**~Rituparna Ray Chaudhuri.**

**BOOK I ~**

**INVOCATION**

**(WEB)**

1. *http://www.paradiselost.org/lmg/indent.gifOf Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit*
2. *Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast*
3. *Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,*
4. *With loss of Eden, till one greater Man*
5. *Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,*
6. *Sing Heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top*
7. *Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire*
8. *That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,*
9. *In the Beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth*
10. *Rose out of Chaos: Or if Sion Hill*
11. *Delight thee more, and Siloa's Brook that flow'd*
12. *Fast by the Oracle of God; I thence*
13. *Invoke thy aid to my adventrous Song,*
14. *That with no middle flight intends to soar*
15. *Above th' Aonian Mount, while it pursues*
16. *Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhime.*
17. *And chiefly Thou O Spirit, that dost prefer*
18. *Before all Temples th' upright heart and pure,*
19. *Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first*
20. *Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread*
21. *Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss*
22. *And mad'st it pregnant: What in me is dark*
23. *Illumin, what is low raise and support;*
24. *That to the highth of this great Argument*
25. *I may assert Eternal Providence,*
26. *And justifie the wayes of God to men.*

**CRITICAL EVALUATION, *THE WAY I DO*.**

**THE MATTER IT CONTAINS**

1. **Analyse and comment on the opening of Paradise Lost, Book-I.**
2. **Milton’s Conception of Hell.**
3. **Characterisation of Satan in Paradise Lost, Book-I.**
4. **Milton’s style in Paradise Lost, Book-I.**
5. **The appropriateness and effectiveness of the Epic Similes used by Milton in Paradise Lost, Book-I.**
6. **Comment on the statement that Milton wrote no language.**
7. **Poetic Value on muster roll of devils in Book-I of Paradise Lost.**

**~*RITUPARNA RAY CHAUDHURI***

***SELF ANALYSIS***

***Milton’s Conception of Hell And Characterisation of Satan in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***Satan’s fourth speech, addressed to the fallen angels lying about in confused despair, certainly brings out the qualities of leadership in this fallen Arch-angel. The combined sarcasm and threat has its intended effect on the listeners. But of, are they still princes and potentates as Satan addresses them? However, it certainly inspires his listeners to stir themselves into action. We can admire Satan’s qualities as a leader but can one sympathise with him, knowing that all his importunities are directed towards evils?***

***The long roll-call of the devils is another use of an epic convention but, Milton associates the devils with pagan deities –at once suggesting something hateful to the Puritan reader. The description of Pandemonium as the golden ‘’straw-built citadel’’ shoes the impermanence of the gold from which Pandemonium has been built. By the end of Book I, the fallen angels have been reduced to being compared with dwarfs and pygmies and faery-elves-all associated with evil and wickedness.***

***Milton is a consummate master of English blank verse “gifted in its varied movement, and the placing of pause, majestic in its flowing cadence, stern in its beauty, lofty in its tone, incomparable in its dignity.” As Douglas Bush says, Milton’s unity is the ten-syllable line. It is essential to think of it in this way and not as iambic with many substitutions-an idea which suggests contrived mechanics rather than complete freedom and flexibility. In Milton’s blank verse the ten syllables are commonly grouped in pairs, which are most often iambs, but the lines contain any number of stresses from three to eight and these may differ in degree and in position. The pause falls most often in the middle, but it is continually varied. It may come even after the first syllable as in “...But not to me returns/Day, or the sweet approach of ev’n or morn.”***

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[***Gustave Doré***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustave_Dor%C3%A9)***, The Heavenly Hosts, c. 1866, illustration to Paradise Lost. (WEB)***

***Ambition and humility are mixed in the sense and movement of the verse. The self-confidence of stating that he is attempting something as yet unattempted is mixed with an appeal. It is also a poignant reference to his terrible limitation as a poet his blindness. It balances the tone between modesty and self-confidence till the verse soars to the ‘’impressive’’ conclusion of the opening statement: “And justify the ways of God to men.’’***

***Milton belongs to both Renaissance and Reformation. All through his times, there was another influence also-the medieval thought and philosophy which had not yet completely lost sway in spite of “new learning” brought in by Renaissance. The three strains of attitude were more or less in conflict with one another. The Renaissance glorified the classical Greeks and Roman civilizations and praised the potential of man and individuality. The Reformation, which can be identified with the growth of Puritanism, considered the ancient Greeks to be pagans and hence associated with the Devil. To the puritan mind culture it was suspicious, for it associated art and culture with the Roman Catholic Church which was consider degenerate. The Puritan would appreciate integrity and honesty but his outlook regarding beauty was necessarily narrow and unwholesome. The Medieval strain was in conflict with the new leaning. Its cosmology and theology were different from later development. In Milton’s poetry, the three conflicting strains blend into harmony. The moral and religious influence of Puritanism combines with the generous culture of the Renaissance.***

***Paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes are comparatively more autobiographical element in Paradise Lost. Still, there is a conspicuous autobiographical element in Paradise Lost. All the twelve books have an autobiographical element in them. In Book-I itself several aspects of Milton’s personality and views are implied or reflected. To Satan, the rebel arch-angel he gives his own firmness of character and unyielding pride. Milton had the spirit of a rebel who would not yield on any account. He stood for freedom and was opposed to bondage which he identified with monarchy. That is why he sided with Parliamentarians. The heroic qualities of Satan reflect Milton’s own. When Satan speaks of the mind being its own place and in itself capable of making a “Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven”, it seems to be Milton himself. Satan’s “Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven” seems to reflect Milton’s thoughts.***

***Milton’s beliefs from Paradise Lost, Book-I And Blank Verse on reference to Milton’s handling in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***Milton’s classical scholarship is obvious in Paradise Lost Book-I. He refers to various characters famous in classical mythology. But at, he identifies these characters with fallen angels in the catalogue. The catalogue reveals Milton’s contempt for the pagan creeds and deities; as a true Christian and the religion they represented was considered the work of the Devil. The catalogue of devils in Book-I of Paradise Lost implies also the evils which Milton personally detested in reality-the violence, noise and cruelty of Moloch, the lust associated with Chemos, whose temple is significantly close to that of Moloch, for lust and murder coexist, and vice itself as personified by Belial. It is Milton’s personal hatred for wealth and avarice which finds expression in the attack of Mammon who is associated with the love of gold. Milton’s denunciation of idolatry is inspired greatly by his Protestantism and rejection of what he considered to be the corruption in Roman Catholicism.***

***“...and thou, profoundest Hell***

***Receive thy new possessor, one who brings***

***A mind not to be changed by place or time***

***The mind is its own place, and in itself***

***Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.’’***

***Milton’s personal belief in the spiritual values of life makes him speak out against man’s materialism. He condemns man’s ransacking the bowels of Mother Earth to obtain gold and precious stones. His love of a simple, noble and pure life comes out in his criticism of the luxury and licentious life of the Court in the Restoration period in Lines 497-505.***

***What do you learn of Milton’s beliefs from Paradise Lost?***

***One of the convenient of the epic is the use of expanded similes, in which an event, object or person is compared extensively with something quite different. Milton uses epic similes to intensify the effect he wants to produce.***

***“He spoke; and to confirm his words, outflow***

***Millions of flaming swords, adrrawn from the thighs***

***Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze***

***Far round illumined Hell.’’***

***Paradise Lost undoubtedly reflects the personality of Milton as well as his views and feelings. “Nothing that was, Milton, nothing that happened to Milton, throughout his dreaming, passionate and disillusioning life, but is to be found in Paradise Lost.” Indeed, the epic has been considered to be a “spiritual autobiography”. While the deep-rooted egoism of Milton detracts from the “objective” nature of the work, it gives the poem a lyrical intensity and emotional continuity which cannot be condemned.***

***“Like the moon, whose orb,***

***Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views***

***At evening from the top Fesole.”***

***Paradise Lost is one of the greatest works in English poetry. The theme of the epic is lofty and also universal. It encompasses the whole vista of eternity. The poet’s imagination seems to know no limitation. Such a vast scheme had hitherto not been attempted by any writer. The character is sublime. The unique quality of Paradise Lost lies in the fact that it brings about a happy fusion of two cultures, Hebraism and Hellenism. An essentially Christian subject has been dressed in pagan robes without incongruity. Milton’s scholarship gives to Paradise Lost a place among the great classical epics of the world. Besides the dramatic quality of the first book of Paradise Lost, there are brilliant and vivid descriptions in it. Though Milton had grown blind when he composed Paradise Lost, he had not lost the faculty of mentally visualizing his scenes. The description of Hell and Pandemonium are evidence of his descriptive skills. Milton possessed splendid narrative power too. He combines description with dialogues and actions in Book-I of Paradise Lost, as Satan’s speeches rouse the angels to assemble before him. Milton’s grand imagination is revealed in the similes used in the first Book of Paradise Lost. He gives us vivid pictures of the Bottomless Pit, and of the vast Lake of Fire in which countless angels with their gigantic stature lie. The similes bring out the sense of vast space and size. In consonance with Milton’s grand imagination is the grandeur of his style; especially remarkable is his use of blank verse. All the above mentioned factors make the power and beauty of Paradise Lost inexhaustible, and one of the greatest poems in English language.***

