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## Old English Poems as Possible Sources of *Paradise Lost*

Finding possible sources of inspiration for John Milton's *Paradise Lost* has long been a particularly prominent topic in Milton scholarship. Milton was familiar with quite a few languages: Latin, Greek, Italian, French and Hebrew, among many others, but it has been widely debated whether he was proficient enough in Old English to be able to read the original text of Old English poems and use them as inspiration for his epic.<sup>1</sup> In this paper, we will take a closer look at the possible connections between *Paradise Lost*, *Genesis B*, and *Christ and Satan*, and consider the possibility that these Old English texts might have been sources of Milton's poem. We wish to examine some important features of Satan's portrayal that are used both by Milton and by the Old English writers, highlighting certain key similarities. While scholars are divided on whether or not Milton used these two Old English poems of the Junius Manuscript as sources for *Paradise Lost* (or if Milton had even come into contact with the manuscript), the correlation between Milton's epic and the two Old English poems in question has long been recognized. According to Elisa Ramazzina, it is worth noting that both *Paradise Lost* and *Genesis B* are rewritings of the same biblical stories, and that "both poets, even separated by centuries, created two original texts of undoubted literary richness and complexity drawing on and reusing existing – and sometimes shared – sources."<sup>2</sup> In the case of *Christ and Satan*, the comparison with *Paradise Lost* is based on the idea that both poems depict Satan's rebellion as an act specifically directed against Christ (or the Son, as Milton preferred to call him).<sup>3</sup> We intend to focus on two particular motifs present in these three poems: the motivations behind Satan's rebellion and his reaction to his Fall. By uncovering some remarkable similarities between the three poems, we wish to argue that Milton's character of Satan was influenced by the Old English poems *Genesis B* and *Christ and Satan*.

Ramazzina argues that in *Paradise Lost* and in *Genesis B* the poets "[create] two characters who are similar in their description as heads of their retinue, as leaders, and as exiles, but who are at the same time extremely different, especially with regard to their feelings and emotions, which make Milton's Satan much more human than the Anglo-Saxon one."<sup>4</sup> It is, however, important to note that Satan

<sup>1</sup> Elisa RAMAZZINA: "The Old English Genesis and Milton's Paradise Lost: the characterisation of Satan". *Lanalisi linguistica e letteraria*, 24.1, 2016, 89–117. 91–92.

<sup>2</sup> Elisa RAMAZZINA: *op. cit.* 95.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas D. HILL: "The Fall of Satan in the Old English 'Christ and Satan'". *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 76.3, 1977, 315–325. 317.

<sup>4</sup> Elisa RAMAZZINA: *op. cit.* 95.

in *Genesis B* also exhibits human features and emotions, although in a more covert manner: through the depiction of the Fall as exile. In his study on the theme in Old English poetry, Greenfield argues that there are four “compulsory” – or at least, regularly included – aspects of the portrayal of exile, “1. status 2. deprivation 3. state of mind 4. movement in or into exile,”<sup>5</sup> all of which appear in the following section of *Genesis B*:

Hete hæfde he æt his hearran gewunnen, hylde hæfde his ferlorene,  
gram wearð him se goda on his mode. Forþon he sceolde grund gesecean  
heardes hellewites, þæs þe he wann wið heofnes waldend.  
Acwæð hine þa fram his hylde and hine on helle wearp,  
on þa deopan dala, þær he to deofle wearð,  
se feond mid his gefeorum eallum. Feollon þa ufon of heofnum  
þurhlonge swa þreo niht and dagas,  
þa englas of heofnum on helle, and heo ealle forsceop  
drihten to deoflum.<sup>6</sup>

[He had earned hatred from his Master, his grace he had forlorn,  
and God grew angry in his heart. For that reason he must seek the abyss  
of terrible hell-torments, just as he struggled against the Holder of Heaven.  
He exiled him then from his favor and cast him into hell,  
into the deep chasm where he changed into a devil,  
the enemy with all his allies. They fell down from heaven  
a very long time: three nights and days,  
those angels from heaven into hell—the Lord debased them all into demons.]<sup>7</sup>

Firstly, the section serves as an announcement of the new, exiled *status* of Satan and his comrades. Secondly, *deprivation* appears in two different forms, both of which are repeated. On the one hand, the poet declares that Satan lost the favour, grace, or loyalty of God (“hylde hæfde his ferlorene” and “acwæð hine þa fram his hylde”), showing the withdrawal of affection and the erosion of the relationship between king and thane (which was also the basis of the social system depicted in Old English poetry). On the other hand, the poet mentions being cast away from heaven twice, and thus portrays Satan as being deprived of his place of origin. In this sense, the author shows both the physical and social repercussions that

<sup>5</sup> Stanley B. GREENFIELD: “The Formulaic Expression of the Theme of ‘Exile’ in Anglo-Saxon Poetry”. *Speculum*, 30.2, 1955, 200–206. 201.

<sup>6</sup> “Genesis A/B”. In Martin Foys, et al. (eds.): *Old English Poetry in Facsimile 2.0*, Center for the History of Print and Digital Culture, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2019–. [oe.poetryfacsimile.org](http://oe.poetryfacsimile.org). Lines 301–309a. Accessed August 30, 2023.

<sup>7</sup> Aaron K. HOSTETTER (trans.): “Genesis A/B”. In Martin Foys, et al. (eds.): *Old English Poetry in Facsimile 2.0*, Center for the History of Print and Digital Culture, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2019–. [oe.poetryfacsimile.org](http://oe.poetryfacsimile.org). Lines 301–309a. Accessed August 30, 2023.

follow an unsuccessful rebellion. Thirdly, the mentions of heaven, hell, and the Fall depict a vertical, downwards *movement*, which fits the fourth aspect proposed by Greenfield. The third aspect, *state of mind* is seemingly missing from the description of the Fall, however, the narrator claims that Satan and his companions changed into devils as a consequence of their actions, signalling a radically negative change in their status. Although it is not specified whether this change is a social, mental or physical one, some scholars, such as Ganze, argue that negative emotional and physiological changes were often connected by Old English poetic vocabulary, and emotional states were often depicted by adding bodily symptoms to the description, such as the increased blood flow due to anger or heart palpitations due to grief.<sup>8</sup> While in this case it is doubtful whether a bodily condition is depicted, the poem suggests an overall negative change in the state of the fallen angels, which might be related to a negative state of mind. Moreover, as exile is one of the core concepts of Old English poetry and is always portrayed as a dire situation, often with a suggestion that it is a state comparable to death, the inclusion of the topic may work as a general evocative device, recalling the hardships of banishment and the struggles of losing one's lord as portrayed in different poems in the Old English corpus. In this way, it might even be unnecessary for the poet to include a detailed description of Satan's feelings.

