the terms interchangeably.

[103] Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "picture (n.), sense I.1.a," March 2024, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1078576104.

Mitchell talks about the supposed "personhood" of images, meaning that they are considered more than mere objects, have a physical and virtual aspect, and they communicate (W J T Mitchell 1996, 72). It is not just that people are images, then, but images may be human, even superhuman. They present further paradoxes as well, such as being something and not at the same time, being there and not being there at the same time.

The association of images with copy-making, and thus imitation has been questioned, but it is an undeniable aspect of images. Images as copies have an inferior status compared to their model, while image-making is also a creative process and a way of multiplication. The Platonic grudge concerning images, copies and imitations has been disproven: the critical point of Plato's arguments is concerned with the effect of images on the lower faculties of the soul (Destrée and Edmonds 2017, 3), thereby exerting a dangerous power over the audience.

The politics of images mean the study of their relationship and effect on the audience. My approach, in the sense that images are imitations and they want to be imitated, as well, since being imitated makes them more like the model, by becoming models themselves.

The study of images, therefore, is organized around contradictions such as 1) similarity and difference, 2) sameness and otherness, 3) presence and absence, and 4) the image always pointing at something beyond itself. In addition to this, the concepts of multiplication, copying and separation, division involve, in my opinion, the sense of loss of control. This is highly relevant to the analysis of *Paradise Lost*, since the epic explores the way the images, such as the Son, Adam and Eve, their descendants, and Sin seek and find their autonomy and establish their status as images. Images must find their freedom, as the example of Sin demonstrates: her Maker, Satan takes control of her, the "perfect image", which eventually proves detrimental not only to Sin herself, but to the model, Satan as well.

The paradoxes surrounding images relate to the kinship metaphor as well, and to the rules of imitation I described earlier: images depend on the model, they are inferior to it, while the model is superior, consequently there might be a rivalry between model and image; images may confound the identity of model-copy and could aim at replacing it.

My interest in imitation in *Paradise Lost* originated from my fascination with the word "image" used in the epic. Antoinina Bevan Zlatar's study, "The Image of their Glorious Maker": Looking at Representation and Similitude in Milton's *Paradise Lost"* (2007) confirmed my observation that while the Son and the human couple are described in terms of *imago Dei*, the rebel angel is not; in fact, after his transformation into Satan, he is described, as Bevan Zlatar shows, in terms of beasts as the leviathan.

The theological basis of this imitation is that the Almighty is the ultimate model, the reference point, and as a creator, he creates resemblances, imitates, and his imitations imitate him. As Bevan

Zlatar describes, while the Father himself is invisible, he has visible images, and looking at these images Satan is either enraged or awestruck, when he is in fact looking at the diverse reflections of God. She drew a parallel between God the maker making images and the poet making metaphors and similes, thus also creating resemblances (Bevan Zlatar 2007, 249).

In *Paradise Lost*, Satan's original, albeit unconscious disobedience or rebellion was also image-making: the creation of Sin. Looking at Sin as his own image and becoming jealous of the Son's elevation show that the archangel does not look at the Father as his model. What is more, the mimetic relationship between Sin and Satan, expressed in the image metaphor, blurs the boundary between model and image, and Satan looks at Sin as his image, taking delight in his own reflection. The only perfect image in the epic is the Son, who by being the son and the image of God, cannot be corrupted, he is beyond compare. This fact redefines image in terms of the harmonious but paradoxical unity between Father and Son: the creator-model and image relate to each other as the members of the Godhead. Not only are, as Bevan Zlatar points out, epic similes absent from the descriptions of God, but he is never described in terms of any other entity than the Son (2007, 250). The Son's function is, therefore, to reflect and echo the Father, and they replace the need for epic comparison, being comparable only to each other.

Image, then, is a complex metaphor, which in the epic goes through a fall itself, its meaning falling away from the divine ideal. It suggests the creation of resemblance, but also a hierarchical relationship, where hierarchy is easily disrupted. However, as Bevan Zlatar argues, and I fully agree with her viewpoint, is that image is an ontological matter in the poem, along with appearance, what one looks like, points to the nature of the being (2007, 110). The image is especially significant in the case of the Son, whose relationship to the Father reveals what image means, and thus creates the basis for *imitatio Christi*. The Son's proximity to the Almighty is almost total, but it is not perfect. His relationship with the Creator consists in being infinitely close to him but never being identical, at the same time, as my starting Pauline quotation suggests, it means sharing the powers without dispossessing the other. Bevan Zlatar argues that the opposites of invisibility and visibility differentiate the Father and the Son, and the Son's visibility is relative to God's invisibility (2007, 244). The image metaphor thus suggests not only ontological contingency but a way of being as well, which way is extended to the human beings as well. They are supposed to relate to the Father the way the Son relates to him. Thus, as Bevan Zlatar suggests, the metaphor image is in the core of not only the theology but of the anthropology of the epic as well (2007, 247).

Zlatar claims that image is not only relevant to the theology, and by extension, I may add, the theodicy of the epic poem, but also to its anthropology. In fact, image, the image of God connects theology to anthropology in the work. As Adam is exploring the significance of being made in the image of God after the fall, and then contemplates the effects of a fallen world, he also describes the

experiences that await the Son, the Second Adam. The effects of death are becoming clear as Sin and Death are unleashed on Earth, and simultaneously the humans learn its consequences. The true image of God, the Son, can defeat death, but inasmuch as he is the son of man, he is liable to death.

Image in the epic is the godlikeness that Satan craves since he does not have it. An image reflects the maker, but it is also capable of transforming it, by making it, or certain aspects of it, visible. It also relates to the onlooker; it represents the model, exerting power, eliciting love or hate. Moreover, the experience of the image itself is relevant too: not being an autonomous, independent being, but a sort of copy, creating a sense of transience and replaceability. In this sense, image differs fundamentally from the kinship metaphor and "son", who is a more independent entity. Both image and son can imply unity, dependence, hierarchy as well as being capable of threatening their respective antecedents, their model or maker. Kinship and image are used in *Paradise Lost* in order to restore the ideal, divine meaning of both metaphors and to express contradiction: oneness and rivalry, hierarchy and freedom. The fall, both the fall of angels and the fall of men means that kinship and image-ness acquire new meaning and are up for interpretation.

IV.2. Image as metaphor

Unlike kinship, the image metaphor, saying that something is the image of another is not that common, they usually represent the invisible, the transcendent, the divinity, and thus they have power. It is in itself controversial that the invisible can be represented by something visible, but it is a fundamental principle of religious thought, and in fact, human cognition. The idea of image expresses not only copy-making, but this contradiction as well, which both supports and undermines the sovereignty of an image. As Mitchell's tree of images (Figure 1) shows, an image can be a material object, or a projection, immaterial.

Another issue that image "represents" is the potential multiplicity of images: there is no limit to the number and the style of images made, therefore, the question arises whether there is an authoritative image or not; second, it is easier to make copies of an image, to multiply it; which raises the question whether the copies are also powerful, authoritative images of the original model, or not. Copies, on the other hand, are replaceable, and thus, disposable.

Image does not fundamentally mean a picture, but a representation of something, and the image can also be a tool for controlling that very thing it represents. Since it is visible, it can be manipulated, it has a magical aspect too. That, however, affects the superior status of the model.