***Milton’s Paradise Lost, though cast in objective form of an epic, has emphatic subjective overtones. Thus we get to known of Milton, his feelings, beliefs, aspiration and views by reading the poem. Kenneth Muir observes: “Milton...was not only justifying his ways to Englishmen between 1640-1660. He was telling them why they had failed to establish the good society. Why they had welcomed back the monarchy. They had failed through their own weakness, their own sin. God was not to blame.” Milton’s beliefs are best reading all the twelve books of Paradise Lost. In the last book we understand his political views, while his opinion of women comes out in picture of Eve. But even Book-I itself is enough to tell us about Milton’s beliefs –his genuine Christian piety and belief in religion and his faith in spiritual values and detestation of evil forces which are ever ready to corrupt man.***

***The first epic simile is the comparison of Satan with “Leviathan” which is expanded to seven lines. The effect is the impression not only of Satan’s huge size but also of the falseness of appearance, deception, and lack of caution of man’s part when near danger. The words “beast” and “scaly” immediately evoke the qualities of evil. “This simile not only suggests the apocalyptic sea-monster and his illusory promise but the confusing gigantism of the evil world in flux.***

***“Lay entered***

***Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks:***

***In Vallambrosa..”***

***The lines are not always of even and regular iambic beat. There are slight variations. Variety is specially introduced by the placing of the caesura or pause at different places in different lines. These pauses sometimes occur more than once in a line. The passage beginning “Nine times the space that measures day and night” shows how interestingly varied the placing of the caesura can be.***

***Milton’s beliefs from Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***The comparison of Satan’s shield to the moon as seen through Galileo’s telescope once again suggests the huge size not only of the weapon but also of the figure which holds it. The moon is not smooth; the shield of Satan, too, has patterns upon it. It brings to mind Homer’s description of the shield of Achilles in the Iliad. The simile used of Satan’s spear also emphasises his size.***

***“And all who since, Baptized or infidel***

***Jousted in As paramount or Montalban***

***Damasco or Morocco or Trebisond***

***Or whom Biserta sent from Africa shore...”***

***Milton sometimes uses an extra syllable in his line such as in “Of rebel angels, by whose aid aspiring”. At other places he loses syllables by suppressing the vowel sounds. An example is “Till, as a signal give’n th’ uplifted spear.” The vowel sounds in giv’n and th’ are suppressed. The technique, known as elision, is used quite often by Milton.***

***“Rose like an exhalation, with the sound***

***Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet-‘’***

***In Paradise Lost, the combination of different qualities- Medieval, Renaissance and Puritan-becomes clear. The subject matter is clearly inspired by Milton’s Puritanism. But of, medieval thought is not absent. As an artist, however, he continued the Renaissance tradition. In the description of Hell in Book-I of the epic, medieval influences are clearly traceable. The scholastic mode argument is also evident.***

***The clergy too is criticised for becoming atheistic “as did Eli’s sons, who filled with lust and violence the house of God.” Milton’s criticism is prompted by his personal views and feelings. Milton personal circumstances are also evident in the poem. At the very beginning there is a poignant reference to his blindness “...what in me is dark/ Illumine...” he says to the heavenly Muse. When he compares the fallen angels with the “autumnal leaves that strow the brooks/In Vallombrosa”, the image may be derived from what he had actually seen on a visit to Vallombrosa, a valley in Italy.***

***Milton’s use of the epic similes is not decorative, but functional. Even as they add variety and human interest to the poem, they answer the demands of the narrative. They are “picturing of the actions, ideas, and sentiments.”***

***The particular appeal of Paradise Lost lies in the blend of the Hebraic theme and Hellenic treatment. If it had been written from a totally puritan point of view with all its hatred of the world, it would have failed as poetry. The puritanical (or Hebraic) and humanist (Renaissance or Hellenic) elements have been blended. Indeed, in Milton’s poetry the ideals of the Renaissance and Puritanism are equal passions.***

***A note on the use of classical mythology in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***Milton is praised for the music, architectonic quality, variety and pauses in his verse. He has strengthened blank verse without cramping it. He has given it grace without making it vapid. He has rounded off with finished care the single line without sacrificing the organic unity of the entire poem.***

***Blank verse is composed of lines each of which has ten syllables. Generally it is iambic pentameter without rhymes. Critics have termed it unrhymed heroic verse. In his Preface, Milton tells us that meter used by him is “English heroic verse without rhyme”-“heroic” referring to the iambic line of ten syllables. Generally the second syllable of each of the five feet in the line is accented-such as in “And justify the ways of God to men”, or “United thoughts and counsel, equal hope”. Blank verse is suitable for the exalted theme. “He needed and he achieved the large and infinitely varied freedom of the verse paragraph which only blank verse allows”, as Saintsbury points out.***

***Salient features of ‘’grand style’’ as found in Paradise Lost Book-I.***

***The opening sentence of Paradise Lost has sixteen lines. It is an example of what Milton refers to as “the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another.” The technique is also called “enjambment”. In Paradise Lost Milton had full scope for his ‘’planetary wheelings’’. It is because the sense is sustained through line after line, and because Milton takes pain to avoid coincidence of the rhetorical pauses with the end of the line, that we have the continuity of rhythm which is so characteristic a feature of blank verse. Thus in Paradise Lost, we are aware more of paragraph than of individual lines. This is mainly because the strong pauses occur within the line. In Book-I, L.241-253 we notice how full stops, exclamation marks and question marks occur in the middle of the lines.***

***While ten-syllable line remains in our ears a norm, there is another system comprising the irregular rhythmic units that flow from one caesura to another. And so we have the combined pleasure of recurrence and surprise manipulated by a supreme artist. And all these effects contribute to the sense of what is being said. In general, Milton compels a reading much more rapid than most blank allows. Eliot has said that Milton’s verse is never monotonous; its strength and intricate refinements every reader must experience for himself.***

***Can Satan be a sympathetic character?***

***The angels who fell with Satan listed in Lines 381-521 of Paradise Lost, Book-I. The names which Milton gives them are taken from classical myths. The chief of them were most wicked. They are associated with idol worship. When Satan calls them up, they all assemble on the plain of solid fire. They arrange themselves in orderly phalanxes and await their commander’s orders. The flag is unfurled, and there is music and deafening shouts of joy of the angelic warriors.***

***About the music of Milton’s verse there can be no two options. The swing and the movement of his verse are swayed by the movement of the thought in a way that can be felt by a delicate ear better than it can be described. “His rhythms are so much a part of his total effect, indeed of his very meaning, that he has to be read aloud.” It has been remarked: “He is like a great organist who, while never losing sight of ancient melody, adorns it with every conceivable variation which serve to show up in place of obscuring , the freshness and sweetness of the simple theme.”***

***Theme and Intention in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***The stress on syllables also has variation. Sometimes Milton stresses both the fourth and the sixth syllables. Milton even uses rhyme sometimes as one of the devices to ensure that the blank verse sounds like verse. Frequently, rhymes on alternating lines occur-entire and ire in L.1.146-148 or pledge and edge in L.1.274-276. There are also lines with rhyming words occurring at the caesura as the words bee and sea in L.1.207-208.***

***Dr. Johnson called attention to the peculiarity of Milton’s diction, saying that “it is so far removed from common use that an unlearned reader, when he first opens the book finds himself surprised by a new language”, “Our language”, Addison had said before, “sunk under him”. Milton’s is a personal style, which T. S. Eliot points out, is not based upon common speech or common prose, or direct communication of meaning. It violates the accepted rules of English grammars and syntax, so much so that Dr. Johnson said that he “wrote no language”. Milton had a preference for the unusual and recondite in vocabulary and construction, which led him to archaism on the one hand and to the substitution of foreign idiom particularly Latin, for English idiom on the other.***

***Illustration of speeches on Satan in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***Milton used Latinisms, but one tends to forget that the seventeenth century reader was quite conversant with Latin and understood the implied Latin sense. It goes without saying, in any case, that Milton’s style is not a “popular’’ one. It is a highly intellectual and scholarly style meant for scholars. We also notice that the sonorous Latin words are often accompanied by simple native words-“sciential sap’’, ‘’dark illumitable ocean’’, etc. This mingling of native and Latin words, resulting in the interplay of monosyllabic and polysyllabic words, gives an effective rhythm to the language.***

***Paradise Lost undoubtedly the greatest poem in English Language.***

***Some of the characteristics of Miltonic style (which are at variance with the English literary usage) are mentioned: Inversion of the natural order of words and phrases, often with relative clauses “Of Man’s first disobedience, and the fruit/ Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste/\* \* \*/Sing, Heavenly Muse...” Inversion of adjective as in ‘’dungeon horrible’’ is also common. Omission of words: E.g. the verb is omitted in “cruel his eyes”, pronoun is omitted in ‘’as whom the fable name’’, and preposition is left out in ‘’fallen such a perilous highth’’. Use of Parenthesis: “Their song was partial, but the harmony/ (What could it less, when Spirit immortal sing?)/Suspended hell... Use of one part of speech for another: Such as verb as noun in ‘’the great Consult began’’: adjective as noun, ‘’the papable obscure’’, ‘’for who whose rebellious’’ and noun for adjective –‘’their dread Commander’’. Unusual compound epithets: As in ‘’Heaven –banished host’’, ‘’night- foundered skiff’’, ‘’bullion-dross’’. Archaism and Latinism in vocabulary: Such as ‘’emprise’’ for ‘’enterprise’’. Many words are used in their original Latin sense: “Afflicted’’ is used to mean ‘’struck down’’ in L.186 ‘’incumbent’’ to mean ‘’leaning’’ in L.226, ‘’virtue’’ is used in the sense of ‘’valour’’ in L.320. All these characteristics may be found in English literature before Milton, but in Milton they become habitual features of style.***

