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THE SATANIC 'OR': MILTON AND PROTESTANT ANTI-ALLEGORISM

Vladimir Brljak

In an often quoted but imperfectly understood passage in John Milton's *Paradise Regain'd*, Satan professes to doubt whether the kingdom portended for Christ is 'Real or Allegoric'. This article takes this passage, the only instance of the term allegory in the whole of Milton's poetry, as a starting point for a reconsideration of Milton's attitude towards the complex and controversial theological, political, and aesthetic issues raised by this term in early modern Protestant culture. Specifically, the article examines the usage of the term in Milton's early prose writings and its abandonment from 1645 onwards; Milton's familiarity with the disputes surrounding Galatians 4:24, a biblical verse of central importance in early modern treatments of the subject; and an overlooked tradition in Protestant commentary according to which allegorical reading was introduced into Christianity by Satan, in order to obscure the true meaning of scripture. Having firmly aligned Milton with the anti-allegorical tendency in Protestant thought, the discussion returns to *Paradise Regain'd* to demonstrate how this anti-allegorism informs a number of key passages in the poem, and briefly discusses its broader implications for the ongoing debates about the representational mode of Milton's biblical epics.

I

Towards the end of John Milton's *Paradise Regain'd*, Satan claims that he has consulted the stars in order to foresee Christ's future: 'A Kingdom they portend thee', he says, 'but what Kingdom, / Real or Allegoric I discern not' (4.389-90).[1] The lines go without substantial commentary in most editions of the poem and the overall import of the passage is clear enough: Satan either genuinely fails to comprehend the true significance of the kingdom, or

only pretends so in another futile effort to tempt Christ. The verses are of interest, however, for being the only instance in the whole of Milton's poetry where not only the concept of what might be called allegory is invoked, but where a form of the actual word, *allegory*, is employed. What, if anything, is to be made of this? Is it significant that the single time Milton uses the term *allegory* in all of his literary work it is put into the mouth of Satan—and if so, what is the significance?

According to almost all previous commentary, the answer is 'no': Satan's word choice is relatively unimportant and 'Allegoric' should here be taken in a broad sense indistinguishable from such neighbouring concepts as 'figurative' or 'typological', or perhaps simply as the opposite of 'real', i.e. 'unreal', 'imaginary'. The latter, for example, was the view of Northrop Frye—'for Satan the material is real and the spiritual is imaginary or, as he says, "allegoric" '—and is the gloss adopted in the *Variorum*: '*Allegoric*. Figurative […] and hence unreal'.[2] But if nothing more is intended, then why choose this technical, confessionally-sensitive, and otherwise methodically-avoided term over various other unproblematic possibilities? More recently, the passage has been revisited by critics who approach Milton's epics as fundamentally allegorical in character, and who therefore have a particular interest in defusing its potentially unpleasant implications. Thus according to Mindele Anne Treip, in what remains the most extensive commentary on these verses,

> Satan uses the term 'allegoric' here partly in a general sense of 'figurative' or metaphorical, partly (with unconscious or ironic allusion to the Old Testament tradition of messianic prophecy) in the older theological sense of 'typical' (typological). […] What is most intriguing about Satan's statement is its either/or aspect. If the kingdom is 'real' it cannot be figurative, and if it is figurative then it cannot be 'real'; the two have to be mutually exclusive. Yet in traditional scriptural multi-layered reading and certainly in typological reading such was not the case. The historical or 'literal' level of truth remained always perceived in the background, and in typology directly present. Type and antitype are both historically real, while they both also participate in a kind of mutual correspondence […]. Both are 'real' *and* simultaneously 'allegoric'.[3]

Satan is an allegorist, then, but he is a bad allegorist, and by 'ironically expos[ing]' his 'narrow literal-mindedness' Milton is instructing us how to approach allegorical literature correctly, including, supposedly, his own allegorical epics.

Anticipated by mid-twentieth-century studies that had presented Satan as 'the arch-literalist' in the poem, Treip's reading in turn anticipates later arguments along similar lines,

for example by Judith H. Anderson, who also reads 'Real or Allegoric' as 'yet another of Satan's pernicious, simplistic binaries, […] equat[ing] allegory with abstraction, fable, and Idea alone, ignoring its defining doubleness'.[4] Such readings have an advantage over earlier ones in foregrounding the potential interest in the use of 'Allegoric', but they still fail to account for what is, as shown below, a unique and deliberate usage of this theologically and politically-sensitive term. However attractive to some modern critics, the idea of allegory as defined by a non-reductive 'doubleness', or of the term being used interchangeably with *figure* or *type*, would have been deeply problematic to many seventeenth-century Protestant readers, and all the evidence suggests that Milton is to be counted among them, at least as far as the final 3 decades of his career are concerned.

Against this prevailing opinion that the usage in *Paradise Regain'd* is either insignificant or reflects, through ironic contrast with Satan's misuse of the term, Milton's own predilection for allegory, I argue here that exactly the opposite is the case—that the usage is significant, and that it is significant precisely because it reflects Milton's hostility towards allegory.[5] In order to substantiate this reading, the article demonstrates Milton's firm alignment with the anti-allegorical tendency in Protestant hermeneutics, including what might be called the Satanic allegory topos—an overlooked tradition in Protestant commentary which specifically claims that allegorical reading is the work of Satan, who introduced it into Christian hermeneutics in order to obscure the true meaning of scripture. The passage in *Paradise Regain'd* draws on this tradition and there is much more to it than previous criticism has acknowledged: what we are meant to be witnessing here is the very birth of Christian allegoresis, the precise moment at which this method of interpretation, which would go on to have such a profound impact on the ensuing development of Christianity, and consequently the world at large, first emerges in history.

II

The principal context for such an understanding of the passage is the tendency within Protestant hermeneutics to dismiss, at least nominally, allegorical interpretation of the Bible in favour of an approach which may be exemplified by Milton's own opinion on the subject in *De doctrina Christiana*: 'The sense of each scriptural passage is single; in the Old Testament, though, it is often a compound of the historical and typological' (*OW* 8: 389).[6] This is not to say that either the concept of allegorical reading, or even the term *allegory* itself, were necessarily anathema to every single Protestant commentator. In

practice, things were rarely as simple as definitions like Milton's made them seem, and Protestant interpreters often resorted to readings which can be plausibly described as allegorical, even when they preferred not to call them so, especially with those books of the Bible which were generally considered to be particularly esoteric in their mode of expression.[7] Alternatively, one could still employ the term, provided certain restrictions or qualifications were clearly acknowledged: for example, on the condition that the 'allegorical' interpretation was proposed within the scriptural text itself, or that the 'allegorical' sense was defined as a subset or aspect of the one 'literal' sense rather than a separate sense in its own right, or that it was not understood as the actual meaning of a scriptural text but merely its homiletic application—or any combination of these and still other available loopholes, most of which had been around in various permutations since medieval or even early patristic times.[8]

In theory, however, the distinction was for the most part clear: unlike typology, allegory presumes multiple senses, and thus denies, or is felt to deny, the historical reality of the persons and events signified by the principal or literal sense, replacing the true meaning of scripture by man-made fabrications. By contrast, mainstream Protestantism taught that the scripture has only a single, literal or historical sense, although the characters and events thereby signified may, especially in the Old Testament, prefigure those of a later time. Indeed, the fact that in actual practice the difference between *allegory*, *type*, *mystery*, and other related terms, was often blurred probably only encouraged a 'narcissism of small differences', making such theoretical and terminological distinctions vital to the construction and preservation of confessional identities. As a result, *allegory* became—again, not universally and unequivocally, but to a considerable degree nevertheless—a branded word and a focus of extensive, complex, and often acrimonious debate.