Mitchell talks about "offending images" and talks about the different ways an image can offend: they can offend the beholder, and the model as well (W. J.Thomas Mitchell 2005), and there are different ways they can be offensive. He goes back to the original offence, the fall, when the images

of God, Adam and Eve committed an offence against God, their very own model, committing a complex case of iconoclasm, and then went on to commit idolatry and thus debased themselves, the images of God (ibid., 132-133).

The idea of image, as it is conceived by religious thinking, is very different from the modern idea of image as a picture, nonetheless the power of images remains. Image as a metaphor for ontological status, however, must be understood from the religious sense. Making an image of something will invest both model and image with a power that has transcendental dimension: an image has the capacity to create power and extend it to the model (Mitchell 2005, 134).

The metaphorical inference patterns of the image can be summed up as such: first, an image can be an object or a vision. If x is the image of y, x is similar to y. Second, X is the image of y implies that y is superior, the model; y is consequently inferior. Third, the image partakes in or shares the power of the model. Fourth, the image might elicit idolatry, and fifth, the image can challenge the authority and the authenticity of the model, blurring the identity of copy and original. Sixth, there can be a multiplicity of images, copies, both of the model and the image, and seventh, images and copies can be replaced; therefore, they are disposable; and finally, interaction with the image can affect the model as well.

These patterns, on the one hand, coincide in part with the laws of imitation I described earlier based on Tarde's and Girard's theories, and on the other hand, with certain metaphorical inference patterns of the kinship metaphor as described by Mark Turner. The status of the image implies both similarity and difference, sameness and otherness, the state of being alike and mimetic action. Mitchell suggests that images have personhood (W. J.Thomas Mitchell 2005, 132); this is especially true in Christian theology. Images therefore are also willful and active. The question is, then, to what extent images are autonomous, independent from their model (or from their maker) and free? In the Biblical story of Adam and Eve, being made in the image of God lends the humans freedom, royalty and dignity. But can images experience freedom and independence?

I argue that image and kinship are expressions of the paradoxical relationship that God and his creatures have in the epic, based on Christian theology, and these metaphors are used to express the complexity of similarity-dissimilarity, sameness-otherness, freedom and dependence which is modelled in its ideal form by the Godhead, and imitated by the rest of creation, with more and less success. The meaning of these metaphors is rooted in human experience; however, it is the divine meaning of "father", "son" and "image" that represent the ideal, true meaning, which the characters in the epic and the audience are exploring.

Both inherently mean imitation, the divine meaning of which is to obey and to follow; while the fallen, satanic sense is to challenge the implied hierarchy and unity, create rivalry between father and son, model/ creator and image, and supplant the father and model.

While kinship implies that the son is to replace the father and overtake his position, the order between model and image, or creator and image cannot be changed. Theologically, while the Son is meant to replace Adam, and thus perfects the image of God invested in Men, he remains the image. Kinship connects the Messiah to God as well as to men, but image remains his exclusive connection to God.

IV.3. "Gods latest Image": Images in *Paradise Lost*

Satan's words in Book 4 (line 567), as he is trying to talk his way into Paradise, in disguise, suggests a multiplicity of images: he certainly remembers when the Son was appointed the image and thus bears grudges against images of God. Later I discuss the contradictory relationship Satan has with images, but it is worth noting that multiplicity seems to have a negative connotation here, whereas multitudes in the ideal sense means neutrally a great number, or even a good thing (a multitude of offspring that God promises Eve (4.474)).

There is a multiplicity of images in *Paradise Lost*. The epic also differentiates image as a living, breathing thing, from material images or idols. Idols appear only in the first book:

> By falsities and lyes the greatest part
> Of Mankind they corrupted to forsake
> God thir Creator, and th' invisible
> Glory of him that made them, to transform
> Oft to the Image of a Brute, adorn'd
> With gay Religions full of Pomp and Gold,
> And Devils to adore for Deities: (1.366-373)

The passage describes the issue with idolatry, specifying early in Book 1 that "Image of a Brute", is only morphologically an image. On the other hand, these verses refer to the idolatry described in the Bible, but it also elaborates on the danger of such activity, the transformative power of images. The lines are ambiguous in terms of who or what is transformed: is it the glory of the Creator, turned into a brute? If so, it proves that images can affect the onlooker as well as the model.

As a narrative structuring pattern, image is closely related to kinship, and particularly to the Son in the Bible. The *St Andrews Encyclopaedia of Theology* describes:

> In the epistles to the Corinthians (1 Cor 15:49; 2 Cor 4:4) and Colossians (Col 1:15; 3:10), Paul refers to Jesus as the 'image of God'. This language is pertinent for sonship because of a canonical connection with Adam: Adam and Eve are both referred to as being in the image of God (Gen 1:26); furthermore, in Luke, Adam is also referred to the son of God (Luke 3:38). Image and sonship are closely related topics because sons may be expected to image their fathers in either body, temperament, or vocation. The language of image is another way of speaking of the close connection between the Father and the Son, as the Son images the invisible Father ((Maurer and Peeler 2022, 21).

Son and image are, therefore, expressions of the same relational status, based on the various implications that these metaphors express: likeness, inheritance, sovereignty, the obligation of obedience, just to mention a few. On the one hand, these express theological principles about the human condition and the workings of providence, and the human condition in general. In the context of a literary work, however, as in *Paradise Lost*, the metaphors open another set of associations, as the experience of kinship and being an image can radically differ from the biblical or theological implications.

IV.3.1. "Anointed universal King" - Kinship and Kingship

The issue of the sovereignty and dignity of man is in the center of the theodicy of Paradise Lost. Being the image of God or being made in the image of God expresses at once the exaltedness of those in possession of it, as well as their inferiority and dependence. The ultimate image of God is the Son (3.63, 4), who is literally the image of God in the sense that he is visible, he visually represents God. He also embodies the Biblical concept of kingship mixed with kinship: he is a king, representing God not only visually, but as an authority as well: he is appointed as a king. Biblical kingship is linked to representing, imaging the divinity as well as being in a kinship relationship with him – in a symbolic or adoptive sense. Both sonship and image suggest hierarchy: God the Father is superior to the Son; they also imply similarity in nature, and they share responsibility as well as authority. The Son carries out the Father's will, following it, obeying it.

The Son is the ideal manifestation of both sonship, as I have shown, and for image-ness as well: he models how to be a son and how to be an image of God, how to represent him, and how to radiate his power. I argued that the divine Father and Son embody the ideal, original meaning behind this kinship category, which is different from the earthly interpretation. The case of the image is the same: the Son is the perfect image, he is the visible image of the invisible God, he is one and unique, not a mere copy, not replaceable, expendable: "The radiant image of his Glory sat,/His onely Son" (3.63-64). He is not one image or copy, but the image.

Moreover, just as the Father delights in his Son, he also finds joy in his image. Delight in the image underlines the goodness of creation, which leaves no room for envy or rivalry. The Son reflects, makes visible (audible) the thoughts of the Father: "My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,/ All hast thou spok'n as my thoughts are, all/ As my Eternal purpose hath decreed (3.170-172). He is son, image, and word since his thoughts and words are signs of God's will and providence. In the epic "word" does not become a metaphor for the Messiah as in the Gospel of John, the epic shows a clear preference towards Son and image when it comes to referring to the second member of the Godhead.