In contrast with *Genesis B*, which does not explicitly show how Satan reacts to his exile, *Christ and Satan* gives him a voice, and in addition, a lamenting monologue that paints a desperate figure lost in nostalgia:

Eala drihtenes þrym! Eala duguða helm!  
 Eala meotodes miht! Eala middaneard!  
 Eala dæg leohta! Eala dream godes  
 Eala engla þreat! Eala upheofen!  
 Eala þæt ic eam ealles leas ecan dreames,  
 þæt ic mid handum ne mæg heofon geræcan,  
 ne mid eagum ne mot up locian,  
 ne huru mid earum ne sceal æfre geheran þære  
 byrhtestan beman stefne!  
 Ðæs ic wolde of selde sunu meotodes,  
 drihten adrifan, and agan me þæs dreames gewald,  
 wuldres and wynne, me þær wyrse gelamp  
 þonne ic to hihte agan moste.”<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Ronald GANZE: “The Neurological and Physiological Effects of Emotional Duress on Memory in Two Old English Elegies”. In Alice Jorgensen, et al. (eds.): *Anglo-Saxon Emotions: Reading the Heart in Old English Language, Literature and Culture*, London, Routledge, 2015, 211–226, 212.

<sup>9</sup> “Christ and Satan”. In Martin Foys, et al. (eds.): *Old English Poetry in Facsimile 2.0*, Center for the History of Print and Digital Culture, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2019–. [oe.poetryfacsimile.org](http://oe.poetryfacsimile.org). Lines 163–175. Accessed August 30, 2023.

[Alas the majesty of the Lord! Alas the Helm of Multitudes!  
 Alas the might of the Measurer! Alas middle-earth!  
 Alas the light of day! Alas the joys of God!  
 Alas the host of angels! Alas upper heaven!  
 Alas that I am without all the joys of eternity,  
 so that I cannot reach out to heaven with my hands,  
 nor may I look up with my eyes, nor indeed shall I ever hear  
 with my ears the voice of the brightest trumpets!  
 Because I wished to drive the Lord, the Son of the Measurer  
 from his throne, and keep its power of delight for myself,  
 the glory and the joy. But something worse befell me,  
 than I was allowed to have as a hope.]<sup>10</sup>

Firstly, it is remarkable that the poet gave Satan such an emotional speech, as this monologue suggests that he himself understood the consequences of his rebellion. Although Satan is not capable of repentance, and later he is shown to tempt Christ, he seems to accept his fate and punishment, as he claims that “sceal nu wreclastas / settan sorhgcearig, siðas wide.”<sup>11</sup> [“I must now set myself / upon the ways of exile, sorrowing, upon these wide paths”<sup>12</sup>]. Leonard H. Frey claims that this quotation sums up “the essence of Satan’s exile condition: total alienation from the sublimest spiritualities and constant recollection of them.”<sup>13</sup> This state, however, can also be applied to other narrators in Old English poetry who were either exiled or lost their lords, such as the speaker in “The Seafarer,” who also recollects his memories about the beauties of the past:

Bearwas blostmum nimað, byrig fægriað,  
 wongas wlitigað, woruld onetted;  
 ealle þa gemoniað modes fusne  
 sefan to siþe, þam þe swa þenced  
 on flodwegas feor gewitað.<sup>14</sup>

[The groves take on blossoms, beautifying the cities,  
 gardens grow more fair, the world hastens –

<sup>10</sup> Aaron K. HOSTETTER (trans): “Christ and Satan”. In Martin Foys, et al. (eds): *Old English Poetry in Facsimile 2.0*, Center for the History of Print and Digital Culture, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2019–. [oepoetryfacsimile.org](http://oepoetryfacsimile.org). Lines 163–175. Accessed August 30, 2023.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* Lines 187b–188.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* Lines 187b–188.

<sup>13</sup> Leonard H. FREY: “Exile and Elegy in Anglo-Saxon Christian Epic Poetry”. *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 62.2, 1963, 293–302. 301.

<sup>14</sup> “The Seafarer”. In Martin Foys, et al. (eds.): *Old English Poetry in Facsimile 2.0*, Center for the History of Print and Digital Culture, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2019–. [oepoetryfacsimile.org](http://oepoetryfacsimile.org). Lines 48–52. Accessed August 30, 2023.

all these things make the hurrying heart mindful,  
 the soul to its travels, to him who so imagines  
 on the flood-ways, to travel far away.]<sup>15</sup>

The speakers of both lamentations are nostalgic about the past; however, there is a sharp contrast between their possible futures: while the narrator of “The Seafarer” appears to find consolation in religion, no such possibility is available for Satan. Although this factor does create a rift between the human speaker in “The Seafarer” and Satan, the comparison of the two poems might prompt a reconsideration of Satan as a character who experiences human feelings. In addition, the remembrance section in *Christ and Satan* might establish a connection between Satan and the audience as well. Harbus suggests that through the recital of memories, “[t]he reader or hearer of this text, even at a distant cultural remove, is invited to engage in narrative thinking and emotional reaction, and to recruit memory, imagination, and synthetic reasoning, a process made possible by the shared cognitive basis of meaning and feeling.”<sup>16</sup> In this way, the feeling of loss creates a common ground between the audience and Satan, and thus humanizes Satan’s figure to a great extent.

In *Paradise Lost*, Satan’s feelings on the topic of his exile are perhaps most clearly articulated during his famous speech on the top of Mount Niphates, where “horror and doubt distract / His troubl’d thoughts, and from the bottom stirr / The Hell within him” (4.18–20).<sup>17</sup> Addressing the Sun of God’s newly created universe, he confesses all his regrets that he, up until that point, has tried to conceal completely.

...to thee I call,  
 But with no friendly voice, and add thy name  
 O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams  
 That bring to my remembrance from what state  
 I fell, how glorious once above thy Spheare;  
 Till Pride and worse Ambition threw me down  
 Warring in Heav’n against Heav’ns matchless King:  
 Ah wherefore! he deservd no such return  
 From me, whom he created what I was  
 In that bright eminence, and with his good  
 Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.