***In Milton’s poetry more is meant than meets the ear. He means more than what he says. As the poet’s difficulty throughout the poem is to describe what cannot be exactly described- Heaven, Chaos, Hell, God, Angels, Devils-he throws out a broad hint or two of their intended shapes and appearance and asks the reader to imagine the rest. Thus Satan’s huge figure, which nobody can have an idea of, is described with a few suggestive strokes; “head uplift above the wave’’, ‘’eyes that sparkling blazed’’, and other parts in bulk as large ‘’As whom the fables name of monstrous size’’. No further details are, or could be given for it, could have made this infinite figure finite. And yet the picture impresses itself upon the mind as if it had been seen. Milton uses the images of a tower, an archangel, the sun rising through mists or in an eclipse, the ruin of monarchs, and the revolution of kingdoms to conjure up the description of Satan. All the other pictures in the poem are similarly suggested.***

***The language of Paradise Lost is that of a scholar writing for scholars. A beautiful illustration of the poet’s fondness for allusions is provided by his descriotion of Satan forces, which dwarfed the mightiest armies known to history or legend: “the giant brood’’ mentioned by Hesoid: ‘’the heroic race’’ that fought at Thebes and Troy, mentioned by Homer; the knights of King Arthur, mentioned by Geoffrey of Monmouth; the Crusaders who fought the Saracens, mentioned in history; and the warriors of Charlemagne, mentioned in Italian epics. “The whole treasury of poetry and the whole storehouse of learning are at his command. He assumes that they are also at the command of his reader and accordingly he loads every drift of his verse with the ore of myth and legend, historical, literary, and scientific fact. Of no other English style is erudition, so integral a part. Classical and Biblical are, of course, the most abundant.’’***

***But of, in his commentaries on Satan, we get the other side of Milton’s character-his Christian loathing for the arch-fiend. His piety finds expression in the very first lines of the poem. He invokes a Muse in classical tradition, but it is the Heavenly Muse he appeals to. It is the spirit who prefers the upright and pure heart to all the temples. His personal veneration of the Bible also finds expression in the poem.***

***The Latinised constructions and inversion of word-order become devices for attaining in English something of the effect of the loaded line of Latin verse, which is a legitimate aim in a poem that deliberately emulates Virgil, as B.A. Wright observes. Furthermore, despite these devices, it is not true that Milton’s language is not based on common English of the educated man of his time. Douglas Bush has correctly observed: “For all bold and cunning pressures Milton exerts upon language, in its total effect; his style is one of grand simplicity; it is only after rapidly assimilating the large cinematic impressions that we study the subtle details. “Specially in the scenes between Adam and Eve after the fall, his language becomes very simple.”***

***“The mind is its own place, and in itself***

***Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.’’***

***Argument lies in the fact Milton has unconsciously glorified the character of Satan.***

***Suggestiveness is but a part of Milton’s other habit, conciseness. He is master of what Raleigh calls, ‘’the packed line’’, which, in his words again, ‘’is our nearest native counterpart to the force and reserve of the high Virgilian diction.’’ Each word and phrase is loaded with full weight of meaning. ‘’Every word is of value. There is no mortal between the stones, each is held in place by the weight of the others, and helps to uphold the building.’’ There lies of the mightiest army one can imagine rendered in less than six lines. ‘’ Serried shields in thick array/ Of depth immeasurable’’-the description applies equally to Milton’s closely packed line, the depth of which is the depth of its meaning.***

***It is significant that Eliot modified his earlier views when he wrote: “I repeat that remoteness of Milton’s verse from ordinary speech, his invention of his own poetic language, seems to me one of the marks of his greatness.”***

***A striking feature in Paradise Lost is Milton’s use of similes. These similes are expanded to draw complete pictures. They add dignity to the narrative, and do not merely illustrate it.***

***The subject matter of the poem-the Biblical account of God, angels, the Fall of Man and justifying the ways of God to men-was wholly believed in by Milton and puritan Englishmen of his time. But at, people today reject the theology of Paradise Lost; they will reject it more as the centuries pass. However, ‘’what has made the poem live is not the story but the incomparable elevation of the style, the shaping spirit of imagination and the mere majesty of the music’’, as Verity observes. A great style is difficult to define but its outstanding qualities are sublimity of thought as well as expression-compression.***

***Milton’s beliefs from Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***The lofty tone is maintained in the speeches of Satan, as for instance in the speech to Beelzebub. One cannot help nothing the rhetorical eloquence with which Satan encourages the fallen angels. The theme of Paradise Lost is great-Fall of Man. Milton maintains a constant elevation and dignity of style corresponding to the greatness of theme. As Milton puts it in his blank verse he is ever observant of ‘’apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another’’ and the result is the ‘’grand style’’ in which he studies the balance of music and sense the suggestiveness of phrases and epithets, the aptness of imagery, the loftiness of thought and reflection.***

***All the above discussion leads to the most marked characteristic of his style-its loftiness of tone. The tone is the cumulative effect of the above mentioned factors, his use of his own words, and his own order of words, which often runs counter to the accepted English practice. In the very first six lines of the poem we have an illustration of the complex involved sentence giving the effect of what Eliot calls ‘’the breathless leap’’. The lines are sonorous and dignified. The sentence departs from the natural order and has several dependent elements, ending after thirty-eight words, with a verb. The word order quite literally encompasses a sublime and vast theme. The technique is called ‘’suspension’’. This brings us to the structure of his phrase and sentence. It is not the usual one. He arranges his words in his own way to gain the maximum effect. ‘’You cannot guess the adjective from the substantive, nor the end of the phrase from its beginning. He is much given to inverting the natural English order of epithet and noun, that he may gain a greater emphasis for the epithet.’’ His most common practice, for instance, is to place a noun between its two qualifying adjective, though the English idiom requires both to be placed before the noun: “the upright heart and pure’’,, ‘’the dismal situation waste and wild’’, ‘’ever burning sulphur unconsumed’’. Sometimes, he prefers the Latin idiom to the English , as in: “Never, since created man/ Met such embodied force,”...where ‘since’ a preposition of time, is made to govern a noun, ‘Man’, that has nothing to do with time. But at, here as in Latin the past participate ‘created’ and the noun ’Man’ both combined, mean an event-the creation of man, and the preposition ‘since’, governs this event. Sometimes the number of syllables or the order of accents is altered to gain an aesthetic effect. Sometimes a whole catalogue of proper names is given to surprise the mind by their strangeness and delight the ear by their musical arrangement: “And all who since, baptized or infidel/ Jousted in Aspramount, or Montalban,/ Damasc, or Marocco, or Trebisond”..***

***The weight of the caesura varies like its position. If we study the opening lines of Paradise Lost for stressed and unstressed syllable, we get an idea of Milton’s variety in the use of blank verse. Here only one line is a regular iambic, and its movement carries an effect of irrevocable finality, an effect felt likewise in “and all our woe”. In the first line and the beginning of the third, the grouping of strong stresses accentuates the thematic idea. In the line four of feminine caesura heightens the idea of something gone wrong, while the phrases that follow are mostly in the rising rhythm of reassurance we read the weighted words slowly and slide quickly over the rest.***

***“What though the field be lost?***

***All is not lost-the unconquerable will,***

***And study of revenge, immoral hate,***

***And courage never to submit or yield,***

***And what is else not to be overcome?”***

***Dr. Leavis seems to imply that the sound of the verse in Milton’s poetry has no relation to the sense. But at, says Kenneth Muir, if we abandoned the attempt to transform Milton into a dramatic poet, we shall find the sense and rhythm are perfectly matched. There is little justification for Eliot’s complaint that we cannot attend to meaning and sound at the same time.***

***Milton describes the chief figure- Moloch, Baalim, Ashtroth, Thammuz, Dagon, Rimmon, Belial. The entire scene of the muster of the angelic warriors has immense poetic beauty. Of all the scenes in the Book of Paradise Lost this one is the most dramatic. The plain of solid fire is the vast stage on which the mighty drama of military drill and oration is enacted. Besides, the entire scene is exquisitely vivid and realistic. In this portrayal of the muster scene of devils, Milton must have been helped by his memory of the Civil War and the muster of Cromwell’s army.***

