

As a Theatrical Production

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Tutkimuksessa tarkastellaan John Miltonin eeppistä runoteosta *Paradise Lost* (1667, suom. *Kadotettu Paratiisi*) ja sen soveltuvuutta teatteriesitykseksi. Tavoitteena on esittää, että koska teos on osa eeppistä traditiota, se jo itsessään soveltuu julkisesti esitettäväksi, ja täten sisältää hyvät edellytykset myös teatteriesitykseksi. Tutkimuksessa pyritään osoittamaan teoksen dramatisaatioprosessin arvo itsenäisenä tutkimusvälineenä alkuperäisteokseen. Tähän liittyen tutkimuksessa tarkastellaan taiteellisen luomisprosessin aikana keskeisten esille nousseiden teemojen tulkitsemista nykypäivänä ja verrataan niitä muiden Milton-tutkijoiden havaintoihin.

Tutkimustyö suoritettiin hyvin käytännönläheisesti *Tampere English Students' Theatre*:n (lyh. *TEST*) puitteissa tehtynä ja esitettynä näytelmäproduktiona *John Milton's Paradise Lost*. Tutkimuksessa käytetään myös Paavo Liskin, David Guthrie Burnsin ja Sami Vehmersuon myöntämiä haastatteluja, joissa he ilmaisevat omia näkemyksiään taiteilijoina alkuperäisteokseen, sen tulkitsemiseen ja sen mahdollisuuksiin teatteriesityksenä. Mainittakoon, että Paavo Liski oli yksi ensimmäisiä maailmassa, joka ohjasi *Kadotetun Paratiisin* ammattiteatterin voimin (1976, Helsingin Kaupungin Teatteri). Omia ja heidän havaintojaan verrataan tunnettujen Milton-tutkijoiden analyyseihin alkuperäisteoksen teemoista, mm. Aatamin ja Eevan valtasuhteiden, seksismin, politiikan, sekä Saatanan itsensä uudelleenmäärittämisprosessin alueilta. Näitä ajatuksia tarkastellaan luovan teatteritaiteen käytännön ja teorian prosessien raameissa, jonka puitteissa tarkastellaan myös alkuperäisteoksen tematiikan ja vertauskuvallisuuden välittymistä teatterilavalle.

Huolimatta eeppisestä mittakaavastaan, *Paradise Lostia* on siis yritetty useita kertoja siirtää teatterilavalle, vaihtelevalla menestyksellä. Teoksen valtavan mittakaavan ja teemojen määrän takia minkä tahansa teatteriesityksen ohjaajan täytyy valita itselleen keskeisimmät teemat ja keskittyä niihin. *John Milton's Paradise Lost* oli esityksenä yritys siirtää koko teoksen rakenne teatterilavalle, mutta muuntaen sen muotoon, joka on 21. vuosisadalla elävälle katsojalle helpommin ymmärrettävissä ja samaistuttavissa.

Tutkimuksessa paneudutaan laajasti *John Milton's Paradise Lost* tuotantoprosessin aikana tehtyihin käytännön ratkaisuihin näyttelijäntyöstä, lavastuksesta, puvustuksesta, sekä kaikista muista teatteri-ilmaisun osa-alueista, jotka vaikuttivat esityksen lopulliseen ilmiasuun ja pyritään samalla vastaamaan kysymykseen kuinka ne reflektoivat alkuperäisteoksen tarinaa, ilmettä, teemoja ja tunnelmaa.

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FOREWORD

This Master's thesis is unusual in the respect that to a greater part it involves an analysis of a work of theatrical art, in which the author played a key role as the director and producer of the production in question. Therefore, whenever I am discussing the play, *John Milton's Paradise Lost* (the play), I can automatically be assumed to be referring to the following:

Tampere English Students' Theatre: *John Milton's Paradise Lost* (theatrical production). First night 9.2.2004. Viewed 9th, 10th, 15th, and 16th of February 2004.

and

Milton, John (1667) *Paradise Lost* (play manuscript, 'John Milton's Paradise Lost', 2004, dramatisation: Kuosmanen, Karita; Meaney, Aleksis; Rasi, Kai; and Timo Uotinen.).

as well as my own personal views as an artist and director in regards to my own vision and opinions of *Paradise Lost* and the play I directed thereof.

One of the greatest problems one encounters when writing about, or referring to a specific work of theatre, is that theatre is an art form, which exists in the context of a certain time. This is, of course, one of the great lures of theatre, in that once a production ends, it really does *end*, in the sense that it cannot be reexperienced the same way as, for example, cinematic or literary works of art.

I have tried my best to describe the production(s) I am referring to with words and photographic material, so that the reader can place him/herself into the viewers position as best can be expected when reading this thesis.

1.0 Introduction

John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost* (1667) is unarguably one of the most significant works of English literature. Milton's evocative representations of the idyllic Garden of Eden and fiery Hell have become ingrained in our use of everyday language. Just two examples of this would be that *Paradise Lost* contains the first recorded use of the word 'pandemonium' and the fact that lines and scenes from *Paradise Lost* are widely quoted and referred to in movies, television, literature, music, and even everyday conversation. When we wish to describe something as being noisy and chaotic, we would use the word "pandemonium", or when describing everyday situations, we might use phrases like "better to reign in hell than serve in heaven" or "how awful goodness is", often without knowing the original source. These are but a few examples of how strongly *Paradise Lost* has become ingrained in English speaking culture and language.

At the time it was first published in 1667, *Paradise Lost* was also a highly controversial work, due to its highly politicised content and critique of the political system of the period, especially in expressing Milton's views on Puritanism and monarchy, good rulership and the right to rule. Milton had supported the parliamentarian cause during the English Civil War, but afterwards became disillusioned by the ensuing brief reign of Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector. By the time *Paradise Lost* was published in 1667, the Restoration of the Monarchy and the re-establishing of the Stuart dynasty in 1660 under Charles II had already taken place and Milton's career in politics was at an end.

Milton chose to write *Paradise Lost* in blank verse, a mode of poetry marked by the lack of rhyme. In English, most blank verse employs iambic pentameter. By doing so, Milton partook in the ongoing debate within the English literary circles of the 16th – 17th centuries aptly referred to as the 'the blank verse controversy', in which poets and writers debated over which form of poetry was most appropriate for the English language. John Milton can therefore be linked to a series of writers, poets and dramatists who partook in this discussion, ranging from the 16th century playwrights Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare, to such poets as John Donne and Ben Johnson, all the way through to John Dryden, a contemporary of Milton.²

By utilising a plethora of metaphors and references, Milton succeeds in bringing to life the epic conflict between Heaven and Hell for the possession of mankind and the newly created world. It could be argued that any Hollywood special effects studio would be hard pressed to recreate such stunning visuals on the big screen.

But first and foremost, *Paradise Lost* is an epic and is therefore already keyed to a form of public performance, as are Homer's epics. This has recently manifested itself as public readings and orations of *Paradise Lost*, by students, scholars and performers. Another good example of this is David Guthrie Burns's one man performance of *Paradise Lost* Books 1-3, each performance comprising of one of the books and which are performed on successive days. Mr. Burns had memorised all three books by heart, and cites his reasons for doing this, as being the ability to concentrate fully on oration and delivery of the poetry. When interviewed, he expressed his aim, as being to represent *Paradise Lost* as he felt

¹ Milton, John (1667) *Paradise Lost*, London: Penguin Books, back cover.

Milton originally wanted it to be presented, i.e. as a public oration. Mr. Burns's performances can therefore also be seen as participating in the oral tradition of the epic.³ Stuart Simpson commented on Burns's performance in relation to precisely this respect:

An audience watching a performance of a work with such rich language and such depth of meaning will come away with a mere sense of the scope of Milton's ambition. However, there is a trade-off. Reading the poem in your own time, with the freedom to consider each passage and each line, the pace and drama of the work can be lost.⁴

In terms of scope and intent, *Paradise Lost* can be placed into context with other major European works of poetry, especially when one compares it to Dante Alleghieri's works "Divina Comedia" and "Inferno" (14th century), as well as in the tradition of the classical epic. Other epics have found their way to the silver screen, the most recent being "Troy" based on Homer's Iliad and some other movies have become loosely termed as epics, "Spartacus" and "Ben Hur" to mention just two.

It is precisely because *Paradise Lost* is such an influential work in English (and world) literature, and can be looked at in the contexts of poetry, literature, oration, and epic, that it can be considered somewhat surprising that very few attempts have ever been made to transfer it to the theatrical stage. At this point, it must be clarified that the recently popular *public readings* of *Paradise Lost*, especially in universities in North America (and reputed to last up to fourteen hours), in which a group of people read the poem aloud in public, do not qualify as theatrical drama in the context of this study.

² Milton, John: *The Poems of John Milton*, Ed. John Carey and Alastair Fowler (1968), London: Longmans, 456-457.

However, in relation to this, it is worth mentioning that Mr. Burns's performance of *PL did* include some very basic choreography and elements of dramatisation, as he switched between the different characters of the poem. The most interesting example of this was Mr. Burns's delivery Beelzebub's speech⁵ from the priest's pulpit, when he was performing Book II at St. Vincent's Chapel at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.⁶

1.1 The history of *Paradise Lost* in the theatre

As was already mentioned above, it can be considered quite surprising that such an influential literary work as PL took almost 300 years to find its way to the theatrical stage. This chapter will take a brief look at some of the various attempts to stage the epic as a play, focusing more closely on John Dryden's first attempt in London in 1674, and Paavo Liski's Helsinki production of 1976. I will only deal with actual dramatisations of PL leaving out the very recent tradition of reading the poem aloud in public. This account should by no means be considered final, since it is perfectly feasible that there are other past small-scale productions that the author is, as of yet, unaware of.

The very first attempt to portray the 10,000 lines of *PL* as a play was made only a few years after the publishing of the poem.⁷ In 1674 John Dryden made his ill-fated attempt to portray *PL* by converting Milton's blank verse into heroic couplets in his play *The State of Innocence, and Fall of Man: An Opera Written in*

³ Interview with David Guthrie Burns, Edinburgh, August 24th 2004, and David Guthrie Burns's Homepage, read 11.5.2004. (www-page)

⁴ Simpson, Stuart, *Guthrie Productions: Milton's Paradise Lost Book II* at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2003 (review), read 1.6.2005. (www-page), *Italics added*.

⁵ *PL* 2.310-416.

⁶ Guthrie Productions: *Paradise Lost: Book II.* (performance) St. Vincent's Chapel, Edinburgh. Viewed August 24th 2004.

⁷ Bassett, Kate, "Theatre Review: Paradise Lost", Independent (newspaper), 8.2.04.

Heroique Verse, Dedicated to her Royal Highness, the Duchess.⁸ Dryden originally wrote *The State of Innocence...* with Milton's permission in 1674, to serve as part of the festivities for the Duke of York's bride Mary of Modena, but the unpopularity of the match made grand festivities unwise and it was never performed.⁹

It took almost three hundred years for anyone to seize upon the subject again. Gordon Honeycombe¹⁰ made a student dramatisation of PL in the United Kingdom in 1961¹¹ and an Edinburgh Fringe production in 1971. Both of these twentieth century productions were amateur theatre productions in nature,¹² but the very first professional theatre production of PL was performed in Hungary in the early 1970's.¹³ It was translated, dramatised and directed by Károly Kazimir and was also the first non-English language stage production of PL. Kazimir's production set PL within the context of a medieval Hungarian rural manor, in which God was the master of the manor, the angels his servants, and Adam and Eve the tenants.¹⁴

The Finnish theatre director Paavo Liski, who had worked with Kazimir in realising Liski's vision of *The Kalevala* (the Finnish folk epic) on the Hungarian stage, saw Kazimir's production when visiting Hungary, and seized upon bringing it to the Finnish stage. Liski, who at the time was head of the Helsinki City Theatre, cites his reasons for directing *PL* (Finnish title *Kadotettu Paratiisi*) as being an interest in the play itself, as well as his personal life at the time, in which he felt that he "had lost his paradise". Liski also admitted to having a great interest

⁸ Lewalski, Barbara K. (2000) *The Life of John Milton, A Critical Biography*, Oxford: Blackwell, 508-509.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ A now retired newscaster living in Australia.

¹¹ Exact place unknown

¹² Cavendish, Dominic, "Theatre Reviews: Paradise Lost", Daily Telegraph 5.2.04.

in bringing epics to the theatrical stage. His directorial work of both *The Kalevala* and *PL* speak for themselves in this respect.¹⁵

Liski's production of *PL* was done very much in the tradition of the medieval mystery plays, which were short plays performed during market days and other festivals in order to represent the biblical tales to the common people. His stage was built in three levels, representing heaven, hell and earth. The dramatisation¹⁶ was that of Kazimir's and was translated into Finnish by Maria Vilkuna and Aale Tynni, who also used the original English language text as well as Yrjö Jylhä's translation of the poem (1933) as the basis. *Kadotettu Paratiisi* was performed at the Helsinki City Theatre, opening on February 17th 1976 and running throughout the spring of 1976. ¹⁷

What makes Liski's production interesting is that, just as Milton had done in his epic, Liski decided to use his subject matter (*PL*) to criticise the politics and political atmosphere of the period. During the nineteen seventies, there was a far left socialist movement in the cultural and academic circles of Finland which was struggling for control over these institutions with the moderates. This movement was called the "*taistolais*"-movement. Liski claimed himself as being "neutral" in the struggle between the *taistolais*-activists and the establishment, but still criticised the *taistolais*-movement in his vision of *PL* by likening them to the fallen angels, who are rebelling against God, who, in turn, represents the existing social order.¹⁸ Whether or not this criticism can be seen as having compromised

¹³ Interview with Paavo Liski, Helsinki, Jan 28th 2004.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Milton, John (1667) *Kadotettu Paratiisi (Paradise Lost*, play manuscript, 1975, Dramatised by Kazimir, Károly and translated into Finnish by Vilkuna, Maria and Aale Tynni).

¹⁷ Interview with Paavo Liski.

¹⁸ Ibid.

his "neutrality" is debatable, since the rebel angels are ultimately defeated, both militarily, and in their plot against humanity.

Liski's neutrality must, however, be seen as necessary in his position as the head of the Helsinki City theatre, a position which would have required him to act in a mediating role between the opposing political factions, in order to keep the theatre running. It is a matter of historic irony that ultimately the *taistolais* movement would also fail, just as Liski's fallen angels did.

It is hard to speculate whether or not Kazimir's original Hungarian production (in the early seventies), upon which Liski's production script was based on, also included a political element to it in the manner of the original epic, and Liski's vision, since it has been impossible to view the production (no recordings exist), and in the interview with Mr. Liski did not delve into it deeply into the matter.

However, considering that Kazimir's production of *PL* was set in a rural manor, and that God was portrayed as the master of the manor¹⁹, it is possible to make an educated guess that this was indeed so, especially when one considers that the play was staged in the early seventies communist controlled Hungary. It does not take any great leap of the imagination to speculate that Kazimir was perhaps likening God and the angels to the strict (communist) order that existed in Hungary, and the rebel angels as being opposing forces to this order. Ultimately, the existing order had to be have been portrayed as winning over the insurgent forces, due to the existing political climate in Hungary at the time. However, since no proper records exist (or are available) none of this can be concretely verified, and therefore remains open to speculation.

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¹⁹ Interview with Paavo Liski.

The next staging of PL was in 2000, when the California based Dell'Arte theatre company performed their first instalment of their three part PL play cycle, $Paradise\ Lost$: $The\ Clone\ of\ God$, followed a couple of years later by the second fragment $Paradise\ Lost$: $Sacred\ Land$, with the third (and final) instalment to be performed in the spring of 2004. The plays were written and directed by Giulio Cesare Perrone. The Dell'Arte company's solution to the grand scope and length of PL seems to have been to divide the work into fragments, or several related plays, as opposed to performing PL as a whole. PL

However, it took nearly three decades from Liski's production for a complete representation of *PL* as a play to reach the stage again. By a remarkable coincidence, two professional U.K. based theatre companies had, completely independently of each other, seized upon staging *PL* as a play. On January 30th 2004, both U.K. productions of *PL* opened, one at the *Northampton Royal Theatre*, adapted by *Ben Power* and directed by *Rupert Goold*, and the other at the *Bristol Old Vic*, adapted and directed by *David Farr*.²² The *Tampere English Students' Theatre* production of *John Milton's Paradise Lost*, which acted as the practical research for this paper, opened nine days later on February 9th at the Comedy Theatre of Tampere main stage. All three productions ran during February 2004.