<sup>15</sup> Aaron K. HOSTETTER (trans): “The Seafarer”. In Martin Foys, et al. (eds.): *Old English Poetry in Facsimile 2.0*, Center for the History of Print and Digital Culture, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2019–. [oeepoetryfacsimile.org](http://oeepoetryfacsimile.org). Lines 48–52. Accessed August 30, 2023.

<sup>16</sup> Antonina HARBUS: “Affective Poetics: The Cognitive Basis of Emotion in Old English Poetry”. In Alice Jorgensen, et al. (eds.): *Anglo-Saxon Emotions: Reading the Heart in Old English Language, Literature and Culture*, London, Routledge, 2015, 19–34, 32.

<sup>17</sup> John MILTON: *Paradise Lost*, edited by Barbara Lewalski, Oxford, Blackwell, 2007. In this paper we quote Milton’s epic from this edition, referencing our quotations within parentheses indicating the book and the line number(s) in the main body of the text.

What could be less then to afford him praise,  
 The easiest recompence, and pay him thanks,  
 How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,  
 And wrought but malice; lifted up so high  
 I sdeind subjection, and thought one step higher  
 Would set me highest, and in a moment quit  
 The debt immense of endless gratitude,  
 So burthensome, still paying, still to ow (4.37–53.)

Satan admits to having made a mistake by rebelling against “Heav’ns matchless King” and losing all that glory that was once freely his in Heaven, the nostalgic note in his speech being noticeably similar to the lamenting monologue found in *Christ and Satan*. In both poems, as we will later show, the characters describe the happy and bright state they fell from and suggest that that brightness is now completely lacking, conveying the loss of their angelic essence and the pain it has caused. Both in the Old English poem and in *Paradise Lost*, Satan is given a dramatic monologue in which it is emphatically stressed that true repentance is no longer an option for him. In Milton’s poem, this speech comes at a point when Satan’s character has already been established as not being regretful in the slightest, as previously, in Book 2, his main concern has only been to determine “what best way, / Whether of open Warr or covert guile” to recover Heaven for themselves (2.40–41), but here Milton also shows just how much the loss of his place in Heaven has hurt the fallen angel. Satan not only admits that he regrets his rebellion, but also goes on to admonish himself, exclaiming how easy it would have been to simply continue to obey God, and offer him the praise he obviously deserves. It seems that in addition to the loss of heavenly glory, he also laments his lack of intellect when choosing to go against the word of God and to rebel. This admission is especially powerful from a figure that has since become famous for his unshakeable reason; he was previously able to justify the rebellion to his followers, asking them “Who can in reason then or right assume / Monarchie over such as live by right / His equals, if in power and splendor less, / In freedome equal?” (5.794–797), but by this point, this confidence in his argument has disappeared. While Milton’s Satan is careful to hide his more vulnerable side from his followers even during his lowest moments, *Paradise Lost* shows a Satan figure that is just as emotionally complex as the one that could be previously seen in *Christ and Satan*. Satan’s constantly warring emotions also manifest themselves in his ever-changing appearance, as C. S. Lewis writes:

From hero to general, from general to politician, from politician to secret service agent, and thence to a thing that peers in at bedroom or bathroom windows, and thence to a toad, and finally to a snake – such is the progress of Satan.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> C. S. LEWIS: *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1969, 99.

Starting in Book 4, Satan's appearance changes almost every time we see him, the emergence of his feelings of self-doubt, envy, and anger clashing with his previously pure angelic being, and he becomes more and more human-like in essence as time passes. This is further reinforced by Milton's first detailed description of Satan in Book 1, where, as Neil Forsyth writes in *The Satanic Epic*, (against expectations) "the reader's experience of Satan has been transformed backwards, as it were, from an infernal serpent to a heroic angel."<sup>19</sup>

While the experience of loss is depicted in a similar fashion in all three poems, Satan's communication with his supporters about the rebellion and the consequent expulsion from Heaven are portrayed differently in *Christ and Satan* and *Paradise Lost*, the two poems which contain dialogues between the leader (Satan) and his followers. The author of *Christ and Satan* chose an intriguing approach towards these issues, since, in the poem, Satan seems to be aware of the foolish nature of his actions:

[...] Hwær com engla ðrym,  
 ða þe we on heofnum habban sceoldan?  
 Ðis is ðeostræ ham, ðearle gebunden  
 fæstum fyrclommum; flor is on welme  
 attre onæled. Nis nu ende feor  
 þæt we sceolun ætsomne susel þrowian,  
 wean and wergum, nalles wuldres blæd  
 habban in heofnum, hehselda wyn.  
 Hwæt, we for dryhtene iu dreamas hefdon,  
 song on swegle selrum tidum,  
 þær nu ymb ðone ecan æðele stondað,  
 heleð ymb hehseld, herigað drihten  
 wordum and wercum, and ic in wite sceal  
 bidan in bendum, and me bættran ham  
 for oferhygdum æfre ne wene.<sup>20</sup>

[...] Whence has come  
 the majesty of angels, which we in heaven were used to possess?  
 This is a shadowy home, violently bound with fixed fiery bands.  
 The floor is in a boil, ignited in poison. It is not far from the end  
 which we must together suffer torment, pain and affliction –  
 not at all the fruits of glory we once had in heaven,  
 the joys of high seats. Listen! Once we possessed delight before the Lord,  
 singing in the skies, in better seasons, where now stand  
 the noble warriors around the Eternal and his high throne,

<sup>19</sup> Neil FORSYTH: *The Satanic Epic*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2002, 211.

<sup>20</sup> "Christ and Satan". Lines 36b–50.

praising the Lord with words and deeds, and I must in torment  
abide in bonds, nor ever hope for any better home for my over-mind.]<sup>21</sup>

This section implies that Satan, as characterised by the author of *Christ and Satan*, is fully aware that the Fall was his own fault, and it was his pride (“over-mind”) that cast him out of Heaven; and while he never calls it a sin, he acknowledges the dire consequences of his actions, and seems to be regretting them to an extent. Moreover, even though Satan only talks about his personal loss of hope for a better home in these lines, the poem later reveals that he is in fact a compassionate leader, who feels responsible for the state of his followers as well. He calls his army “earme heap” [miserable company], and claims that it was he who led them to their hellish home.<sup>22</sup> The poem thus portrays Satan as a dutiful lord, who keeps the fate of his subjects in mind, and is aware of the fact that he is to be blamed for their misfortune and their consequent deformation.