***The Hebraic and Hellenistic forces blend harmoniously in Milton’s Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***One may call all this ‘’activity’’. But of, all the frantic activity is merely a facade to hide the utter despair and hopelessness of fallen angels. Beelzebub acknowledges the defeat, but Satan cannot. However, his words bear ‘’Semblance of worth, not substance.’’ Satan contemplates the fiery wilderness but rises valiantly to try and overcome despair. He hails the ‘’infernal world’’ and declares that the ‘’mind is its own place’’ and can in itself ‘’make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven’’. He speaks to his fellow fallen angels not to languish and despair but to resolve upon war. His words evoke the response of flashing sword and shields sounding the ‘’din of war’’, all hurling defiance towards the ‘’vault of heaven’’. So they go on to build Pandemonium, the capital of Hell.***

***Milton presents the abstract as concrete. He uses striking images drawn from different sources to focus our attention on fire. Terms such as ‘’dry land’’, ‘’burning lake’’, ‘’gate’’ etc. Contribute to the technique of making the abstract into concrete. ~The place is compared to a volcano. The ‘’torrid clime vaulted with fire’’ naturally produced intense heat. The dry land is solid fire just as the lake is of liquid fire.***

***The scene of the muster of the rebel angels suggests almost the infinite power of the devils, and by implication still greater power of the Almighty. It also suggests the immense strength of Satan’s character, his quality of leadership and his power of organisation. By identifying the followers of Satan with the divinities of Pagan Mythology, Milton reveals his close and detailed knowledge of the gods and religious rituals of the pagan.***

***The appropriateness and effectiveness of the Epic Similes used by Milton in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***Lastly, Milton refers to the Greek legend of Vulcan’s fall from Heaven in talking of Mulciber in Lines 738-46. Mulciber of Vulcan was the son of Jupiter and Juno. His father kicked him down from Olympus when he attempted to free his mother who had been fastened by a golden chain for her insolence. He took nine days to come from heaven to earth. He fell in the island of Lemnos, where the inhabitants, seeing him in the air, caught him in their arms. He, however, broke his leg by the fall, and even after remained the lame of one foot. He fixed his residence in Lemnos, where he built himself a palace and raised forges to work metals.***

***Characterisation of Satan in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***In the Catalogue of Devils, Milton shows his love of high sounding names which also show his classical knowledge. Further more, the bad angels are given a concrete quality-each standing for some evil that afflicts man such as deceit, greed, violence, cruelty, lust, etc. It is Milton’s puritanical zeal which is seen in the strong terms of condemnation.***

***Milton in his description of Hell in Lines 59-75 makes use of the medieval notion- that Hell, being a place where the damned are deprived of the sight of God (who is light), is a place of sorrowful darkness. The Old Testament description of the land of the dead is also recalled ‘’where the light is as darkness’’. Hell is a place for removed from the light of Heaven, and the difference between the two places is clearly suggested. The greatest punishment is to be deprived of the beatific vision, and to be immersed in eternal despair.***

***Milton’ uses a series of similes for the fallen angels to suggest their vast numbers and the sense of confusion in which they lie and their lost glory. Thus they are first compared to autumnal leaves strewing the brooks. They have lost their freshness and their brightness. The comparisons with the forces of Pharaoh and with the locusts called up by Moses have appropriateness in the Christian theme’s context. They suggest the association of the fallen angels with barbarians once again emphasizes their destructive quality, as well as a sense of relentless advance. In the roll-call of the devils, Milton identifies them with pagan deities. The classical tales lose none of their seductive beauty in Milton’s hand, but he uses them at the same time to suggest the hatefulness of the devils. The simile of Mulciber being thrown out of Heaven, a transposed description really focuses in one memorable vision all the previous identifications of the fallen angels with the pagan deities. The angels are compared to bees to suggest the thickly swarming ‘’mass-insect” quality of the angels. Finally they are reduced to being compared with dwarfs, faery-elves and pygmies. These comparisons serve to emphasize the fallen angels’ wickedness.***

***Milton compares the fiery land with the bottom of the burning Pelorus or Etna which is torn from its base by a violent underground wind and, on catching fire, converts solid minerals into vapour and blown off rocks. What is left is a burnt surface at the bottom, all wrapped up in smoke and foul smell. Classical myth indeed is interwoven into the descriptive passages of Paradise Lost. But of, the classical influence has been used by Milton in a creative manner. The classical myth is used in subtle fusion with the Hebraic and the puritan element in the poem. Milton, however, does not make Hell formless, even though he does not indicate its size or degree of heat. Sea and land exist and from its soil the precious metals are refined which go into the construction of Pandemonium. It gives the atmosphere of busy planning, ‘of life as nearly as lively as ever, of energies unquenched” says Waldock.***

***Blank Verse on reference to Milton’s handling in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***Satan’s expression of sympathy with his followers for their plight, his flattery combined with threats, propaganda mixed with lies are the characteristic of the demagogue. Crowds, indeed whole nations were swayed by fascist demagogues in the twentieth century. The speeches of Satan are calculated to impress and it is not surprising that he impresses even the readers of the poem. He has the popular leader’s clever skill to make up striking slogans, such as “Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven’’. In all his crucial speeches, he makes use of rhetoric, irony, taunt, even threat, which are characteristics of world famous speeches. Satan’s initiative and bold endeavour to explore the territory is also characteristics of a leader. Milton’s Hell is described partly as the reader might see it, and partly through Satan’s eye. The objective and subjective torments of Hell are thus mingled. We view Hell and also experience it from the point of view of Satan who is to dwell in it forever. That Hell is a place of confusion contradiction is brought out by the description-it is a place where fire exists without light and darkness is almost tangible and this darkness itself reveals the sight of misery.***

***There is no doubt that Milton has created a powerful figure in Satan. In Book-I of Paradise Lost, we cannot doubt his courage, self confidence, and determination. From the moment that he breaks the ‘’horrid silence’’ with his bold words to Beelzebub, Satan impresses us as being an inherent leader. He exhibits all the characteristic of a political leader. The speeches of Satan addressed to the fallen angels have striking similarity to the rhetoric of a modern demagogue-a popular political agitator, a factious orator who appeals to the emotions and prejudice of the masses in order to win them over and so gain power. He is a powerful speaker, about to win over his hearers and inspire them. The fallen angels are roused form their stupefaction. They are electrified with fresh courage. The hopelessness of Hell is an important feature to note. Man can bear suffering and pain partly because of the hope that it will end sometime. What is more important, complete hopelessness indicates an inner disintegration. But of, the fallen angels have brought Hell upon themselves. ‘’The devils like fallen men, are caught in a recalcitrant and dangerous world of their own making; having tried to burst Heaven, they find themselves domiciled in a volcano’’. And they have to face it for eternity.***

***Illustration of speeches on Satan in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***However, “while Milton’s highly sophisticated art can be most fully appreciated by those who know Greek and Latin poetry, he is more accessible to any intelligent and educated reader than a multitude of less learned and more fashionable poets, “One cannot deny that Paradise Lost is a poem for scholarly readers. But to say that he ‘wrote no language’ is evidence of critical blindness to the beauty of style and the comments is all more surprising as it comes from the erudite critic such as Dr. Johnson. One cannot say Milton ‘’renounced’’ the English language, or even ‘’corrupted’’ it. Varying the usage of words and syntax, he evolved a language at once supple and delicate. Milton was, indeed, the first writer to commit what Eliot terms “every distortion of construction, the foreign idiom, and the use of a word from which it is derived, than the accepted meaning in English.’’ But in the context of his grand theme and purpose, his readers, and his age, these ‘’faults’’ do not appear as faults but as essential devices.” While describing the various evil gods, who in reality, were fallen angels, Milton also mentions the gods of ancient Greece, or the Ionian gods in Lines, 508-521. There is a reference in these lines to the gods of classical mythology, Saturn and Jove. Saturn was a Latin divinity whom the Romans identified with the Greek God Kronos. He obtained his father’s kingdom by the consent of his brother Titan. Afterwards, he was dethroned by his son Jove or Jupiter, and he fled for safety into Italy. Milton also refers in these lines to the Lympian Gods whose abode was not as high as the Heaven of the Christians. The gods living on Mount Olympus were worshipped throughout ancient Greece.***

***Milton’s hell is a place of discords-where the angels move in silence to soft pipe that charms their painful step over the burnt soil. Its hollow deep resounds with jarring sounds. Milton’s graphic description has overwhelming effect. It serves Milton’s purpose of indicating the eternal torments of the fallen angels. It is a hopeless dungeon where all activity is inspired by the aim of warring against Omnipotence. Such an aim vitiates any ‘’meaningfulness’’ in activity. Satan’s speeches in Book-I of Milton’s Paradise Lost have the sound of impressive heroism-so much so that some critics have declared him to be the hero of the epic. Nothing could have been farther from Milton’s intention. The tendency to cast Satan as epic hero arises from a basic misinterpretation of his speeches. Milton’s commentaries on the Arch-rebel are plain enough in his condemnation and, if we analyse Satan’s speeches carefully, we are impressed by Satan as the personification of evil and empty pride. The picture that emerges is not sympathise.***