The most recent theatrical production to be based on PL was the play $Kadotetut^{23}$, directed by Sami Vehmersuo, and performed by the $N\ddot{a}lk\ddot{a}teatteri$ theatre group in Helsinki. The play juxtaposed a present day "real life" broken human relationship with the events of Paradise Lost, with the environment shifting between the present day relationship and Satan's epic quest to corrupt mankind.

²⁰ No information was available of the third fragment, only that it was being planned.

²¹ Opera San José, Giulio Cesare Perrone, set designer, 11.5.2004. (web page)

²² Latham, Peter. *Paradise To Be Lost Twice in 2004*, British Theatre Guide, 11.5.2004. (web page)

²³ English translation: "The Lost"

The play was performed with only three actors (two men and one woman), each portraying a variety of roles during the performance.²⁴

The play productions of the past few years, and the renewed interest in *PL* as a potential stage performance can be interpreted as a small scale Milton revival, manifesting in the world of theatre and drama. After being fairly unpopular for a while, Milton seems to be once again becoming *en vogue*. This could be partially attributed to the re-emergence of "the epic" in popular culture. The movies *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (2001-2003, dir. Peter Jackson), *Troy* (based on Homer's *Iliad and the Odyssey*, 2004, dir. Wolfgang Petersen) and the up-and-coming *King Arthur* (based on the Arthurian legends, 2004, dir. Antoine Fuqua) are all good examples of this, as are such modern "epics" as the *Star Wars* movies. It remains open for speculation when and if a version of *PL* will reach the big screen, since cinematography and special effects have finally reached a level that would be adequate in bringing Milton's vision to life.

1.2 Aims of the Study

In this thesis, it is my intention to discuss, illustrate and offer some suggestions how *PL* could be represented on the stage, drawing on the experiences of the practical research conducted during the *Tampere English Students' Theatre* (henceforth referred to as *TEST*) production of *John Milton's Paradise Lost*.

Any work of theatrical art based on an existing text (especially if the text in question was not originally a play), requires the text to be interpreted by the director and the performers. In this light, I wish to examine how *PL* was

²⁴ Nälkäteatteri: *Kadotetut* a theatre production based on John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. First night 17.3.2005. Viewed 2.4.2005, and *Interview with Sami Vehmersuo*, Helsinki, April 2005

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interpreted in the case of *TEST*, and compare the thoughts and ideas that arose within the theatre group with those of some academic Milton scholars. This is done with the intention of exploring whether or not a play production of *PL* that delves into and interprets many of the central themes or the original poem, can also be seen as a new way of approaching the original work itself, and thus constitute an academic reading of the poem in its own right.

In this thesis, I also wish to focus on the problematics of turning such an immense work of poetic literature into a two and a half hour play and the transition which has to be made between genres (namely, from poetry to drama) in order to accomplish this. This generic move from the epic (poem) to drama (theatrical performance) will be, to some extent, framed by a more general discussion of the some theories of dramaturgy, especially the issues of adaptation and creation of dialogue. In this context I wish to bring forth some of the ideas presented by Martin Esslin in his works *Anatomy of Drama* (1976), and *The Field of Drama: How the Signs of Drama Create Meaning on the Stage and Screen*. (1987). I will also consider some of the practical (and highly opinionated) central principles and guidelines of writing and directing plays that Alan Ayckbourn discusses in his book *The Crafty Art of Playmaking*.

The primary research work for this paper has been highly pragmatic in nature, in the form of the above mentioned project by the *Tampere English Students' Theatre*, which was undertaken from April 2003 to February 2004, and climaxed on February 9th 2004, ²⁵ in a two and a half hour play based on Milton's *Paradise Lost*, which was performed at the Comedy Theatre of Tampere, Finland. It was, to the best of my knowledge, the first English Language theatrical

25 Other performances February 10th, 15th and 16th 2004.

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production of *Paradise Lost* outside of the United Kingdom, which attempted to depict the entirety of the poem in one performance. The author of this paper acted as the director and co-writer of the play, as well as performing the role of Arch-Angel Michael.

To avoid confusion and in order to save space, when drawing comparisons between *Paradise Lost* the play and *Paradise Lost* the poem, I will refer to each as *PL* (the poem) and *JMPL* (the play, titled *John Milton's Paradise Lost*) respectively.

2.0 From Epic to Play: Methods and Approaches

Once the decision had been reached by the *TEST* group that Milton's *PL would* be the play staged in February 2004, work on writing the script for the play began, headed up by myself. The final version of the script was the result of work laid down by four individuals; myself, Kai Rasi, Timo Uotinen and Karita Kuosmanen, with each focusing on different aspects of the work in process. However, during the rehearsal process, each actor also familiarised him/herself with the corresponding character in the original epic and was given the opportunity to have input when considering the final versions of the lines. In this chapter I wish to discuss the methods and the approaches to the text utilised by the *TEST* writers when reconstructing the epic poem into a theatrical performance.

The greatest problem with *PL* was the sheer scope of the poem. Milton's epic imagination and the 10,000 lines of poetry had to be reworked to suit the real life constraints of what resources *TEST* would have at its disposal. The play was to be performed on the main interior stage of the Comedy Theatre of Tampere, which is a medium sized stage in a 221-seat hall. It would also have to be presentable with a cast of 19 people, plus a technical team of over half a dozen highly talented semi-professionals.

None of the cast members were professional actors, but consisted of Finnish students of English, hence, English was not their native language, though the entire cast had an exceptionally good command of it. The play production was placed in the context of an extensive course of drama expression for the students, in which the objectives were to give the students the opportunity to hone their presentation, vocal and dramatic skill in English. It was also considered to be an

amateur theatre production in its own right partially independent of university work.

One of the greatest practical obstacles though, was running time. The time required to read aloud the entire poem was estimated as being more or less fourteen hours. The maximum running time of the play had to be less than two hours and thirty minutes. This number was arrived at after debate amongst the group as being appropriately long enough to portray the epic scale of the play, but also as being the maximum time that the audience could be expected to retain concentration in a foreign language play. The half-time recess would also conveniently split the play into two, approximate one hour long, acts.

Another important consideration was the language. The greatest part of the audience would be Finnish speakers, and from the experience of the previous *TEST* production of William Shakespeare's "*Macbeth: In-Yer-Face!*" in 2003, the writers were aware of the difficulty of relaying Early-Modern English to a non-English-speaking audience.

Hence, the language had to be simplified into a form which allowed easier accessibility for the audience, but the plot also had to be made accessible through the visuals of the play, which, it was hoped, would allow a member of the audience with only a limited command of English to follow and understand the narrative of the play and enjoy it as a theatrical experience none the less. Hence, a highly visual approach was adopted, putting great emphasis on the visuals of the play, which, in addition to the actors' actions, would include extensive lighting, sound, live music and video engineering. Also, a great deal of effort would be afforded to costume and make-up design.

In order to avoid confusion, the play was given the title *John Milton's Paradise Lost (JMPL)*. The choice of title also reflects the fact that it was the sincerest intent of *TEST* to try and portray as much of the whole poem as was possible on stage. I will discuss this further in the next chapter.

2.1. Composition

Performing PL in its entirety would require too many resources and too much effort on the part of both the drama group and the audience. Hence, it was not conceivable as such. Since PL is even less well known in Finland than it is in the English speaking world, a stance was adopted that the play JMPL would act as an introduction to PL for the audience, containing as much of the plot and events of the poem as could be represented in a dramatically allowable way.

Ayckbourn argues that in writing/staging a play one should use the minimum number of characters that one needs.²⁶ In accordance with this principle, character focus was shifted to whom the writers viewed as being the three most pivotal characters of *PL*: Satan, Adam and Eve, and the triangular drama dynamic that they create. The included elements of the poem would revolve very much around these three characters. However, very soon it was discovered that more attention would have to be afforded to the heavenly faction (to the Son of God more specifically).

This was done for the reason that it was understood that in order to remain true to Milton's vision, Satan's argument had to have a counter argument. Evil and Hell may be more compelling and entertaining to the audience, but evil without the presence of good is just as impotent as good without the existence of evil. It is

²⁶ Ayckbourn, Alan (2002) *The Crafty Art of Playmaking*, London: Faber and Faber, 13.

precisely from such conflict that dramatic suspense arises. In relation to the message of the original epic, this proved to be an almost cathartic observation when transforming it into the genre of drama.

Due to the context in which the production was staged,²⁷ there was also the matter of employing nineteen actors with lines. Having the ability to utilize nineteen actors in a performance can be seen as a tremendous advantage. However, at some point during casting, we discovered that we were fast running out of central characters. Therefore some of the supporting characters (such as Zephon and Ithuriel) were included in much of the onstage action, and various generic "angelic" parts were fused into these characters, whereas some of the other lesser characters of *PL* (such as Uzziel or Zophiel) or were left out completely. The actors of many of the smaller roles would also double up as the Lords of Chaos.

Milton employs the epic device of describing events that, from the subjective view of the characters, have transpired in the past, rather than portraying them in the present moment, the prime example of this being Raphael's relation to Adam (and Eve in *JMPL*) of the fall of Lucifer and the creation of the world and of man. Partially this is due to Milton beginning his story *in medias res*, which is also in accordance with the epic tradition. Ayckbourn warns that one must be careful when mixing time speeds and non-chronological storytelling in a play, since too much can result in the audience becoming confused and experiencing a form of (narrative) travel sickness.²⁸

The solution to this was to have the events referred to by the characters in *PL* to be played out as live action on the stage, either as a flashback sequence, as

²⁷ i.e. a university course of "Drama in Performance".

²⁸ Ayckbourn (2002), 22-25.

was done with Raphael's story of Lucifer's fall from heaven (Books V and VI), or by altering the story structure in a way that would allow the events being referred to, to be played out in the present. An example of this is the *JMPL* scene in which Satan arrives in Paradise (see appendices) and witnesses the creation of Eve.

Nevertheless, a great deal of material still had to be edited out. Ultimately, it was decided that very little emphasis would be put on *PL* Books 7-8, 11 and 12, and that any content of those books that would merit inclusion in the play would be brought up in a different context, or included in a scene based on one of the *focus* books (*PL* 1-6 and 9-10)

Much of what was edited out from the poem had to do with the accessibility of some of the finer points of Milton's political writing and his views on religion and Puritanism. It was thought that the Finnish audience would not be well enough acquainted with the history and culture of Civil War and Republican England and running time and focus could be better used in dealing with themes that had a more direct relation to the modern age. However, some important features from Puritan writings (including Milton's) were retained, especially ones that accepted "the legitimacy and propriety of sexual desire". and which located "human happiness in loving relations between men and women".

Paavo Liski had tried to work around this problem by printing a short history of the English Civil War and Republican England on the handout sheet of the 1976 Helsinki City Theatre Production of PL, 31 but TEST did not have the resources to print such an extensive handout sheet. An example of leaving out this

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²⁹ Keeble, John K. 'Milton and Puritanism' (2001) *A Companion to Milton*, Ed. Thomas N. Corns, Oxford: Blackwell, 139.

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ Helsinki City Theatre: *Kadotettu Paratiisi*, (handout) 1976, The Theatre Museum of Finland.

kind of social commentary in *JMPL* is the exclusion of the biblical tales told by the Archangel Michael in books 11-12.

2.2. Themes

When creating a play from a work such as PL, it is imperative that the director of the play explores the themes and dilemmas he wishes to express to the audience. Just as Milton used the Bible and various other religious sources as the subject matter to explore themes that he felt were important (in Milton's case, these would be his political and theological/religious views), TEST used PL as the subject matter to explore its own themes.

As the director, there were two primary themes that I wished to explore through the staging of *JMPL*. The two central themes formed the intertwining plot threads that ran through the play and keep the narrative in motion. The first theme had to do with (1) individualism, self-love and self-worship, and the second with (2) human relationships.

When Milton was writing PL in the 1660's, there was a social shift in the views of what the ideal way for a human being to live was. The focus was shifting from the monastic to the domestic way of living. During the latter half of the twentieth century, that view has performed another shift, this time from the domestic to the individualistic. This individualistic ideal pervades the whole of western culture and is one of the results of the new liberal values of western society as well as capitalism and the new interconnecting information society.

It is not unusual to speak of a "God shaped whole in the heart of man". Humankind has begun to fill that God shaped whole with itself. We have begun to worship the individual, i.e. ourselves, just as Satan does in *PL*. The play analyses

this theme through the character of Satan, who is portrayed in *JMPL* as being the ultimate individualist.

For Satan, the play is a journey of self-creation, or rather, re-creation of self after falling into sin. In an attempt to deny God, he begins a process of redefining himself as "the antagonist to Heaven's almighty king", refusing to acknowledge the reality that even he was created by God. In a similar manner, I feel that we, human beings, in this day and age of science, are trying to re-define ourselves and remove God and the supernatural from our lives, replacing it with worship of the individual and the values associated with it.

David Robertson takes a similar view of the character of Satan in his essay "Soliloquy and Self", in which he argues that Satan's soliloquies in *PL* "trace the process of creation of a self that had its origin in sin".³² He continues:

However, the sinful self is not immediately fully formed, but must be gradually defined and learned. The process delineated in *Paradise Lost* is one in which Satan defines his self as one approaching closer and closer to his evil public role.³³

The second theme is human relationships, which is explored through the relationship between Adam and Eve. In *JMPL*, Adam and Eve are seen as representations of the whole of humanity, at its best and at its worst, and their relationship becomes a metaphor for all human relationships. This coincides with Milton's clear intentions. He calls them "our first parents" and "when Adam first of men / To first women of Eve" 35.

Adam and Eve were portrayed as being neither wholly good, nor wholly evil, but completely human. This interpretation was chosen partly because the pre-

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³² Robertson, David. (1995) "Soliloquy and Self", *Of Poetry and Politics: New Essays on Milton and His World*. Binghampton: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 66.

³³ Robertson (1995), 66-67.

³⁴ *PL* 4.6.

³⁵ PL 4.408-9.

lapsarian condition of Adam and Eve is too alien to us, modern day people, that in order to make it accessible to the audience a special approach would have to be adopted. Samuel Johnson would agree that this is true even of the original text, as he says:

The man and the woman [Adam and Eve] who act and suffer are in a state which no other man or woman can never know. The reader finds no transaction in which he can be engaged, beholds no condition in which he can by any effort of imagination place himself; he has, therefore, little curiosity or sympathy.³⁶

This problem was dealt with by turning the experience of Adam and Eve into a metaphor of a real life, real relationship experience, very much in the same manner that "Kadotetut" would later juxtapose PL with a real life relationship, making a more concrete representation of such an interpretation, and showing once again how universally many of the themes of PL can be experienced.³⁷ John Keeble comments on precisely this by stating that "ordinariness is essential to Milton's conception of Eden. His [Milton's] Adam and Eve are people like us"³⁸.

When Adam and Eve first meet, they become enthralled with each other. Knowing only good, they can only see what is good in each other and are oblivious to each others' faults. When the first real crisis (eating the forbidden fruit and the results thereof) opens their eyes and teaches them both good and evil, they at once see each other's faults, to which they had been previously blind. This creates a sudden backlash in their emotions towards each other. Ultimately, like in any real life relationship, they have to learn to accept one another's shortcomings in order to rediscover each other and their love.

³⁶ Johnson, Samuel. (1779) 'From Lives of Poets: From Milton: Paradise Lost' (1962) *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, New York: Norton & Co., 1271.

³⁷ Nälkäteatteri: *Kadotetut*.

³⁸ Keeble (2001), 139.

Despite being evicted from Paradise, it was the strong opinion of the director and the rest of the *TEST* group that they have rediscovered a new Paradise within themselves and each other. This interpretation tied in which Michael's words in *PL* that Adam and Eve that humanity shall "possess / A Paradise within thee, happier far" as well a tying in with the idea in the bible that "It is not good for the man to be alone" It is not good for anyone to be alone. The group felt strongly that *JMPL* should convey the idea that the natural state of any human being to be in is to be with another human being, and therein laid the salvation and Paradise of humanity.