In terms of compassion, the case of Milton’s Satan is slightly more complex, as he seemingly tries to hide his true feelings from his followers. Although we have previously shown how regretful Satan becomes in Book 4 of *Paradise Lost*, it is important to distinguish between those words uttered alone, and the ones he has previously said to his followers in the first two books. The angry and remorseful Satan that laments his lost place in Heaven is not the Satan that his followers can see in Hell after their tragic Fall. There, he assumes the role of a mostly optimistic – and perhaps somewhat naive – leader, who tries to convince his followers that there is still hope for them. Upon waking up, he gives his first impressions of Hell to Beelzebub, claiming that their greatness cannot be diminished by the fact that they are no longer in Heaven:

The mind is its own place, and in it self  
Can make a Heav’n of Hell, a Hell of Heav’n.  
What matter where, if I be still the same,  
And what I should be, all but less then he  
Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at least  
We shall be free; th’ Almighty hath not built  
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:  
Here we may reign secure, and in my choyce  
To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:  
Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav’n (l.254–263)

This is one of Satan’s speeches that Neil Forsyth uses to demonstrate the power of the fallen angel’s words, its seductive nature being compared to that of a Siren’s

<sup>21</sup> Aaron K. HOSTETTER (trans.): “Christ and Satan”. Lines 36b–50.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* Lines 87–88.



song in *The Satanic Epic*.<sup>23</sup> It is essential to remember that Satan's speeches in Hell are always twofold; on the surface this is simply a twisted motivational speech, but given his always-present desperation with proving his unchanged state, his "fixt mind," this speech is just as much for his own benefit as it is for Beelezbub's. As Lewis writes, "Satan *wants* to go on being Satan. That is the real meaning of his choice 'Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heav'n'."<sup>24</sup> Satan claims that Hell will, in some ways, be even better for him and the other fallen angels, as, distanced from God's influence, in Hell "at least [they] shall be free." Milton's Satan is similar to the main character of *Christ and Satan* in that he also keeps the fate of his followers in mind, but slightly dissimilar from the Old English Satan in that, instead of focusing on his own faults, he is already thinking of the possible (perhaps only imagined) advantages that Hell might offer them. This attempt at praising Hell continues in Book 2, during his opening speech in Pandæmonium, where he stresses the lack of possible envy they might feel towards each other in Hell:

...The happier state  
 In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw  
 Envy from each inferior; but who here  
 Will envy whom the highest place exposes  
 Formost to stand against the Thunderers aim  
 Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share  
 Of endless pain? where there is then no good  
 For which to strive, no strife can grow up there  
 From Faction; for none sure will claim in Hell  
 Precedence, none, whose portion is so small  
 Of present pain, that with ambitious mind  
 Will covet more. (2.24–35)

Once again, Satan has an ulterior motive with this seemingly inspiring speech; he asserts his right to be their official leader even in Hell, reinforcing his claim to a rule that he believes he obtained "with full consent" (2.24). On the surface, the dutiful lord that is present in *Christ and Satan* is also found in *Paradise Lost*, however, Satan's own obsession with himself in Milton's epic noticeably undermines the former Archangel's sincerity. Milton's Satan is very familiar with lying, even if it is to himself; it is truly as Lewis writes: we as readers can never be sure "whether we can distinguish his conscious lies from the blindness which he has almost willingly imposed on himself."<sup>25</sup> As Lewis suggests, after a while it is not only the other characters or us readers that have cause to doubt Satan's sincerity, but also himself, as he seemingly falls victim to his own propaganda.

<sup>23</sup> Neil FORSYTH: *op. cit.* 147.

<sup>24</sup> C. S. LEWIS: *op. cit.* 103.

<sup>25</sup> C. S. LEWIS: *op. cit.* 97.

After considering the similarities between the descriptions of Satan's reaction to his Fall, it is time to take a closer look at how the events and decisions leading up to his rebellion are presented in the three poems. Milton was of course inspired by several religious texts and traditions. According to Arnold Williams' article, "The Motivation of Satan's Rebellion in 'Paradise Lost,'" before *Paradise Lost*, there were three main, widely accepted explanations for the Fall of the angels, based on three different texts: *The Book of Enoch*<sup>26</sup> 69:6, the *Latin Life of Adam and Eve* XII–XV, and *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch* 25:4–5.<sup>27</sup> All three of these texts date from "the period of the two or three centuries immediately before and after the beginning of the Christian Era."<sup>28</sup> It is important to note here that while Milton's aspiration for *Paradise Lost* was to create a specifically Christian epic, none of the books of Enoch are included in the traditional Christian Bible. Nevertheless, these were three of the primary stories that Milton possibly would have looked at as sources of inspiration for his epic poem, and thus, they are important to consider before we take a closer look at how Satan's rebellion in Heaven is depicted in *Paradise Lost*. In *Enoch*, about two hundred angels were sent to Earth to guard humans, where they "were lured by women and sinned carnally with them":<sup>29</sup>

1 And it came to pass when the children of men had multiplied that in those days were born unto 2 them beautiful and comely daughters. And the angels, the children of the heaven, saw and lusted after them, and said to one another: "Come, let us choose us wives from among the children of men 3 and beget us children." And Semjaza, who was their leader, said unto them: "I fear ye will not 4 indeed agree to do this deed, and I alone shall have to pay the penalty of a great sin." And they all answered him and said: "Let us all swear an oath, and all bind ourselves by mutual imprecations 5 not to abandon this plan but to do this thing." Then sware they all together and bound themselves 6 by mutual imprecations upon it.<sup>30</sup>

This explanation places the time of the Fall after the creation, temptation and Fall of man, therefore, it "could not serve [Milton's] purpose"<sup>31</sup> for his epic. The second example that Williams mentions is already somewhat closer to what Milton ended up writing, as in *Vita Adae et Evae*, what causes the Fall of Satan and his followers is his refusal to worship the newly created man; as he says, "he will not worship him

<sup>26</sup> Following Williams' example, in the following we will refer to *The Book of Enoch* simply as "Enoch", and *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch* as "Secrets".

<sup>27</sup> Arnold WILLIAMS: "The Motivation of Satan's Rebellion in 'Paradise Lost'". *Studies in Philology*, 42. 2, 1945, 253–268. 254–256.

<sup>28</sup> Arnold WILLIAMS: *op. cit.* 254.

<sup>29</sup> Arnold WILLIAMS: *op. cit.* 254–255.

<sup>30</sup> R. H. CHARLES (ed.): *Book of Enoch: The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1913, no pag., lines 6:1–7.

<sup>31</sup> Arnold WILLIAMS: *op. cit.* 255.