The contradictions and vacillations inherent in the Protestant position in this debate may be illustrated by the use of *allegory* and its derivatives in Milton's own prose writings of the early 1640s. Even at this date the term is rarely used: only seven instances are found,[9] of which two are irrelevant here, as he term is employed in a purely literary or rhetorical sense. This is the case with one of the three instances in passages added to the 1644 edition of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (*YP* 2: 223) and the single instance in *De doctrina*, occurring in the following caveat in the chapter on predestination: 'of assignment to life—if one must rely on metaphors and allegories in so contentious a matter—frequent mention is made, and of the book of life, but none anywhere of the book of death' (*OW* 8: 25-6). This has been cited as evidence of Milton's acceptance of scriptural allegoresis,[10] yet on closer

inspection the passages in question are all revealed to be instances of the metaphor of the book of life and other variations on 'this figure of writing'. Indeed, the disclaimer is prompted by Milton's own use of such a metaphor (echoing Isaiah 4:3), for 'assignment to life' is really 'ascriptione […] ad vitam'.[11] In other words, the term *allegory* is meant here in the rhetorical rather than the hermeneutical sense: an extension of the simple metaphor of the 'book of life' (e.g. Philippians 4:3) into a series of related metaphors (e.g. Psalms 69:28).

There are thus, in addition to *Paradise Regain'd*, five relevant instances of the word 'allegory' in the whole of Milton's work: one in the 1641 *Animadversions*, one in the 1642 *Reason of Church-Government*, two in the 1644 *Doctrine and Discipline*, and one in the 1645 *Colasterion*. Each of these displays a different facet of Milton's engagement with the term and its various aspects and connotations. As already noted above (n. 5), the instance in *Animadversions* relates to Revelation—'the whole Booke', Milton writes, 'soares to a Prophetick pitch in types, and Allegories' (*YP* 1: 714)—and must be approached with an awareness of the exceptionally esoteric status accorded to this text, even in Protestant commentary. In *Church-Government* we find him distinguishing between an authentic and an inauthentic allegorical interpretation, as he sees them, ridiculing his opponents for attempting 'to straine us a certaine figurative Prelat, by wringing the collective allegory of those seven Angels into seven single Rochets' (*YP* 1: 778, see note). In *Doctrine and Discipline* he similarly engages with a previous allegorical reading by Philo, this time implying an understanding of allegory as a homiletic application of scripture rather than its actual meaning—apparently Philo's interpretation is not so much wrong, as Milton's is 'haply more significant' (*YP* 2: 288).[12] The other instance in the same work is of interest for designating as 'allegorick' not passages of scripture, or any other text, but what he terms 'precepts of beneficence fetcht out of the closet of nature' (*YP* 2: 273).

Of particular significance is the instance in the *Colasterion*, where Milton is responding to criticism and is therefore particularly explicit about his methodology and its underlying premises. The obviously opportunistic interpretation in question, turning two agricultural precepts at Deuteronomy 22:9-10 into precepts against joining incompatible personalities in marriage, was first proposed in *Doctrine and Discipline*, where it is not called allegorical (*YP* 2: 270). It was then challenged in some detail in the anonymous *Answer* to Milton's treatise, and it is in responding to this rebuttal in the *Colasterion* that he refers to the Deuteronomy verses as '*allegorical*' (*YP*2: 751).[13] On both occasions he goes to great lengths to maintain that he is following the best Protestant practice in discerning such a meaning: he is not acting on his own impulse, twisting an allegory out of an otherwise intelligible passage

to suit his polemical interests, and he is not discerning this allegory by his own fallible intellect but is merely clarifying what is already suggested elsewhere in the scripture.

Be that as it may, it is to be strongly emphasized that the chief relevance of all this in approaching Satan's 'Real or Allegoric' in *Paradise Regain'd* lies in its irrelevance. At most, these examples show that early in his career Milton occasionally used the term in his non-literary work, in senses which range from the purely rhetorical or literary to those displaying a keen awareness of the strictures placed on figurative interpretation in Protestant hermeneutics. None of this, however, to go back to Flannagan's comment, can be taken to exemplify his 'customary' use of the term. Rather, what is customary, especially in the last three decades of Milton's career, is precisely the term's disuse. Even though the writings from this period account for the majority of hermeneutic terminology found in Milton's work, the word *allegory* virtually disappears from his vocabulary.

The five relevant instances of *allegory* are put into perspective by over a hundred instances of comparable terminology elsewhere in the prose, notably in *De doctrina*.[14] In the poetry, the widest range of such terminology is found in *Paradise Lost*: we hear of 'types', 'shadowes', and 'shadowie Types' (1.405, 12.232-3, 303), of things 'mysteriously […] meant' or presented 'in mysterious terms' (3.516, 10.173), of events 'foretold' and 'Oracle[s] […] verifi'd' (10.182, 191), of actions undertaken 'in figure' (12.241) of those to come, of accounts related 'By lik'ning spiritual to corporal forms' (5.573), of understandings passing 'from Flesh to Spirit' (12.303), of texts 'not but by the Spirit understood' (12.514)—but not of *allegory*. Except in *Paradise Regain'd*, Milton never used the term in its hermeneutical sense after 1645.[15] Adapting a passage in Wolleb where *allegoria* is listed among the types of figurative language that cannot be charged with falsehood, he removes it from the list.[16] The simplest explanation for all this is that he came to view the term as controversial and joined many of his fellow Protestants in using it sparely or abandoning it altogether.

III

Just how controversial the term could be is vividly illustrated by an event from December 1655, when an Englishman was sent to prison for believing that the Bible was to be read allegorically. Admittedly, this particular Englishman, the itinerant nonconformist preacher Richard Coppin, harboured many other curious beliefs and had been preaching about them for several months in Kent before he was finally examined, found guilty of breaching the 1650 Blasphemy Act, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment.[17] Besides believing that

the Bible was an allegory, Coppin also believed that there was no local heaven or hell, that baptism, good and bad deeds were all equally irrelevant to salvation, that God will destroy the sin but not the sinner, and ultimately, "*That all mankind,* Jew *or* Gentile, *and what ever they are, how ever they live, or dye, shall be saved*".[18] But if these sound like far graver blasphemies than Coppin's hermeneutics, they are often premised precisely on his allegorical readings of scripture, and it is no coincidence that of the twenty-five articles of his arraignment, it is the very first that reads: '*That all the Scriptures is but an Allegory, that is all, said he, both Law and Gospel, and that it is nothing but an Allegory, said he, it is clear from* Gal.4.24.'[19]

Coppin's position was undoubtedly radical, yet it is still instructive in several ways: it shows that the question of scriptural allegoresis was not merely a theological but also a deeply political and even, in such extreme circumstances, legal matter; it reminds us that scriptural allegoresis was not, in Protestant eyes, associated exclusively with Papist but also with nonconformist heresy; finally, it exemplifies the central importance of the scriptural passage to which Coppin appealed, Galatians 4:24. The reason why the passage was so important is simple: it contained the only use of a form of the word *allegory* in the whole of the Bible. At this place in the epistle, Paul not only gives an arguably allegorical interpretation of the account of Abraham's sons in the Book of Genesis, but explicitly calls it 'allegorical': 'ἅτινά ἐστιν ἀλληγορούμενα', 'all of which is spoken allegorically', which had for centuries been rendered by the Vulgate as 'Quae sunt per allegoriam dicta', 'Which things are said by an allegory', a reading effectively reaffirmed by Erasmus's translation of 1516, 'quæ p[er] allegoria[m] dicunt[ur]'.[20] As might be expected, Roman Catholics and nonconformists like Coppin cited this place in support of their allegorical interpretations, while their claims were wholly or partially disputed by their Protestant opponents.[21]