In my opinion the reason for this is exactly the network of relationships that kinship and image-ness create in the epic between the members of the Godhead and the human couple. Through kinship and image, the human couple can be restored to their original nature as children and images of God.

The nature of the Son is defined in these lines:

> Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
> Most glorious, in him all his Father shon
> Substantially express'd, and in his face
> Divine compassion visibly appeerd,
> Love without end, and without measure Grace (3.138-142)

The visibility of the Son is a crucial point: he can be seen, as vision is the most powerful sense, and can impress the onlooker more. "Substantially express'd" refers to the theological background of the epic, substance being the shared quality of the Father and the Son. Compassion, a divine emotion, is also something perceivable through vision, represented by the facial expression of the Son.

Roland Mushat Frye in his colossal work, *Milton's Imagery and the Visual Arts* (1978) discusses the representation of the Father and the Son, and observes that, on the one hand, the representation of the Father is the "least visual" aspect of the epic, and that the poet follows early Christian conventions of not depicting the Father, but instead the Christ-Logos (1978, 149). While I agree with the latter argument, I think that the epic's insistence of the invisibility of God (ibid.) does not make it less visual: the invisibility of the model is an important factor of the ideal concept of the image, and God is simply expressed through his Son. The trick is exactly that the father and the Son are purely described in terms of each-other, and this way they are indeed "beyond compare", they are not likened to any other creature. God radiates and emanates glory, and the Son reflects it, thus they together define not the divine appearance but rather the essence, that cannot be described in human terms – the tool of accommodation is not appropriate here. The epic thus provides the only acceptable way to represent God: describing the Father in terms of the Son and the Son in terms of the Father.

At one point, Roland Mushat Frye argues that "When the Father addresses the Messiah as "effulgence of my glory, Son beloved,/ Son in whose face invisible is beheld/ Visibly, what by deity I am,/ And in whose hand what by decree I do," the paradox is neatly concealed by Milton's poetic sleight-of-hand: "in whose face invisible is beheld/ Visibly" (vi, 680-84). Here indeed the music almost carries us away, and we may very well be persuaded that we have seen something "visibly" even though we are told that it appears in a "face invisible." (1978, 154). The way I see it, the paradox is not concealed, on the contrary: the complete unity of Father and Son is emphasized by the mutual referencing of each other.

The paradox also means being able to see the invisible God, therefore, not seeing the Son, but seeing the Father instead. This begs the questions, who is really invisible, and who is visible, who is seen?

The Son, otherwise, is described in action several times, as befitting the hero of the Christian epic, through iconographic traditions that relate the Son to creation, the War in Heaven, the judgement of Adam and Eve and the Last Judgement (R. M. Frye 1978, 156). Still, and Frye also acknowledges that the artistic traditions, painting Christ as a young man, a bearded middle-aged man or *Pantokrator* do not explicitly appear in the epic, instead, the Son appears as carrying out different functions of the Godhead, in action, but not as Adam for example, in terms of his looks (4.300-303).[104]

The concept of Son as the image, furthermore, expresses the paradoxical sameness and otherness previously mentioned. Image completes and, in my view, clarifies the culturally and biologically burdened kinship metaphor, insisting on the metaphysical aspect of the relationship between the members of the Godhead. The two metaphors reinforce and interpret each other and also provide the interpretative basis of kinship and image-ness in the epic. This is the ideal state to which man should aspire as well, even though for them it is unattainable, since the Son is "beyond compare" (3.138), both as a son and as the image of God.

The Son's kingship, therefore, originates from God, as not opposed to it, like the realm of the fallen angels. The meaning of kingship as the image of God was discussed by none else than John Milton. There is hardly any need to demonstrate the metaphorical importance of the image at an age when two works, the Image of the King, and the Image-breaker was born. In this section I focus on these literary images, *Eikon Basilike* (1649) and Milton's *Eikonoklastes* (1649), two works that epitomize the power of images and the reaction to it.

The clash of the concepts of image as a person and image as an object culminates in the Early Modern period, when both image-making, iconophilia and iconoclasm flourishes. Additionally, as man as images are supposed to represent God, material images are also thought to point beyond themselves, being epistemological tools and ways to the divine as well as misleading idols and tools of magic. Images rely on the undefinable likeness between human and divine, they are imitations, and they imitate by representing what they stand for, therefore they do not passively reflect the model, but actively transmit its power. At the same time, an image is never the thing itself, it is not the model, it is the appearance of the model, thus it can be misleading and dangerous. It is no surprise then that

[104] For instance, in the description of the War of Heaven, there appears the Merkabah of the Hebrew tradition, the chariot on which the Son is mounted on a throne. Both Frye (1978, 157) and J. H Adamson (Hunter, Patrides, and Adamson 1971, 103-104) analyze the imagery that comes from the *Cabbalah*, the latter connecting it to the concept of the Logos.

with the evolution of technology and technique, the invention of linear perspective and mirrors the fascination with images and mirrors peaked during and after the Renaissance.

It is impossible to be unaffected by images. Images affect, however, not only the onlooker, but also the model. This is especially interesting in relation to the fact that images are through to reflect, primarily, the divine, the invisible, and not the earthly, visible reality (Ferrer-Ventosa 2024, 94). This implies what Paul also argues in his letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor 13:12), that there is a need for a medium that facilitates perception and transmits knowledge, and that medium is the image. This gives power to images over perception and knowledge, but it also gives power to the maker of images. Art, therefore, whether visual or poetic, has fundamentally more than aesthetic function, it has a moral dimension as well. Representation is a responsibility, as Plato argued.

Not only that, but images have a spiritual role too. Since the second Council of Nicea, the Christian use of images was based on the concept of *traslatio ad prototypum*, meaning that worship is directed towards the prototype of images, of which many exist (Ferrer-Ventosa 2024, 100). The proliferation of images served the purpose of deepening devotion and communicating divine truth, much like the parables themselves.

It is, nevertheless, difficult to differentiate the worship of images from the worship of the prototype, and the power of the image from the power of the model. The paradox of presence-absence affects perception. It is no surprise, then, that the iconoclastic movement of the Reformation took place, and that it has enjoyed much scholarly attention. Alexandra Walsham mentions that besides the rather obvious theological worries that grew out of the second commandment, iconoclasm is also an intriguing symptom concerning the power of images, manifested in the zeal with which they were destroyed, annihilating meaning (Walsham 2017, 83).

Eikon Basilike and Milton's *Eikonoklastes* are two works that deal with the destruction of one of the most prominent images, the image of the king in terms of the image and the kinship metaphor. While the former describes Charles I. as a father figure, a representative of God residing over the nation, the latter is set out to disprove this, mostly on the basis that the king in question did not live up to is function as an image. It is not only that the king could not, according to Milton, stand as a father to the nation, but he also cannot be considered a representative of God. The titles of both works reflect the obsession with images, which puts the regicide in the context of the theological debate of the age, reclaiming and denying the idea of one particular man as the image of God, the king, as opposed to the idea of all men being the images of God.

The book of the king employs the idea of showcasing a speaking picture of the king, who talks in first person singular, and embarks on a line of argumentation that are rather Miltonic in their theme

(Clay 1998).[105] In response, Milton uses the title of ancient Byzantine emperors who used to destroy images as a title (eikonoklastes). The king's book addresses and invites the people to participate in imagining (or re-imagining) the king (Chaise-Brun 2019, 2-3), and thus idolatry becomes image-making, the creation of an image without a model; in addition to the fact that the authorship of the book is debated (x).