[man] who is lower and posterior to [him].”<sup>32</sup> As Williams suggests, this account even has “scriptural authority of a sort,” as the idea of commanded worship is already present in Hebrew 1:6, “And again when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.”<sup>33</sup> As Williams writes, “in both the *Vita* and *Paradise Lost* God makes an announcement and commands an act of obedience by the angels. In both documents Satan refuses to perform the act of obedience.”<sup>34</sup> Already here, Satan’s sense of pride and superiority becomes the main point of the conflict, which will reemerge in Milton’s poem, although, in *Paradise Lost*, Satan’s refusal to subject himself will be in response to the sudden exaltation of the Son instead of the creation of mankind.

Finally, in *Secrets*, the motivation behind the rebellion is Satan’s reckless ambition “to place his throne higher than the clouds above the earth, that he might become equal in rank to my [God’s] power.”<sup>35</sup> While during Satan’s initial reaction to the exaltation of the Son this ambition is not as strongly stated as his refusal to submit, over the course of Milton’s poem it becomes quite evident that Satan’s desire “to set himself in Glory above his Peers” (l.39) is used as his main motivating factor for most of his actions. All things considered, it can be said that even if none of these three stories could be declared the one official main source that Milton used to imagine his version of Satan’s rebellion, it is clear that certain elements from all of them can be found in *Paradise Lost*.

In the Old English *Genesis B*, Satan similarly “resolves to be God and works northwards and westwards to set up his throne,”<sup>36</sup> and it is for this reason that he is thrown out of Heaven:

Ac he wende hit him to wyrsan þinge,    ongan him winn up hebban  
wið þone hehstan heofnes waldend,    þe siteð on þam halgan stole.  
Deore wæs he drihtne ure;    ne mihte him bedyrned weorðan  
þæt his engyl ongan    ofermod wesan,  
ahof hine wið his herran,    sohte hetespræce,  
gylpword ongean,    nolde gode þeowian.<sup>37</sup>

[But this one turned himself away unto worse affairs.  
He thought to heave up a struggle against the highest,  
the Sovereign of Heaven aseated upon the holy throne.

<sup>32</sup> B. CURTIS, G. ANDERSON, and R. LAYTON (trans.): *Latin Life of Adam and Eve*, Marquette University, n.d., 3. 14:3. [marquette.edu/maqom/Latin%20Life%20of%20Adam%20and%20Eve.pdf](http://marquette.edu/maqom/Latin%20Life%20of%20Adam%20and%20Eve.pdf). Accessed August 30, 2023.

<sup>33</sup> Arnold WILLIAMS: *op. cit.* 256.

<sup>34</sup> Arnold WILLIAMS: *op. cit.* 263.

<sup>35</sup> Qtd. in Arnold WILLIAMS: *op. cit.* 256.

<sup>36</sup> Arnold WILLIAMS: *op. cit.* 257.

<sup>37</sup> “Genesis A/B” *Lines* 259–264.

Beloved was he to our Lord – this could not be hidden from him  
 so that his angel began to become overly proud,  
 heaving himself up against his Master, seeking hateful words  
 and boasting speech against him. He wished to serve God no longer.]<sup>38</sup>

There is a clear emphasis on Satan's importance and his high status in Heaven, which Milton's epic also describes repeatedly. Furthermore, *Christ and Satan* depicts the relationship as one of a lord and his thane – a valued tie in Anglo-Saxon society – by showing God as a king and Satan as a beloved subject in the prelapsarian era. Similarly to *Paradise Lost*, this is done with the intention to contrast Satan's prelapsarian and postlapsarian self. Milton describes Satan as being "of the first, / If not the first Arch-Angel, great in Power, / In favour and præeminence" (5.659–661), showing, as Satan says, "what state [he] fell" from as a result of his rebellion (4.38–39). In the end, Milton's version of the narrative becomes a curious mix of the second and third ideas that Williams lists, with Satan reacting negatively to being asked to bow to the Son and "confess him Lord" (5.608):

Who can in reason then or right assume  
 Monarchie over such as live by right  
 His equals, if in power and splendor less,  
 In freedome equal? or can introduce  
 Law and Edict on us, who without law  
 Erre not, much less for this to be our Lord,  
 And look for adoration to th' abuse  
 Of those Imperial Titles which assert  
 Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve? (5.794–802)

Sandra M. Gilbert, in "Patriarchal Poetry and Women Readers: Reflections on Milton's Bogey," comments on this "pseudoliberal speech" of Satan to his followers, comparing the reasons behind Satan's Fall to that of Eve's, suggesting that both of them were dissatisfied with their place and made the mistake of wanting to be "Equal with Gods" (4.526).<sup>39</sup> As Barbara Lewalski points out, this speech also closely resembles some of Milton's own ideas expressed in his political pamphlet from 1649, *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*:<sup>40</sup>

No man who knows ought, can be so stupid to deny that all men naturally were borne free, being the image and resemblance of God himself, and were by

<sup>38</sup> Aaron K. HOSTETTER (trans): "Genesis A/B" Lines 259–264.

<sup>39</sup> Sandra M. GILBERT: "Patriarchal Poetry and Women Readers: Reflections on Milton's Bogey". *PMLA*, 93.3, 1978, 368–382. 372.

<sup>40</sup> Quoted in John MILTON: *Paradise Lost*, 145.

privilege above all the creatures, born to command and not to obey: and that they liv'd so.<sup>41</sup>

This is not the only instance where elements of Milton's own political ideas permeate his epic poem. Satan's ever-changing and ambitious character in particular calls to mind some of the poet's descriptions of tyrants in *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*:

Sometimes they seem furiously to march on, and presently march counter; by and by they stand, and then retreat; or if need be can face about, or wheele in a whole body, with that cunning and dexterity as is almost unperceavable; to winde themselves by shifting ground into places of more advantage.<sup>42</sup>

Even if Milton's own claims on the matter of kingship and tyranny might be considered biased by some because of his own political stance, Satan's resemblance to the tyrannical figure Milton presents here is obvious. As Lewalski writes in her introduction to Milton's poem, Milton portrays Satan as a "self-styled grand rebel marshaling Milton's own republican rhetoric from *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* against what he calls the 'tyranny of heaven.'<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, in *Paradise Lost*, Satan not only expresses his scepticism towards the legitimacy of the Son's authority over them, but, in response to Abdiel's powerful attack on his previous claims, also "asserts that the angels were self-begot, and that God falsely claimed the credit for this [the creation of the angels]":<sup>44</sup>

That we were formd then saist thou? and the work  
Of secundarie hands, by task transferd  
From Father to his Son? strange point and new!  
Doctrin which we would know whence learnt: who saw  
When this creation was? rememberst thou  
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?  
We know no time when we were not as now;  
Know none before us, self-begot, self-rais'd  
By our own quick'ning power... (5.853–861)

As C. S. Lewis sums up in *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, Satan "attempts to maintain that he exists 'on his own' in the sense of not having been created by God, 'self-begot, self-raised by his own quickening power.'<sup>45</sup> To be able to argue that he is equal

<sup>41</sup> John MILTON: *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, London, 1649, no pag.