This view can of course be questioned when reading *PL*. Beverley Sherry would argue that the "Paradise within" is not indeed "happier far" than the Paradise they have lost, and that this is simply the Archangel Michael consoling them, and that he was he not instructed God to do so.⁴¹ However, God does tell Michael "reveal / To Adam what shall come in future day, / *As I shall thee* [Michael] *enlighten*."⁴² Therefore, I feel that the portrayal of the "paradise within" that was used in *JMPL* is closer to Milton's own vision than the counter argument.

Precisely because of this, and despite the title "Paradise Lost", JMPL was intended by the performers to be a play about hope and the ability that humanity possesses to rise above itself and re-discover its Paradise. Compassion triumphs over malice, love over hate, but there is a price to pay for errors made and there is no changing one's past, but one can come to terms with it. In JMPL, good and evil

³⁹ *PL* 12.586-587.

⁴⁰ NIV Study Bible: Genesis 2:18.

⁴¹ Sherry, Beverley 'A "Paradise Within" Can Never Be "Happier Far": Reconsidering the Archangel Michael's Consolation in *Paradise Lost*' (2003) Milton Quarterly, Vo. 37, No 2, May 2003, 77-87.

⁴² PL 11.113-115. Italics added.

are viewed as just sides in a conflict, and Adam and Eve in turn are portrayed as being the innocents involuntarily becoming the pawns of this epic conflict.

2.3. Language

When writing the script, a major problem area was Milton's extensive use of long poetic lines and soliloquies when his characters are addressing each other or expressing their innermost thoughts to the reader. Transforming these soliloquies into adequate dialogue proved to be one of the greatest challenges of the production.

Drawing on the experience of *TEST*'s previous production of William Shakespeare's "*Macbeth: In-Yer-Face!*" and the audience feedback to it, the writers came to the conclusion that 17th century English would be too inaccessible to the vast majority of the Finnish-speaking audience. Therefore, it was felt to be justified that Milton's poetry would be reworked into modern-day prose, in order to make it more accessible to the audience. The visuals of the play would then support the language to a sufficient extent to allow a non-native English speaker to follow and enjoy the play.

This involved a three-part process. Milton wrote *Paradise Lost* in blank verse. The first part of the process included transforming the 17th century blank verse into *modern* blank verse⁴³. This involved changing the more archaic words of the poetry into words used more frequently in modern English (this included old personal pronouns). Below is an example of this transformation process from when Satan confronts Death at the gates of Hell (PL 2.681-687):

'Whence and what art thou, execrable Shape, That dar'st to, though grim and terrible, advance

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 $^{^{\}rm 43}$ Still in the iambic pentameter, but using modern vocabulary.

Thy miscreated front athwart my way
To yonder gates? Through them I mean to pass,
That be assured, without leave asked of thee.
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heaven.'

This was reworked into:

'Whence and what are you, execrable Shape, That dares to, though grim and terrible, advance your miscreated front athwart my way To yonder gates? Through them I mean to pass, That be assured, without leave asked of you. Retire, or taste your folly, and learn by proof, Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heaven.'

After this, the modern verse would be shortened and streamlined, transforming the poetry into dialogue. Especially during the streamlining process the actors themselves would be consulted about their lines. Below is the final version that was used in the play:

(PL 2.681-687, abridged and in modern prose)

'What are you, miscreated form, that dares to thwart my way to yonder gates?

Though them I mean to pass, and without your leave, be assured. Retire hell-born, or taste your folly, and learn not to contend with the Spirits of Heaven.' 44

The final phase of re-writing the lines would involve workshops and rehearsals with the actors, during which the lines would be constantly changed and altered in order to create the required dynamics within the dialogue. This can be seen during the final polishing of the text before it reached its final form. The most startling perception of the final result though, was that even after undergoing such drastic changes the lines still retained some of their original lyrical rhythm.

However, this still meant leaving words like "yonder" and "thwart" within the text, which would be difficult for non-English speakers to understand. The reason for this was the difficulty in finding proper synonyms for such words, since long periphrasis would have destroyed the natural rhythm of speech. By reworking the language into this form, the intention was to retain an element of elevated and dignified style from the original work, while still being able communicate meaning to the audience.

The use of verse to some extent also has the function of removing "the action from the everyday, familiar sphere and makes it clear that no attempt is being made to portray life in all its humdrum pettiness"⁴⁵. It also removes the necessity of having to try and achieve a completely convincing realistic effect, which is why "modern plays dealing with history or exotic locations often tend to be in verse"⁴⁶. In these respects, retaining an element of verse in *JMPL* remains entirely justified, after all, as Esslin sums up:

Myths –like Greek tragedy –will require the highest flights of poetic language. Heroic plays about kings and queens, and almost superhuman men and women [and angels] will still need an elevated language. 47

2.4. Modern Popular Cultural Influences

I wish to take a brief look into how modern popular culture influenced the end result of *JMPL*, and especially the visual content. Many of the visual concepts and portrayals in the play were influenced by features of today's popular culture, some of which, in turn, have been influenced by John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Hence, for the play production of *PL*, some influences came full circle and found themselves re-attached to their original context. A good example of this was the

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⁴⁴ Milton, John (1667) *Paradise Lost* (play manuscript, 'John Milton's Paradise Lost', 2004, dramatisation: Kuosmanen, Karita; Meaney, Aleksis; Rasi, Kai; and Timo Uotinen.).

⁴⁵ Esslin, Martin (1976) *Anatomy of Drama*, London: Maurice Temple Smith, 37.

⁴⁶ Esslin (1976), 38.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

representation of Hell and Pandemonium in the play as a dark, shadowy realm bathed in flickering fires.

The most striking visual influences that found their way into the overall "look" of the play were perhaps the writers' love of oriental martial arts films, such as Hong Kong style kung-fu movies, and Japanese Samurai Films, which influenced especially the style of the angels and the fight sequences. This was a striking departure from the traditional "Greek"-styled angels of Milton's description. The popular culture movie phenomenon *The Matrix* (dir. The Wachowsky Brothers, 1996, sequels *Reloaded* and *Revolutions*, 2003) also influenced the way that many of the scenes in which the angels partook were portrayed.

When visualising other aspects of Milton's vision, inspiration was also drawn from such artistic works as the graphic novels of Neil Gaiman (*Sandman* series) and Mike Carey (*Lucifer*, a *Sandman* spin-off series), the novel *Good Omens* (*Terry Pratchett* and *Neil Gaiman*, 1990) and the movie *Dogma* (dir. *Kevin Smith*, 1999) influenced the play in visual respects, as did the artwork of such *PL* illustrators as Gustav Doré, Francis Hayman, John Martin, John B. Medina, Richard Westall, and Edward Burney⁴⁸, as well as William Blake's water colour illustrations of *PL* from 1808.

An important role from the point of view of *JMPL* was also played by two other depictions of Adam and Eve's story. The play *The Mysteries, Part 1: The Nativity*⁴⁹, which was adapted from the *English Mystery Plays* by Tony Harrison

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⁴⁸ Their *Paradise Lost* artwork can be viewed on the *Paradise Lost Study Guide: Illustrations* www-page www.paradiselost.org/4-stories-pictures.html.

⁴⁹ Cottesloe Company: *The Mysteries, Part 1: The Nativity*, adapted from *The English Mystery Plays* by Tony Harrison. Performed at the National Theatre, Great Britain, 1985. Produced and directed by Bill Bryden and Derek Bailey. (video recording).

and performed by the Cottesloe Company at the National Theatre, Great Britain in 1985, acted as a source of inspiration for the group in its portrayal of the creation of the universe, and the fall of Lucifer and of mankind. The portrayal of Adam and Eve (and much of the humour therewith), was also influenced by the "The Diary of Adam and Eve" segment of the claymation movie *The Adventures of Mark Twain* (dir. Will Vinton, 1985). These were both were watched by the group on video during the production process.

JMPL was also intentionally filled with other small homages to the popular cultural phenomena of the 1990's and early 21st century, ranging from the portrayal of Eve as the emancipated woman to the distinct anarchic "punk" look of death.

3.0 Representations

"All dramatic performance is basically iconic: every moment of dramatical action is a direct visual and aural sign of a fictional or otherwise reproduced reality." ⁵⁰ The poetry in *PL* is highly descriptive as Milton uses a plethora of metaphoric approaches to describe the places, characters and events of his epic work. As already discussed above, a *dramatic* play cannot hope to convey all this information in verbal form within its limited running time, nor would the physical constraints of any theatrical production make it possible to convey all the information in visual form. Hence, representation becomes vital in capturing the essence and feeling of the poem.

Theatrical representation will, however, require interpretation and deviation from the original poem, for the very reasons cited above. In this chapter, I will discuss how the various characters and locations of PL were interpreted and portrayed on the stage during the production, concentrating on the visual imagery, since PL can in its self be deemed as being a visually highly evocative work of poetry.

3.1. Representing Characters

As I outlined in chapter 2, the play focused highly on the visual aspects. In this chapter I wish to discuss how the characters of *PL* were brought to life on the stage. An intrinsic part of the stage character creation was costume and make-up, since they "employ a considerable element of symbolic signifiers" *Hanne Vuorela* was responsible for costume design and *Marika Lähdekorpi* for make-up

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⁵⁰ Esslin, Martin (1987) *The Field of Drama, How the Signs of Drama create Meaning on Stage and Screen*. London: Methuen Drama, 43.

design and effects. Both worked in tight co-operation with the director to ensure the overall visuals of the play functioned. Because the play took place in a "high fantasy" setting, great liberties could be taken in both departments as the artists were not constrained by historical dress. Indeed, the departure from the traditional views and visions was intentional in order to give *JMPL* a more "modern" and exotic look.

3.1.1. Gay Legions and Infernal Lords – the Angels

The Bible (as well as Milton for that matter) provide us with some pretty outlandish and varied descriptions of angels, ranging from "seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying," to angels indistinguishable from humans, and often to the point that they cannot even be identified as being such. 53

Milton must have been aware of these depiction, but because of the epic tradition Milton was following, most of the time he likens the heavenly legions of angels in PL to the traditional medieval view of angels, i.e. that of beautiful humans with wings, ancient Greeks to be more precise, armed with spears and fiery swords, wearing armour and carrying shields.

However, what does make Milton special is his materialistic view of angels, made explicit by Raphael's speech "one first matter all". Milton's angels are not disembodied spirits; they eat, fight, drink and make love. Milton consistently minimises the ontological distance between angels and men. He also

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⁵¹ Esslin (1987), 64.

⁵² NIV Study Bible; Isaiah 6:1.

⁵³ NIV Study Bible; Genesis 18+19 and Judges 13.

describes the angels as modifying their appearance by shaping their subtle material bodies.⁵⁴

The *TEST* group decided to make a departure from this and the choice to portray the angels in a more spiritual and oriental fashion was intended as a departure from Milton's original vision for artistic as well as pragmatic purposes. The resources to equip the angels in a "Greek Warriors" or "shape shifting" manner were simply not available. However, it can also be argued that by making his angels "more materialistic", Milton, has already made the job of portraying them with actors on the stage slightly easier.

Consistency amongst the portrayal of angels was deemed important, especially since resources were not available to manufacture wings. The angels had to be clearly identifiable as angels in comparison to Adam and Eve. The angels (both loyal and fallen) had to be supernaturally elegant and graceful, compared to the rather rustic appearances of Adam and Eve.

The solution came in the form of elegant long slim-cut coats which spread out from the waist down into three divided sections, two of which would rise as the actor walked on the stage creating "wings, or "winglets". The coats were strongly influenced by traditional Chinese-style dress and had no sleeves. Under the coats the actors wore long skirts reaching down to their ankles, loosely resembling the Japanese *hakama*⁵⁵. The role of the skirts was to cover the leg movements of the actors to create a feeling of "gliding" as the actor moved on the stage, further increasing the elegance of their movement. Ordinary angels (Abdiel, Ithuriel, and Zephon) do not wear the coats but rather have a tight sleeveless top to

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⁵⁴ Fallon, Stephen M. (1991) *Milton Among the Philosophers: Poetry and Materialism in Seventeenth-Century England*, Ithaca: Cornell, 141-147.

⁵⁵ Traditional Japanese loose trousers. Used to conceal the movement of the legs.

show that they are of a lesser station. Satan also temporarily discards his coat as he takes on the form of a lesser angel to deceive Uriel.

All of the angels, loyal and fallen, whether played by a man or a woman, were seen as being sexless or hermaphrodites. This was taken into account in their makeup, which was designed to look androgynous, after all "For Spirits... / Can either Sex Assume, or *both*" (italics added). For the purposes of this thesis, all of the angelic characters are referred to in the masculine, irrespective of whether they were played by male or female actors.

A mention must be made of the portrayals of the angels of the other productions of *PL* in Finland. Surviving photographs of the Helsinki City Theatre production of 1976 show that Paavo Liski's angels showed a few surprising similarities in costume to those of the *TEST* production. The loyal angels wore sleek and elegantly cut white jackets and trousers and sported long drapes over their shoulders to portray wings. The costumes brought to mind a cross between Chinese style dress and the Starfleet uniforms from the *Star Trek* television series and movies. In a stark contrast to the loyal angels, the fallen angels were portrayed in black and red studded biker leather in Liski's production and held council in hell to the sound of the *Hurriganes* (a Finnish rock band of the time).⁵⁷

In the *Kadotetut* production in 2005, Sami Vehmersuo made a bold decision to portray the loyal angels with the actors completely naked and posing like Greek statues, with wings fashioned from newspaper on their backs. The reason for this portrayal was that Vehmersuo thought that since his Adam and Eve were wearing clothes throughout the performance, he wanted the portray the

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⁵⁶ PL 1 423-424

⁵⁷ Helsinki City Theatre: *Kadotettu Paratiisi*, (handout) 1976, The Theatre Museum of Finland.

angels as being of the utmost purity, hence the absence of clothes. The fallen angels in *Kadotetut* were, in turn, dressed in black suits with bright red shirts. ⁵⁸

The Hierarchies

Medieval tradition and angelology divided the angels into hierarchies, each fulfilling a specific purpose. It is often thought (by Christopher Hill for example ⁵⁹)

that Milton pays very little regard the existence of an angelic hierarchy, by using the words Seraph (pl. Seraphim) and Cherub (pl. Cherubim) generic terms for whereas angels,



The loyal angels prepare to do battle with the rebels: (left to right) Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, Ithuriel, and Zephon.

traditionally they have been considered to be two separate and specific choirs of angels.⁶⁰

However, Mohamed argues in 'Paradise Lost and the Inversion of Catholic Angelology' that Milton does, indeed, pay attention to the angelic hierarchy in heaven, but inverts it, by making the Seraphim and the Cherubim (the two choirs traditionally thought to be closest to God) into generic (but distinct) terms for

⁵⁸ Nälkäteatteri: *Kadotetut* a theatre production based on John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. First night 17.3.2005. Viewed 2.4.2005, and *Interview with Sami Vehmersuo*.

⁵⁹ Christopher Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth-Century England* (81), quoted in; Mohamed, Feisal G. '*Paradise Lost* and the Inversion of Catholic Angelology' (2002) *Milton Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No 4, December 2002, 240.

⁶⁰ Mohamed, Feisal G. '*Paradise Lost* and the Inversion of Catholic Angelology' (2002) *Milton Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No 4, December 2002, 240-247.

angels, and by elevating the Archangels into the highest position in heaven⁶¹ as "those seven Spirits that stand / In sight of God's high throne"⁶². Further support for Milton having a hierarchical view of heaven is that he has God refer to the angels as "Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,"⁶³ in a manner which Lucifer later tries to emulate, ⁶⁴ and thus usurp divine authority for himself.