Graphic testimony to these disputes is found in the early English translations of the verse (Table 1). In spite of the fact that some form of the English word *allegory* was the obvious choice for rendering Paul's ἀλληγορούμενα, and that both the Vulgate and Erasmus rendered it by the Latin *allegoria,* Tyndale and Coverdale refuse to let this word into their renditions, translating, respectively, 'Which thing[es] betoken mistery' and 'These wordes betoken somwhat'.[22] Tyndale's version survived when his text of the New Testament was included in the 1537 Matthew Bible and the Tyndale-Erasmus diglot edition of 1538, the latter affording a particularly explicit instance of the conflict, with Tyndale's English, 'Whiche thynges betoken mistery', directly facing Erasmus's Latin, 'que per allegoriam dicuntur'. A change occurs, however, in another diglot edition of the same year, printing a

Table 1. Some early English versions of Gal. 4:24, divided into those which avoid and those which employ the term ‘allegory’. The editions cited, in chronological order, are *The New Testament: A Facsimile of the 1526 Edition*, tr. W. Tyndale, intro. D. Daniell (London, 2008); *Biblia. The Bible that is, the holy Scripture …* ([Antwerp], 1535); *The Byble which is all the holy Scripture …* ([Antwerp], 1537); *The newe Testament in Englyshe & in Latin …* (London, 1538); *The newe testament both Latine and Englyshe …* (Southwark, 1538); *The Most Sacred Bible …* (London, 1539); *The Byble in Englyshe …* ([London], 1539); *The Byble, that is to say all the holy Scripture …* (London, 1549); *The seconde tome or volume of the Paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the newe testament …* , [tr. M. Coverdale and J. Olde] (London, 1549); *The Nevve Testament of Ovr Lord Iesus Christ …* (Geneva, 1557); *The Bible and Holy Scriptvres Conteyned in the Olde and Newe Testament* (Geneva, 1560); *The holie Bible* (London, [1568]); *The Nevv Testament of Ovr Lord Iesvs Christ Translated ovt of Greeke by Theod. Beza …* , tr. L. Tomson (London, 1576); *The Nevv Testament of Iesvs Christ …* (Rheims, 1582); *The Holy Bible …* (London, 1611); Giovanni Diodati, *Piovs Annotations Vpon the Holy Bible …* (London, 1644); Meric Casaubon *et al.*, *Annotations Upon all the Books of the Old and New Testament …* (London, 1645); *The Dutch Annotations Upon the whole Bible …* , tr. T. Haak (London, 1657).

‘Which thing[es] betoken mistery’ Tyndale’s NT, 1526	‘[the] which thynges are spoken by an allegory’ Coverdale/Vulgate NT, 1538
‘These wordes betoken somwhat’ Coverdale’s Bible, 1535	‘Which thinges are spoken by an allegorye’ Taverner’s Bible, 1539
‘Which thynges betoken mystery’ Matthew Bible, 1537	‘Which thynges are spoken by an allegorye’ Great Bible, 1539
‘Whiche thynges betoken mistery’ Tyndale/Erasmus NT, 1538	‘Whiche thinges are spoken by an alligorie’ trans. of Erasmus’s *Paraphrase*, 1549
‘Which thinges betoken mysterye’ Becke’s Bible, 1549	‘Whiche thynges are spoken by an allegorie’ Bishops’ Bible, 1568
‘By the which thinges another thing is me[n]t’ Whittingham’s NT, 1557	‘vvhich things are said by an allegorie’ Rheims NT, 1582
‘By the which things another thing is ment’ Geneva Bible, 1560	‘Which things are an Allegorie’ King James Bible, 1611
‘By the which things another thing is me[n]t’ Beza’s Latin NT, trans. Tomson, 1576	‘*Are an allegorie* [...] *have an allegoricall sense*’ Diodati’s *Piovs Annotations*, 1643
‘Which are things that have another signification’ *Dutch Annotations*, 1657	‘Which things are an allegory’ Westminster Annotations, 1645

new translation by Coverdale parallel with the Vulgate, in which this verse is revised to include, for the first time in an English version, the word *allegory*: '[the] which thynges are spoken by an allegory'. This reading is then retained in Taverner's Bible, the Great Bible, and the Bishops' Bible, and is repeated in substance in the King James Bible.

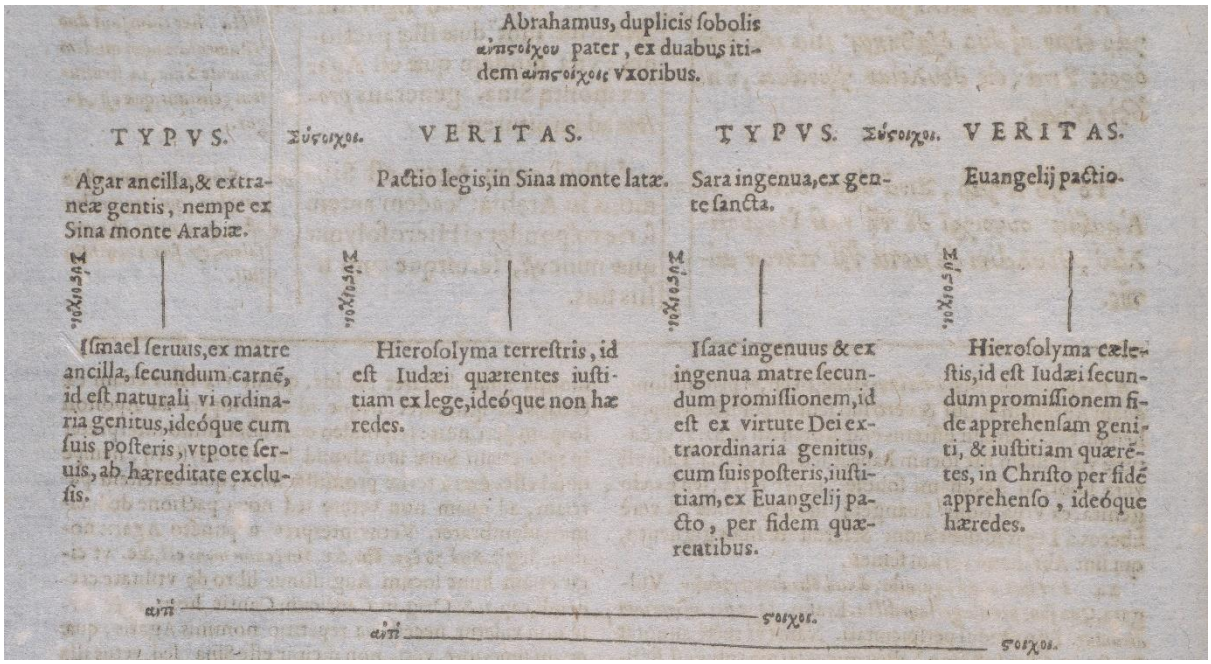
The Great Bible continued to be printed in the reign of Edward VI, alongside further allegory-free renditions of the Galatians verse. The so-called Becke's Bibles—revisions of the Matthew and Taverner versions produced between 1549 and 1551, apparently by the staunchly Protestant Edmund Becke—revert back to Tyndale's version. Around 1552, Richard Jugge's revision of Tyndale's New Testament contains another juxtaposition of the variants: the text is still Tyndale's, 'Which thynges betoken mystery', but a marginal note adds that 'Some read: whiche thinges are spoken in an allegorye'.[23] In 1557, the translation of William Whittingham, a Marian exile in Geneva, gives 'By the which thinges another thing is me[n]t', a rendering adopted three years later in the Geneva Bible, as well as in Laurence Tomson's 1576 English translation of Theodore Beza's Latin version of 1565.