<sup>42</sup> John MILTON: *The Tenure*, no pag.

<sup>43</sup> John MILTON: *Paradise Lost*, 22.

<sup>44</sup> Joad RAYMOND: *Milton's Angels the Early Modern Imagination*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2010, 209.

<sup>45</sup> C. S. LEWIS: *op. cit.* 66–67.

not just with the Son but also with God, Satan must first and foremost renounce any part that God may have had in his creation. Milton's Satan not only denies the idea, but dismisses it entirely, as though it was only Abdiel's "strange [...] and new" assertion, instead of being a universally accepted fact, undermining the strength of the very claim. This denial might seem especially confusing to readers, as in Book 4, Satan has previously admitted to being created by God (4.43). It is evident from these that Milton drew upon many of the previously established narratives detailing Satan's rebellion and his possible motivations, and then by intensifying Satan's pride and ambition, he created his own entirely unique version of the story.

Similarly to *Paradise Lost*, the core issue of Satan's rebellion against God in *Genesis B* is the question of authority, and to an extent, self-governance. While Milton's Satan touches upon concepts such as equality in terms of freedom or the possibility of governing instead of service, the Old English poet had a coinciding idea about the potential causes of Satan's Fall:

“Hwæt seal ic winnan?” cwæð he. “Nis me wihtæ þearf  
 hearran to habbanne. Ic mæg mid handum swa fela  
 wundra gewyrcean. Ic hæbbe geweald micel  
 to gyrwanne godlecran stol,  
 hearran on heofne. Hwy seal ic æfter his hyldo ðeowian,  
 bugan him swilces geongordomes? Ic mæg wesan god swa he.  
 Bigstandað me strange geneatas, þa ne willað me æt þam stride geswican,  
 hæleþas heardmode. Hie habbað me to hearran gecorene,  
 rofe rincas; mid swilcum mæg man ræd geþencean,  
 fon mid swilcum folcgesteallan. Frynd synd hie mine georne,  
 holde on hyra hygesceaftum. Ic mæg hyra hearra wesan,  
 rædan on þis rice. Swa me þæt riht ne þinceð,  
 þæt ic oleccan awiht þurfe  
 gode æfter gode ænegum. Ne wille ic leng his geongra wurþan.”<sup>46</sup>

[“Why must I toil,” he asked. “There is no need at all  
 for me to have a master. I can mold many  
 wondrous things with my own hands.  
 I have great enough power to make ready  
 a godly throne — to be master in heaven.  
 Why must I scrape after his favor, bowing to him in such vassalage?  
 I can be a god just like him –  
 Strong warriors stand beside me, who will not withdraw from battle,  
 heroes hard-hearted. They have chosen me as their lord,  
 these brave warriors. With such allies one could devise a plan

<sup>46</sup> “Genesis A/B” Lines 278–291.

to seize with such comrades-in-arms. These eager friends are mine,  
 loyal to their hewn hearts. I can be their master,  
 to rule this realm. And so it does not seem to me right  
 that I should need to flatter him at all, a god after any god.  
 Nor will I be one of his subordinates for long.”<sup>47</sup>

While *Genesis B* does not talk about submission specifically to Christ, only to God, the essential idea is similar to Milton’s: Satan believes he is equal to God and is thus entitled to have an equal influence in the world. Although in *Genesis B* Satan does not directly question the creation of angels, he claims to have creative powers equal to God and states that he would be able to establish a better throne in Heaven. Furthermore, he assumes godhead by describing himself as a lord chosen by valiant soldiers. In his speech, Satan implies that on the one hand, he has a status equal to God in terms of rank; on the other hand, he suggests that the fact that his comrades chose him as a leader might add to the legitimacy of his rule. Relegation of power and the issue of inheritance, however, was not this simple in the Anglo-Saxon society. While the importance of support from retainers is also depicted as a relevant issue in Anglo-Saxon literature and society, as, according to Biggs, it was only possible to retain power through the command of warbands,<sup>48</sup> dynastic ties also played an important role in ascension to the throne. According to Biggs, the importance of dynastic ties appears in *Beowulf*, too. In another article, Biggs proposes that by showing that Beowulf was deserted by his retainers in his battle against the dragon, the poet emphasizes Beowulf’s lack of a son who “might [...] have begun using the tribe’s wealth to prepare for the beginning of his own rule,” and thus would have been able to continue his bloodline.<sup>49</sup> Regarding this aspect of Anglo-Saxon succession and the tradition of primogeniture in the Christian world, Satan’s speech in *Genesis B* might suggest that his rule is doomed to fall apart, as he has no son, only comrades to rely on.

Another, less frequently mentioned similarity between *Paradise Lost* and *Genesis B* is the fact that there is a possibility that both Milton and the author of the Old English poem were motivated not only by artistic or religious, but also political reasons. In this respect, the case of Milton is easier, as his pamphlets and other writings – such as the *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* – present his republican ideas, while the oral background of Old English literature and the distorting effects of time and copying provide no place to explain private ideas. However, there are two clues which suggest that the Old English poem might have some political implications: firstly, its Old Saxon origin, and secondly, the political

<sup>47</sup> Aaron K. HOSTETTER (trans): “Genesis A/B” Lines 278–291.

<sup>48</sup> Frederick M. BIGGS: “The Politics of Succession in ‘Beowulf’ and Anglo-Saxon England”. *Speculum*, 80.3, 2005, 709–741. 732.