***Can Satan be a sympathetic character?***

***Milton was a profound scholar of classical literature and in Book-I of Paradise Lost he makes impel use of classical mythology. He begins the poem with an invocation to the ‘’Heavenly Muse’’. Now the ‘’Muses’’ in Greek Mythology are goddesses who par side over poetry, music and dancing and all the liberal arts. They are daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne and are nine in number. A few lines later Milton mentions Olympus. The ancient Greek thought that it touched the heavens with its top, and, from that circumstance, they placed the residence of the Gods there and made it the court of Jupiter. Next, Milton compares Satan to one of the Earth-born Titans. In Lines 198-200, he says that Satan looked Titanic. In these lines there is a reference to Titans, Jove, Briareous and Typhon. Jove or Jupiter is the most powerful of all the gods in ancient Greek and Roman myth. The wars of the Titans against the gods are celebrated subjects in classical myth. Typhon is another fierce giant in Greek Mythology.***

***Poetic Value on muster roll of devils in Book-I of Paradise Lost.***

***Satan’s third speech is one of most famous. Being, perhaps, the most inspiring one, it influences readers to look at Satan with sympathy. Satan’s heroic qualities are broadened and given further dimensions by his love of freedom and abhorrence of slavery. His reference to a mind being its own place capable of making a Heaven of Hell and a Hell of Heaven reflect philosophical nobility which seems to be Milton’s own quality. But in, the speech has plenty of contradictions and absurdities which leave no doubt in the reader about Milton’s intentions. Satan’s declaration-‘’Here at least we shall be free...Here we may reign secure.’’ reaction to the region, soil and clime to which he and his colleagues have been driven. He talks of being ‘’still the same’’- equal to God in everything except the store of thunder which God possesses. The speech gains in ‘’seeming’’ heroic rather than being actually so.***

***Satan’s second speech, once again addressed to Beelzebub, begins heroically- ‘’to be weak miserable, doing or suffering’’. But at, what he will choose to ‘’do’’ is evil ‘’ever to do ill our sole delight’’. All their efforts are to be directed towards confounding good- ‘’out of good still to find means of evil’’. Satan wants a mobilization of the fallen angel now that opportunity is there, because God had ‘’ recalled his ministers of vengeance and pursuit back to the gates of Heaven’’. It is an implicit admission of God’s superior strength. Satan proposes to get whatever strength he can from hope or despair. Of course, the strength of will, the determination and the courage in the face of power, which is admittedly superior, shown by Satan gives to him a heroic semblance. But of, these qualities are not separated from the moral implications. In totalty they reflect a great character becomes warped. There is much that can be admitted in this speech-courage in the face of insurmountable difficulty is always appealing. But of, there is also something absurd in Satan wanting to teach God a lesson that a victory by force is only a partial victory. He implies that God’s power and authority were hollow and that God had sat secure on his throne upheld by empty tradition. He accused God of deception because He ‘’concealed’’ his true strength from the angels. In a single sentence God is accused both of displaying false strength and of false concealing strength. If Satan knows God’s strength and will not provoke war, what is the whole speech leading to? Thus the speech of Satan is an involved piece of falseness and empty boastfulness. They are high words that bore ‘’Semblance worth, not substance...’’***

***It is doubtful if any one sympathises with Satan. One may admire some of his qualities in isolation; one may sympathise with the ‘’idea’’ of a character of potential having become warped. We may say ‘’Oh, the pity of it’’ as we note the fine rhetoric, the powerful intellect and heroic qualities being employed towards an evil course of action. But at, we do not feel ‘’sympathy’’ for the figure of Satan in his particular situation in the context of moral values.***

***Theme of the epic on context to ‘’angels’’ in revolts in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***In Paradise Lost, Milton gives a vivid and effective picture of Hell. Hell is a place of torment, evoking the quality of sinister wilderness. It is a ‘’dismal situation wastage and wild’’ as Satan realizes on surveying the place to which he has fallen. It is the ‘’infernal world’’ of horrors. The place resembles a dungeon burning like a furnace. But of, the flames give no light, or only just enough light to emphasise the darkness- ‘’darkness visible’’. The little light brings to Satan’s sight the misery, and sorrowful places where ‘’rest can never dwell’’ and hope, which comes to all beings, is totally absent. There is only never-ending torture, since there is no release from here for the fallen angels. they have fallen into a ‘’fiery gulf’’, ‘’a fiery deluge’’ fed with ‘’ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.’’ The ocean of fire spreads over an indefinite space. The place is constantly afflicted with ‘’floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire’’.***

***Comment on the statement that Milton wrote no language.***

***Milton evokes a vivid picture of the misery into which Satan and his followers have fallen. Satan has been hurled ‘head-long flaming’ from Heaven to ‘bottomless prediction’. On recovering his sense, he is tortured by the thought of ‘’lost happiness and lasting pain’’. Satan himself is fully aware of the glory he and his companions have lost. Only, ‘sights of woe’ meet his eye and it is a place where ‘peace and rest can never dwell’ and where ‘hope never comes’. The disorder of the place is evident in the fact that fame exists there without light and darkness is ‘’visible’’ only to reveal the misery. The condition in Hell are experienced by Satan to overthrow God speaks of the very high opinion Satan has of himself and his self-aggrandizement.***

***Satan certainly possesses heroic qualities in Paradise Lost, but, if Milton glorified him, it is done consciously. But of, knowingly or unknowingly, Milton is never on the side of the Devil. Satan was required to be made of heroic dimensions to make him a fitting adversary of God and to impress on the reader the dangerous potential of evil. Furthermore, if Satan had been of less than ordinary stature, the deception of the Mother of Mankind would lose its effectiveness. Above all, Milton was writing a special kind of epic-an epic of cosmic proportions which required its characters to be impressive.***

***Satan’s last speech in Book-I is once again striking. He begins his address to the fallen angels with some flattery, calling them ‘’powers matchless’’. The speech is that of a commander boosting the morale of his men after defeat in a battle. But many portions of the speech show the hypocrisy and the deliberate confusion of issues indulged in by the speaker. He claims that these ‘’Puissant legions in exile’’ hath ‘’emptied’’ Heaven, and now can easily repossess it. His explanation of their defeat having been the result of God’s concealing. His true strength merely admits Satan’s own folly of underestimating foe. He now advises a course of fraud or guile to attain what could not be attained by force. Referring to the new race of being about to be created by God, Satan says he plans to find out the truth. Meanwhile, he says, they must not think of peace-‘’ war, then war, open or understood.’’***

***Milton’s beliefs from Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***Satan’s first speech is to Beelzebub, and admits that God’s strength was greater than that of His opponents. But of, he asserts that only a battle, and not the war, has been lost. He will not repent or admit defeat but continue his defiance. The speech brings out his unconquerable will, and courage never to submit or yield, his self-confidence. On the face of it these are ‘’heroic’’ qualities. But at, these qualities are directed towards revenge and immortal hate towards God. He will wage war ‘’by force or guile’’. His claim thaty, nobody knew exactly the strength of God before the battle, is either a piece of self-deception or hypocrisy; living in Heaven would surely have made him fully aware of God’s omnipotence. In the first speech itself Satan is not fully ‘’sympathetic’’ figure.***

***It was William Blake who observed that Milton belonged to the Devil’s party without knowing it. The remark implies that Milton unconsciously glorified Satan, especially in Book-I of Paradise Lost. This point of view is typical of the Romantic spirit, and it makes Satan the real hero of Paradise Lost. The Romantics admired indomitable courage and love of freedom, both of which Satan show in plenty of Book-I of Paradise Lost. However, one cannot admire these qualities as good in themselves, ignoring the moral values connected with them in the context of the poem.***

***“War then war***

***Open or understood must be resolved”***

***Satan cannot, however, be regarded as the ‘’hero’’ of the poem merely because he is cast in the heroic mould. The courage, the determination, the philosophical statements, the love of freedom, all these qualities lose their value when the intention behind them becomes clear and it is clear not merely in Milton’s commentaries but in Satan’s very speeches. One should not be deceived by the dazzling flourishes of Satan’s rhetoric. Milton’s presentation of Satan is in no way at variance with his commentary. Satan comes out in all his vain egotism, falsehood and evil. His courage and indomitable will are directed towards evil ‘’our labour must be to pervert that end and out of good still to find means of evil’’. Satan is the negation of good. He is the perversion of an angelic nature. While this perversion is increasingly evident in the later Books of Paradise Lost, it is also very much there in Book-I. He intends the war against God to be conducted by guile, anticipating the sly and sneaky manner in which he enters the Garden of Eden to harm two beings who have done him no harm.***

***Milton’s Satan has evoked a great deal of controversy. Misreading of the character, especially in Book-I of Paradise Lost, has led people to admire Satan as an unqualified hero. But of, such a misreading fails to take into account the fact that Satan is essentially the personification of evil. He may have certain heroic qualities- determination, self-confidence, endurance, ability to support flagging wills. But at, these very qualities lose much of their grandeur when seen in the context of the intention and the circumstances that prompt these qualities to come to the force. If we admire Satan, we are endorsing the misery and suffering that he and his followers have to endure in Hell. We are also approving of his lies and deception, his propaganda against God and his egotism which prompts him to picture himself as the future ruler of Heaven. If we admire Satan, we are showing an approval of a world full of evil and falseness.***