Milton explains:

> But the People, exorbitant and excessive in all thir motions, are prone ofttimes not to a religious onely, but to a civil kinde of Idolatry, in idolizing thir Kings; though never more mistak'n in the object of thir worship; heretofore being wont to repute for Saints, those faithful and courageous Barons, who lost thir lives in the Field, making glorious Warr against Tyrants for the common Liberty; (Milton 1932, 68-69)

The author touches upon the fact that idolatry is not necessarily a religious phenomenon, but it might be a sociopolitical one, when people "idolize the king", instead of the people they should look up to as examples. He goes on to name the lords he has in mind, who truly served England.

Both works are emblematic of the age, as *Eikon Basilike* ruthlessly takes advantage of the analogical thinking that operates with icons and symbols, for example claiming that the king would rather wear a crown of thorns, just like the savior (Knachel 1966, 39).[106] The associations between crown and a crown of thorns and Christ are far-fetched but obvious at the same time, and the symbols activate the next layer of meaning, until the desired links to the divine are established. Milton questions this sequence of associations, and tries to activate a new thread, evoking thorns and snares. Instead of the image of God, the king, in the critics' opinion, evokes Satan. Joan Bennett writes:

> Though Charles had not possessed the full strength of Satan, he had been, in Milton's view, a servant of the archrebel. When a state is governed tyrannically, "those in authority are both human and fiendish. . .. Thus, the fiend is termed prince of this world; and in Revelation 13 the Dragon gave the beast his own dominion and throne and mighty power" (*A Defence*, CPW 4, pt. 1:384)- Although the beast was not equal to the Dragon in magnitude or complexity, the imitator shared traits with his model; and a tyrant like Charles was an imitator and servant of the devil (Bennett 1989, 35).

[105] Most relevant of Clay's arguments is that the *Eikon Basilike* sets out to create the image of the Christian hero, who is honest in his suffering (1998, 37).

[106] This is despite the fact that the book intends to paint the portrait of Charles I. as a mere man (Chaise-Brun, 2019, 1). Furthermore, the book employs discursive strategies, such as rhetorical questions, discourse markers, etc. to imitate the oral style, as if talking directly to the reader, sharing private thoughts from beyond the grave (ibid. 4).

Bennett argues, the way I see it, that in the eyes of the author of *Paradise Lost* Charles I. was none else than the agent of the mimetic violence, the Satan phenomenon that holds the world in bonds in the Girardian sense.[107] The fiend, Satan, becomes a model for tyranny.

This is not to say that the Satan of *Paradise Lost* is based on Charles I.'s figure, or his fictional image in *Eikon Basilike*. Rather, I would like to reinstate that Satan is both a Girardian Satan, the one who sets in motion the cycle of violence in the world, and an individual whose psyche reflects the struggle with this vicious circle, mimetic desire, envy, rivalry with the model and the inability to satiate his desire. *Eikonoklastes* seeks to shatter the self-deifying image of the king, where image is intended to evoke the image of God.

The iconoclastic work questions the audience's concept and relationship with narrative images, drawing attention to the fact that images might not represent what they seem to depict, and follows the example of image-breakers: "For which reason this answer also is intitl'd, *Iconoclastes*, the famous Surname of many Greek Emperors, who in thir zeal to the command of God, after long tradition of Idolatry in the Church, took courage and broke all superstitious Images to peeces".

Satan in the epic accidentally creates his own image (Sin), and after the fall of the angels generates the narrative that repaints the image of the rebellion. Satan, and the rebel angels, are not made in the image of God, they "self-begot" (5.860) in the sense that they indeed author their own image. Narratively speaking, as the king's image is meant to paint a certain picture, Satan also weaves his own narrative.

There is another image, the counterpart of God's image: death. The Son of God is the radiant image of the Almighty, his expression – the descriptors the epic employs when referring to the Son are in line with the Scriptural representation of the Messiah. The son of Satan, on the other hand, is Death. Through analogy, therefore, the son is the express image of his father, Death embodying – or disembodying – Satan's nature.[108] Instead of delighting in his son, Satan is appalled. Then death is transferred to man after the fall, when Adam contemplates the first murder, Abel's slaughter:

> Alas, both for the deed and for the cause!
> But have I now seen Death? Is this the way
> I must return to native dust? O sight
> Of terrour, foul and ugly to behold,
> Horrid to think, how horrible to feel! (11.461-465)

[107] In *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning* (2001) the French philosopher explains that while Satan causes mimetic conflicts, envy and jealousy, his power comes from seemingly being able to control the disorder and restore peace through the single victim mechanism, achieving his own deification (36-37). While the king in *Eikon Basilike* claims his power comes from God, he also deifies himself.

[108] When analyzing the kinship metaphor, I rely on Mark Turner's study of metaphors of kinship, wherein he argues that one component of kinship is inheritance, therefore what the offspring possesses or manifests is also the possession or characteristic of the parent; in this way, Sin reveals the true nature of her father. (Turner 2000, 72)

What Adam sees is the worst version of death, murder. His outcry echoes Satan's encounter with Death, also with a capital "D", a vision that is terrible and repulsive. Through murder, the final disgrace to God's image, man becomes the very image of Death. Death, in this capacity plays the reversed role of an image, one that reflects the true nature of the subject but instead of eliciting joy it elicits horror – which is all the more horrible since it is a reflection. The properties of the image, being transferable and visible, work not only with the divine image, but with its antithesis as well. The metaphor in the epic is used poetically, its nature is questioned and negotiated.

IV.7. 2. "His fair Inchanting Daughter" - Satan's Perfect Image

Satan has a complicated relationship with images and with the concept of the image. Unlike the Son – or Adam and Eve -, the angels, and Satan are not made in the image of God, but they are referred to as godlike. At the beginning of the epic Satan is described in terms of the sun first (1.594-599), and then his shield as the moon (1.284-291). This is in harmony with the Genesis account of creation, where these celestial bodies are the rulers of above, with a set function and sovereignty. In both cases Satan is depicted as not the perfect celestial bodies, but as ones whose light (and surface respectively) is dimmed or imperfect. These celestial bodies, and consequently the angels obtain their light and glory from God, and the fallen angels have been removed from the source of their light. Despite the fact that they are not images, they do reflect God, therefore distance from the source affects them.

Chronologically, Satan's first encounter is with his own image, Sin. Sin is more insistent on their kinship, but she also reminds Satan that she is his "perfect image" – in a moment when Sin is already far from being perfect. In any case, the image metaphor, sin my opinion here functions as the connection to the other image pairs, Father and Son, and Adam and Eve, on the one hand; on the other, it provides insight into the rebel angel's nature: looking upon a flawless image, he is not elevated to recall his divine nature, he uses it to satisfy his own selfish desires. His lustful reaction resembles the young man's wrong reaction to the image of the beloved in Plato's *Phaedrus*, when the subject acts without restraint.[109] Satan gives birth to Sin involuntarily, and continues to be unable to control

[109] The dialogue between Socrates and Phaedrus is concerned with the way images can be used in the right way, to aid the recollection of the idea; and the wrong way, for satisfying desires (Edmonds 2017, 85). The exchange between the philosopher and his friend is about rhetorical images, with Phaedrus describing a Lysias's speech to Socrates, but also images of beauty, such as the beloved, or statues of gods. The treatment of images as guides to the divine are relevant to my study as characters as images affect each-other much in the way as it is laid out in the dialogue, evoking violent sexual desire, or transporting the onlooker to the realm of the divine. The work also sheds light on the ritual use of divine images in ancient Greek culture. An important part of these rituals was the procession, in which the statue of the divinity was followed by the admirers. The idea of following, in Plato's terms meant the recollection of the divine realm by the soul (Edmonds 2017, 77). This is similar, in my view, to the concept *of imitatio Christi:* Christ called people to follow

his reaction to her – which is not delight, but lust. He admires the wrong image, thus instead of being elevated, he falls.