In the play, a synthesis of these two views (the traditionalist Catholic view and Milton's own vie) was created and supported visually. This was achieved by the choice of weapons allocated to each angel in the heavenly war sequence. In keeping with the oriental theme, the angels each wielded a Chinese weapon, the nobility of each weapon reflecting the station of the angel. The Rebel angels were allocated "nobler" weapons to support the view that more of the angels of the higher choirs joined Lucifer's revolt than of the lower choirs. The allocated weapons were:

Lucifer Long sword or Rapier

Beelzebub Spear

Moloch Short Blades Mammon Iron Staff

Belial Three-jointed-staff Archangels Scimitar or Falchion

Angels Wooden Staff

The wooden staffs of the angels were also a reference to shepherds, or concept of guardian angels watching over people as a shepherd protects his sheep.

Satan – Lucifer

Milton mentions the name "Lucifer" only three times during PL (5.760, 7.131, and 10.425). Lucifer was Satan's name in heaven, and like the other fallen angels, lost

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⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² PL 3.664-665.

⁶³ *PL* 5.601.

⁶⁴ PL 5.772.

his heavenly name when cast out of heaven. For the play, this division was made ever clearer, the character of Lucifer/Satan being always referred to as Lucifer before Abdiel renames him Satan. In the poem, in chronological order, this is the first time Milton mentions the name "Satan" through a character.

As discussed earlier, the character of Lucifer/Satan is going through a process of self-creation in PL^{65} and this is also reflected in the actor's physical appearance in the play. His costume changes subtly, but constantly throughout the play. When Lucifer is still in heaven, his costume is radiant white and he has blond streaks in his hair. When he incites the rebellion his "angel" jacket changes colour to black. This was intended as a metaphor for the thought that even in a game of chess, someone has to play the black pieces.

When Satan falls to hell, he loses his radiant halo, i.e. his hair turns from blond to brown (the actor's natural hair colour). In the second act of the play, his hair begins to turn red as his final choices cement his new infernal identity. By the time Satan has returned to hell, he has also shed his white undergarment, the last vestige of his once heavenly beauty. ⁶⁶

His final aspect that he takes on is in Michael's final relation to Adam and Eve about Satan's fall from grace during which Satan appears dressed in a business suit but wearing a peace symbol on his breast. This is a director's commentary on the modern world and comes at the stage at which the play is beginning to "lose" its magical and fantastical elements, and become more like the

⁶⁵ Robertson (1995), 66.

⁶⁶ As a matter of note, during the opening night the actor playing Satan (Kai Rasi) managed to knock himself almost unconscious by walking into a supporting stage structure when exiting the stage towards the end of act one. He refused all pain medication on the grounds that the very real pain he was experiencing would "enhance his performance of Satan's anguish in act two".

tragic "real" world, or as Milton would put it "I now must change Those Notes to Tragic".

The final transformation of Satan is in tandem with the final forms of Sin and Death (see below), in which the three are portrayed in line as the scourges of the modern world. Here, Satan is portrayed as the "lawyer", or "the capitalist", or the "corporate businessman". The ultimate interpretation is left to the audience, however, the peace symbol was added to remind the audience that evil has many faces and that, in the real world, the divide between good and evil is not as clear or evident as it has been in the play.

Throughout the play, like in *PL*, Satan is portrayed as the being the antithesis to the Son of God, rather than God himself, as Satan would have perhaps liked to think. Just as "Satan has volunteered for man's destruction, as Christ, in Book III, will volunteer for man's salvation."

The Son of God

Putting aside the discussion that The Son has with God at the beginning of Book III, the (chronologically) first appearance of the Son of God sees him dressed in very much the same garb as the other "lower" angels, that is, Abdiel, Ithuriel and Zephon. However, when he is crowned the Son of God and King of Heaven, he receives a brilliant white coat, almost identical to that of Lucifer, except decorated with golden trims to mark his newly gained privileged status. His dress is also removed to reveal white trousers. The intention of doing this was to emphasize the newly gained individuality of the Son as opposed to the other angels, an

⁶⁷ PL 9 5-6

⁶⁸ LeComte, Edward (1978) *Milton and Sex*, London: Macmillan, 75.

individuality that Lucifer becomes jealous of. To use a more rustic expression, it was seen that the Son now "wore the pants in heaven".

The coat of the Son was open, depicting his openness and compassion for man, which created a contrast with the other angelic powers, especially Lucifer, whose coats are closed. This also represents the fact that of all the angelic powers, only the Son was ready to sacrifice himself for man. Due to the likeness of the costumes, this contrast played even stronger with the character of Lucifer. Lucifer was closed and introvert and harboured hidden hopes and desires (coat closed). The Son was open, truthful and loving (coat open).

Just as in *PL*, it was also thought that God himself should not interact directly with the characters of Adam and Eve; hence the Son of God was portrayed as God's "tool" on earth, which delivers the spark of life to Eve. Therefore, the Son also fulfils the role of the Metatron (the voice of God, an angel supposedly who delivers his messages to mortals), of whom Milton makes no mention in *PL*.

The role of the Son was played by a woman (*Kati Nieminen*). This was done for two reasons. The first was pragmatic; there were far fewer males in the group than females, and the male actors available had to be placed in roles that were being seen as possessing more "masculine" qualities (such as Satan, the Archangel Michael, Moloch, or Death). The second (more important) reason was the consideration that having a woman play the role of the Son would add a newfound gentleness to the portrayal of the character, almost a motherly quality towards humankind, thus giving a new dimension to the sacrifice that the Son was prepared to make on their behalf.

In the end, the portrayal of the Son as being more feminine, and played by a woman, did not cause any major problems, since all the angels were portrayed as being "sexless" (as described above), despite some of the characters laying claim to certain masculine or feminine properties.

3.1.2. Sin and Death

Depicted as the ultimate dysfunctional mother-son duo, Sin and Death were

portrayed as two very rogue characters in the *JMPL*. Liski also saw them in a similar light and he viewed them as being "two creatures outside the natural order and opposition of heaven and hell" ⁶⁹. The *TEST* group had a very similar vision of these two characters with Mr. Liski. The two characters were seen very much as a duo, acting in tandem in all things. The relationship between them was portrayed as a twisted maternal relationship to the extreme, with conflicting emotions of



Sin in her heavenly beauty, forms a stark contrast with Sin in her "fallen" condition. See pg. 36. (personal collection).

fear, hatred and maternal love from the part of Sin.

In JMPL, Sin was played by two women, one ($Mari\ J\ddot{a}rvinen$) portraying Sin as Lucifer's heavenly lover and consort before the fall, and the other ($Karita\ Kuosmanen$) portraying Sin as the abused mother after the fall. LeComte would argue that the moral of this transformation in PL is plain: "Sin is always tempting at the beginning, repulsive at the end."

⁶⁹ Interview with Paavo Liski.

⁷⁰ LeComte (1978), 69.

To illustrate to the audience that both actors were playing the same character, but only in different stages of her development, both were costumed identically, but with striking differences in make-up, hairstyle and posture.⁷¹

In both cases, Sin was seen as a courtesan, clothed in rich red satin, with pearls and beads, but whereas in her heavenly form she was young, striking, tall and beautiful, in her post-fall



Satan confronts the fallen Sin at the Gates of Hell. She possesses the key he needs to pass through them.

form she was old, crouched, ugly and withered. Hardly any information is given in PL about Sin's appearance before the fall, except in her own relation that she once was "Likest to thee [Lucifer] in shape and countenance bright, / Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess armed," but the fallen Sin is described in detail:

[She] Seemed a woman to the waist, and fair, But ended foul in many a scaly fold, Voluminous and vast, a serpent armed With mortal sting. About her middle round A cry of Hell-hounds never ceasing barked A hideous peal, yet when they list, would creep, If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb And kennel there, yet there still barked and howled Within unseen.⁷³

Another line which drew attention when visualising the fallen Sin was "Nor uglier follow the night-hag"⁷⁴, which influenced Sin's makeup. Obviously, since the actress playing Sin had to be able to move on the stage, the idea of her having a

⁷¹ The contrast was further enhanced by the dissimilar statures of the actresses.

⁷² *PL* 2.756-757.

⁷³ PL 2.650-669.

⁷⁴ PL 2.662.

lower body ending in serpents had to be abandoned, as did the hellhounds crawling in and out of her womb. However, the Serpent imagery was included in the character as part of her hairstyle, which was made to resemble dozens of small snakes –homage to the Greek Medusa myth. The hellhounds also (by accident) found their place in the play, but as an eerie bass howling, included in Hell's soundscape.

Death, Sin's son, described in PL as a shape "If shape it can be called that shape had none / Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb, / Or substance might be called that shadow seemed, / For each seemed either," also:

Black it [Death] stood as night, Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell, And shook a dreadful dart; what seemed on his head The likeness of a crown had on.⁷⁶



The son of Satan and Sin: Death (personal collection).

This passage of *PL* strongly influenced the final appearance of Death. It could be argued indeed that the character of Death was portrayed closest to Milton's original vision, in terms of physical representation on the stage.

The costume design began as a synthesis between the costumes of Death's parents,
Satan and Sin. The coat and the

⁷⁵ *PL* 2.667-670.

⁷⁶ PL 2.670-673.

under skirt started off as being identical to those of Satan, but were then shredded to give Death a more incorporeal appearance. His costume colour was a coal grey and the costume did not reveal any skin that was not covered by heavy make-up. The final effect was that Death seemed as a stalking shadow in the stage lights.

The final vision of Death was also very much based on the Timo Uotinen's (the actor playing Death) idea of basing the visual look on a "punk" or "cyberpunk" motif. The "crown" Milton refers to ⁷⁷ was created by giving Death wild "punk" styled hair, which stood on end. The make-up was made to refer to the more traditional imagery of the skull-faced "Grim Reaper" The final touch was to add taints of red to Death's hair and costume, which were a reference to the heritage of his mother, Sin, whose costume colour was a bright red.

In keeping with this line of though in character creation, the character Death was seen as the ultimate rebel, existing completely outside the set order of good and evil, and out of bounds of any laws, logic, or hierarchies that govern either. Death was portrayed as a raw force of destruction, existing only to devour and destroy –a true anarchist in *JMPL*.

3.1.3 Tackling out Nudity – Adam and Eve

In their pre-lapsarian condition, Adam and Eve are naked and know no shame. Because of the existing social norms of the nineteen sixties and the seventies (let alone the 17th century), the thought of having naked actors strut around on stage has raised a problem in the representation of Adam's and Eve's nudity in past professional productions, as well as present day amateur productions. Due to the liberalisation of social values during the latter half of the 20th century, stage nudity

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⁷⁷ PL 2.673.

slowly became acceptable, despite the risk of vulgarity when using it in a production. The *in-yer-face* theatre movement in Britain during the nineties accelerated the acceptance of stage nudity.

However the question of nudity on the stage remains one that must be addressed whenever a production wishes to portray the story of Adam and Eve. Indeed, the *Kadotetut* production even made a joke out of this problem in a scene in which the actress who will be playing Eve suddenly walks into the theatre and interrupts the portrayal of Satan's journey to the world, momentarily breaking the illusion. The exchange went something like this (translated from Finnish):

Eve: Are you doing a play? What is it? First Man: Erm... John Milton's Paradise Lost. Eve: Great! Can I be in it? I could be Eve.

Second Man: But, but that's my part.

Eve Well now it's mine. I'm *not* doing any nudity, mind

you.⁷⁹

Both the Bristol and Northampton productions of PL in 2004 had the actors of Adam and Eve nude on the stage, as did Bill Bryden's 1985 production *The Mysteries*, which had Adam and Eve naked, except for sand covering the strategic locations of the actors to some extent. ⁸⁰ The Helsinki production of 1976 could not do so because of the existing social norms in Finland at the time. ⁸¹ When it came time for the *TEST* production to tackle with this problem, it was decided that having the actors naked was not an option.

The reason for this decision was primarily not one of social unacceptability, but rather due to the fact that TEST was not a professional theatre company and hence could not make such demands on its actors as full frontal

⁸⁰ Cottesloe Company: The Mysteries, Part 1: The Nativity.

81 Interview with Paavo Liski.

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⁷⁸ As well as the make-up of several punk and rock bands, such as the "Misfits", "Kiss" or "Alice Cooper", yet another popular cultural homage.

⁷⁹ Nälkäteatteri: *Kadotetut*.

nudity. This, however, left the question open on how to portray their nudity without the actors actually being naked. Another issue was the emphasis placed on their differences before and after the fall.

The solution was what became referred to as "pseudo" clothing. The underlying logic was, that since neither Adam nor Eve could "see" one another's nudity, then neither could the audience. The actors were dressed in natural white, one-piece costumes, a pair of loose trousers for Adam, and a dress for Eve. The style was intentionally minimalist with straight cut lines, so as to draw minimal attention to the clothing itself.

The use of "pseudo-clothing" also brought out the metaphorical element of Adam's and Eve's position in the greater hierarchy of existence. Their clothing is a natural "creamy" white, as opposed to that of the angels' whose dresses are a pure radiant white (despite being coupled with other colours as well). Adam and Eve are therefore being portrayed as being lower, or less pure, than the angels, but still comprised of the same matter, or "one first matter all," and therefore their bodies "may at last turn all to spirit" and may "Here [earthly Paradise] or in heavenly paradises dwell" 4.

The problems with pseudo clothing began when the distinction needs to be made when Adam and Eve do see one another's' nudity and feel ashamed of their own. PL however, supplies its own solution in the form of the fig leaves that Adam and Eve use to cover themselves. In JMPL the next time that the audience sees Adam and Eve after their lapse into sin, they have both wrapped themselves in green sheets with leaves sown onto them, creating the impression that they are hiding in the bushes, ashamed of their nakedness. The actors playing Adam and

⁸² PL 5.472.

⁸³ PL 5 497

Eve were not naked under the sheets, but the illusion was to the audience that they were. Often in theatre, what the audience cannot see is a more powerful effect than what they can see. They remain in this state until the Son passes judgement over them and clothes them in *real* clothes.

Adam and Eve are also represented as being different, but equal, in the eyes of God, a state reflected in the androgynous voice of God, God is seen as being both female and male, or neither (see below). This equality is also evident to some degree in *PL*, or as Susan Woods points out:

Milton's profound respect for human liberty has the ultimate effect of subverting his patriarchal assumptions. He is too thoughtful to accept cultural [17th century England] assumptions without question, yet he has no frame of reference for responding to biblical authority in this manner. The curious result is that the dignity and intelligence he gives his female characters strain against the inferior social position in which they find themselves.⁸⁵

In respect to the equality of the sexes, Milton's hands may have been tied to some degree, due to his subject matter, and the fairly rigid views of the Bible at the time. It was therefore seen by the group as wholly fitting that *JMPL* would "correct" this view, due to the more liberal attitudes to the interpretation of the bible in the 21st century.

In contrast, Liski's 1976 production of *PL* dealt with the "inequality" of Adam and Eve in a slightly different way. Kazimir's adaptation remained more faithful to the original context, but Liski succeeded in undermining the hierarchical man-woman relationship between Adam and Eve by relying on the comedic talents of *Marjatta Raita*, the actor who played Eve. In Liski's production, the character of Eve was portrayed as intentionally concealing her full

⁸⁴ PL 5.500.

⁸⁵ Woods, Susan 'How Free Are Milton's Women' (1988) *Milton and the Idea of Woman*, Ed. Walker, Julia M., Illinois: Illinois University Press, 19.

intellectual capacity from Adam, and humouring his desire to feel more important than her, a view that Eve secretly did not always agree with. 86

To finish off, it is also worth mentioning something of the comedic elements of *JMPL*, since most of them revolved around the characters of Adam and Eve. Ayckbourn states that in his opinion "the best comedy springs from the utterly serious"⁸⁷. When planning how to introduce a comic element to *JMPL*, the group had originally thought that much of the comedy would centre around the absurdist representations of the characters of Sin and Death. However, often this did not achieve the desired reaction from the audience.

Unexpectedly, much of the comedy rose from the characters of Adam and Eve. Especially Adams (erring) opinions of the world and his role in it were delivered with such utter conviction, that it provoked a humoured response from the audience. This surprising perception during the production ultimately makes sense, in that Adam and Eve were more accessible characters for the audience than those of Sin and Death, and therefore the audience could more easily identify with their humorous idiosyncrasies.