<sup>49</sup> Frederick M. BIGGS: “Beowulf and Some Fictions of the Geatish Succession”. *Anglo-Saxon England*, 32, 2003, 55–77. 60–61.

tension in Wessex around the poem's assumed creation date. As for the first issue, it must be mentioned that both textual and linguistic evidence shows that *Genesis B* is a fractional translation of an Old Saxon poem narrating the Book of Genesis.<sup>50</sup> Thomas states that based on its literary context, e.g. its allusions, or the dating of the manuscript it was preserved in, the Old Saxon *Genesis* was supposedly composed in the first half of the 8th century, in the Carolingian empire, during the often unstable rule of Louis the Pious or the years of power struggle following his death, and the conflict of Satan and God in the poem can be understood as an allusion to these turbulences.<sup>51</sup> Thomas also adds that the translation of the poem into Old English might thus have been motivated by two reasons: on the one hand, it could contribute to the spreading of Christian theology in England; on the other hand, it could draw a parallel between political treachery and the disobedience of Satan by depicting the devil as a figure of Anglo-Saxon aristocracy.<sup>52</sup> As the mid-ninth century status of Wessex was comparable to Louis's Carolingian Empire in terms of problems of power division and political authority,<sup>53</sup> the translator might have been inspired by the contemporary political climate, or, alternatively, the poem itself might have had an influence on the assessment of the situation. Although the time of the translation is uncertain, Doane theorizes that the Old Saxon *Genesis* came to England somewhere between 850 and 900 based on the linguistic evidence,<sup>54</sup> in which case the remnants of previous power struggles in the century might have been perceivable.

While the authors of *Genesis B* and *Paradise Lost* decided to show the motivation for Satan's rebellion in a speech uttered by Satan himself, the poet of *Christ and Satan* chose a peculiar method to shed light on the reasons of Satan treachery. Instead of listing Satan's incentives himself, in the role of the narrator, or giving Satan a monologue about his discontent with God, it is the group of followers who sum up the events for the reader:

Duhte þe anum þæt ðu ahtest alles gewald,  
 heofnes and eorþan, wære halig god,  
 scypend seolfa. Nu earttu earm[.] sceaðana sum  
 in fyrlocan feste gebunden.  
 Wendes ðu ðurh wuldor ðæt þu woruld ahtest,  
 alra onwald, and we englas mid ðec.

<sup>50</sup> Thomas D HILL: "Pilate's Visionary Wife and the Innocence of Eve: An Old Saxon Source for the Old English 'Genesis B.'" *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 101.2, 2002, 170–184. 174.

<sup>51</sup> Daniel THOMAS: "Revolt in Heaven: Lucifer's Treason in Genesis B". Larissa Tracy (ed.): *Treason: Medieval and Early Modern Adultery, Betrayal, and Shame*, Leiden, Brill, 2019, 149–150.

<sup>52</sup> Daniel THOMAS: *op. cit.* 163.

<sup>53</sup> Daniel THOMAS: *op. cit.* 164.

<sup>54</sup> Alger Nicolaus DOANE. *The Saxon Genesis. An Edition of the West Saxon Genesis B and The Old Saxon Vatican Genesis*, Madison, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1991, 52.



Atol is þin onseon! Habbað we alle swa  
 for ðinum leasungum lyðre gefered.  
 Segdest us to soðe þæt ðin sunu wære  
 meotod moncynnes; hafustu nu mare susel!<sup>55</sup>

[To you alone it seemed that you owned all power,  
 the heavens and the earth, that you were Holy God,  
 the Shaper himself. Now are you bound fast  
 in fiery locks, just another criminal –  
 You believed by your glory that you possessed the world,  
 power over everything, and we were your angels by your side.  
 Terrifying is your face! Ill we have suffered for all your lying.  
 You said to us as truth that the measurer of mankind was your son –  
 now you have the more torment!]<sup>56</sup>

What makes this description of the situation especially interesting is the fact that on the one hand, the text reveals that Satan himself feels remorse for his actions; on the other hand, his remorse is not even enough to make his own followers empathise with him. Satan is as heavily criticised by his supporters as by the narrator; if only the preceding section of the poem is observed, the band of devils is harsher in their description of their leader than other parts of the text. Whereas the devils claim that Satan's face is terrible, and their suffering originates from his lies, the narrator only used the expression "se alda"<sup>57</sup> [the old one] to describe Satan, making the devils' judgement appear even harsher in comparison. In a sense, this portrayal and the dynamic between Satan and his supporters may signal that Satan's guilt is not strong enough to gain him forgiveness either from God or from his followers, which shows that he has failed both in his role of an angel, a symbol of his connection to God, and in his role as a chief, which is a political and social function.

Such a reaction on the followers' part, however, seems to reveal a key feature of Satan's original motive. The fiends say that Satan claimed that his son was the ruler of men; in addition, their account of the events suggest that Satan lied to them on purpose, which makes his drive for the rebellion utterly selfish, even though he acts like a responsible leader after the Fall. Milton's Satan is comparable to him from the aspect of leadership as well. On the one hand, Milton's Satan holds his council in Hell, which implies that he takes the opinion of his fellows into consideration, portraying him as an arguably attentive leader; on the other hand, the text also suggests that the most important aspect of his agenda was his own progress. He claims that "[he] sdeind subjection, and thought one step higher / Would set [him] highest" (4.50–51). This resonates with the account of Satan's actions in *Christ and*

<sup>55</sup> "Christ and Satan" Lines 53–64.

<sup>56</sup> Aaron K. HOSTETTER (trans.): "Christ and Satan". Lines 54–64.

<sup>57</sup> "Christ and Satan". Line 34.

*Satan*, where the devils' speech implies that Satan was, in fact, posing as God, and thus positioned himself as if he were to fulfil the highest role in Heaven. It is important to note that while both poems depict Satan as a self-motivated, yet caring lord, the reactions from his fellows greatly differ. The shortcomings of Satan in *Christ and Satan* are voiced by those fallen spirits that once supported his cause, showing that in the end, even sinners are disillusioned by his lies and understand their own fault in following him during the events of the rebellion. This nuance shows that although Satan seems to exhibit characteristics of Anglo-Saxon leaders, he failed in this role, as he can no longer provide safety for his thanes; moreover, his followers lost their trust in him. In contrast, the flaws in the arguments of Milton's Satan are not called out by his supporters, as they are willing to work together with him and listen to him even after being exiled, and "as a God / Extoll him equal to the highest in Heav'n" (2.478–479). Problems with Satan's reasoning are only addressed by the angel Abdiel, prior to the rebellion, who calls his words "blasphemous, false and proud" (5.809). Because of this, Milton's Satan might be interpreted as a more successful leader, as his subjects do not decide to oppose him even in a dire situation. Moreover, it might also imply that the Satan of the Old English poem lied to his followers more deliberately, while in *Paradise Lost*, the whole host of devils might have agreed with his agenda of not subjecting to the Son.