Satan falling in love with his own image – to the extent that is can be considered love - alleges not only to Eve's liaison with her own image in a pond, but it also contrasts with the way Satan reacts to the image of God, the Son: he stumbles, he is offended. As Mitchell described, images can offend the onlooker, and this is what happens to the Archangel. He questions both the fact that the Son is the image and a king:

> Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
> Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,
> This onely to consult how we may best
> With what may be devis'd of honours new
> Receive him coming to receive from us
> Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
> Too much to one, but double how endur'd,
> To one and to his image now proclaim'd? (5.777-784).

Satan raises the question why the Son is selected as unique (one) and as the representative (his image), hinting to the fact these are significant titles. Apparently, he disapproves of God's image. He does not envy, however, godlikeness in the sense that the son embodies it, he only desires the son's position – he himself is godlike. He dislikes the Son as the image of God as the Son exposes, and the fact that he desires not true godlikeness, but the power that comes with it, as Raphael explains the motivations of the rebel angels: "since by strength /They measure all, of other excellence /Not emulous, nor care who them excels" (6.820-822).

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him, that is, to assimilate themselves to the divine by becoming actively alike the visible image of God: "Following the tracks back from within themselves to find the nature of their god, they succeed on their way, because they have been compelled to keep their eyes fixed upon the god, and as they reach and grasp him by memory they are inspired and receive from him character and habits, so far as it is possible for a man to have part in the divine" (253a). There is an advantage to visible images, therefore, which the devout can follow. These beautiful images, according to the philosopher, therefore, allow the onlooker to ascend to the divine realm, but they may also powerfully affect the subject, causing not only inspiration but also rapture. What is more, images can inevitably possess the onlooker, but it is necessary to approach them the correct way. The beautiful image should be treated as the divine, therefore it should help to elevate the onlooker's soul. Beautiful, visible images are signs of the divine beauty that is invisible. Furthermore, through reason, humans can picture the divine even though they have never actually seen it (Edmonds, 2017, 67). This kind of recollection, according to Plato, is the goal for man, leading to perfection (ibid. 78). The images, however, can, Plato explains, cause a kind of madness, a desire which is difficult to control, even of sexual nature. In *Phaedrus* the philosopher uses the metaphor of a charioteer and his horses: he must put reins on the steeds of his desire that would assault the image of beauty (ibid. 67). It is also worthy of mention that Plato's Socrates argues that someone corrupted, despite formerly having been elevated, can react to beauty by earthly lust (Edmonds 2017, 78-79). The image of the beloved can point to divine beauty and truth the same way as a rhetorical speech can produce images, and the audience may react to these the same way as to visible images, since rhetoric is a sort of image-making according to Plato. In his work *Phaedrus*, therefore, he already treats a great variety of images, from mental images to the beloved, and images or statues of the divine. All these images exert their power on the onlooker the same way, and they can be used either for the recollection of the divine truth, or for gratification (Edmonds 2017, 85).

The rebel angels, then, imitate and rival with authority and power, which they consider the worthiest. They do not find virtue in anything else, that is why Satan is not in awe of the Son, only sees his position and the power that comes with it as a challenge. He considers the Son's power as a rival and disregards his true and complete nature.

As opposed to iconophobia, Satan demonstrates various forms of iconophilia as well. He loves his "perfect image," Sin, but he abuses this image. The way Satan is enraptured by Sin, his "perfect image," actually committing sexual abuse on her evokes the wrong attitude to images of a corrupt soul, who uses beauty not for self-elevation but instant gratification.[110] The fact that Sin is his own image is an additional twist: the Archangel experiences a love of a divine image, to the extent that he is a god, but he fails to control himself and use the image to remind himself of his divine nature – just like Eve is the "best image" of Adam, the expression of his godlikeness through their union. What is more, as the result of this act Satan is not exalted, on the contrary, his real image comes into being: Death. Sin as an image, hence, has a transformative power over the Archangel, but she is ambiguous: she is beautiful, and it is Satan's actions that corrupt her. Similarly, Satan's rhetoric affects a number of the angels not by leading them to the truth, but misleading and enslaving them.

Sin reflects the image of Satan as he wishes to see himself, as a creator: "O Parent, these are thy magnific deeds,/ Thy Trophies, which thou view'st as not thine own/ Thou art thir Author and prime Architect" (10.354-356). She alludes to Satan as "Author" elsewhere too, and in this sense, Sin as image serves as the tool for self-exaltation for Satan. She provides an alluring reflection and encourages him to take delight in his power. This self-exaltation, however, is the opposite of the doctrine of exaltation, discussed by György Endre Szőnyi (1998), which is achieved by different techniques and media. Exaltation is supposed to be the way to get in touch with the divine realm, when Satan rejects divine knowledge and seeks his own power.

He reacts differently to another beautiful image, Eve:

> Such Pleasure took the Serpent to behold
> This Flourie Plat, the sweet recess of Eve
> Thus earlie, thus alone; her Heav'nly forme
> Angelic, but more soft, and Feminine,
> Her graceful Innocence, her every Aire
> Of gesture or lest action overawd
> His Malice, and with rapine sweet bereav'd
> His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:

[110] Plato's work mentions that the beholder might need to consciously control himself upon the beautiful sight, which Satan is unable to do: "Now when the charioteer beholds the love-inspiring vision, and his whole soul is warmed by the sight, and is full of the tickling and prickings of yearning, the horse that is obedient to the charioteer, constrained then as always by modesty, controls himself and does not leap upon the beloved; but the other no longer heeds the pricks or the whip of the charioteer, but springs wildly forward, causing all possible trouble to his mate and to the charioteer, and forcing them to approach the beloved and propose the joys of love" (*Phaedrus* 245a).

> That space the Evil one abstracted stood
> From his own evil, and for the time remaind
> Stupidly good, of enmitie disarm'd,
> Of guile, of hate, of envie, of revenge; (9.455-466)

The scene demonstrates the effect and the power of images, as Eve stands in front of Satan as the image of things he has lost, he is reminded of Heaven and angels in their original form. The image causes visual pleasure, but goodness, as before, elicits negative feelings from Satan. On the one hand, Satan only perceives the appearance of beauty, and that affects him. However, just like the actual image of God, the Son is ineffectual, the image does not have transformative power over him. He is "bereav'd", "abstracted", "disarm'd", that is, powerless in front of the image. Plato in *Phaedrus* already mentioned such effect of an image, where upon the sight of the beloved, the soul (horses and the charioteer) stands in awe:

> And they come to the beloved and behold his radiant face. And as the charioteer looks upon him, his memory is borne back to the true nature of beauty, and he sees it standing with modesty upon a pedestal of chastity, and when he sees this he is afraid and falls backward in reverence, and in falling he is forced to pull the reins (254b).