Predictably, the Rheims New Testament of 1582 responds to Geneva's provocation not only by translating *allegory* but also appending a note adducing the passage as scriptural warrant for allegorical reading. Equally predictably, this note receives an extensive rebuttal by Fulke, who allows the story of Abraham's sons a typological significance—it is 'a figure or paterne of the Church to come'—but insists that the passage in no way presents a warrant 'to draw the Scriptures from the sense of the wordes which you call the literall sense, to any allegoricall interpretation, which is fayned and counterfected in mans brayne, and hath no ground of the spirit of God'.[24] Fulke's moderate position seems typical of many Church of England divines: he follows the reading of the Bishops' Bible and takes no quarrel with the use of the term as such, yet insists that 'the Apostle in this place vsing the terme of allegory, meaneth no such descanting vpon the Scripture' as Catholic interpreters indulge in, that 'prefigurations differ much from allegoricall interpretation', and that even 'if we should admit that the apostle, who was certeine of the sense of the Holy ghost, did make an allegorical interpretation, yet it is not lawfull for euery man', who 'hath no such assurance', to do so.

There can be no doubt that Milton was aware of these variant readings and the disputes they reflected. Not only were they present in the two major vernacular versions, the Geneva and the King James Version,[25] but also in Latin and polyglot editions, including the version of the New Testament that Hale and Cullington (*OW* 8: xlvii-li) identify as the one principally consulted by Milton in composing *De doctrina*, namely Beza's, in the Geneva

edition of 1598, printing the Greek, the Vulgate, and Beza's own Latin translation in parallel columns, with Erasmus's translation sometimes supplied in the notes. Against all these, Beza's translation of Galatians 4:24 still reads, as it did in the original edition of 1556, 'Per quæ aliud figuratur'.[26] The 1598 edition also contains features that would have lent further prominence to the passage, including additions to the already extensive commentary on the verse, and even a schematic representation of Beza's clarification of Paul's 'allegory' (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Beza's schematic representation of Paul's interpretation in the 1598 edition; reproduced by the kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library. Similar schemes are given for only two other passages, Rom. 7:1-6 and 2 Cor. 5:1-10; cf. Jan Krans, *Beyond What Is Written: Erasmus and Beza as Conjectural Critics of the New Testament* (Leiden, 2006), 279.



What did Milton make of all this? The banishment of the word *allegory* from his post-1645 vocabulary gives us one clue and further evidence is found between the lines of a quotation of Galatians 4:24 he gives in *De doctrina*. Discussing the abolishment of the old law, Milton gathers a number of proof texts, including Galatians,

> v. 24, about Hagar and Sarah: *these women are those two covenants:* […] *Hagar* […] *producing offspring for slavery*; *the other*, v. 26, […] *is free*; hence v. 30: *cast out the*

> *slave-girl and her son, for in no way shall the slave-girl's son be an heir with the freewoman's son* (*OW* 8: 320).[27]

Obviously the quotation is highly elliptical, as are most of the thousands of biblical references and quotations which make up for half of the text of *De doctrina*. On closer view, however, there are strong indications of a particular logic behind the truncations that cannot be wholly ascribed to economy. Not only does Milton fail to cite the beginning of 4:24, containing the troublesome *hapax*, but he avoids using any hermeneutical terminology on his own part, limiting himself to the utterly indifferent 'about' and 'hence', and letting the whole weight of the interpretation to fall on Paul's seemingly innocuous but in fact highly significant '*are*'.

The significance of this '*are*' becomes clearer in the light of Milton's discussion of sacramental language in the following chapter of the treatise. The discussion is occasioned by the treatment of the Lord's Supper, which inevitably revolves around the interpretation of the words attributed to Christ in the Synoptic Gospels and 1 Corinthians 11:24-5, notably the key phrase, 'this is my body'. In keeping with Reformed orthodoxy, and drawing on Wolleb, Milton argues that these words and similar sacramental expressions elsewhere in the Bible are to be taken figuratively, and vehemently dismisses the doctrines of transubstantiation and consubstantiation (*OW* 8: 354). However, he also steers clear of the other extreme—that sacramental expressions are *merely* figurative—arguing that they employ a special mode of figuration not encountered in other types of discourse.[28] Specifically, sacramental figuration is the same in kind as that employed in other contexts, but not in degree: 'in the case of the sacraments, […] the relation between signifier and the thing signified is very close [*summa*]', and sometimes even closer, for 'it seems the biblical writers used this manner of speaking to signify not only a very close [*summam*] correspondence between signifiers and the things signified, but also an absolutely sure sealing of spiritual things [*certissimam rerum spiritualium obsignationem*]' (*OW* 8: 354-6).

This and other finer points in Milton's treatment of the sacraments are beyond the scope of the present study, but the remainder of this passage is of direct relevance to the truncated quotation from Galatians. 'Hence', he continues,

> the same way of speaking has also been transferred to the signifying of all other absolutely sure things [*res certissimas*]: Gen. 41: 27: *the seven cows* […] *are seven years …* ; Rev. 1: 20, and 17: 9: *the seven heads are seven mountains*; and v. 12: *the ten horns* […] *are ten kings.*

While the preceding examples all relate to covenants and sacraments, these do not. Rather, they resemble sacramental expressions in being instances of esoteric figurative interpretations or analogies found within the biblical text itself, explicitly adduced through the use of the copulative verb—exactly what we find at Galatians 4:24.[29] In other words, the introduction of this terminology, which is Milton's own intervention into his principal source in Wolleb, would seem to present yet another Protestant strategy to 'rebrand' traditional modes of esoteric hermeneutics, including those which could be plausibly described as allegorical.

A closer look at Milton's sources here seems to support such a reading. The last quoted passage from *De doctrina* rewrites the following one in the Wolleb's *Compendium*:

> Yea, the very same is seen in other speeches besides sacramental; as Gen. 41. 37. *The seven cows, are seven years*; that is, types and figures [*typi & figuræ*] of seven years: Rev. 17. 9. *The seven heads, are seven hills*; and v. 12. *The ten horns are ten Kings*.[30]

Milton keeps the examples but removes the phrase 'other speeches besides sacramental' and the reference to the contents of the pharaoh's dream as 'types and figures', presumably because he find such usage erroneous: types are historical figures and events and not elements in dreams or visions. But if these are neither sacraments, nor seals, nor types, nor figures, nor allegories—and note here that at an earlier period Milton was not averse, as he now seems to be, to employing the latter term with regard to Revelation—then what are they? They are *res certissimae,* and vague as that may be, it does the job of avoiding the controversial term *allegory*, while at the same time foregrounding the divine assurance for the interpretations adduced in such passages.

Furthermore, there were various sources where Milton could have found the notions of sacramental language and the sacramental copula related directly to Galatians 4:24. The search for expressions comparable to 'this is my body' began in the early days of the eucharistic controversy, and at some point the Galatians verse began to be cited in this context.[31] Eventually, through this association, the converse also began to apply: not only was Galatians 4:24 used in illustrating sacramental language, but the notion of sacramental language became a gloss for Galatians 4:24. Milton would have seen the verse glossed in similar terms by Beza—who does, however, instruct the reader to distinguish between 'sacramental' and 'typical' signification—and possibly elsewhere as well.[32] Although not mentioned among Milton's examples of 'absolutely true things', the verse clearly falls under this category, and if this is the thinking he brought to bear on it when quoting it in *De doctrina*, it makes perfect sense that he would skip the opening words and proceed directly to the part containing the 'sacramental' or 'absolutely sure' copula.