3.1.4 Shedding Skin – the Serpent

The serpent was portrayed by a separate actor from the one that played Satan. This was seen as important as the serpent, being a direct creation of God, was not seen as being inherently evil in nature, although "the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the Lord God had made". It could therefore be argued that the serpent was simply the creature best suited for Satan's purposes, or as Milton puts it as Satan spies the serpent "which of all [beasts] / Most opportune

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⁸⁶ Interview with Paavo Liski.

⁸⁷ Ayckbourne (2002), 80.

might serve his [Satan's] Wiles, and found / The Serpent suttlest beast of all the Field". The *JMPL* group saw the Serpent as being most susceptible beast for possession by Satan, whether it liked it or not.

It is therefore made clear through stage tricks that the spiritual substance of Satan melds into the serpent and takes control of it, although he himself finds this to be a particularly repulsive process, as Satan remarks: "O foul descent! that I who erst contended / With Gods to sit the highest, am now constraind / Into a Beast, and mixt with bestial slime".

The serpent was dressed in a costume hinting at its sleek figure and scales and the actor's skin was painted in hues of earthy colours to emphasise it being a "beast" as opposed to "human". The serpent is the only animal to be portrayed on the stage, with the exception of the musicians putting on rabbit and cat ears for the paradise sequences, to make a reference at the other creatures that abide within its walls.

3.1.5. The Role of the Audience

The audience has a vital role to play in the dynamic of the theatre, after all, without an audience, there is no theatre. The audience of *JMPL* was also seen as being part of the alternative reality of the play. They were, in essence, included in the world of the play, and used to enlarge it to the epic scale of the poem, by putting them into the position of the "extras" that would have inhabited the stage in the grander scenes, had the *TEST* production possessed the resources and manpower to do so.

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⁸⁸ NIV Study Bible, Genesis 3.1.

⁸⁹ *PL* 9.84-86.

⁹⁰ PL 9.163-170.

When Satan, Beelzebub, or the other Princes of Hell deliver their most stirring public orations, they are addressing the audience more than each other, and trying to convince them of the rightfulness of their cause. The audience are put into the position of the fallen angels in hell, the angels that witness the crowning of the Son of God as the King of Heaven, and the angels that Lucifer has gathered in the northern quarters of Heaven, to mention but a few instances.

This element of the audience existing within the fantasy world of the play is underlined in the last mentioned instance, when Abdiel suddenly emerges from the audience (the angels listening to Lucifer's argument) and literally storms the stage, in disbelief of the words he has just heard being uttered. Therefore, Abdiel is portrayed as the only one of the gathered angels (the audience) that dares to speak out against Lucifer. This functions of two different levels of drama: On one level, the audience is a group of people sitting in a theatre watching a performance by group of actors. On the second level, they are angels in heaven watching a performance by Lucifer. In both cases they are not inclined to speak out and disturb the performance(s) they are witnessing.

In stark contrast, the Son and the loyal angels do not address the audience in this manner. They were seen as possessing an absolute certainty that they were right, and therefore had no cause to try and convince the audience (and themselves) of their cause. The one instance in which this rule is broken is when Michael shows Adam and Eve what is to come in future days due to the sin that they have committed. It was thought that the visions that Michael shows "our first parents"⁹¹, as well as the advice he gives, would be experienced by the descendants of Adam and Eve (the audience) as well

⁹¹ PL Book XI. The Argument.

3.2 Representing Locations

In when talking about theatrical visuals and design, Martin Esslin states that:

The most obvious function of the **set** or **decor** is an informational, iconic one: it pictures the environment against which the action of the drama unfolds, and provides much of the basic expositional information for the spectator's understanding of it by indicating its place and period, the social position of the characters and many other essential aspects of drama. ⁹²

When discussing performing *PL*, Mr. Burns said that in his opinion, the rapid changes in characters and locations in *PL* constituted one of the primary reasons why it is ideally suited for a one-man public oration. ⁹³ Indeed, the sheer number of locations of epic scale and the quick shifts between them proved to be a major obstacle that had to be overcome during the planning stages of *JMPL*.

Early on in the production, a "bare stage" was chosen as the basic set for the play. In this case, location and mood are created through the utilisation of lights, soundscapes, and, in the case of *JMPL*, video imagery (projected onto a canvas at the rear of the stage), as well as a minimalist use of props, which can be moved and brought onto the stage by the actors themselves. Ayckbourn comments that the uses of such methods help to establish the otherwise skeletal locations by implication. He also points out that this solution is often the obvious one when the play involves multiple locations of variable nature, with fast changes from one to the other, and the play is not supported by a huge budget and grand scale stage mechanisms. ⁹⁴

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⁹² Esslin, Martin (1987), 73.

⁹³ Interview with David Guthrie Burns.

⁹⁴ Ayckbourn (2002), 29-30.

In this section, I will discuss how (using the methods described above) *JMPL* portrayed the different locations in contrast to the original text. The key people in creating the locations and surroundings according to the directors vision of *PL* for *JMPL* were; *Taneli Seppälä* (lighting design), *Johannes Pitkänen* (sound design), *Jani Villikka* (video design), and *Ville Vuorela* (video animation). Music also acted in creating a dramatic mood and context for the locations and event, and was directed by *Juha Sokka* and performed by *Juha Sokka/Lotta Kuoppala* and *Antti Sokka*.

3.2.1. Hell

The constraints of the stage made it impossible to make a clear visual differentiation between the Lake of Fire and Pandemonium, or any of the other locations within Hell described in Book II. Therefore, Hell had to be dealt with as a single location, with the exception of the Gates of Hell.

It was the lighting designer Taneli Seppälä, who originally suggested the concept of creating a "cold" Hell, which, in spite of the scorching heat of the

flames, was spiritually cold and desolate place illuminated by "No light, but rather visible"95. darkness The key lighting colours were therefore



Hell: Satan orders his minions to rise and join him in council.

⁹⁵ PL 1.63.

purple, a cold blue and orange, which created the effect that the actors were in the presence of flames that were burning blue (i.e. at a very high heat).

The lighting was designed in tandem with smoke to cast long shadows to create an effect of perpetual night and dread. In the background, an animation of flickering flames was projected on the screen at the back of the stage, which looked as if they were crawling along a roof, a roof that separates the Hell "down under" from the rest of creation.

The soundscape of Hell included the crackling of fires and the eerie howling of the wind through cliffs, which was originally intended to bring about the impression of the howls of agony let out by lost souls. This ended up proving to be problematic upon closer inspection of the chronological events, since no human souls had yet taken up residence in Hell. Ultimately, it was decided that the eerie howl could be interpreted as the torments of the other fallen angels (not portrayed on the stage), or, alternatively, as the crying of the hellhounds that surround Sin (see above). Inquiries made to the audience revealed that out of all the locations portrayed in *JMPL*, Hell proved to be the most visually pleasing and interesting.

3.2.2. *Heaven*

In stark contrast with Hell, heaven was portrayed as a place of light and tranquillity, right up until the outbreak of the Heavenly War. The lighting made use of peaceful and tranquil colours, such as various hues of blue and white, with hardly any use shadows at all. Despite its outward appearing tranquillity, Heaven was seen a being a rather "sterile" place from the human point of view. On the background screen was projected a mountain over which clouds gently rolled.

Once Lucifer has begun his rebellion and introduced war into Heaven, the portrayal of the location dramatically changes. The image on the screen moves

away from the mountain and into a valley, in which the two armies supposedly meet. The gentle white clouds turn into black storm clouds with flickering lightning flashing between them.



Heaven: With whispers, Sin helps to spread the seeds of discontent amongst the angels who would later become (left to right) Moloch, Mammon and Beelzebub.

The lighting becomes darker and the shadows lengthen. These changes in the scenery were intended to portray the strife that was in progress in Heaven, since, because of safety reasons mass combat on the stage was not an option in portraying the heavenly war.

When, at the end of the Heavenly War, the Son unleashes the wrath of Heaven upon the rebel angels, the lights darken and focus purely on the Son. The background screen portrays a single raindrop falling from the clouds, which then explodes into a blinding light, accompanied by almost all the stage lights being turned on and aimed at the Son. In the background, a steadily increasing sound explodes into a deafening boom in synchronisation with the lighting and video effects. The effect is that the light appears to be emitted from the Son, as it shines blindingly off his brilliant white robes.

In the Presence of God

God was the single most difficult character to portray on stage, and all three plays to portray *PL* in Finland dealt with the problem differently. Paavo Liski's production in 1976 portrayed God with an actor on the stage, in accordance with the mystery play tradition. The actor wore black clothes, which included a long



In the Presence of God: The Son listens as God relates the fall of mankind, which is yet to come.

sleeved polo shirt,
which created the
effect that in the stage
lighting in which only
the actor's head and his
hands could be clearly
seen by the audience. 96
In the mental image of

the author, this would

have created an effect of God being a puppeteer, or puppet master.⁹⁷ In stark contrast, the *Nälkäteatteri* production did not depict God, or the Son for that matter, on the stage, but replaced the sections in which they appeared with a selection of Finnish Lutheran Christian church hymns.⁹⁸

During the pre-production planning discussions for *JMPL*, it was agreed that God should not be played by an actor on the stage, but neither could God be left out. With God being such an intrinsic part of *PL*, some other method of portraying Him on the stage had to be found.

The solution came from the lines when the Archangel Michael seeks to educate and comfort Adam when he mentions that "his [God's] omnipresence /

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⁹⁶ Interview with Paavo Liski.

⁹⁷ Author's own commentary.

Fills land, sea, and air, and everything that lives"99. The spirit of God was seen as permeating everything that happened in PL (and therefore also JMPL). Sami Vehmersuo also saw God in this manner in his production. 100

However, it was still felt that being in the actual vicinity of the divine presence deserved a more extravagant interpretation than an actor could give. Bypassing the matter by making God an invisible character, only referred to by the others, was also out of the question. Some form of concrete portrayal of God had to be made, and hence, the actual presence of God was created into its very own location, which moved around heaven.

The effect was achieved with lights, video imagery and impressive sound effects. From the beginning it was seen that God should not be given human form, and that when it came to visuals and sounds, God should be portrayed as how God feels rather than looks and that this should spill over into the audience, for it should be made to feel that the divine presence reaches beyond the bounds of the stage. One method with which this effect was achieved was raising the volume of God's voice to a booming bass, so that the audience could literally feel the sound reverberating through their bodies.

The actual voice of God was created by fusing together the voices of two male (David Robertson and Timo Uotinen) and two female actors (Jenni Rouvinen and Karita Kuosmanen), thus depriving it of individual features as well as gender. It was felt that in the modern world, in which we aim for the equality of the sexes, God should not be portrayed as a purely masculine presence and should be either androgynous, or sexless, despite the fact that the Son (played by a female actor) refers to God as "father". Visually, God was created by bathing the stage in white

⁹⁸ Interview with Sami Vehmersuo.

⁹⁹ PL 11.336-337.

light at portraying a white and black visual image on the rear canvas that thrummed and moved in synchronisation with the voice of God.

The final result was the portrayal of God as a wondrous entity, but also as an immensely powerful one, almost frightening or threatening. Michael Bryson points out that "a particularly thorny dilemma" in *PL* "is why angelic and human character alike express anxiety regarding the Father's capacity for good and evil." God's capacity to refrain from intervening in the causes of the immense suffering of many of the characters at times makes him seem cruel in the eyes of some characters.

In *JMPL* several of the characters experience this anxiety. Both the Son and Adam question God as to why he made humanity in the first place if he knew that they were destined to fall. Unlike God several of the loyal angels (Michael, and Gabriel), express sympathy for the suffering Adam and Eve, this is not even to mention the verbal assault that Satan makes upon God and his actions.

For the purposes of the production, it was decided that God was beyond all concepts of good and evil, and that everything that transpires is in accordance to some master plan of his. The group did, however, venture to assume that it was God's intention all along that Adam and Eve should fall, but that they should do so of their own free will, as Raphael points out "Our voluntary service he requires / Not our necessitated... for how / Can hearts not free be tried whether they serve / Willing or no." The interpretation of the *necessity* of Adam's and Eve's fall will be discussed later.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Sami Vehmersuo.

¹⁰² PL 5.529-533.

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¹⁰¹ Bryson, Michael '"That far be from thee": Divine Evil and Justification in *Paradise Lost*' (2002) *Milton Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 2, May 2002, 87-88.

3.2.3. Paradise

Paradise itself was portrayed as a garden, filled with warm colours, green and luscious. The background screen portrayed rolling green and fertile hills and the sounds of birds singing and other wildlife. Stage right stands the tree of knowledge (designed and created by *Terhi Jokinen*), a tree with gilded branches full of the forbidden fruit. The tree of knowledge was made to be conspicuously present in all scenes involving Paradise by directing light to it, which faded away in the other locations.

The musicians donned animal ears, to refer to the fact that Adam and Eve may well have been the only humans to abide in Paradise, but were by no means the only creatures living there. Paradise was portrayed as a place teeming with life and positive energy. Even when night comes, it is a peaceful, unthreatening place, a fragile illusion that is shattered by the appearance of Satan, stalking the sleeping pair.

A stark contrast was wanted to be made between Paradise before and after the fall of Adam and Eve into sin. Whereas outwardly, the location did not change, it was felt that when Adam and Eve unleash Sin and Death on the world, the mood of "Paradise" would change to "Paradise Lost". This was achieved mainly by two methods. The first was silence; the soundscape of Paradise was removed and replaced by complete silence, giving it a more desolate feel. The second was the background image, which changed to a more desolate, drier portrait, than the previously luscious garden. This decision can be criticized as creating the false illusion that Adam and Eve are no longer in Paradise.

3.2.4 Chaos and Ancient Night

Despite not being one of the "primary" locations of the play, the Realm of Chaos and Ancient night deserves to be mentioned separately from Heaven, Hell and Paradise. Portraying the nothingness and the darkness that lies between the places of God's creation (Heaven, Hell and Earth), the Realm of Chaos and Ancient Night is a vast gulf of nothingness that Satan has to navigate to reach the newly created world, and comprises one of the three challenges he has to overcome on his quest to corrupt mankind.

Once the Gates of Hell have opened, accompanied by an eerie screech and a hollow boom sound, the location shift is instantaneous. Despite Satan being in nothingness, the soundscape thrums with a hollow sound, creating the impression of a vast empty space. The Lords of Chaos themselves were seen as being the darkness itself, and, in stark contrast to the portrayal of God, were, in turn, played by actors completely robed in black.

When addressing Satan, the Lords of Chaos surround him, and circle him, portraying the darkness that wells around him. When they speak, the actual lines were broken down into short sentences, phrases, or even single words that the actors rehearsed to speak in carefully co-ordinated fashion, with the shifts moving flawlessly from one actor to another, making it seem that the speaker is constantly moving invisibly around Satan, being everywhere and nowhere at the same time. The reason the actors of the Lords of Chaos are discussed here, instead of chapter 3.1. is that they were seen as being an intrinsic part of the location, rather than being actual characters.

4.0 The Narrative of the Play

In this chapter, I will run through the narrative of the play while constantly referring to *PL*, in order to illustrate how many of the principles and approaches discussed chapters 2 and 3 were put into narrative context. The numbers in parenthesis show where the dialogue for each scene came from in the original epic in order to illustrate the change in structure from epic to play. The lines referred to are *not* the lines actually spoken in the play, but their context in the production will be illustrated in the narrative of this chapter.

4.1 Act 1: From Heaven to Hell

The play begins with a three-dimensional animated sequence that is projected onto the back screen. It portrays a first person view of falling through clouds into a starfield, and then being sucked into a fiery vortex and into darkness. The background screen starts showing animated livid flames.

This sequence was intended to give the audience a first person view from Satan's perspective of his fall from heaven. The intent was two-fold; firstly, it was designed to start the audience on the road of identifying with Satan, and second, it was intended to tie together the chronological narrative. This was important, since because the play, like *PL*, begins *in medias res*, the use of the same sequence at the end of Raphael's relation of Satan's fall from heaven would complete the chronological structure of the play for the audience.