***Theme of the epic on context to ‘’angels’’ in revolts in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***In Book-I of Paradise Lost, Milton gives to Satan a heroic stature. Indeed, the figure of Satan seems to be inspired by the spirit of the Renaissance. Satan’s love of liberty reflects the Renaissance spirit as does his keen consciousness of individualism. His determination to explore the infernal world reflects the Renaissance spirit of inquiry, daring and broadening of mind. The all-daring spirit of adventure is in Satan. It draws from his supreme intellectual powers, not from his physical strength and prowess. His own spirit remains unconquerable and he instils the same spirit in his followers. The mind that can defy all circumstances and perils reflects the new spirits of the Renaissance. It is only against the background of Renaissance culture that a character like Satan could have been conceived and executed.***

***Milton’s Conception of Hell.***

***Satan has determined to always do evil in order to negate the will of God. If God would work good out of evil. Satan would bring evil out of good. Satan’s empire obviously will be full of evil and misery, and if we admire him we are giving our consent to the creation of such an empire. The illogicality and wishful thinking mark Satan’s instigation of his followers to continue their war, knowing full well God’s power. Critics have called this ‘’courage’’ but it is a foolish courage-it can be seen as an ‘’epic parody’’, and it rests on the dubious foundations of evil. He is self deluded, and goes on to delude others as well. His claim to separate immortality from God is, in the Christian sense, a heresy.***

***Poetic Value on muster roll of devils in Book-I of Paradise Lost.***

***The grandeur that Milton bestows on Satan is the fulfilment of an artistic requirement. But of a villain is a villain however powerful he is portrayed. Even from Book-I of Paradise Lost Satan appears as the father of lies, an arch-fiend, an apostate angel, an archangel ruined. He would have been a tragic hero if he had opposed forces of evil, but ironically he is himself the author of evil. The great qualities of Satan are made futile because of his inner corruption. As B.A. Wright points out, Satan is the enemy of God and man. He must be seen as a towering genius, but we cannot forget that his genius is Satanic. “All his virtue are in fact corrupted by his situation and by the uses to which he puts his power.’’ When we read Satan’s speeches and understand their implication, we cannot endorse the opinion that Milton belonged to the Devil’s party, knowingly or unknowingly. We do not feel that the poet’s commentaries are at variance with the presentation of Satan. We realize that if Milton has ‘’glorified’’ Satan it is to make all the more poignant the idea that mere appearance is not enough and that one should not be deceived by the dazzle in which evil clothes itself.***

***What do you learn of Milton’s beliefs from Paradise Lost?***

***The theme, in the true classical epic tradition, is vast. Moreover, it is of universal significance. The theme is Biblical. Milton states it in the first line of Paradise Lost. The theme, as realized in the poetry, is full of theological and philosophical issues. Milton’s purpose is to ‘’assert Eternal Providence? And justify the ways of God to men. The theme is vast, encompassing the whole system of the intellectual world-the chaos, the creation, heaven, earth and hell. The poem is thematically valid even beyond ‘’Christian’’ interpretation, for it deals with profound morals and archetypal truths. There appears a conflict between ‘’massed polarities’’ on various levels. The moral purpose has been less sympathetically received than the theme. It has been asked whether God’s ways need to be justified. Fundamentally, there is an aversion to all didacticism in Literature. It is debatable whether Milton has succeeded in his purpose. Critics generally feel that the poem fails to answer many questions regarding Providence and justness of God’s ways.***

***They rise guiltily when Satan is sarcastic and threaten them. Milton now uses a series of similes to indicate their confusion, vast numbers and their essential evil. They are compared to locusts and barbarians. But of, they have not lost their god-like shapes. It reminds us of their glory that has been lost. Their names have been ‘’blotted out’’ from the heavenly Book of Life. Their looks are ‘downcast and damp’ but they cheer up on seeing Satan self-confident and courageous. He dispels their despair and fear.***

***The speeches of Satan more or less support the points mentioned in the given statement in the question. The very first speech of Satan has an ironical undertone while it reduces Satan’s stature. He invents a justification for the rebellion. He says that it expressed his ‘’fixed’’ mind and ‘’high disdain’’ for God. He takes pride in not repenting or changing: he associates ‘’repentance’’ with ‘’change’’. The high rhetoric of “What though the field be lost...” has a hollow ring, for the consequences are bitter and dreadful. Revenge and immortal hate are going to be his motto- and no moral standards can allow one to admire Satan for it. The propagandist comes to the fore in Satan’s trying to make out that the result of the battle was not clear. But of, it is clear enough to us, as Satan and his followers lie on the fiery lake of Hell. Indeed, Satan himself, refers later on to God as the ‘’angry victor’’, thus contradicting his earlier claim of the battle being ‘’dubious’’. The assertion that he and his forces are ‘’in arms not worse, in foresight much advanced’’ reflects a false confidence. His speeches are full of egotism. He even claims that God had feared Satan’s strength-‘’from the terror of this arm, so late doubted his empire.’’ This is sheer nonsense. Satan falsifies both the past and the present. In a foolhardy manner which only shows his obstinacy and conceit, he proposes eternal war with Omnipotent God. It speaks of an illogical mind whose wishful thinking has blinded it to reality. Milton’s commentary emphasises the hollowness of Satan’s rhetoric-Satan is “vaunting aloud but racked with deep despair.”***

***The theme of Paradise Lost is clearly stated in the opening lines. In Lines 1-26, we are told that Milton is going to deal with “Man’s first disobedience’’ and the consequences of his tasting the fruit of the forbidden tree. Milton’s purpose is to asset ‘’Eternal Providence, and justify the ways to God to men.’’ The subject is Biblical, and thus Milton considers it to be more elevated than the subjects dealt with by the classical epic writers. He invokes the Heavenly Muse to inspire him so that his poem rises above the Aonian Mount, and so that he may be successful in his undertaking, the like of which had hitherto not been attempted in prose or poetry.***

***In typical epic fashion, Milton begins the poem in the middle of the story. He begins by describing the state of the fallen angels. They have fallen from Heaven and are lying on the fiery lake of Hell. Except for Satan, the fallen angels are a miserable crow; they are in Beelzebub’s words, ‘’swallowed up in endless misery’’. They lie ‘’grovelling’’ and ‘’prostrate’’ on the fiery lake. They are ‘’abject and lost’’, full of ‘’amazement at their hideous change.’’***

***A note on the use of classical mythology in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***Milton does not pause at the verb, but sustains the flow with a relative pronoun in ‘’who first taught’’ and continuing with ‘’or... and... that’’. The theme encompasses even more than the work at hand; it includes even part of Paradise Regained i.e. the Christian scheme of redemption-‘’till one greater Man/ Restore us...’’***

***Paradise Lost undoubtedly the greatest poem in English Language And Poetic Value on muster roll of devils in Book-I of Paradise Lost.***

***In Lines 27-44, Milton talks of the prime cause of man’s fall. “Who first reduced them to that foul revolt?’’ he asks, and answers that it was ‘’the Infernal Serpent’’ Satan, driven by hate, envy and revenge, who had deceived Eve, the Mother of Mankind. Satan’s vaulting pride had instigated, him to start an ‘’impious war’’ in Heaven. Naturally failing in the attempt he was driven out of Heaven along with his followers and thrown down to ‘’bottomless perdition’’.***

***At Satan’s instigation the fallen angels get busy. Trumpets and blown, his ‘’mighty standard’’ is raised, and ten thousand banners rise into the air along with a multitude of spears. The fallen angels stand in military formation. They slowly present a picture of solidarity. Once again Milton gives a series of similes to emphasize the size, vastness and power of Satan’s forces. But of, at the same time we are not allowed to forget their diminish glory. Milton achieves this effect by comparing them to huge trees struck by lightning. Satan’s voice, resounding in the hollow deeps of Hell has, however, revived them. They raise their ‘’flaming swords’’ to conform his words. Then Milton gives the catalogue of devils, listing all the wickedness which these angels represent.***

***It is true that there are some obvious artifices and mannerisms in Milton’s style which would lead one of suppose it to be a highly artificial style. But of, it is equally obvious that these devices are not used indiscriminately. They are used as occasion demanded, depending on the needs of the narrative, subject matter and the moods. Exotic words and phrases, as Pope points out, are used by Milton more when the subject is marvellous and strange as in the scenes in Heaven and Hell.***

***The emphasis is going to be on ‘’man’’ and not on Satan. The subject is clearly a Christian one, taken from the Genesis. It is appropriate that Milton invokes a Muse who lives higher than Mount Olympus or Mount Helicon: the Heavenly Muse of Milton resides on the ‘’secret top’’ of Horeb or Sinai, sacred places associated with Moses, the shepherd-prophet-poet. Just as the classical Muse was implored to inspiure and guide the poet, the Heavenly Muse is invoked by Milton to lead him higher than the Aonian Mount. His subject is of higher order-it deals with the very history of mankind as expressed in the Bible, whereas the classic epics had for their subject merely a national hero and the fates of nations. Milton therefore hopes to transcend the classical epics. He hopes, with the aid of the Heavenly Muse, to deal with the profound problem of justifying the ways of God to men. In the first twenty-six lines, Milton has brought together and fused three strains- classical, Hebrew and Puritan. The ambitious and comprehensive nature of his task is indicated and his status established as an epic poet on a higher moral plane than the classical models.***