In summary, Milton's quotation of Galatians 4:24-25 seems carefully designed to elide the controversies that had accumulated around the passage, and thus testifies, albeit in negative form, to Milton's familiarity with these controversies, which would have been very prominently brought to his attention when he looked up this passage in the two principal Bible texts that he used, and any other versions or commentaries he might have consulted. That Milton would choose to pass over these disputes here is not surprising: a work aimed, in his view, at further consolidation of orthodox Protestant doctrine rather than polemic with 'the Pontificians' (*OW* 8: 3-4) was not the place for a judicious treatment of such a difficult and contentious yet ultimately non-doctrinal matter.

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that Milton considered the text of the New Testament to be highly 'corrupt' and that he might have, as he did in several other cases (*OW* 8: 59-60, 73, 109-10, 396-8), questioned the authenticity of the unique use of ἀλληγορούμενα at Galatians 4:24. If he also took the trouble of consulting the verse in Brian Walton's *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta*, he would have found additional motive for such suspicion.[33] Walton's polyglot gives nine texts here: the Greek, the Vulgate, the Syriac, the Arabic, and the Ethiopic, with all the non-Latin texts accompanied by Latin translations. The Latin versions of the beginning words of Galatians 4:24 offer a predictably inconclusive array of readings: 'Quæ sunt *allegorizata*' (from the Greek) and 'Hæc autem sunt allegoriæ' (from the Syriac) vs. 'Hæ autem duæ sensum habent cujus narratio ineffabilis est' (from the Arabic). Most interestingly, however, the translation from the Ethiopic gives nothing, jumping from its rendering of the final words of 4:23, '& quæ è libera secundùm promissionem', directly to 'Et hæc sunt duo testamenta', and thus omitting any text corresponding to the disputed words in the Greek. One can only speculate, but Milton's decision not to quote the part of 4:24 that is (to the best of his knowledge) lacking in at least one version of great antiquity and authority, is translated with significant variations here and in other renditions, and contains, in the 'corrupt' Greek, a very important *hapax legomenon*, seems entirely compatible with, and may be indicative of, his doubts about its authenticity.[34]

IV

There is, however, a further and compelling reason to believe that this is the context in which Satan's 'Allegoric' is to be taken, namely the term's long-standing association with the devil in Protestant commentary. The tradition apparently begins with Luther, who condemns 'the satanic madness and illusion' of allegorical reading, and refers specifically to Roman

Catholic allegories as 'thought out and devised, not by the Holy Spirit but by the devil'.[35] Possibly picking up on these statements, Calvin develops the sentiment into an actual theory of allegory's satanic origins:

> Without doubt, this was the inuention of satha[n] to abase the authoritie of the scriptures, & to take away the true vse fro[m] the reading thereof. which prophanation God hath reuenged with iust iudgeme[n]t, in that he hath suffred the puritie of vnderstanding to bee oduerwhelmed with the bastard & counterfeit gloses.[36]

The idea is reiterated in Calvin's sermons on Galatians and more explicitly in his commentary on Genesis: 'the Allegories of *Origen*, and of such like are to be reiected: whiche Sathan by his most pestilent subtiltie went about to bring into the Churche, that the doctrine of the Scripture might be doubtfull, and voyde of certeintie'.[37]

The same notion appears in Beza's 1554 *De haereticis a ciuili magistratu puniendis*, in a passage cited by Thomas Edwards in 1647:

> For this was the speciall subtiltie of Sathan of old, which yet not one almost of the ancient Fathers observed, that when he could not cast the Scripture out of the Church wholly, yet by vaine Allegories, he made the whole Scripture unprofitable and fabulous, so as truely there was not one piece of Scripture left free of being contaminated with these Allegories.[38]

In the epistle to the 1565 edition of his New Testament, translated into English in 1576, Beza similarly recounts how in the age of the early church fathers 'Satan layed […] in the countrie of *Grecia*' various 'mischiefs', of which 'two […] especially reigned in those dayes'.[39] One was the tendency to fuse Christian teaching with pagan philosophy, yet

> The other mischief was farre worse, for as an vnauoydable disease, it had almost possessed all mens mindes, and it was this, a maruelous desire that men had to misshape the whole Scripture, and turne it into allegories wherein euery man tooke so great pleasure without measure or compasse, that eche man thought he might do what he woulde.

The idea also appears in original seventeenth-century English texts. In an anonymous pamphlet from 1650, the author ascribes the departures from the faith he perceives in his times to, among other things, the 'affectate desire we have (more consulting with Satan, then the Scripture) to turn plain truths […] into confused Allegories'.[40] 'Souls', he admonishes his contemporaries, 'have you not learned this yet, that tis Satans policy, chiefly this way, either to divert our hearts from, or darken our understandings in the eying any solid eminent truth, lest when the snare is discovered we escape'. According to another, similarly-titled pamphlet

from 1655, Satan encourages men 'to put allegorical and mystical (as they call them) Interpretations upon prophetical, and Doctrinal Scriptures […] so they will make of it what they please'.[41] As late as 1696, an anti-Quaker tract claims that it was 'the Grand Design of him who first *Inspired* and *Possessed* them [i.e. the Quakers], to Destroy the *only Saving Faith*, in the *Satisfaction* made by Christ for our *Sins*, by turning all this to a meer *Allegory*'.[42]

A particularly elaborate account appears in Richard Gilpin's 1677 *Dæmonologia sacra*, explaining at length how Satan 'befools men into a belief, that the Scriptures do under the *Vail* of their Words and Sentences, contain some *hidden Notions*, that are *of purpose* so disguised, that they may be *locked up* from the generality of Men'.[43] There are various degrees of such satanic hermeneutics, depending on whether it departs wholly or only partly from the plain sense of the biblical text. The latter is the case with what Gilpin specifically terms '*Allegorical reflections* or allusions', an approach which 'supposeth the *Letter* of Scripture to be *true*, (but still as no better than the *first Rudiments* to train up Beginners withal)'. However, 'the crafty Adversary at last enticeth' allegorical readers

> to *let go of the History*, as if it were nothing but a *Parable*, not really acted, but only fitted to *represent* Notions to us. Allegories were a *Trap* which the Devil had for the *Jews*, and wherein they wonderfully pleased themselves. How much *Origen* abused himself and the Scriptures by this humour is known to many; and how the Devil hath prevailed generally by it upon giddy people in later times, I need not tell you.

Gilpin also takes note of Galatians 4:24—'The pretence that Satan hath for this dealing is raised from some passages of the *New Testament*, wherein […] some things are expressly called *Allegories*'—but denies that the passage justifies 'any Mans *boldne[ss]* in presuming to do the like to any *other passage* of Scripture'.

Finally, there is a passage in Milton's own *Of Reformation* which all but explicitly reiterates the notion. Responding to the claim that the scripture is too difficult to understand without the guidance of the church fathers, Milton concedes that 'there be some Books, and especially some places in those Books that remain clouded', yet 'Hence to inferre a generall obscurity over all the text, is a meer suggestion of the Devil to disswade men from reading it, and casts an aspersion of dishonour both upon the *mercy, truth*, and *wisedome* of *God*' (*YP* 1: 566).[44] Allegory is not explicitly mentioned but it can probably be taken for granted that this imagined 'obscurity' includes such 'wrung' allegorical readings as he criticizes in *The Reason of Church-Government*. At this point Milton still occasionally used the term in

positive contexts, so his unwillingness to attribute it unreservedly to the devil is not surprising. Even so, the passage testifies to his early familiarity with the tradition that he would later exploit, with explicit reference to allegory, in *Paradise Regain'd*.