The use of the starfield was also intentional. It represents Satan catching a glimpse of God creating the new world, giving him the knowledge that God has begun another creation. This is a departure from the poem, in which the rebel angels are portrayed as falling from heaven, through chaos and darkness, beyond

God's creation and down into Hell. The vortex of fire represents the gates of hell in the animated sequence.

Satan (*Kai Rasi*) awakens in Hell, with his defeated companions strewn and stunned all around him in a semi-circle (their exact positions will become important later, at the end of Raphael's story). In the poem, book one takes place in several locations in Hell, the lake of fire, the shores and the throne room. Because of practical reasons, the play merges all of these into a single location portrayed on the stage. Satan's first words (*PL* 1.84-85), in which he laments the change in his outward lustre, were originally addressed to Beelzebub in the poem, but in the play he is portrayed as speaking them to himself. He continues by surveying his new surroundings (*PL* 1.242-245).

This change from the poem was made to show the difference in Satan as a character when he knows he is watched and when he thinks he is alone. When Beelzebub (*Krista Markkula*) awakes and speaks (*PL* 1.128-155) Satan is startled from of his thoughts and quickly rallies back into his boastful leader aspect. The short discourse the two of them share (*PL* 1.157-191 and 1.272-282), in which their original lines were fragmented and shared, is intended to show the unique relationship that Satan has with Beelzebub, who was first angel that Satan turned to his cause, and therefore with whom he shares a far more intimate relationship in nature than with any other of his fallen crew. Beelzebub is portrayed as Satan's lieutenant, and as trusted as far as Satan can trust anyone. Nevertheless, Satan still hides his true thoughts from his companion.

Satan calls his minions to council to debate upon a course of action to follow (*PL* 1.315-330). They slowly rise from their prone position, eyeing Satan with barely contained hatred. They blame him for their fall, and Satan will have

his work cut out for him in trying to persuade them to fall in line. However, Satan's skilful oratory (*PL* 1.622-662 and 2.11-42) succeeds in winning them over and a heated debate ensues.

Only major princes of Hell (and who partake in the argument in the poem), are portrayed on the stage; Moloch (*Ilari Juselius*), Mammon (*Marianne Eerikäinen*) and Belial (*Jenni Rouvinen*). The audience is put into the position of the other fallen angels, listening to the arguments of the Princes of Hell and the loudspeakers play loud cheers and hails on cue.

The arguments given by each of the Princes of Hell are shortened versions of those that appear in the poem (Moloch; *PL* 2.51-105, Belial; *PL* 2.120-225, and

Mammon; 2.229-283.),



The debate rages on in Hell. Moloch (front) forcibly presents his argument for open war against Heaven, with Belial (left) and Mammon (right) listening in the background.

but essentially have the same content. They are met with little cheers or applause, as well as barely restrained hostility from the other princes. The objective here was to portray the lack of unity of purpose and discipline amongst the fallen angels, as well the absence of hierarchy.

Due to the delicate political situation in Hell, it is Beelzebub that presents the council with Satan's plan to travel to Earth and lead God's newest creation, man, into temptation (*PL* 2.310-378). To further emphasise the fact that the plan presented is actually that of Satan, the actor of Satan is subtly mimicking the

words and movements of Beelzebub in the background, as he delivers his oratory, like a puppeteer (Satan) controlling a puppet (Beelzebub). This arrangement is, however, portrayed as being consensual on Beelzebub's part.

Beelzebub's motion passes with loud applause. He continues to subtly suggest that Satan should be the one to be sent forth on the quest to corrupt man (*PL* 2.390-416). Satan announces that he, and he alone, will partake in this great enterprise and recites the three main challenges that will be facing him; escaping from Hell, navigating the Abyss of Endless Night, and deceiving the angels that guard the newly created world (*PL* 2.430-466). In this oratory, it was intended to convey, that Satan has already begun to market himself as the "hero" of the story. It was seen that he was essentially trying to "hi-jack" the narrative of the play for his own uses.

The council ends, the Princes of Hell depart and Satan makes his way to the Gates of Hell. The gates are represented by a line of actors, clad in all black robes (they will later become the Lords of Chaos), and in front of the gates stand two likewise robed figures. As Satan tries to advance on the gates, one of the figures intercepts him and casts off his robe. It is Death (*Timo Uotinen*). They engage in a short dialogue, during which they exchange threats (*PL* 2.681-703). In his anger, Satan strikes death, but Death parries the blow and Satan feels a sudden surge of pain in his arm. This was done to emphasise the interpretation that Sin is, indeed, speaking the truth when she later tells Satan "shun / His deadly arrow... for that mortal dint, / Save he who reigns above, none can resist" Death then attacks Satan, who can do nothing but dodge the blows. The short physical confrontation was done as a stylised martial arts sequence. This was a departure

¹⁰³ PL 2.810-814.

from *PL* in the sense that, in *PL*, Satan and Death have a simple stand off with weapons poised to strike. The departure was intended to create more on stage action and give the encounter a more dynamic nature.

Just before Death is about to deliver the fatal blow, Sin (*Karita Kuosmanen*) reveals herself to be the other robed figure and intercedes, stopping her son from delivering the *coup de grace*. The following scene remains very faithful to the original poem, with Sin recalling her creation, her fall, and the birth of Death, as well as revealing that she is in possession of the key to the gates of hell (PL 2.727-814). Satan changes tactics and proceeds to persuade Sin to give him the key (*PL* 2.817-843), much to Death's displeasure at first, but then he succeeds in even persuading Death to consent, once he has aroused Death's appetite for destruction (*PL* 2.843-844). His honey-tongued words win favour with Sin and she obliges (*PL* 2.850-870).

Satan opens the gates and flies into the abyss between worlds. The actors dressed in dark robes standing as the gates of hell, become animate, surround Satan, and begin to circle him. They represent the emptiness and darkness now surrounding him –The Lords of Chaos and Ancient night (*Mari Järvinen, Terhi Jokinen, Netta Nakari*, and *Laura Ollikainen*). The lighting turns to a deep shade of blue, casting long shadows and the space is filled with a booming hollow sound, creating the impression of vast emptiness. Satan asks the Lords of Chaos for directions to the newly created world (*PL* 2.868-988), and they reply (*PL* 2.990-1009), with each robed actor speaking one fragment (anywhere from 1 to 4 words), but together forming complete sentences, creating the impression that it is the darkness all around Satan which is speaking, rather than the individual figures.

The darkness departs, and a blinding light reveals the Arch-Angel Uriel (*Elina Koivisto*), as Satan leaves the darkness of the Abyss and enters the newly created universe. The actor playing Satan removes his black coat revealing a white undershirt, representing his transformation into a lesser angel. The removal of the coat also becomes a metaphor for Satan's serpent-like qualities as he "sheds his skin", and also refers to events yet to come.

Satan speaks to Uriel, inquiring of him the way to the home of the newly created human race (PL 3.654-680). The deceived Uriel answers to Satan, also reciting briefly the creation of the world, which he had witnessed. This is the only instance in which the creation of the world is described in the play. Uriel reveals to Satan the way to Eden (PL 3.694-734). Satan cannot resist the temptation to mock the angel by bowing low, and thanking Uriel, and then exiting with a malicious smile upon his face. Uriel finds the coat that Satan discarded, symbolising the doubt that has surfaced in his mind and exits, following the disguised Satan.

Meanwhile, in Heaven, in the divine presence of God, the Son of God (*Kati Nieminen*) watches Satan making his way to the newly created world. In *PL* this scene happens at the beginning of Book III, before Satan's encounter with Uriel, but was delayed in the production, for the purposes of presenting all three challenges that Satan had to overcome to reach his goal, and to which he had referred to before he departed. It was felt that it was important to represent all three challenges in succession, and thus create an efficiently flowing narrative describing Satan's travels to Eden.

God (the voices of *David Robertson*, *Timo Uotinen*, *Karita Kuosmanen*, and *Jenni Rouvinen*) reveals to the Son that Satan will succeed in seducing humankind away from him and bring about their damnation (*PL* 3.80-134). The

Son questions God on how He, being omniscient, could have allowed this to happen, and suggests that while withholding His power to intervene, He was being



The Son asks God why He is allowing the fall of humanity to happen, since He possesses the power to intervene.

so cruel towards mankind (*PL* 3.144-167). God replies that since he created humankind and all the angels with free will, they were free to choose whether they stood or fell through their own actions. Also, that since God was the creator of the universe; He had, in a sense, created the rules of the universe, and had decreed that universal justice must be observed. It was God's choice that He would play by his own rules. Mankind would have to pay the price of disobedience by dying, unless someone

else would be prepared to accept punishment on their behalf (*PL* 3.168-216). Here the scene ends for dramatic purposes. It was felt that the announcement by the Son that he would accept the burden and die on mankind's behalf should be delayed until after the fall to create dramatic suspense, after all "expectations must be aroused, but never, until the last curtain, wholly fulfilled" since "all action must seem to be getting nearer to the objective yet never reach it entirely before the end" 105.

Satan arrives in Paradise. He delivers his speech upon the mountain while gazing longingly at the sun (PL 4.31-113). He now beholds Adam (Lauri

¹⁰⁴ Esslin (1976), 43.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

Lahikainen) alone, and playing solitaire, the lonely man's game. He approaches Adam in bewilderment, wondering what this newly created creature is and prophecies that man's happiness will come to an end (*PL* 4.358-392). The still lifeless vessel of Eve (*Minna Anttila*) lies on the other side of the stage. Satan, being a spirit, is invisible to both Adam and Eve. Suddenly, Satan hears someone approaching and hides.

The Son enters. He gives Eve the spark of life in a manner reminiscent of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel (only here it is Eve, who is receiving the spark of life from God instead of Adam). This manner of Eve's awakening was meant to express that the writers had thought of Eve as being more equal to Adam than Milton had. As already mentioned, Adam and Eve were thought of as being different, but equal in the eyes of God. It was also an intentional allusion to the legend of *Lilith*, Adam's first wife, who, according to legend, refused to lie under him while having sex and when Adam pressed the issue she left him.

The reference to the legend of Lilith was a subtle one, but was in keeping with the character concept of having a "more equal" Eve, for, like Adam, Lilith was created directly from the earth. The removing of Adam's rib is not shown in the stage production, other than Adam later touching his side when later addressing Eve for the first time. The positioning of the actors of the Son and Eve is this scene is almost identical to that in Michelangelo's famous painting on the roof of the Sistine Chapel, but which depicts Adam (instead of Eve) receiving the spark of life from God.

To make Eve more equal to Adam does not mean that the group viewed Milton was a misogynist, far from it, or, as Susan Woods expressed it, "Milton's

Eve has majesty". However, though not a misogynist, Milton is still "locked into his culture's assumptions of woman's inferior position in the human paradigm". It therefore was only natural that our vision of Eve in *JMPL* would concur with the cultural norms of the equality of the sexes in early 21st century Finland, and would be more emancipated than Milton's.

Eve awakens to life, looks around full of amazement and makes her way to the edge of the lake (portrayed by the edge of the stage). She is startled by her reflection and backs away, but soon returns and admires her own beauty. The Son calls her to her follow him (*PL* 4.467-475). Being unable to see the Son, she follows his voice and beholds Adam for the first time, but finds him to be "less fair, / Less winningly soft, less amiably mild, / Than that watery image" Adam jumps up, forgetting his game. This startles Eve and she backs away, but stumbles. Adam soothes her (*PL* 4.481-488). He takes her hand and leads her to the Tree of Knowledge and explains to her the only command that God gave them (*PL* 4.411-439); not to eat of the forbidden tree, for "God had pronounced it Death to taste that tree" (*PL* 4.427). The Son of God departs, smiling contently. All the while, Satan listens from his hiding place with interest.

Eve finally addresses Adam accepting him as her companion (PL 4.440-447) and admires the beauty (and desirability) of his body. Adam lifts her into his arms and carries her off the stage. Eve's final off stage cry "Oh Adam!", is not in PL, but was added by the woman playing Eve, to lend additional humour to the scene, as well as to illustrate to the audience that Adam and Eve were enjoying conjugal love off-stage. It was felt that, just as in PL, it was important to make it clear to the audience that Adam and Eve, even in their pre-lapsarian condition, had

¹⁰⁶ Woods (1988) 15-16.

¹⁰⁷ Woods (1988) 16.

sex, only that then it was still a natural act of innocence and joy between them. In essence, "they have the innocence of pre-Freudian children." This also tied in with the "marriage ceremony" which the Son conducts in both play and PL in which Milton convey that "sex in its proper place, the marriage bed, is given full due" PL.

Satan comes out of hiding and expresses his envy for their bliss, but also devises a plan to lead them away from God by deceiving them into eating of the Tree of Knowledge (*PL* 4.505-535). Satan picks up a card from Adam's game of solitaire and reveals it to be the Ace of Spades. Satan's revealing of the Ace of Spades, also known as the *Card of Death*, is an omen of what is to follow, as well as a concrete metaphor of Death's role in his plan and that Adam and Eve will soon become familiar with Death. Having decided upon a course of action, Satan exits the stage, following Adam and Eve.

The above-mentioned scene is actually composed of several separate sections of *PL* fused into a whole, represented in on-stage action. The sections are; Satan beholding Adam and Eve for the first time and deciding upon a course of action (*PL* 4.358-538), Eve's recollection of her coming to life and meeting Adam for the first time (*PL* 4.449-491), and Adam's own relation of the same event (*PL* 8.463-520). As far as the depiction of Eve's creation and Adam's and Eve's first meeting, the scene remains more faithful to Eve's recollection of events than those of Adam.

This scene also kept another important element of *PL*, for in this scene Satan is introduced Adam and Eve for the first time, as is the viewer/reader.

¹⁰⁸ DI 1 179 190

¹⁰⁹ LeComte (1978), 89.

¹¹⁰ LeComte (1978), 91.

Hence, the viewer/reader sees them for the first time through Satan's eyes. They are seen as being together but not wholly equal.

Evening arrives in Paradise. The Archangel Uriel arrives in Paradise, and meets the Archangel Gabriel (*Jenni Kytöharju*). Uriel relates to Gabriel his earlier encounter with the wandering angel (Satan in disguise) and expresses his concern that it was one of the fallen (*PL* 4.561-757). Gabriel replies that he will take immediate action (*PL* 4.577-588), and Uriel bids him farewell with an added section of dialogue. Gabriel summons Ithuriel (*Terhi Jokinen*) and Zephon (*Netta Nakari*) and instructs them to search through Paradise for the rebel angel that has escaped from Hell (*PL* 4.688-796). The section with Gabriel, Ithuriel and Zephon is located later in Book IV, but it was felt that it should be added to this scene, to lessen the number of short scenes and thus minimise the fragmentation of the narrative.

The sun sets. Adam tells Eve that when night falls, it is time for them to sleep and rest in preparation for the next day (*PL* 4.610-633). Eve inquires from

Adam about the role of the stars in the night sky, and who shall behold them if they are asleep (*PL* 4.635-658). Adam replies that despite the fact that they sleep, many spirits still walk the earth and



Adam and Eve lie down to sleep, unaware of the evil that stalks them in Paradise.

heaven that behold the glorious sight (PL 4.660-688), and notices that while he

was talking Eve has dozed off. This does not happen in *PL*, but it was added to remove the necessity of prayer on behalf of Adam and Eve, but also to add some comedy, as Adam drones on about stars, Eve falls asleep. Adam then kisses her gently and lies down to sleep next to her.

In *JMPL*, Adam and Eve are never openly portrayed as praying, except after the fall, and even then they pray in humble silence. It was simply felt that open prayer might mislead the audience to think of *JMPL* as being a Christian Religious play, rather that a play with more universal themes, but set against a Christian mythos. The play *Kadotetut* dealt with this same problem by interlacing church hymns (as discussed above) into the production when God is speaking, but also when Adam and Eve are praying. ¹¹¹

Satan enters. The following scene portrays Eve's dream. The scene was implemented without dialogue, but with carefully choreographed, almost dance like movement on the part of the actors and with violin music playing in the background to emphasize the dreamlike state that was being portrayed.