Eve, just like the beloved, embodies, or rather depicts true beauty, the union of beauty and goodness. The account in *Phaedrus* goes on to describe the way the charioteer must struggle to control the "dark horses", overtaken by desire. In Satan's case, while he is awestruck and despite his nature stands "stupidly good", it is his fallen nature that stops him from further admiring Eve; he remembers his envy and bad intentions and continues with his plans. Therefore, as opposed to being overtaken by his own image, Sin, he reacts differently to a true image of beauty and innocence, which again shows his corrupt nature.

What is more, as I have mentioned, Satan reacts adversely to the actual image of God, the Son: he directly sees the image of divine truth and goodness and is offended by it. His reaction simply means that he does not find the divine image appealing, he finds his own image (and by extension ideas) appealing and true, and goes into great lengths to paint an unappealing, threatening image of God to the rebel angels. Ironically, Satan, and the fallen angels eventually acquire their share of God's kingdom, Hell, and their position as rulers as the result of imaging God negatively. In this way, they become the image and thus achieve the opposite of the position they envied in the first place. Additionally, they lose what is left of their godlikeness.

It is possible, then, to study the rebellion of Satan as a chain reaction to different images that elicit a wide range of emotions, from offence to lust, and all these reactions are wrong. He demonstrates not only how to be a bad father, but also how not to treat images, but see them for what they are.

Hell is in a way the manifestation of divine justice and providence, where the fallen angels can establish their kingdom and partake in their definition of freedom, but they end up uncannily imitating, emulating the heavenly rule. Their wish to copy the kingdom of Heaven reveals their lack of awareness of the laws of imitation, which finally enthralls them: they do not only rival the rule of Heaven, but also want to overcome it, which is impossible by definition. They end up miming their model, instead of becoming independent and having authority. The mimetic interpretation of the image metaphor uncovers the underlying structure of dependence and freedom that creates a poetic theology that manages to accommodate the drama of the apocryphal narrative of heavenly rebellion to the idea of theodicy.

IV. 7. 4. "His image multiply'd": The Human Experience

There is an instance in the epic when different meanings of the image are juxtaposed and contrasted: through Eve's experience, the first picture in the narrative appears, but this image is promptly dismissed by a voice, explaining that in fact Eve herself is the image. Following the fall, her awareness of being an image drives her to despair over her replaceability. In both cases Eve talks from her own personal viewpoint:

> As I bent down to look, just opposite,
> A Shape within the watry gleam appeard
> 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,
> Had not a voice thus warnd me, What thou seest,
> What there thou seest fair Creature is thy self,
> With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
> And I will bring thee where no shadow staies
> Thy coming, and thy soft imbraces, hee
> Whose image thou art, him thou shalt enjoy
> Inseparablie thine, to him shalt beare
> Multitudes like thy self, and thence be call'd
> Mother of human Race: (4.460-475)

Notably, neither Eve, nor the mysterious voice calls the phenomenon an "image" yet, it is called a shape; what is more, the voice says, she sees herself. She finds delight in the picture, in the way it imitates her, and she experiences love developing.

However, the voice shatters the illusion: "What there thou seest fair creature is thy self". The voice goes on to explain that Eve herself is an image of somebody", thereby defining her. The difference, the voice explains, that while the shape in the water comes and goes, Adam "inseparablie"

belongs to her, but she will "enjoy" him, just as she enjoyed her reflection in the water. Having offspring is likened to making copies, thus the kinship metaphor is again connected with the "image" – Eve will "beare" children, who will bear her image.

Eve continues to reminisce, and during her encounter with Adam, she does call her reflection an "image":

> what could I doe,
> But follow strait, invisibly thus led?
> Till I espi'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
> Under a Platan, yet methought less faire,
> Less winning soft, less amiablie milde,
> Then that smooth watry image; back I turnd,
> Thou following cryd'st aloud, Return faire Eve,
> Whom fli'st thou? whom thou fli'st, of him thou art,
> His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
> Out of my side to thee, neerest my heart
> Substantial Life, to have thee by my side
> Henceforth an individual solace dear;
> Part of my Soul I seek thee, and thee claim
> My other half: with that thy gentle hand
> Seisd mine, I yielded, and from that time see
> How beauty is excelld by manly grace
> And wisdom, which alone is truly fair. (4.475-490)

Eve seems to have realized, in retrospect, that in the water she had seen an "image" in the sense of not being substantial, as opposed to Adam's argument about her material origin. Even though the watery image looks more pleasant, it is only an appearance, superficial and insubstantial, immaterial. Contrary to this, Adam, the model, and his image Eve are material, and their resemblance and oneness goes deeper than a mere reflection. Reproduction, having children is the way of creating real likenesses.

This scene describes, in my view, the theological concept of the epic regarding the image, even though it does not involve God directly. The comparison between a "watr'y image", a picture, and the relationship between two people as image-ness focuses the attention on the difference between picture and image and insist on the fact that image has personhood. Besides, the scene implies that human experience does not create sufficient meaning, what she understands as an image is not the same as the divine original.

In the human world, unlike in Heaven, there are appearances, thus not all that seems like an image is an image, and the event forewarns Eve not to trust appearances – as she would with the Serpent. Eve has no reason not to admire and approach the reflection, what she has to do is to become aware of the difference between picture and image. The episode serves as demonstration of the ambiguity of the image, and the voice, together with Adam, aims at clarifying the meaning of the

image. It shows that humans react positively to likeness but need to learn the difference between images and pictures.

While in the case of the infernal couple it was Satan who failed to recognize his partner – even though it was after he had already had intercourse with her -, here it is Eve who does not immediately recognize Adam, and a voice explains their relationship. From Eve's part, however, it is an honest mistake, she simply needs to learn the difference between picture and image, between appearance and reality.

The divine aspect of human existence is, besides dignity, rulership and representation is the union between man and woman, the love between Adam and Eve. This is also expressed through the image metaphor, as Eve is the "best image" of Adam. Eve's beauty, the sight of the beloved, by the logic of *Phaedrus* is meant to remind Adam of his divine nature and thus elevate him, as long as he treats her right.

Adam confesses Raphael in Book 8 his most intimate feelings concerning Eve:

> yet when I approach
> Her loveliness, so absolute she seems
> And in her self compleat, so well to know
> Her own, that what she wills to do or say,
> Seems wisest, vertuousest, discreetest, best; (546-550)

Before that, Adam acknowledges that Eve is "resembling less/ His Image who made both, and less expressing/ The character of that Dominion giv'n /O're other Creatures" (543-546), still, he is fascinated by her. The problem is the nature of his fascination, however different it is from Satan's lustful desire of Sin: Adam admits that "All higher knowledge in her presence falls/ Degraded, Wisdom in discourse with her/ Looses discount'nanc't, and like folly shewes (551-553). Eve seems to threaten Adam's reason and integrity, and that is why Raphael admonished him. He warns him, just as the mysterious voice warned Eve of the false appearance of her reflection in the pond, not to be carried away by appearances, but remember his position: "weigh with her thy self;/ Then value: Oft times nothing profits more/ Then self esteem" (570-572). The angel also explains to him that animal desires are below them, they are made for a different sort of love:

> What higher in her societie thou findst
> Attractive, human, rational, love still;
> In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
> Wherein true Love consists not; love refines
> The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat
> In Reason, and is judicious, is the scale
> By which to heav'nly Love thou maist ascend,
> Not sunk in carnal pleasure (586-593).