V

If we now return to the portrayal of Satan in *Paradise Regain'd*, parallels should be quite obvious, even beyond the 'Real or Allegoric' passage. Indeed, allegory is just one of the various forms of esoteric semiosis—'presages and signs, / And answers, oracles, portents and dreams' (1.394-5)—which are Satan's province both by his own account and by Christ's disparaging response to his claims:

> all Oracles
> By thee are giv'n, and what confessed more true
> Among the Nations? […]
> But what have been thy answers, what but dark
> Ambiguous and with double sense deluding (1.430-5)

These are all qualities that could with equal propriety be ascribed to allegory, and in fact we find a remark in *De doctrina* which directly parallels these verses even as it makes an analogy between oracular and scriptural divination: 'a principle article of faith […] ought not to be dug out of ambiguities, or else obscurities—like the Delphic oracle's answers [*ex ambiguis aut obscuris quasi pythia responsa*]' (*OW* 8: 75).

Satan's hermeneutic prowess fails him, however, when he attempts to divine the meaning of the events that transpired at Christ's baptism. As he relates to his 'gloomy Consistory' (1.42)—a glaring anti-Catholic allusion, paralleling the infernal 'conclave' in *Paradise Lost* (1.795)—he saw 'Heav'n above the Clouds / Unfold her Crystal Dores', and 'thence on his head / A perfect Dove descended, what e're it meant' (1.81-83). In other words, the one thing that Satan is unable to interpret is precisely that which is the ground of all valid interpretations—a point repeatedly emphasized by Protestant commentators and further underscored by Christ's account of the same event later in the poem (1.282), to whom, of course, as to all of the poem's readers, the meaning of the dove is perfectly clear.

The second time Satan mentions the baptism, his language is even more symptomatic. Here he tells Christ that he has kept an eye on him ever since his infancy, but especially since he heard the voice from heaven proclaiming him the son of God:

> Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view

And narrower Scrutiny, that I might learn
In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
The Son of God, which bears no single sence (4.514-17)[45]

Again Satan is unable to comprehend a central tenet of the Christian faith, and again the terminology is technical and topical with satirical and indeed comic effect, as the 'single sence' of scripture is precisely the central premise of Protestant hermeneutics: 'Not only *sola scriptura*, […] but alongside it an equally significant principle, *solus sensus litteralis*.'[46] Satan has already attempted to turn Christ from the principle of *sola scriptura* ('All knowledge is not couch't in *Moses* law / The *Pentateuch*or what the prophets wrote' [4.225-6]), and now he attempts the same with that of *solus sensus litteralis*—precisely the two greatest 'mischiefs' that Beza attributed to Satan's influence on early Christian thought.

The conflict these passages imply is not, then, between literal and figurative reading, but between two incompatible approaches to the latter: the either/or of allegory, represented by Satan, and the both/and of typology, represented by Christ. We hear of Christ's invention of typological reading from his own mouth: having learned from his mother of the miraculous circumstances of his conception and the events and omens that transpired at his birth,

strait I again revolv'd
The Law and Prophets, searching what was writ
Concerning the Messiah, to our Scribes
Known partly, and soon found of whom they spake
I am (1.259-63)[47]

Yet like most heavenly things, this too has its infernal counterpart. Christ is not the only creative reader of scripture in *Paradise Regain'd.* Indeed, in discussing the 'Real or Allegoric' passage it is easy to overlook one simple fact, namely that prior to Satan saying these words Christian allegory is not yet in existence. Whatever Milton otherwise thought of it, the apostle's use of ἀλληγορούμενα in the Epistle to the Galatians is here irrelevant, for the Epistle to the Galatians has not yet been written. There are no apostles, no epistles, no canon of specifically Christian writings, no specifically Christian hermeneutics—all of that, except for Christ's own insights, is yet to come. There is, however, and there had been for many centuries, allegory and allegorical reading, by means of which the pagans had attempted to make sense of their mythology. And now the devil, with whom this false mythology itself originates, attempts this pagan method on a fundamental tenet of the emergent Christian faith in another vain effort to shake Christ's conviction of the prophecy. This, I think, is what Milton, drawing on an old tradition in Protestant polemics, intends us to see in this passage: a

condensed etiological myth with strong satirical overtones about the invention of Christian allegoresis. Satan is the first Christian allegorist. With him emerges, at this very moment, the pernicious method of interpretation that many centuries later Reformers like himself would set out to combat.

Finally, there is the question of the implications of all this for the broader debates regarding the representational mode of Milton epics, especially *Paradise Lost*. Almost seventy years have passed since A. J. A. Waldock observed that critics of *Paradise Lost*'differ not only in their approach to the poem, in their feeling about it, in their judgment of it: they differ also in their understanding of what occurs in it'.[48] On many counts the scholarship of the intervening decades supersedes that of Waldock's day, but if it gives us a better idea of what is at stake in this critical impasse, it still offers no definitive or even broadly accepted solution for overcoming it. One thing that is certain, however, and is perhaps still not sufficiently acknowledged, is that any such solution will need to address the status of allegorical representation in Milton's biblical epics. Indeed, the abiding problem of what occurs or does not occur in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regain'd* largely is the problem of whether their representational mode is to be understood as thoroughly allegorical, thoroughly non- or even anti-allegorical, or suspended, consciously or unconsciously, coherently or incoherently, between these two opposing poles—positions which are not merely theoretical but which all find representatives in the fascinating history of the poem's reception, especially since the rise of critical interest in allegory in the latter half of the twentieth century.

The present article hopes to readjust the grounds of this debate by providing a more extensive and accurate account than has previously been available of Milton's engagement with allegory and the controversies raised by this notion in early modern culture. Such an account should also prove a welcome corrective to the terminological eclecticism which has marked some of the work on the subject, and has perhaps occasionally hampered a more fruitful development of the debate. Obviously one is also tempted to point to some highly suggestive parallels between Milton's hermeneutic anti-allegorism and certain developments and motifs in his literary work: for instance, between his abandonment of the term *allegory* and his abandonment of the early plans for an ostensibly allegorical epic, or between the two satanic births of allegory in the two companion poems—the birth of allegorical interpretation from Satan's mouth in *Paradise Regain'd* and the birth of allegorical representation from Satan's head in *Paradise Lost*. Especially since the mid-twentieth-century studies of Stein, MacCaffrey, and Ferry, a number of critics have commented on the association of allegory

with fallen experience in *Paradise Lost*, and my account of the satanic allegory topos and its dramatization in *Paradise Regain'd*further validates and complements their insights.[49] Above all, it is hoped that the article demonstrates the need for further investigation along these lines. Although it certainly does not bode well for the allegorists, the above discussion does not present decisive evidence in favour of the literalists either. Both camps, however, along with the various factions interposed between them, ought to take it into account in future attempts to unravel the same 'deceptively simple' yet 'obviously fundamental' question posed by Waldock—'the question of what, at this important juncture or that, is really *happening*' in these poems.