Satan takes Eve's hand in a manner echoing the spark of life she received from the Son and leads her to the Tree of Knowledge. He grabs an apple and bites. Eve looks on in wonder and a hunger is aroused in her. Satan offers the apple to Eve, but as she is reaching out to take it, he suddenly flicks it aside and seizes Eve into a close embrace, which then transforms into a passionate waltz. The waltz was intended to symbolize when Eve was flying over the world with Satan in her dream¹¹². LeComte remarks on this scene in *PL*, saying that "The Devil wooes her [Eve] like a Cavalier and husband substitute." On the whole, this scene in the play was intentionally filled with sexual innuendo. It was thought that if Adam

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¹¹¹ Nälkäteatteri: *Kadotetut*.

¹¹² PL 5.86-90.

was the "safe" and reliable man back home, then Satan should be portrayed as the dashing and handsome exotic stranger. In essence, Satan became Eve's sexual fantasy.

Suddenly, Eve falls gently and returns to her place besides Adam. The dream has ended. Satan is curious as to what has caused this turn of events. His question is answered when Ithuriel and Zephon arrive and block his escape route. They cross words (*PL* 4.823-843), and a possibly violent confrontation is only avoided by the appearance of Gabriel on the scene. In *PL*, it is Satan who is taken to Gabriel, but for the purposes of *JMPL* it was easier to introduce Gabriel as a new force into the scene to be reckoned with.

The confrontation between Gabriel and Satan is presented as a contest of words (*PL* 4.878-976), will and strength. Unlike in *PL*, which represents the

Gabriel drives off Satan in a contest of might, will, and wit. In the background, Zephon witnesses the struggle.

contest as a dialogue, ending with a show of force, the play also added an element of physical action to the scene, in the form of the actors' lines being punctuated by stylized martial arts combat, as

was done with the above-mentioned Satan and Death Scene. During the discourse, Satan's temper slowly flares, until it reaches the highest pitch of anger. The physical combat is also intended to show the disparity of strength between the two

¹¹³ LeComte (1978), 78.

angels. Gabriel has no trouble in defeating Satan and demonstrating his strength, but while Gabriel's concentration is momentarily broken, while she tells Satan the reason he lost (*PL* 4.1006-1013), Satan escapes, followed in hot pursuit by Ithuriel and Zephon. Gabriel lingers a moment over Adam and Eve and then departs.

Morning comes to Paradise. Adam and Eve awake, and Eve relates the dream she had to Adam (*PL* 5.28-93). Adam is troubled, but not too concerned

(PL 5.95-128), and when he sees the Archangel Raphael (Eeva Viljanen) approaching he sends Eve to fetch fruit to offer the unexpected guest (PL 5.308-320).



In the morning, Eve relates her dream of the winged stranger to Adam.

Adam greets Raphael

and Eve returns with the fruit. During the following discourse (*PL* 5.361-433 and 5.461-575), Raphael is offered fruit and he eats a grape, demonstrating that he and Adam and Eve are really not that different and are comprised of "one first matter all," and that they all hold their happy state thanks to their obedience, which must be given of free will. More importantly, Raphael explains that because of this, one day Adam and Eve may evolve and ascend to heaven at their pleasure. This is important from the dramatic point of view, since it makes it clear that "the fall" of humanity was indeed unnecessary and that their, Adam's and Eve's, own impatience to achieve this new state became their ultimate downfall.

¹¹⁴ PL 5.472.

Raphael mentions the fallen angels in passing, and Adam jumps on the opportunity to inquire more. Instead of telling the tale of Lucifer's fall, it was felt that a better option was that Raphael would conjure up a vision of the past events to Adam and Eve "by likening spiritual to corporal forms" Another important element worth mentioning in this scene, and Raphael's story, is that Eve is visibly present in Adam's and Raphael's company all the time. It was felt that in keeping with the more liberal and egalitarian interpretation of Eve (discussed above), it

was a better option to
have her openly
partake in the vision,
than have her
"eavesdropping".

This is the point at which the play (as does the epic) jumps back in time. Raphael's vision begins with the



Raphael visits Adam and Eve, and, by eating a grape, illustrates that they really are not that different. He continues by relating to them the story of the fall of Lucifer from grace.

crowning of the Son of God as the King of Heaven by God's decree (*PL* 5.600-615). The two mightiest Archangels, Michael (*Aleksis Meaney*) and Gabriel crown the Son with his new regalia, while the jealous Lucifer (*Kai Rasi* –Satan in his still radiant and unblemished form), formerly second only to God, watches in barely contained rage. All the angels bow before the newly anointed king and leave, with the exception of Lucifer and his Lieutenant (*Krista Markkula* –later to become Beelzebub), who hesitates in doubt.

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¹¹⁵ PL 5.573.

Lucifer seizes the opportunity and addresses the lone angel (*PL* 5.673-693) commanding him to gather all the discontented angels to the northern quarter of Heaven. The angel leaves, and suddenly Lucifer is overcome by terrible pain in his head. In a gust of smoke, Sin (Mari Järvinen -Sin's heavenly form) emerges from Lucifer's head, in accordance with Sin's earlier relation. 116 For a moment, their movements mirror each other. Being reminiscent of Lucifer in appearance, he becomes infatuated with Sin out of his own self-love, 117 after all, "what other standard of beauty could he [Lucifer] have?" They engage in a passionate and erotically charged dance, at the end of which Lucifer sweeps Sin off her feet and carries her off the stage to have sex with her (and thus impregnate her with Death).

The discontent angels gather, wondering why Lucifer has summoned them. Lucifer arrives, now clad in a black coat, and succeeds in turning them to his cause with his charismatic oratory (PL 5.772-802). Sin is also portrayed as being instrumental in the rebellion, and as Lucifer delivers his speech, she walks amongst the angels, whispering promises into their ears, and as their minds are turned, she places red sashes over their shoulders.

Only Abdiel (Laura Ollikainen) remains unmoved by Lucifer's oratory. He storms onto the stage and pleads with Lucifer to turn away from his course of action and plead for forgiveness (PL 5.809-848). Lucifer rebukes and mocks Abdiel, issuing a challenge for him to pass on to the Son (PL 5.853-871). Abdiel sees that he is alone and that all the others have sided with Lucifer. He renounces them all as being beyond salvation and leaves. Accompanied by rising cheers, Lucifer draws his sword and prepares for war. Darkness descends. On the backdrop screen, the clear skies of Heaven become dark storm clouds.

¹¹⁶ *PL* 2.752-758. ¹¹⁷ *PL* 2.764-765.

The two armies of angels now stand opposing each other. The rebels – Beelzebub, Moloch, Mammon, and Belial - led by Lucifer, and the loyalists -Gabriel, Uriel, Ithuriel, Zephon and Abdiel - led by Michael have formed opposing battle lines. Abdiel is horrified by what Lucifer has done (PL 6.114-126), and steps forth issuing a challenge and naming Lucifer Satan in the progress (PL 6.131-148), a name that will stay with him from now on. Satan mocks Abdiel and the rest of the loyalist angels (PL 6.150-170), but is rebuked by Abdiel (PL 6.172-188). As if to lend weight to his argument, Abdiel delivers the first blow upon Satan, which he parries, but is sent reeling back from its force.

Michael intervenes and declares that heaven will not suffer the acts of war that Satan has introduced and issues and ultimatum (PL 6.262-280), but is mocked

The rebel angels look on in horror as their leader, Lucifer, is struck down by Michael. In the background, Sin also experiences her father's pain.

by Satan (PL 6.282-284 and 293-295). They fight with swords. Michael brings his sword down in a great arc and strikes Satan down. Sin also feels the pain of the blow that strikes her

father and acts likewise. Experiencing agony for the first time, Satan declares, that since nothing but heaven exists, the war will go on for eternity, and that despite how many times Michael strikes him down (PL 6.288-293).

¹¹⁸ LeComte (1978), 69.

The Son arrives on the scene. He thanks the angels for their loyalty, but declares that he alone must face the rebels (*PL* 6.801-823). The loyalist angels depart. The Son is surrounded by the rebel angels on all sides. The Son unleashes the wrath of heaven upon the rebels and they are cast out of heaven.

This is the moment that the events are spliced in with the beginning of the play. The same video sequence is played as at the beginning of the play, and the same sequence of events takes place in hell; Satan rises, surveys Hell, and sees his changed shape. This is suddenly interrupted when Raphael snaps his fingers. The vision freezes into place. Raphael walks onto the stage and sums up his story and warns Adam and Eve not to transgress the will of God (*PL* 6.897-912). The first act ends.

When planning the whole "war in heaven" sequence, it was felt that the description should be kept to a bare minimum, so as not to take away from the primary narrative. It was felt that the origins of Satan could be sufficiently portrayed by focusing on a few key events in the heavenly conflict, rather than try to portray the strife as a whole; the anointing of the Son, the birth of Sin, Lucifer's mustering of support, Abdiel's objections and naming of Satan, Satan's duel with Michael and first experience with pain, and, finally, the casting out of heaven of the rebels by the Son of God. Ending the first act with where the play began also gave the act, as a whole, a narrative consistency and closure. The role of the first act was to set the scene for the events about to transpire in the second act.

4.2 Act 2: From Epic to Personal

If the first act was characterised by grand events of epic proportions, the second act begins to focus more on the individual characters, more specifically, on Adam and Eve and Satan. The audience has now been made aware of the background and context of the events about to transpire, and the plot is now free to focus more on the fall of mankind itself.

Act 2 begins with Satan returning to Paradise. Adam and Eve are asleep on one side of the stage and the serpent sleeps on the other. Satan is still fascinated by the beauty of Paradise, and has to fight to remind himself of the reason and objective of his quest (*PL* 9.99-178). He finds the serpent sleeping, and, though disgusted by what he has to do, takes possession of its body, melding with it. The Serpent, now possessed and controlled by Satan awakes, makes its way to the slumbering Adam and Eve, and watches in secret as they rise from their rest.

Eve expresses her desire to separate for a while from Adam, using the pretext of grooming the garden (*PL* 9.205-225). Her true motivation is, however,

portrayed as being a desire to spend some time on her own, again in context of the more liberated Eve. Adam would be prepared to consent, but he expresses his concern for the danger that



Adam beseeches Eve not to separate from him while the evil seeking to tempt them may still lurk nearby.

Raphael warned them about (*PL* 9.227-269). In the following discussion (*PL* 9.273-384), they each argue their case, Eve thinking that Adam is lacking in trust towards her, whereas Adam is arguing that now may not be the best time for them

to separate. Adam finally relents and they part ways to meet again later. Adam takes position stage left and begins to make Eve a floral crown.

The Serpent witnessed their discussion from its hiding place. Even it has become enamoured of Eve's beauty and shakes itself awake from its daydream and reminds itself of its true purpose (*PL* 9.473-493). Carefully, the Serpent approaches Eve and addresses her with reverence (*PL* 9.532-548). Eve is amazed that the Serpent can speak and seems to possess the power of reason (*PL* 9.535-



Eve listens in wonder as the Serpent relates to her how it gained the ability of speech and reason.

566). The Serpent (Satan) explains that it was granted the power of reason after eating fruit from a certain tree (*PL* 9.568-612), and Eve asks the Serpent to lead her to that tree (*PL* 9.615-624). The

Serpent obliges and they move to the tree of knowledge.

Upon seeing the tree, Eve is disappointed and tells the Serpent that they are forbidden to eat from this tree (*PL* 9.647-654). In the following monologue (*PL* 9.679-732), the Serpent persuades Eve to eat the fruit by appealing, not only to her vanity, but also to her acute capability to reason. In a sense, Eve is portrayed as being betrayed by her own intelligence. The Serpent retreats, and in her final monologue before tasting the fruit (*PL* 9.745-779), Eve reasons to herself (and to the audience in the process) why she is about to embark upon this course of action. She eats the fruit. The Serpent smiles and returns to slumber, stage left.

The scene with Eve and the Serpent is also very intimate in nature. The audience needs to be constantly reminded that, although acting through the body of the Serpent, it is indeed Satan, who is delivering the lines. The scene also contained a sexual tension between the Serpent and Eve, portrayed by strong physical contact. This was intended to relate to a degree, the desire that Satan feels towards Eve.

After tasting the fruit, Eve is overcome by a feeling of intense ecstasy, again, portrayed as being almost sexual in nature. Her only concern is how Adam will react when he discovers that she has eaten of the forbidden fruit (ref), and whether he will abandon her after seeing her new condition. She resolves that she could not bear being abandoned and alone and wants to persuade Adam to taste as well, since then they would share any bliss or woe to come. Eve is portrayed as being selfish in regards to Adam, but it was felt that this sin should not be hers alone.

Adam returns from making the floral crown, and spies Eve, and sees what she has done, and that she is lost. He contemplates (*PL* 9.896-916) the possible fates that may await beyond the choice of to taste or not to taste, and even considers whether God would create him another Eve. However, Adam decides to eat of the fruit as well, since even if God would create him another Eve, he would still love this one, and, out of his own selfishness and fear of abandonment, could not bear to be parted from her.

Adam's soliloquy was extremely important because it showed that Adam had made his choice to eat of the fruit *before* Eve had a chance to convince him, thus underscoring that he did so of his own free will, and ultimately removing most of the blame of his choice off Eve's shoulders.

Adam

approaches Eve and she sees him and runs to embrace him. She does her best to persuade Adam of the wisdom and pleasure that lie to be gained



Eve asks Adam to also taste the forbidden fruit and to partake in bliss with her.

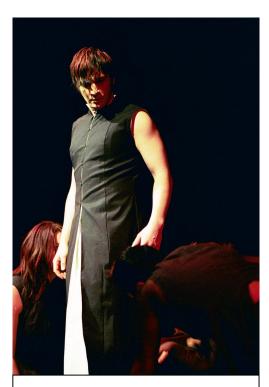
from tasting the fruit (*PL* 9.856-885). Adam is sceptical at first but finally gives in, as he tries to reason this new situation to himself (*PL* 9.921-959). Eve is overjoyed by this chain of events and that Adam is willing to join her together in the newly achieved state of being (*PL* 9.961-989). Adam eats of the fruit. Like Eve, he too is overcome by an immense sensation of pleasure. He commends the fruit of its taste and suddenly feels an overwhelming feeling of passion build inside him (*PL* 9.1017-1033). Both Eve and Adam are overcome with lust and they have violent and passionate sex.

It was felt that it was important to show that the first act that Adam and Eve engage in after tasting the forbidden fruit is the act of having sex. This second portrayed sexual encounter is in stark contrast to the one hinted at in Act 1. Their first sexual encounter in only hinted at, and is portrayed as an act of love, even being playful in nature. Before their "fall", sex is to Adam and Eve like playing games is for children, an innocent act of love and affection. However, now the act is one of pure lust and passion. It is portrayed openly, explicitly, and almost violently. In *JMPL* Adam's and Eve's sexual encounters become a metaphor for the difference between their pre-lapsarian and post-lapsarian condition.

Since the act of eating the fruit was seen as happening instantaneously with what transpired in hell in the next scene, the order of events was changed from the original *PL* to the following.

Meanwhile in Hell, Sin and Death sense that a new change has taken place in the world. They feel their power growing and discover that they feel a pull towards the newly created world and are capable of navigating the void between the worlds. Sin suggests that they undertake to cross the vast abyss and lay a path for all of Hell to follow (*PL* 10.235-263) and Death concurs (*PL* 10.265-271).

Before they can set out on their path, Satan returns to Hell and is greeted by Sin, who lovingly commends him on his success (*PL* 10.354-382). Satan proclaims himself victor over the almighty and that he has now taken control of the world and sends Sin and Death to wreak havoc in the newly created world, to



Upon his return to Hell, Satan is surprised to be greeted with hisses and curses instead of praises, as his formerly mighty minions have degenerated into writhing monsters.

first enslave man and then kill (*PL* 10.384-409). Sin and Death depart for Paradise.

Satan calls all his minions to him and tells (in short) the tale of his "heroic" quest and announces that they will now ascend to the world that he has won for them (*PL* 10.460-503). Instead of applause, he is greeted with contemptuous hisses, as all of his formerly mighty Princes of Hell have degenerated into writhing monsters, which now slowly crawl towards him in agony and slither up

and down his body. God speaks down onto Satan and passes judgement on him, proclaiming an eternal enmity between him and the seed of woman (*PL* 10.175-181). Satan lets out a cry of anger and despair. He knows he has been defeated.