Raphael's words recall the function of the image of the beloved, describes in *Phaedrus* to elevate the onlooker's soul: she must be treated as an image in the right way (Edmonds 2017, 77-78) reaching the divine level of love, represented by the Father and his image, the Son. the relationship between Adam and Eve, thus, can also be framed by the concept of the image.

Eve has yet another encounter with dangerous, mental images. The implications and dangers of fantasizing appear in the epic, when Eve gives an account of her dreams to Adam in Book 5. After talking about her dream of eating the fruit (having the mental image that could lead to behavior), Adam analyzes her experience based on the contemporary ideas of imagination:

> But know that in the Soule
> Are many lesser Faculties that serve
> Reason as chief; among these Fansie 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 Fansie wakes
> To imitate her; but misjoyning shapes,
> Wilde work produces oft, and most in dreams,
> Ill matching words and deeds long past or late. (5.100-113)

Adam, thus, defines "Fansie", as a faculty of mind that gathers sensory impressions of the outside world, transforms them, and acts as if it was reason, replacing it and as a result it creates experiences and dreams that appear to be actual thoughts. Adam's logic means that "Fansie" is twice removed from reality, while thinking (Reason) works with mental representation, "Fansie" imitates Reason in a way that it falsifies the result. There is a danger, thus, in seeing, representing and imitating subconsciously - the way it usually happens, as I will explain.

It is also interesting that Adam, despite the ominous content of the dream, did not focus on the events themselves but tried to figure out the reason for these fantasies. He, consequently, ignores the power of the dream as an example, which will actually take place almost the same way as it did in Eve's mind. The prefiguration of Eve's transgression, and her fascination with the dream, together with its reproduction in Book 9, describes the imitative behavior characteristic of mankind. Adam, however, dismisses the danger of imagination, arguing that it is only dangerous when one is asleep, and Reason is inactive. It seems as if reason equaled morality, and since they are reasonable and moral creatures, there was no risk of imitating an example that causes distress. As opposed to this, temptation takes place when Reason is supposed to be awake. The tendency to imitate, therefore, is stronger than the ability to reason, and the dream reinforces imitation, since Eve has already seen herself committing

the act; what is more, she already had experience of the result as well. During the temptation, she also has the example of the Serpent.

The influence of imagination, and the effect of appearances, therefore, are strong enough that there is a need for a counterexample, who is relatable (has the form of a human) and who demonstrates the way of obedience. The role of the Son, not just as a redemptive sacrifice, but as a model, fully develops in *Paradise Regained*, however, already in *Paradise Lost* the need for his role as a model appears; the sequel reinforces the fact that following imitating Christ is imperative. He is the "one" image, since no other images can fulfil his role.

The fall immediately affects the way Eve thinks about her status as an image in terms of her replaceability, questioning her uniqueness:

> so to add what wants
> In Femal Sex, the more to draw his Love,
> And render me more equal, and perhaps,
> A thing not undesireable, somtime
> Superior: for inferior who is free?
> This may be well: but what if God have seen,
> And Death ensue? then I shall be no more,
> And Adam wedded to another Eve,
> Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;
> A death to think. Confirm'd then I resolve,
> Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
> So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
> I could endure, without him live no life (9.821-834)

Eve reasons that as a result of her disobedience, she might be discarded, and supplanted by "another Eve", as if she was a copy. This line of argumentation questions her individuality, and it approaches the genre of science-fiction, when a clone comes to realize its expendability. This is of course flawed logic, especially since she attributes to God her destruction, almost as a revenge. Eve's logic reflects modern anxieties with the idea of being one of many among God's images, the worthlessness of copies thus the valuelessness and transience of human lives. These ideas go against God's providence, nonetheless Eve decides to make Adam like her.

Moreover, Eve's way of thinking echoes Satan's argument that her position in hierarchy cannot be good, it curtails her freedom and thus it must be therefore changed. In context, Eve's freedom is not reduced by Adam, he was convinced by Eve to separate from him and go about their respective work. There is no evidence that Eve is less free, yet she uses this Satanic argument to justify her actions.

The postlapsarian logic is reiterated by Adam, who does not deny the possibility of replacement Eve, in fact, he treats it as a possibility:

Should God create another Eve, and I
Another Rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from my heart; no no, I feel
The Link of Nature draw me: Flesh of Flesh,
Bone of my Bone thou art, and from thy State
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe (9.910-916)

Adam is still unfallen, but he already treats Eve as lost and as one who can be recreated from his rib, given that he still has ribs to spare, and wonders how the creation of another Eve would affect him. He understands that it would not be the same person, but instead of rejecting the idea, he insists on his nature, much like Sin explains her connection to Satan, and his material nature connecting him and Eve – not mutual love. As ridiculous as the repeated idea of "another Eve" is, it demonstrates the dehumanizing potential of misinterpreting the human status and condition.

With respect to Adam's words, Eve's worship sounds overbearing:

O glorious trial of exceeding Love,
Illustrious evidence, example high!
Ingaging me to emulate, but short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attaine (9.961-964)

Her lines reflect the fallen attitude to which she is condemned according to Genesis 3: "and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Gen 3:16). Hers is again a fallen attitude, appointing Adam as her example, even though Adam decides to follow her for all the wrong reasons. His example is not to be imitated, and the epic features the word "emulate", now not in the sense of rivalling, but imitating; however, Adam at this point is not perfect.

Subsequently, Adam and Eve engage in a lustful union, which once again demonstrates that they lose control over themselves, and they serve not as a means of elevating, but demeaning each other. They start to treat each-other the wrong way, not as the instrument of discovering God's image, but self-gratification. In this way, Adam and Eve authors not to themselves, but each other, but their new identity as conceived by the other leads them to conflict and confrontation.

The instances where images appear cross-reference explain and inform each other, expanding on the metaphoricity of the concept. Apart from the meaning arising from the biblical subtext, the modern philosophical connotations come into play in the relationship between characters and in their speeches. They are meaningful in themselves, but they also explain one another, and create a metaphorical structure that emphasizes the difference and uniqueness of the image-ness of the Son with respect to his Father, in comparison to Adam and Eve. Their concept of the image changes with the fall, they fail to see it as a blessing. Adam laments that the image would not prevent his deterioration and death in Book 11 (507-514). The angel Michael needs to clarify that the role of the

image is not to prevent the effects of death, but to remind them to exert control and consciously respect the image-ness of themselves and each other.

The image is a dynamic concept, therefore, but it still distinguishes mankind from the angels and unites them with the Godhead. The adoption to the divine family, and the exaltation of mankind happens via the kinship metaphor, through which Adam metaphorically becomes the divine Son's father.