University of Warwick

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[1] Milton's works are cited from *The Complete Works of John Milton*, gen. ed. T. Corns and G. Campbell, 11 vols (Oxford, 2008–), for *De doctrina Christiana*, *Paradise Regain'd*, and the shorter poems; *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, gen. ed. D. M. Wolfe, 8 vols (New Haven, CT, 1953-1982), for the English prose; *The Works of John Milton*, gen. ed. F. A. Patterson, 18 vols with index (New York, NY, 1931-1938), for the Latin prose; *Paradise Lost*, ed. B. K. Lewalski (Oxford, 2007). The collected editions are cited parenthetically under the abbreviations *OW* ('Oxford Works'), *YP* ('Yale Prose'), and *CW* ('Columbia Works'). Citations from the main text of *De doctrina* are given according to the manuscript pagination.

[2] Northrop Frye, 'The Typology of *Paradise Regained*', *Modern Philology*, 53 (1956), 227-38, p.231; W. MacKellar (ed.), *A Variorum Commentary on the Poems of John Milton: 'Paradise Regained'*, with E. R. Weismiller (London, 1975).

[3] *Allegorical Poetics and the Epic: The Renaissance Tradition to 'Paradise Lost'* (Lexington, KY, 1994), 171-2.

[4] William G. Madsen, *From Shadowy Types to Truth: Studies in Milton's Symbolism* (New Haven, CT, 1968), 193; Judith H. Anderson, *Reading the Allegorical Intertext: Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton* (New York, NY, 2008), 273.

[5] For a partial exception to the dominant view, see Flannagan's note: 'Milton's use of the word, juxtaposing it with "Real," suggests that he had indeed rejected allegory as a valid mode […], at least at this point'; *The Riverside Milton*, ed. R. Flannagan (Boston, MA, 1998). Flannagan further dilutes the claim by adding that 'Milton's customary use of the word relates it to biblical types […] and hence is not pejorative', citing his description of Revelation in the 1641 *Animadversions* as replete with "types, and Allegories" (*YP* 1: 174). As further discussed below, this is problematic not only because of Milton's later avoidance

of the term, but also because of the special status accorded to the Book of Revelation regardless of the confessional divides.

[6] As has long been acknowledged, the passage is taken over from Johann Wolleb's *Compendium theologiæ Christianæ …* (Cambridge, 1642), sig. A7v; translation in *The Abridgment of Christian Divinitie …* , tr. A. Ross (London, 1650), sig. B5v. Cf. *Of Reformation*: 'the Scriptures [protest] their own plainness and perspicuity' (*YP* 1: 566); *Of True Religion*: 'Scripture, which by a general Protestant Maxim is plain and perspicuous abundantly to explain its own meaning in the properest words' (*YP* 8: 425).

[7] A good example here is Wilson's dictionary (in its early editions), which covers the whole of the Bible but is particularly concerned with the most 'Mysticall' books, namely the Song of Songs ('a continuall Allegorie'), the Epistle to the Hebrews (containing 'Tipes and Figures'), and Revelation ('which hath as many Mysteries, as words'); see Thomas Wilson, *Christian Dictionarie …* (London, 1612), sig. A3r-v. In his entry for *allegory*, however, Wilson repeats the conventional Protestant warning: 'it is a safe thing to tread in the steps of the holy ghost, not making Allegoricall sences, where the Spirit hath made none'.

[8] For an engaging overview of this problematic, see Brian Cummings, 'Protestant Allegory', in R. Copeland and P. T. Struck (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Allegory*(Cambridge, 2010).

[9] Not counting the citation of the title of Philo's *Legum allegoria* in the first *Defence* (*CW*7: 78).

[10] Treip, *Allegorical Poetics*, 182.

[11] The metaphorical quality of two other scriptural passages referred to similarly turns on the root verb *scribere* and is thus partially lost in translation: Ps. 69:28, '*not enrolled with the righteous*', is '*cum iustis ne conscribantur*'; Jude 4, '*marked down for this judgment*', is '*praescripti ad hoc iudicium*'.

[12] Cf. the appreciative reference to Philo in the first *Defence* (see n. 9 above; cf. *YP* 4: 344-5, n. 16-17).

[13] See *An Answer to a Book, Intituled, The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce …* (London, 1644), sig. F4r-G1r.

[14] Most frequently Milton uses *typus* (*OW* 8: 45, 311, 350, 353, 389, 432, 434, 552, 571), but also *adumbrare* (67, 86), *accommodare* (10), *dicere* (109), *exhibitio* (338), *figurare* (348), *illustrare* (290), *intelligere* (99-100), *manifestatio* (306), *obscuritas* (81, 140, 312), *parabola* (151), *repraesentatio* (101), *res certissima* (356), *sensus compositus* (389), *sensus duplex* (49, 389), *sensus metaphoricus* (49-52), *sensus theologicus* (125), *significatio*, *significare* (99-100, 339, 356), *signum* (339, 435), *symbolus* (142, 307), *tropus* (81), *umbra* (307, 571), or such phrases as 'sub nomine […] intellige' (7), 'more prophetico […] significari' (67), 'prophetici […] libri stylus' (81), 'sub […] specie administrata' (101), 'humano […] more ait' (132), 'obscuriùs […] percipitur' (305), 'ex charitati[s] sensu […] interpretantur' (329), 'per externa […] signa repraesentatio' (330). The term is also avoided in the Prolusions (*CW* 12: 128, 130, 150, 248). Instances in the English prose include *figure*, *foreshow*, *foresignify*, *mystery*, *pattern*, *shadow*, *type*; see the entries in L. Sterne and H. H. Kollmeier (eds), *A Concordance to the English Prose of John Milton* (Binghamton, NY, 1985).

[15] Even the rhetorical instance in *De doctrina*, found in the Skinner portion of the manuscript, could theoretically date from the earliest stage in the work's composition, in the 1640s, and thus be roughly contemporary with those in the English prose: see G. Campbell *et al.* (eds), *Milton and the Manuscript of 'De Doctrina Christiana'* (Oxford, 2007), 65.

[16] See Wolleb, *Compendium*, sig. M11r: 'Schemata, Metaphoras, Allegorias & similia, mendacia non esse'; cf. *De doctrina*: 'parabolas, hyperbolas, apologos, ironias mendacia non esse' (*OW* 8: 655-6).

[17] See Nigel Smith, 'Coppin, Richard', *ODNB*.

[18] Richard Coppin, *A Blow at the Serpent …* (London, 1656), sig. M7r.

[19] Ibid. sig. M4r.

[20] *Novum Testamentum Graece*, ed. B. and K. Aland *et al.*, 28th rev edn (Stuttgart, 2012);

The Vulgate Bible: Douay-Rheims Translation, ed. S. Edgar and A. M. Kinney, 6 vols (Cambridge, MA, 2010-2013); *Novvm Instrumentu[m] omne …* (Basel, 1516). The precise meaning of ἀλληγορούμενα, a New Testament *hapax*, remains disputed, with the arguments of modern commentators often reiterating those reaching back to Milton's day and far beyond. The above translation is from Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, *The Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, tr. V. P. Howard and J. W. Thompson, 3 vols (Grand Rapids, 1990), who add that the type of interpretation in question is 'more accurately' to be identified as 'typological allegorizing'. Other *allegory*-based renderings are similarly counterbalanced by the insistence that Paul's interpretation does not deny the reality of the historical events in question, raising the question of how this *allegory* is to be distinguished from what is more readily described as typology. For criticism on this ground, see Anthony Tyrrell Hanson, *Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology* (London, 1974), 91-101.

[21] In addition to the examples below, see Thomas H. Luxon, *Literal Figures: Puritan Allegory and the Reformation Crisis in Representation* (Chicago, IL, 1995), esp. 77-101.

[22] Coverdale's rendering shares 'betoken' with Tyndale's, while the rest is markedly similar to Luther's, 'Die wort bedeuten etwas'; *Das Newe Testament Deůtzsch* (Wittenberg, 1522).