Moving the passing of judgement to a different location (Hell) and from being directed at the Serpent to Satan instead, was in keeping with the idea that the Serpent was not, in itself, to blame for the seduction of mankind (as discussed earlier). This way, it was felt, the final blame would rest on the character truly responsible for the tragedy of humanity. It also gave the words on lines 10.175-181 of *PL* a new meaning. They became a metaphor for the goodness in mankind, which would struggle to defeat Satan in the future, and made Satan into the "adversary". The "seed of woman" could also be interpreted as a reference to the virgin birth, and the final act of defeat to be dealt upon Satan by Jesus Christ, an omen of Satan's "final" defeat. This is the first direct allusion in the play to the concept of *felix culpa*¹¹⁹, which exists strongly in the original work as well.

Meanwhile, in Paradise, Adam and Eve have discovered the other side of their new condition, and are suffering from a "morning after"-like experience of depression and shame. Their sentiments have been mirrored by the change in their surrounding environment. Adam and Eve are now both naked and covering themselves in green foliage to hide their nudity. Adam contemplates on how they could have come to this and that he could never again behold the beauty of angels. He resolves to hide from the Son and the angels of Paradise (*PL* 9.1067-1097).

Adam and Eve then begin to futilely blame each other for their newly gained misery (*PL* 9.1134-1186), only to be interrupted by the sound of the Son walking in the garden and calling out to Adam (*PL* 10.103-108). The Son finds

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^{119 &}quot;fortunate fall"

Adam and Eve hiding in the bushes, and the following discourse (*PL* 10.114-162 and 10.193-208) remains very loyal to the original *PL*, but with the omission of the sentencing of the Serpent. The Son inquires of the reasons for Adam's and Eve's trespass and Adam tries to shift the blame to Eve, only to be reminded that, ultimately, it was Adam's own choice. Eve is portrayed as being more resigned and ready to accept responsibility for her actions, only naming the Serpent and relating in simple terms what had happened. The Son proclaims judgement upon Adam and Eve, and is about to leave, but, in his compassion, feels deep pity for them. He orders the angels of Paradise to clothe Adam and Eve and then departs.

The angels Uriel, Gabriel, Ithuriel and Zephon arrive on stage with clothes for Adam and Eve, and erect green canvases to conceal them while they change. This also comes across as a metaphor for shielding them against Sin and Death,



Adam laments his fate. Sin is standing in the background, enjoying the spectacle of desperation.

who arrive in Paradise. Sin and Death survey their surroundings they discuss their next course of action (*PL* 10.591-609). They resolve that Sin would infect humankind, before Death would devour them. They depart.

The angels depart, revealing the fully clothed Adam and Eve, dressed in what can, at best, be described as "unfashionable" clothes. This idea came from the group which felt that it would add an element of tragicomedy to the scene, as if God was "twisting the knife" by choosing

such outfits. During the scene that follows, Sin and Death return to the stage and influence the thoughts and emotions of Adam and Eve. Sin and Death, like Satan, are spirits and therefore invisible to Adam and Eve.

Sin enters. Adam laments his miserable fate, and the fate of his offspring (*PL* 10.720-844), but when Eve tries to comfort him, he leaps up at blames her for

everything that has befallen them (*PL* 10.867-908) and drives her away from him (while being influenced by Sin), in a manner bordering on domestic violence. However, Eve, in an act of great courage and determination, refuses to give up on Adam and implores him not to forsake her, or her love for him. She declares that she will take on all responsibility for their actions and will pray to God that all the judgement shall befall her, and her only (*PL* 10.914-936). Adam laments, and they



Adam verbally assaults Eve, blaming her for all his misfortunes.

end their quarrel. Sin is thwarted and she leaves in displeasure. He suggests that they try together to find a way to alleviate their misery (*PL* 10.947-965).

Death enters. The industrious Eve immediately suggests several courses of action (*PL* 10.967-1006). First she suggests that, in order to spare future generations from sharing the same misery as they, that they should abstain from having sex and thus prevent the creation of the suffering human race. This idea wins very little favour with Adam. Death places a knife in Eve's hand. Eve (being, in turn, influenced by Death) now suggests that they should commit suicide to

spare them any further suffering. She is about to cut her jugular vein with the knife, but Adam physically intercedes, and they fall into an embrace of tenderness, the first time they do so since their fall into sin. The foiled and agitated Death leaves. Adam comforts Eve and says that they can bear their punishment, and drawing on an idea that Eve already presented, suggests that they pray with all their hearts for forgiveness from God (10.1013-1096). They kneel in silent prayer.

The abovementioned scene, in which Adam and Eve are preyed upon by Sin and Death, was also intended to show that humanity is not as helpless in the face of adversity and evil as one might think, despite falling out of the good graces of heaven. When apart, Adam and Eve and in danger of being destroyed by Sin and Death, but together, and helping each other, they succeed in defeating the malicious pair.

The following scene takes place in Heaven, but is superimposed on the praying Adam and Eve. It concludes the discussion between the Son of God and God in Book III of *PL*, which the play discontinued for reasons of building dramatic suspense.

In his infinite compassion, the Son of God goes before God and declares that he will sacrifice himself for humankind and suffer Death on their behalf (*PL* 2.227-265). God is content, and declares that to atone for humankind's sins, the



The Sacrifice of the Son. In a symbolic gesture, the angels carry the Son off the stage in the likeness of a cross. Adam and Eve can be seen praying in the foreground.

Son must become "man among men on Earth, / Made flesh" and suffer the death that was intended for humankind (*PL* 2.274-343). While God is speaking, stigmata open in the Son's palms, an omen of what is to come. All the angels come onto the stage and carry the Son off, in a manner resembling carrying a cross, to the rhythm of a slow drumbeat (yet another omen). Only the Archangel Michael remains who then departs for Paradise.

Back in Paradise, Adam and Eve feel as if a weight has been lifted off their hearts. Adam expresses this unexpected sensation out loud, and gives Eve the floral wreath that he made earlier and hails her as the mother of mankind, which Eve accepts, in a ceremony, which is not unlike them renewing their marital vows (*PL* 11.141-180).

Adam is filled with the anticipation of a great change when he sees a bright light on the horizon (*PL* 11.193-207 and 11.226-237). The light is the Archangel Michael arriving in Paradise. Michael tells Adam and Eve that they have been granted grace from above, but that they may no longer abide within the walls of Paradise (*PL* 11.251-262). Eve despairs but Michael comforts her (*PL* 11.268-332).

Adam is sad that he must be parted from God in such a way (*PL* 11.296-332), but Michael tells Adam that God is everywhere and everything and that nothing can ever be beyond, or parted, from Him if one makes the effort to look, and reveals to Adam and Eve that he will now show them the future events that will transpire due to the sin that they have sinned (*PL* 11.335-369). Eve accepts on behalf of them both and they both take hold of his hands (*PL* 11.371-376, originally Adam's line).

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¹²⁰ PL 2.283-284.

The visions of Michael proved to be a very problematic scene indeed. It was experienced that to portray all of them would be too time consuming and (to say the least) anti-climactic. It was therefore decided that artistic liberty would be utilised, and instead of portraying the visions as a whole, the play would concentrate on some of the key *themes* of the visions instead. The most important is the bringing of Adam and Eve face-to-face with their newly gained mortality, and their introduction to the concept of death. Another important departure was to have Eve present in the viewing of the visions, instead of having Michael lull her off to sleep as happens in *PL*. This, once again, tied into the egalitarian view of *PL* that *JMPL* took. For this to function, many of Adam's lines from *PL* were split and divided equally between Adam and Eve.

Michael provides Adam and Eve with three visions: the first two on the video screen and the last one portrayed by actors on the stage. Michael takes Adam and Eve by the hands (the first time an angel establishes physical contact with them), and channels the visions into them. This was thought to reflect the fact that in their post-lapsarian condition, Adam and Eve had lost much of the purity that enabled them to view Raphael's visions without aid.

Michael declares that what they are about to see are the effects of their great crime, (*PL* 11.423-428) and images of war and violence permeate the screen. Adam and Eve inquire whether they have now seen death (*PL* 11.461-465) and they despair (*PL* (*PL* 11.500-514, and 11.526-529), but Michael replies explaining that the forms of death are many (*PL* 11.466-477), and reveals that by living well and being good they might achieve a peaceful death (*PL* 530-545). To illustrate his point, Michael shows them the second vision, which showed funeral processions, and old people who have died in their sleep. Adam and Eve lament their fate and

resign themselves to reaching their deaths as easily as possible (*PL* 11.547-550), but Michael stresses the importance of living *well* and rejoicing in their short spree of mortal existence (*PL* 11.553-554). Adam wishes that Michael would never have shown him what is to come to the race of humankind, for now he feels guilt for all the times to come, not just the present (*PL* 11.763-767).

By now, Adam and Eve are beginning to show signs of fatigue. The images that Michael is channelling into them are proving to be too much for their frail mortal minds. Michael sees this and declares that he will continue by relating to them what is to come (*PL* 12.8-12). Hence, the third vision is played out by actors. Michael relates that, in time, a redeemer shall spring from the seed of woman, who will eventually quell the adversary (*PL* 12.358-371). Adam and Eve are filled with new hope and inquire when and where this battle will take place (*PL* 12.375-385). Michael explains that what shall transpire is not so much a battle in the conventional sense but a battle within the soul of humanity (*PL* 12.368-465). In his relation, he introduces Satan, Sin and Death to Adam and Eve, for the first and last time.

Each arrives on the stage, and is dismissed in turn as Michael relates how each will eventually be defeated by the Son of God (and Man). All three, Satan, Sin and Death are now presented in a more "real" manner. Satan is dressed in a business suit, carrying a suitcase and bearing a peace symbol pin, a reference to the growing material greed of the modern world. Death is carrying several ammunition belts, an obvious reference to the steadily increasing number of violent conflicts over the course of the 20th century. Sin is showing off a detergent box, with the text "New and Improved Sin" visible on the side, a stark critique of the rampant consumerism and hedonism of current western society.

This "fashion show"-presentation of the evil trio ties in with the thought that as the play is coming to its close, the real world is slowly creeping onto the stage, and the more fantastical elements are beginning to fade away. Therefore, Satan, Sin and Death can be finally portrayed in a more concrete context. It also binds the characters of Satan, Sin and Death together as a grotesque parody of the Holy trinity, as LeComte would argue is the case is in PL as well. 121

Michael's relation is ended with the arrival of the other angels; Gabriel, Uriel, Raphael, Abdiel, Ithuriel, and Zephon, who form a corridor to the gates of Paradise. Michael announces that it is time for them to leave (PL 12.589-594). Adam and Eve vow to each other that they shall try, as best they can, to live their lives better from now on (PL 12.557-573). Meanwhile, Michael has found a lone surviving flower amongst all the dead flowers of Paradise and gives it to Adam and Eve – a small part of Paradise – to take with them.

Michael's parting words are his final advice to the couple (PL 12.581-585), and the very last words he speaks: "...then wilt thou not be loth / To leave this Paradise, but shall possess / A Paradise within thee, happier far, 122. These lines coupled with Eve's words to Adam "with thee to go / Is to stay here; without thee here to stay / Is to go hence unwilling" 123, from hers and Adam's final discourse (PL 12.614-623) form the most cathartic moment of the play. They epitomise the central idea that the play tried to communicate to the audience, i.e. that Paradise lies not within a time or place, but within our hearts and each other. The fall of Adam and Eve was seen as felix culpa, not as being only inevitable, but also necessary for humanity to triumph. When Eve speaks to Adam of the "Promised

¹²¹ LeComte (1978), 75. ¹²² *PL* 12.585-587.

¹²³ PL 12.615-617.

seed"124, she puts Adam's hand on her abdomen, indicating that she is already pregnant. This child was, of course, Kain, the first murderer, who was represented in JMPL as being conceived when Adam and Eve were in the throes of passion after committing their original sin.

Accompanied by the music from a lone violin, which first begins to play in a sad minor key, but then transforms into a rising beautiful melody of hope, Adam and Eve slowly walk, hand in hand, through the corridor of angels and out through the gates of Paradise into the world beyond. They have lost one Paradise, but found a new one. The end.

¹²⁴ PL 12.623.

5.0. Conclusions

In this thesis, I have broadly outlined the processes involved in staging the *TEST* version of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and offered some potential solutions and methods with which *Paradise Lost* can be approached as a potential theatrical performance. I have also demonstrated that *Paradise Lost* not only *can*, but indeed *already has* been transformed into a theatrical performance in several instances. The only question which therefore has remained, and which I have tried to answer above is *how*.

Whenever one embarks upon a dynamic creative process, such as transforming an epic poem into a play, as is the case here, one can never be sure of the final outcome of the constantly evolving creative process, or how it ultimately reflect the themes of the original work.

The process itself, as is the final performance, is strongly influenced by the choices that have been made in terms of focus and selection of themes, as well as taking into account the nature and language of the audience for which the play is intended. Also the personal views of the director and cast members enter into the equation, in relation to what the underlying intended message of the performance is, and the methods used in projecting it to the audience. Various pragmatic considerations affect the outcome as well, such as resources, funding, rehearsal time and the abilities of the cast, both innate and acquired, to mention but a few.

What did make the process of staging *PL* with the *TEST* especially interesting was that the performers were students of English language and literature, and were therefore acquainted with the various ways and methods with which to interpret, read, and approach the text as a literary study. It therefore remains open to speculation, whether a group of drama professionals or students

would have approached the project in the same manner, and would they have built as much of the play on Milton's original vision of *Paradise Lost*, as the final *TEST* product showed.

Most importantly however, I have found that the experience of the production of *John Milton's Paradise Lost* has offered new ways of exploring the themes and message of the original poem. I believe that the production (or indeed, any production of *PL*) offers a new approach and method in order to gain further insight into the epic. Despite the fact that many artistic liberties were taken in creating a play production from *PL*, it, never the less, can, in itself, be seen as a form of *reading* of the poem. However, due to a greater element of subjectivity in the interpretation of the poem, as well as a lesser reliance on other research, this process cannot be seen as an *academic reading* in the strictest sense.

However, I will argue that such an approach can offer fresh perspective into the facets, themes and politics of the original work, which can then be applied to further research of the work, especially in the contexts of epic tradition and the public performance thereof.

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Appendix: Cast and Crew of the TEST production of *John Milton's Paradise Lost*

Crew

Director	. Aleksis Meaney
Writers	Karita Kuosmanen Aleksis Meaney Kai Rasi Timo Uotinen
Assistant Directors	. Karita Kuosmanen Timo Uotinen
Lighting Design	. Taneli Seppälä
Sound Design	. Johannes Pitkänen
Video Design	. Jani Villikka
Video Animation	.Ville Vuorela
Costume Design	. Hanne Vuorela
Make-up Design	Marika Lähdekorpi
Fight Choreography	. Timo Uotinen
Musical Direction	. Juha Sokka
Musicians	Antti Sokka Juha Sokka Lotta Kuoppala
Photography	Kimmo Koivunen
Graphic Design	. Johannes Pitkänen
Stage Manager	. Janne Haapala (ComTh)
Technical Advisor	Janne Pärnänen (ComTh)
Supervising Lecturer	David Robertson

Cast

Humanity Adam Eve	
Infernal Spirits	W ' D '
Satan/Lucifer	
Beelzebub	
Belial	
Mammon	
Moloch	
Sin	
	Mari Järvinen
Death	. Timo Uotinen
Heavenly Spirits	
The Son	Kati Nieminen
Gabriel	. Jenni Kytöharju
Michael	Aleksis Meaney
Raphael	Eeva Viljanen
Uriel	Elina Koivisto
Abdiel	. Laura Ollikainen
Ithuriel	. Terhi Jokinen
Zephon	
1	
The Serpent	. Mervi Miettinen
The Voice of God	David Robertson
	Timo Uotinen
	Karita Kuosmanen
	Jenni Rouvinen
Lords of Chaos and Ancient Night	Terhi lokinen
Lorus of Chaos and Anticut rught	Mari Järvinen
	Mervi Miettinen
	Netta Nakari
	incua inakali