***It is characteristic of Milton to have begun Paradise Lost ‘’correctly’’ with an invocation to the Muse in true classical tradition. Equally characteristic is it that he Christened the Pagan literary device by replacing the Greek goddess of poetry with ‘’Urania’’ (or literally the ‘’heavenly one’’). Once again characteristically, he shifts from Urania to himself, and states that he will use his poem to carry out a supremely ambitious literary project.***

***Theme and Intention in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***The first six lines have power and sublimity-what T.S.Eliot calls the quality of ‘’a breathless leap’’. It is an example of ‘’suspension’’- the verb is delayed while the whole subject is proposed. Milton brings in all the things he is going to deal with-disobedience, death, loss of Eden, and restoration through ‘’one greater Man’’-before he brings in the verb. The technique reinforces the sense of vast design, and sets up a feeling of expectance in the reader. There is wonderful congruity between syntax and versification with ‘’Sing Heavenly Muse’’, the sense of expectation raised in the reader is beautifully satisfied. There seems to be a release of energy and tension. The momentum gained by this release of energy is enough to carry forward the sentence smoothly for a further ten lines.***

***Comment on the statement that Milton wrote no language.***

***There is a sense of unreality about satan’s words; for it is not better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven. The speeches of Satan shows a combination of vanity, self deception, whistling in the dark, and rabble -rousing. Satan addresses his followers as “Princes, Potentates...the flowers of Heaven’’-which is absurd when we note that these Princes ans warriors are lying abject and lost, amazed at their ‘’hideous change’’. Satan makes a war-like speech flattering his followers and deliberately justifying their defeat to boost their morale. Once again we are conscious of the underlying absurdities. Satan says that God had clearly hidden his power, but that merely indicates Satan’s under-estimation of a foe. The propagandist speaks when Satan declares that the expulsion of the fallen angels had ‘’emptied Heaven’’. There is wishful thinking when he declares that Heaven can be repossessed by the fallen angels; God being omnipotent. Satan’s works are meaningless. He indulges in casuistry by trying to put the blame of their fall of God’s cunning. In the same breath he says that they will not provoke war and that they will declare war. Satan reveals himself in Book-I of Paradise Lost itself as a cunning, malicious, and evil being, all the more dangerous because his ;lies are couched in deceptive rhetoric and his false propaganda spring from a powerful intellect. To admire him is, indeed, to give a vote for the world of misery he is capable of creating.***

***The prologue to Paradise Lost states the subject and pleads for divine guidance. The style of the prologue in its striking imaginative power and its verse music performs another vital function. These twenty six lines are constructed to give rise to the feeling that some supremely important thing is about to begin. It is important that such feeling be given at the very beginning, for then the poet will have full control over the reader for the rest of Book-I. If this is Milton’s object, he succeeds completely. There are reasons for the success. The lines are long and have heavy monosyllabic endings. There is the direct suggestion of deep spiritual preparation at two points-“O spirit who dost prefer’’ and ‘’What in me is dark’’. These suggestions of great beginnings are reinforced by an allusion to the creation of the world itself (Dove-like sat’st brooding) and then by images of rising and lifting (soar, raise and support, highth of this argument). Then there is the reference to ‘’one greater man’’. All this makes the reader feel that he is about to read an epic that spans the whole of the history.***

***Analyse and comment on the opening of Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***In language whose assured eloquence testifies to the intensity with which he is beginning to create, Milton leads up to the climax of the invocation-that his purpose is momentous, being no less than to assert eternal Providence, ‘’And justify the ways of God to men’’.***

***“High on a throne of royal state, which far***

***Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,***

***Or where the gorgorgeous East with richest hand***

***Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold***

***Satan exalted sat.”***

***The Hebraic and Hellenistic forces blend harmoniously in Milton’s Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***Milton follows the classical models not only in form and conventions. He uses a grammatical structure which is typically Latinate. The first sentence, for instance, goes on until line 6 before the construction becomes clear with the verb ‘’Sing’’. As Mathew Arnold puts it, Milton is ‘’so resolute not to let it (the sentence) escape him till he has crowded into it all he can that it is not till the thirty-ninth word in the sentence that he will give us the key to it, the words of action, the verb.’’***

***The fallen angels are huge in number. But on, the impression of their strength and dignity is slowly eroded by the end of Book-I. Towards the end we are told how, in order to accommodate all of them in Pandemonium, these angels reduce themselves to the smallest size. Now they look like dwarfs, or a multitude of faery elves, or swarm of bees. Thus there is created an impression of the ridiculous. The impression of their grandeur is short-lived, and their activity is exposed for the evil intentions prompting it.***

***Satan claims that he is equal to God in the faculty of reason, but admits his inferiority in respect of force. He tries to gloss over the fall of Hell by saying that the mind is capable of making a Heaven of Hell. It only means that he will carry Hell wherever he goes. He grandly declares: “Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.’’ The self-importance obvious-so long as Satan can be king-figure it does not matter what he rules over. It is absurd to think of freedom in such a dreadful place for freedom loses its meaning, yet Satan deludes his followers with “Here at lest we shall be free.’’***

***Theme and Intention in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***The style of Paradise Lost has all the grandeur which the epic poem demands. Milton is the ‘’mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies’’. The march of the poetic lines resembles the ocean waves with their sonority, and grandeur. The meaning of the words, the syntax, the division of sentences, constantly remind there scholarly reader of classical writers. The opening sentence, the first line of Satan’s speech on looking at his surroundings, his words to Beelzebub, and the description of Satan’s shield and spear-all these reflect Milton’s grand style.***

***“...Heaven opened wide***

***Her ever-during gates, harmonious sounds***

***On golden hinges moving.”***

***Milton uses devices perfectly suited to sustain the flow of the passage. Its beginning is emphatic, simple but suggestive of amplitude. “The sense is then developed, extended, modified, qualified, reconsidered in a great variety of ways, by the subordination of clauses and the adroit use of conjunctions, prepositions and relative pronouns-‘’ and, whose, with, till.’’ Normal English word-order is reversed so that the object of the opening sentence may be placed at the very beginning-thus the theme of the poem, which is the object of the sentence, get an important place. When the first verb of the sentence comes, it rings out with tremendous emphasis-“Sing Heavenly Muse’’.***

***“...for never since created man***

***Met such embodied force, as named these...”***

***Milton borrows some similes from classical sources and adapts them to his own use. Homer and Virgil often used comparisons of trees to indicate the stature or the fall of heroes. Milton uses the striking similes of forest oaks or mountains pines struck by lightning to convey the withered glory of the fallen angels. Another borrowed simile is that of the swarm of bees in spring time. Milton adapts it specially to suit the situation of the fallen angels. it not only suggests the rustling murmur of a large crowd, but also their having come to discuss ‘’state affairs’’. It is to be noticed that the simile emphasizes not the industry of the fallen angels, but rather the ‘’mass-insect’’ quality.***

***The climax, one notes, is simple in its grandeur. The placing of the pauses, the rise and fall of the emotion, the high emotional charge in which the poet’s sense of dedication and of communion with the great Biblical figures of the Old Testament is communicated, the request with a humble cadence of the appeal to have his darkness illumined and his mind elevated, and the final powerful simplicity of the concluding statement of his purpose-all this represents poetic art of a high order. Milton is going to write about the fall of Man and the first act in this epic is the fall of Satan who takes his revenge of God by deceiving man into folly and evil. In Lines 27-44, the poet prays to the Heavenly Muse to first help him to write of that infernal ‘’Serpent’’ whose guile caused the fall of Man. Book-I naturally goes on to deal with the fallen angels.***

***Blank Verse on reference to Milton’s handling in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***Milton begins with the classical convention of invocation to the Muse but the appeal, though classical in form, is really addressed to the Holy Spirit for divine inspiration. Milton’s Muse doesnot dwell on Mount Olympus. The significance of the epic convention here lies in Milton’s choice of the power to be addressed. Indeed, he uses the classical poetic device to speak for the superiority of the Heavenly.***

***In Paradise Lost Milton has created a Christian epic on classical lines. As an epic, it involves the basic conventions of the classical epic. But of, these conventions and devices are given new meaning by Milton within scope of Christian theology. As such the supernatural machinery, the roll-call and council of leaders, the plunge into the middle of the subject, and the unfolding of the future events are epic devices not just used by Milton; these devices are recreated in a functional way-to give point or illustrate and elaborate the Christian theme. The revolt of the angels, thus, has echoes of the wars of giants and the Titans of classical mythology. The entirely of action and vastness of scope demanded by classical epic convention is fulfilled by Paradise Lost- it encompasses the universe as conceived by Christian theology. Its action ‘’contrived in Hell, executed upon Earth, and punished in Heaven.’’***

***Muse, for she will inspire him to poetic heights greater than the Aonian Mount which represents classical poetry. Milton’s Muse inspired Moses on Sinai and on Oreb; thus, Milton associates himself with Moses as a shepherd-prophet-poet. Furthermore, the invocation in Milton’s case is not mere form; it is the expression of an actual feeling in Milton that he was divinely inspired in his task of justifying the ways of God to men. Milton goes beyond invoking the Heavenly Muse; he emphasises the creative aspect of his Muse. After the invocation comes the statement of the epic’s subject in true classical style.***