In terms of motivation, there is another curious similarity between *Paradise Lost* and *Christ and Satan*. Dustoor explains that Milton's decision to have Satan rebel against God due to the exaltation of the Son is a divergence from the medieval tradition, since most works in the Middle Ages suggested that his Fall was either a consequence of envy for Mankind, or his own vanity.<sup>58</sup> Of course, directing Satan's revolt against Christ specifically is not unprecedented in literature or theology. As a possible source of this idea, Dustoor mentions *Discourse of Divels*, an addition to Reginald Scot's *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* from 1558, which was republished in its supplemented form in 1665, and the Junius Manuscript's *Christ and Satan*.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, Hill adds that although the idea of Satan rebelling directly against Christ was a well-known tenet of Puritan theology, scattered references to such an understanding of Satan's Fall can also be found in other Old English religious poems, for example in *Andreas* or the poem entitled *Resignation* from the Exeter Book.<sup>60</sup> Unfortunately, references to the direct causes of Satan's rebellion in *Christ and Satan* are neither clear nor undivided; however, some excerpts imply that instead of rebelling against the Holy Trinity as a whole, Satan's disobedience was directed at Christ. In the poem, three different speakers – the narrator, Satan and the band of devils – all comment on this issue. Firstly, the narrator, who can be said

<sup>58</sup> P. E. DUSTOOR: "Legends of Lucifer in Early English and in Milton". *Anglia. Zeitschrift für englische Philologie*, 44, 1930, 213–268. 246.

<sup>59</sup> P. E. DUSTOOR: *op. cit.* 247.

<sup>60</sup> Thomas D. HILL: *op. cit.* 318.

to represent an outside perspective, claims that the rebels “[...] woldon benæman nergendne Crist / rodera rices”<sup>61</sup> [that they wished to seize from the Savior Christ / the kingdom of heaven];<sup>62</sup> a statement that explicitly portrays the revolt as a fight against Christ. Secondly, Satan himself says that he “[...] wolde of selde sunu meotodes, / drihten adrifan”<sup>63</sup> [I wished to drive the Lord, the Son of the Measurer / from his throne],<sup>64</sup> suggesting that his claim to the heavenly throne was put up against Christ. Thirdly, the group of fiends mention that “[s]egdest us to soðe þæt ðin sunu wære / meotod moncynnes”<sup>65</sup> [You said to us as truth that the measurer of mankind was your son – / now you have the more torment!].<sup>66</sup> Although the last claim contains no direct reference to Satan working against Christ, it does suggest that Satan wanted to replace him with his own son. This act can also be viewed as an attack on Christ in his role as Lord.

There are many undeniable similarities between the ways the figure of Satan is depicted in *Paradise Lost*, *Genesis B*, and *Christ and Satan* that seem to suggest that Milton might have looked at these specific Old English poems as sources of inspiration. Although most of the more overarching themes used in the poems are those generally used in almost all texts depicting the events surrounding the fall of Satan, some of the more specific details of Satan’s character itself suggest a connection between these narratives that is deeper than simply their shared story. While on the surface Satan might simply be the embodiment of pure evil, all three poems manage to show a figure that has intriguingly complex emotions. Although in *Genesis B*, Satan’s emotions are never directly expressed, the tragedy of his Fall is still as deeply felt as in *Paradise Lost* or *Christ and Satan*, in both of which works he is given a dramatic lamenting monologue confessing his regrets. Furthermore, the motivations behind and consequences of his rebellion also share various common features. In all three poems, at the core of Satan’s rebellion is his unwillingness to submit to or accept any figure of authority besides himself. His main motivation is always to prove himself to be equal with God, which is clear in both Milton’s work and the Old English poems. During our research, we have come to the conclusion that a deeper look into Milton’s use of other Old English poems might reveal hitherto unnoticed parallels to *Paradise Lost*, further enriching the already extensive scholarship not on just Satan’s character, but also on Milton’s poetry.

<sup>61</sup> “Christ and Satan”. Lines 345–346a.

<sup>62</sup> Aaron K. HOSTETTER (trans.): “Christ and Satan”. Lines 345–346a.

<sup>63</sup> “Christ and Satan”. Lines 172–173a.

<sup>64</sup> Aaron K. HOSTETTER (trans.): “Christ and Satan”. Lines 172–173a.

<sup>65</sup> “Christ and Satan”. Lines 63–64a.

<sup>66</sup> Aaron K. HOSTETTER (trans.): “Christ and Satan”. Lines 63–64a.

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### Abstract

*In our paper, we analyse and compare the figure of Satan in Paradise Lost, as well as in Genesis B and Christ and Satan – two works of Old English literature – in order to see whether the poems in the Junius Manuscript might have served as a source of inspiration for Milton’s epic. The comparison was based on the individual analysis of three different factors. In the first part of our paper, we study the characterisation of Satan, his reactions, emotions, and responses to the event of his exile. In the second part, we concentrate on Satan’s social function as a leader, his relationship with his subjects, their responses to his actions and the overall evaluation of his position based on the assumed rules of the societies in which the Satan-figures were created. Lastly, we contrasted the motivation of Satan in the three poems. Our*

*comparison showed that parallels between Satan in Paradise Lost and Old English poetry exist in many respects.*

**Keywords:** *Paradise Lost*, Old English poetry, Satan

### *Rezümé*

*Óangol versek mint az Elveszett Paradicsom lehetséges forrásai*

*Tanulmányunk témája az Elveszett paradicsomban, valamint a Genesis B és a Krisztus és Sátán című óangol versekben megjelenő sátánfigura összehasonlítása. Célunk az volt, hogy elemzéseink segítségével megtudjuk, Milton használhatta-e forrásként a Junius-kézirat verseit eposzához. A műveket három nézőpontból hasonlítottuk össze. Tanulmányunk első részében Sátán megformálását – reakcióit, érzelmeit és a száműzésre adott válaszát – vizsgáltuk. A második szakaszban Sátánt vezetői szerepében vizsgáltuk: értékeltük alattvalóival való kapcsolatát, azok hozzáállását Sátán tetteihez, valamint azt is, hogyan tölti be az uralkodói pozíciót a vers keletkezési idejének társadalmi kontextusában. Az utolsó részben Sátán motívációit vizsgáltuk a három szövegben. Összehasonlításunk megmutatta, hogy számos párhuzam fedezhető fel az Elveszett paradicsom és az óangol költemények Sátánjai közt.*

**Kulcsszavak:** *Elveszett Paradicsom*, óangol költészet, Sátán