



1993

## Fresh Woods, and Pastures New: Chorography, Cartography and the Puritan Perspective in "Lycidas"

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### Recommended Citation

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY

"FRESH WOODS, AND PASTURES NEW":

CHOROGRAPHY, CARTOGRAPHY

AND THE PURITAN PERSPECTIVE IN "LYCIDAS"

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

BY

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

JANUARY, 1993

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To my mother, my father, and my husband

## INTRODUCTION

In the divisions between Protestants and Catholics, Parliament and Crown, divisions that grew sharper as 1642 approached, Milton and many of his countrymen saw the unfolding of a plan prophesied in Revelations; they believed that England, where the promise of the Reformation was in the process of fulfillment, had a special role in the advancement of a divinely prescribed order. This apocalyptic, nationalistic spirit is reflected in "Lycidas" in part through its relationship to two particular forms of geographical representation. Cartography and chorography were familiar in varying degrees to privileged seventeenth-century readers, especially to Milton's primary, intended audience, the Cambridge dons and students who would read the commemorative volume, Obsequies to the Memorie of Mr. Edward King, published the following year. While the fact that the poem alludes to these two closely related but distinct geographical modes has long been mentioned in footnotes and scholarly discussion, the relationship between the elegy and geography is more than a matter of mere allusion, because in particular passages the poem engages in a verbal depiction of the image of Great Britain.

The existence of such a geographical effect may seem, at first, arcane, a matter best left in the capable hands of scholars and editors of scholarly editions. However, as

recent historicist investigation has at least begun to suggest, it may be possible to read early seventeenth-century geographical representations as expressions of anti-monarchical feeling, of the fact that the nation and the Crown were in the process of becoming distinct, not always compatible entities; it is, therefore, significant that geographical images occur in Milton's poetry in 1637, which was, as Peter Sacks points out, "the first year of the so-called revolutionary epoch" (92), a time when overtly subversive statements were forcefully and in many cases violently suppressed.

I will examine the relationship of "Lycidas" first to chorography and then to cartography, explore the theoretical and political implications of these representational practices, and end by examining the way such implications bear on the poem's interpretation. Ultimately, I hope to demonstrate that the appearance of geographical images in this particular poem at this historical point signifies something intriguing about the relationship between the consciousness of the Puritan, his nation, and his king. The imagery suggests that certain human beholders are capable of seeing the world from an elevated, distant, Divine perspective--from a point of view approximating God's--and it is through this perspective, which I call the Puritan perspective on Great Britain, that the political tenor of the poem is conveyed. The image of the land and the perspective from which it is seen, introduce, in

a way that is necessarily subtle, a new formulation of authority over the earthly realm of human affairs, and the terms of the new equation, quite simply, exclude the authority not only of the bishops, but ultimately, the King.

### Chorographical "Lycidas"

"Lycidas" is played out on two planes, spatial and temporal, and the movement of both is from the remote to the immediate. Mona is a distant, mythologized, somewhat Arcadian setting, and the event that takes place near Mona--Lycidas' death--occurs in a remote time-frame, roughly corresponding to that of Vergilian and Theocritan idyll. The gradual transition of those settings that are identifiably British, the progression from Mona to Cambridge, represents a movement from the distant reaches of Wales to a place closer to the center of power in London, and from a distant, Druidic, pre-historical epoch, to the era of Renaissance scholarship at Cambridge.

The temporal movement of this apocalyptic poem is forward, and a future-orientation, as C.A. Patrides writes, is essential to seventeenth-century views of Revelations prophecy (207). Each of the poem's three sections, in fact, closes with lines presaging future developments: the poet may "expect" his due fame in heaven (l. 84); the "two-handed engine" is "ready to smite" (l. 131); and the speaker, in the end, awaits "fresh Woods, and Pastures new" (l. 193).

In the rebuke of the absent nymphs of Mona--an archaic toponym for the Welsh island now called Anglesey--Milton rendered a particular British setting, Anglesey and the surrounding area, by referring to specific landmarks--a promontory and a Druidic burial-ground, among others--and did so without, as far as we know, ever having visited these points. His experience of the locale was based not on a recollection of sights, but purely on other texts. Among these texts are chorographical ones, and it is possible to read "Lycidas" in terms of its relationship to the great chorographical works of the period, works such as William Camden's Britain, first published in an English translation in 1610, and Michael Drayton's Poly-Olbion, a book-length chorographical poem published in 1612. Richard Helgerson has proposed that this complex of geographical texts--one that includes Christopher Saxton's late-Tudor atlas of English counties and especially involves Poly-Olbion--implies the existence of a new mode of individualist perception, a "mutually self-constituting exchange between individual authors and the land they represent"; the affinity between various texts allows us to conceive of the emergence of nationalism and the emergence of individualism as "deeply implicated in one another," because they share "a common term of difference . . . opposition to a royal absolutism" (Helgerson 64-65).