[23] *The newe Testament of our Sauiour Jesu Christe …* (London, [1552?]). For the inverse procedure, see the Bishops' Bible, which gives 'by an allegorie' in the text, but adds in the margin, 'By an allegorie, that is another thyng is meant'.

[24] William Fulke, *The Text of the New Testament of Iesvs Christ, translated ovt of the vulgar Latine by the Papists of the traiterous Seminarie at Rhemes … with A Confvtation …*(London, 1589).

[25] Even after the KJV reading became predominant it was still occasionally contested, for example in the 1657 translation of the Dutch *Statenvertaling* Bible commissioned by the Westminster Assembly (*The Dutch Annotations*; see Figure 1).

[26] *Iesv Christi Domini Nostri Nouum Testamentum, siue Nouum fœdus …* ([Geneva], 1598); cf. *Novvm D. N. Iesv Christi testamentum …* ([Geneva], 1556). Beza explains his choice as striving for 'perspicuity'—allegories are 'wholly fictional', whereas Paul's text is a 'true

history', albeit one 'adumbrating a more hidden mystery'—but his statements elsewhere voice his deep aversion to allegory in less diplomatic terms. For the Old Testament and the Apocrypha, Milton is said to have relied primarily on the 1623-1624 Hannover edition of the Junius-Tremellius-Beza Bible: *D. N. Jesv Christi Testamentvm Novum …* (Hannover, 1623), *Testamenti Veteris Biblia Sacra …* (Hannover, 1624). This included Tremellius' translation from the Syriac, 'Hæc autem sunt allegoriæ', alongside Beza's 'Per quæ aliud figuratur'.

[27] This quotation agrees with Beza's 1598 edition ('duæ illæ pactiones'). There is another reference to the passage in *De doctrina* (*OW* 8: 326), and another brief quotation, 'Gal. 4. 24. *duo pacta*' (*OW* 8: 312), which agrees with the 1623-1624 JTB version ('duo illa pacta'), so we know that Milton looked up the passage in both versions.

[28] Cf. Wolleb, *Abridgment*, sig. K7r, arguing 'against those who cry out that we have nothing in the Sacraments but empty signes'.

[29] Apparently it is this use of the copula which makes them 'absolutely sure' rather than just 'very close'. Cf. Wolleb, *Abridgment*, sig. L1r: '*it is not material whether the trope be in the attribute, or in the* copula*, or coupling of the words: for though the trope may be in the attribute, yet the cause or ground of the trope is in the copula*'. Milton, it would seem, is not entirely convinced and prefers to have a category for those instances where the presence of the copula leaves nothing to the interpreter's own inference. The examples bear out this interpretation: those preceding the above passage include both instances which do and those which do not contain the copula, whereas the four examples of 'other absolutely sure things' all contain it.

[30] Wolleb, *Abridgment*, sig. L1r; *Compendium*, sig. F3v.

[31] For an example in English, see *A Fvll Declaration of the Faith and Ceremonies Professed in the dominions of the most illustrious and noble Prince Fredericke …* , tr. J. Rolte (London, 1614), sig. G2r-v.

[32] See the note in Beza's 1598 NT: '*Sunt*, εἰσιν. Id est, figurant & adumbrant, sicut dicitur Petra fuisse Christus, & Panis dicitur corpus Christi', etc. Cf. *The Dutch Annotations*: '*are*

[that is, signifie, betoken, represent. A sacramental phrase. See *Gen.* 41. 26. 27. *Matt*. 26. 26.]'; James Fergusson, *A Brief Exposition of the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians* (London, 1659): 'So is it in the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper, […] and so it is here, […] *Those are the two Covenants*'.

[33] See *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta …* , ed. B. Walton, 6 vols (London, 1657). Milton's familiarity with this edition was first demonstrated by Harris Francis Fletcher, *The Use of the Bible in Milton's Prose* (Urbana, IL, 1929), 86-8; cf. *OW* 8: lx, 237, n. lxi.

[34] Cf. Milton's reference to the Ethiopic version in his dismissal of the Johannine Comma (*OW* 8: 59). His esteem for the Ethiopic text would have been influenced by the fact that Walton attributed great antiquity to it, believing it to have been translated 'from ancient Greek exemplars close to the apostolic age'; *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta*, vol. 1, second pagination, sig. Bb2v. Milton's knowledge was almost certainly limited to the translation in Walton's edition; see Fletcher, *supra*.

[35] *Luther's Works*, ed. J. Pelikan and H. T. Lehmann, 55 vols (Saint Louis, 1957-1986), vol. 2, 156, vol. 5, 356.

[36] *A Commentarie of M. J. Caluine vpon the Epistle to the Galathians*, tr. R. V[aux] (London, 1581), sig. K1v.

[37] *Sermons of M. Iohn Caluine vpon the Epistle of Saincte Paule to the Galathians* (London, 1574), sig. Dd8v; *A Commentarie of John Caluine, vpon the first book of Moses called Genesis*, tr. T. Tymme (London, 1578), sig. D6r.

[38] Thomas Edwards, *The Casting Down of the last and strongest hold of Satan. Or, A Treatise Against Toleration And pretended Liberty of Conscience …* (London, 1647), sig. Z1v.

[39] *The Nevv Testament*, tr. Tomson, sig. †9r-v.

[40] Thomas Hearne, *A Seasonable Word, Or a Plain and Tender-Hearted Epistle to All Sincere Hearts in Parliament …* (London, 1650), sig. A4r-v.

[41] J. B., *A Seasonable Word of Advice Unto all the Saints in England …* (London, 1655), sig. A3v, B3r.

[42] Charles Leslie, *The Snake in the Grass …* (London, 1696), sig. n5v.

[43] Richard Gilpin, *Dæmonologia sacra …* (London, 1677), sig. Gg2r-3v.

[44] Cf. Fulke's *Confvtation* on 2 Pet. 3:16: 'the hardness of the Scriptures, is not the cause of so many heresies, but the malice of Satan, that stirreth vp such proud and contentious instruments'.

[45] The same detail is underscored by Herman, who does not discuss 'Real or Allegoric', but does note that 'It is Satan who tries to glean complex resonances from language, […] to tease out its various levels of meaning'; Peter C. Herman, *Destabilizing Milton: 'Paradise Lost' and the Poetics of Incertitude* (Basingstoke, 2005), 157. Cf. Noam Reisner, *Milton and the Ineffable* (Oxford, 2009), 236-48.

[46] Cummings, 'Protestant Allegory', 177.

[47] Cf. the ekphrasis of the temple reliefs in Vida's *Christiad* as a possible source here. Christ is the first to comprehend the significance of the 'arcane notations and obscure signs, which to that day had never been deciphered by any man, not even by the priests', including types of himself and his sacrifice—' "unravel the scenes that follow, understood by few, that presage my unspeakable death" '; Girolamo Vida, *Christiad*, tr. J. Gardner (Cambridge, MA, 2009), 1.551-725.

[48] *'Paradise Lost' and Its Critics* (Cambridge, 1947), Preface, unpaginated.

[49] See Arnold Stein, *Answerable Style: Essays on 'Paradise Lost'* (Minneapolis, MN, 1953), 157-8; Isabel Gamble MacCaffrey, *'Paradise Lost' as 'Myth'* (Cambridge, MA, 1959), esp. 92-118, 179-206; Anne Davidson Ferry, *Milton's Epic Voice: The Narrator in 'Paradise Lost'* (Cambridge, MA, 1963), 116-46.