V. "Adam's Son" - Conclusion

In an inspiring and elegantly comprehensive essay Rachel Trubowitz (2017) studies and compares John Milton's and Isaac Newton's radical ideas about poetry and science, and argues for Newton's belief in the power of mathematics to provide metaphors that could reveal God's attributes. She also claims that Milton's bold use of contemporary science without wanting to solve the paradoxes they conveyed.[111]

The power of Newton's mathematics, Trubowitz says, is that it "provides an excellent approximation of Truth, but not Truth in itself, which is inaccessible" (ibid. 37), and in terms of Truth, it reveals that the "likeness between the Son and the Father is the same as that between quantities that tend to infinity and infinity itself, which is not a quantity at all in an commonplace sense" (ibid. 54).

In this thesis I argued that while a mathematician such as Newton relied on mathematics to describe and prove his views not only about science but also about theology, Milton as a poet relied on poetry: metaphors and language to convey and communicate the inimitable and incomprehensible. My argument is that he used two pillars of Chistian theological language, Son and "image", and expanded on their respective meaning to reveal the divine truth. The epic *Paradise Lost* employs science, but is also true to the doctrine of "*sola scriptura*", and as Milton himself in his *Treatise* (1925) argues, the biblical word is trustworthy when it comes to communicating truth about God.

These metaphors in the epic represent the phenomenon of imitation, which is the primary relationship between God and his creation: existence is mimetic, and creatures inevitably imitate the creator. Through the perspective of Satan and the rebel angels, the epic explores how the imposed hierarchy of ontological mimesis interferes with the free will and the dignity of creatures.

Different theories of imitation allowed me to explore the nature of imitation, and the reason why likeness may turn into rivalry through the theories of René Girard. In the Christian cosmos of the epic, however, God cannot be reduced to a rival, and the opposite of rivalry is mutual love, expressed in the mimetic relationship between Father and Son.

[111] John Rogers (2019) also discusses the relationship between Newton's natural science and Milton's theology, and their Arian inclinations as well. He concludes that in the epic *Paradise Lost* the distinction between Father and Son is less clear-cut, mentioning the divine titles he is referred to with (ibid 96), not even mentioning the "Second Omnipotence"(6.684), which I found contradictory in itself. He argues that since creation is carried out by the Son, who perceives the divine idea and the divine will, he is capable of acting both as a creature and as a creator of the ultimate sense (ibid. 102). On the other hand, for the sake of the theodicy of the epic, Rogers claims, the Son must be an independent creature in possession of free will, being given the same choice to choose to sacrifice himself and carry out his Father's will as any other creature (ibid. 78). Similarly, I also claimed that the status of the Son depends on the function he fulfils in a certain context.

Furthermore, I applied cognitive metaphor theory to scrutinize the range of meanings that kinship and "image" imply in the epic. Apart from importing mathematical analogies in the epic, as Trubowitz claims (ibid. 38), Milton also imports metaphorical analogies from myth, the Bible and contemporary life to expose the fallen connotations of both kinship and "image", while insisting on the original, divine meaning of both sonship and the image-ness of both the Son and Adam and Eve. The metaphor theory of the epic, consequently, is not cognitive, but theological and theodical. While cognitive metaphor theory argues that meaning is anchored in everyday, human sense experience, the epic constantly defies this, and argues that meaning is anchored in divine truth.

Hence, both kinship and "image" structure the metaphors of the epic into a scaffolding that consists of a network of comparisons. For instance, the sonship of Death and his rivalistic relationship with Satan, and the very fatherhood of Satan stands in opposition of the kinship of God and the Son, who are not only the only referents for each-other, but exist in perfect harmony and unity, and express their love and admiration towards each-other.

Similarly, idols and false images, and the visual, immaterial image experienced by Eve both in her dream and upon her awakening stand against the image-ness of the Son and in fact the image-ness of Adam and Eve as well. Eve sees her reflection, and thinks that it is a real entity, but immediately she learns that she herself is an image, a living-breathing creature, "Daughter of both God and Man" (4.660).

The metaphors of *Paradise Lost*, therefore, are not intuitive, but require conscious, logical thinking, reason and also will discover truth. Language must be an object of scrutiny, but it is capable of communicating the approximation of truth.

In this sense, in fact, as Trubowitz writes both Milton and Newton were looking for the pristine, original religion, and Milton did so through language: I claimed that his radicalism is a radical accommodation, manifested in his trust and reliance in poetry to be able to express truth, but it challenges the audience and demands rationalism.

The purpose of kinship and image metaphors in *Paradise Lost* is to express completion and transformation. These metaphors are relational, meaning that one constituting part cannot exist without another, and they complete each-other. However, transformative power also involves danger: it is risky to become a parent, and it is risky to create one's image, bestowing individuality and authority to the offspring and the image respectively.

The pairs of model and image, God and the Son, Satan and Sin, and Adam and Eve also complete and interpret each other: the ideal kinship and image-ness is demonstrated by the members of the Godhead, wherein the Son both reflects and reveals the nature of God, inherits his power and kingdom, overtakes his responsibilities and delights in him. Adam and Eve in their relationship are meant to imitate this ideal, and by virtue of being made in the image of God should follow and imitate

Him by representing Him, imitating his just rule of Heaven on Earth. In this sense they are images of the Son, who is the ultimate king. Satan and Sin, and eventually Death, paint the opposite of the ideal: the corrupt family, in which kinship lacks fairness and affection, and Sin as the image serves for not only making visible Satan's true nature, but to reduce him to a brute.

Rachel Trubowitz further studies the way Milton uses Zeno's paradox to describe the infinitude of fall, both for angels and men, the impossibility of arriving at the end point, while divine providence is expressed through the continuity of movement toward the end point, redemption, in analogy with Newton's theory of fluxions. Paradoxes are not scarce in the epic, and in my opinion, the metaphorical, or poetic expression of the workings of the divine providence lies in the kinship metaphor, the promise that the Son becomes Adam's Son, as God promises: "Here shalt thou sit Incarnate, here shalt/ Reign Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man" (3.315-316).

The way I see it, this is a subversive use of the kinship metaphor, since it implies that Adam becomes more than a son of God, he becomes a father, thus he, and though him his offspring, is exalted. The Son remains the eternal son, his status is absolute and immutable.

Moreover, Adam's son suggests an endpoint, but in fact two endpoints: both incarnation and redemption, through the transformative power of the metaphor. As Trubowitz states, both Milton and Newton believed that the climactic point in history of the end of the world (2017, 45). In my view, the expression Adam's son signifies not only the incarnation, when the Son becomes human, but also the complete reunion of the divine with the human, via the rebirth of both the Son and the rebirth and exaltation of Adam and in him, humankind. Adam remains an important actor until the end, and the Son is not a new Adam, but Adam's son, recreating the ideal, original family unit united by love and admiration.

It is the absolute sonship of the Son, and the redeemed fatherhood of Adam, therefore, that metaphorically express the workings of divine providence and the will of God, the ultimate truth. Paradoxes remain, however, and these metaphors do not solve but complicate the issues. Their systematic and consistent use point to what Michael Lieb (2000) refers to as a question of methodology, a scrutiny into the nature and the limits of language to express the complexities of sameness and otherness, presence and absence, hierarchy and freedom, individuality and multiplicity, uniqueness and replaceability. The question whether the Son is divine depends on the viewpoint and the context, I argued: the Son is the sign of the presence of God, not of his absence, as a mere image would be, while he is metaphorically inferior, and accepts his position, serving an example of the possibility of submission even for someone infinitely godlike. As Adam's son, he incorporates both human and divine nature in order to unite them.

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