***Blank Verse on reference to Milton’s handling in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***Milton employs Homeric similes to heighten his theme to grandeur. In this he follows the convention of Virgil, Lucan, Tasso and Spenser. His similes not only ennoble and enrich the poetry; they are also the organic part of his story. Some examples of epic similes are the comparison of Satan’s bulk to a sea-beast, comparison of the fallen angels to forest oaks struck by lightning, the simile of bees in spring time. Satan’s shields are compared to the moon seen through Galileo’s telescope. It recalls Homer’s description of Achilles’ shield. Other rhetorical devices used by Milton also follow epic tradition. One such is the employment and repetition of numbers such as ‘’three’’ and ‘’nine’’. These devices add a stately tone to the poem.***

***Analyse and comment on the opening of Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***In Paradise Lost familiar features of the epic such as war, perilous journey, marvellous buildings, similes and allusions are to be found in abundance. But these are so transformed that their significance and even their aesthetic appeal are new C.M. Bowra remarks. The similes are often taken from the Orient, the Near and far East, As B.A. Wright points out, ‘’for Milton and his contemporaries the East was the home of despotism, the scene of worldly pride, and ambition, of barbaric luxury, cruelty and lust, of idolatry and dark superstition.’’ Thus the epic conventions used by Milton often have ironic undertones. He has adapted them to his own purpose.***

***A prominent convention of the classical epic is the use of similes, especially the elaborate and extended type. There is no dearth of similes-simple and ‘’long tailed’’ in Paradise Lost Book-I. But of, the similes convey more than mere comparison; they reinforce Milton’s religious intention. The first epic simile which compares Satan’s huge bulk with ‘’Leviathan’’ goes into seven lines. On the superficial level, it conveys the sense of great size; but it conveys also the impression of trickery, falseness of appearance, the lack of caution on the part of man when close to danger. These impressions are associated with Satan they will be elaborated later in the epic when Eve is deceived by the serpent just as the unwary sailor may be deceived by Leviathan.***

***Can Satan be a sympathetic character?***

***A colossal epic, is an example of encyclopaedia and Biblical tradition, the harmonious meeting ground of Hebraism and Hellelenism, the epitome of the ‘’grand style’’, controversial for the presentation of Satan, a failure in justifying the ways of God to men-these critical views simply the vast range and multifaceted appeal and interest of Milton’s Paradise Lost. It is an epic, and most of its other literary features issue from this factor, but a question on Paradise Lost as an epic and a question on how Milton recreates epic” conventions” in this poem do not demand exactly the same answer. The emphasis and point of view have to be different in both cases, while it is to be kept in mind that the poem is Biblical in theme and classical in form. Paradise Lost shows Milton’s puritan zeal as well as his classical learning. It is inevitable that when dealing with the one aspect, we will have to bring in the other, for the puritan element is either emphasised or moderate by humanism in Milton. Classical reminiscence is inextricable involved with puritan purpose in Paradise Lost. The colourful personality has evoked a myriad of responses- all adding to the difficulty to interpret the character on context “Is Satan a hero or a villain?”Does he show that Milton unwittingly belonged to the Devil’s party? Is he an embodiment of the Renaissance spirit? Is he a modern demagogue? To take another example, a question on Milton’s beliefs and a question on autobiography element in Paradise Lost do not necessarily demand the same answer: for the former is an elaboration of just some aspects of autobiography.***

***Speeches of Satan are also modelled on epic conventions. But at, they have a hollow sound of vainglory.***

***Milton’s style in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***A series of similes are employed by Milton to indicate the huge number of Satan’s followers. The fallen angels lie ‘’thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks in Vallambrosa’’. The term ‘’autumnal leaves’’ conveys the diminished glory of the angels. The simile produces the effect of the confusion in which they lie. Next, they are compared to masses of seaweed floating on the Red Sea; again the simile conveys the sense of confusion. When they are compared to the locusts called up by Moses, not merely is their vast numbers suggested, but also the evil and destruction associated with locusts. The comparison with the barbarians who descended upon and destroyed the ancient Roman civilization reinforces the image of evil. The simile of the sun in eclipse once again suggests evil, for eclipses were considered to portend disaster.***

***In the seventeenth century, the models for an epic poet were Homer, Virgil, Tasso, Ariosto and Spenser. Milton was an ambitious poet and he wanted to write a poem which should rank with Homer and Virgil’s. He studied all the classical epics. Homer sang of Archilles and Odysseus: Virgil had glorified Rome and Aeneas but Milton decided to write a universal epic.***

***Characterisation of Satan in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***Book-I of Paradise Lost is just a part of the epic but several epic devices and conventions are made us to in it: Statement of Theme-In the tradition of Homer and Virgil, Milton states the theme of his poem in the first lines. Invoking of the Muse- According to the classical convention established by Homer, Milton invokes the Muse to help him in his great task of writing the epic. Milton, like other classical poets, invokes the Muse again in the course of Book-I, seeking her aid in enumerating the fallen angels, but of, Milton’s Muse is not one of the Greek Muses. She is the Heavenly Muse of religious poetry who inspired the poets and prophets of Israel. Milton plunges in the middle of the action-The poet begins his epic with a picture of the rebel angels floating on the lake of fire in Hell. How they fell into Hell is described in subsequent Books. Satan and his company of fallen angels are important because of the role they play in the Fall of Man A roll-call of the devils is given according to the classical convention. It can be compared with the catalogue of ships in Homer’s Iliad. The speeches in the poem are modelled on the speeches in Homer’s Iliad and Virgil’s Aenid. The speeches of Satan and Beelzebub are elaborate, revealing their thoughts, motives, feelings, doubts and hope. At the end of each speech are words such as ‘’ ‘so Satan spake’, He spoke’’ etc.***

***Paradise Lost is a story of Human action dealing as it does with “man’s first disobedience’’ and his fate. As all other epics, it has a hero, though there has been a controversy as to who it is. But of, Adam is its hero. In the poem, we have other great figures too but it is Adam and Eve around whom the poem revolves. Milton’s great moral purpose was to ‘’justify the ways of God to men.’’***

***“He spoke; and to confirm his words, outflow***

***Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs***

***Of mighty Cherbim; the sudden blaze***

***Far round illumined Hell.’’***

***Milton’s Paradise Lost, cast as it is in the classical epic mould, opens with an invocation which has now become famous. In Lines 1-26, which form a prologue to the poem, Milton states the theme of his poem and invokes a Muse to inspire him. Homer’s Iliad begins with a similar invocation. He asks the Heavenly goddess to sing of Achilles’ wrath and ‘’woes unnumbered’’ which was brought upon Greece. Virgil began his Aeneid with ‘’Arms and man I sing’’, the theme of Paradise Lost is stated in the very first lines, and he is going to try to ‘’assert Eternal Providence” and ‘’justify the ways of God to men’’.***

***“To reign is worth ambition though in Hell;***

***Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.”***

***Characterisation of Satan in Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***Milton adds a new dimension to the classical epic poetry. Through Milton invokes the Muse to help in his task, the point note is that he seeks the aid, not of the pagan Muse, but of the Heavenly Muse, the Holy Spirit. And though he employs similes to add grandeur to his poem, Milton is really being a Protestant Christian when appearing most classical. As Kingsley Widmer has said, these similes are denigration of paganism’’. Though Milton has displayed his vast classical learning, he has employed it for his puritan theme-the justification of the ways of God to men. Paradise Lost is thus, a classical epic imbued with Christian theology.***

***Comment on the statement that Milton wrote no language.***

***In the divisions and style, Milton’s poem follows Homer’s Iliad and Virgil’s Aeneid. Taking Paradise Lost as a whole, one can see that the rules of classical epic as discussed by Aristotle are followed, to a large extent, by Milton. The action deals with a great subject, derived from the Scriptures. It deals with the Fall of Man and to this all other episodes in the epic are related and subordinated. Satan’s fall is a prelude to the main action. The action is entire, having a beginning, middle and an end. What is more, the vastness of the theme, encompassing the whole of the human race, makes it a unique epic.***

***Milton the Puritan speaks with all the moral fervour at his command in the poem. The very choice of the subject reflects his piety: “Of Man’s first disobedience...”It is a Biblical theme and it was Milton’s pious object to “justify the way of God to men”. His denunciation of Satan as the “infernal serpent” whose guile deceived the mother of mankind is genuine in its intensity. It is an expression of his resentment and indignation against the forces of evil. The same puritanical zeal is implied in his description of Hell as a repulsive and dreadful place where “peace and rest can never dwell” and “hope never comes.”***

***Analyse and comment on the opening of Paradise Lost, Book-I.***

***There is controversy about whether Milton’s use of language has had a corrupting influence of English. Dr. Johnson said that Milton wrote no English. The scholarly style of Milton, however, has to be understood in all its subtle nuances to be fully appreciated.***

***~[Except Setting, Ideas and a few changes words and sentences are referred from Dr S.Sen’s Critical Evaluation on Paradise Lost, Book-I along with other.]***

***~RITUPARNA RAY CHAUDHURI.***

***“Three poets in three distant ages born***

***Greece, Italy and England did adorn;***

***The first in loftiness of thought surpassed.***

***The second in majesty; in both the last.”***