Chorography is defined by The Oxford English Dictionary



as

the art or practice of describing, or delineating on a map or chart, particular regions, or districts; as distinguished from geography, taken as dealing with the earth in general, and (less distinctly) from topography, which deals with particular places, as towns, etc.

The dictionary notes that the concept of chorography is now submerged in meaning with geography and topography, but was sufficiently important in the seventeenth century to require a particular term. Critics unaware of this distinction often assume that Milton's rendering of land-features in "Lycidas" is an example of topographia, but this is not exactly the case. In the charge to the absent nymphs of Mona and the mention of the river Deva, Milton's imagery involves not so much the particular landmarks of a place--an identifiable British place--as its general character as a region. The passage draws together and conflates qualities associated with three distinct points in the general region of Mona, and thus the rendering of space in this passage is not, strictly speaking, topographical, but chorographical; to some extent it engages in the practice of chorography.

The poem's relationship to chorography is further strengthened by allusions to chorographical works--allusions supporting a connection between Edward King and the Druids, the "old Bards," who lie buried near Mona. This association, which has been noted by a number of critics,<sup>1</sup> is important because it suggests that King is heir to the tradition of the Druids, functioning in the poem as their modern counterpart or

antitype. These ancient priests are presented by certain chorographers as early practitioners of an indigenously British religion, which, while it was certainly not Christian, differed from most pagan religions in its monotheism. Their strange, intense faith led to the Druids' becoming, in a sense, religious martyrs, for they were slaughtered by invading Romans soon after the birth of Christ. The association between the Druids and the Cambridge fellow, Edward King, a cleric who died during the sea-voyage to his first parish, suggests that there is something particularly British about King's faith; the association has special implications for the interpretation of the attack on the clergy and of the poem as a whole. In the process, King is indirectly likened to the Druids of Mona, and his martyrdom with the sacrifice of "true" English priests. The death of Lycidas is not simply the death of a poet-shepherd or priest-shepherd or a Cambridge alumnus with whom Milton in some ways identified. As the antitype of the Druids, he is connected with Britain's primal religious past, and is thus "purer" than the corrupt clerics Milton derides. King, according to the poem's typological logic, is untainted with the influence of Laud, and is a figure standing for the Protestant salvation of England.

In "Lycidas," two worlds, British and classical, converge. At first Great Britain is only a metaphorical shadow; it appears when the speaker recalls the idyllic,

imaginative landscape where the two shepherds were "nurst." Because they engage in song for which they receive the approbation of "old Damaetas," the reader understands that the hill is a metaphor for Cambridge; one of the university's many functions was the training of young poets.

After the countryside turns to mourn the loss of Lycidas, the setting shifts to a vantage-point from which his drowning might have been seen.

Where were ye Nymphs when the remorseless deep  
 Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas?  
 For neither were ye playing on the steep,  
 Where your old Bards, the famous Druids, lie,  
 Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,  
 Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream:  
 Ay me, I fondly dream!

(ll. 50-56)

Let us first examine this passage on its face. We are, at this point, given quite a bit of information about a setting. It is in the general region of a place called Mona, which seems to be near the sea, the "remorseless deep". It is difficult to know whether "high" modifies Mona itself or its "top," but Mona seems to be either a mountain-top or an area featuring a mountain or lookout-point. This elevation is "shaggy," which suggests that it is wooded. Somewhere nearby there is a burial-ground of "Druids," who are identified with "Bards," and that place is also steep. The reiteration of "nor" and "nor yet" suggests that these spots--Mona, the burial-place, and the third locale, the point at which "Deva spreads her wizard stream," are distinct. But together, they

seem to constitute a region, for from each of these points Lycidas' drowning might have been witnessed by the nymphs.

A twentieth-century reader, especially without the aid of footnotes, might be unable to see that the setting has shifted from the imaginary pastoral realm, an area in which Cambridge and the classical setting somehow merge, to the actual world of Great Britain--to points identifiable on a map--and would probably pass over this quite quickly. Milton and his intended audience, however, would have had somewhat more knowledge of these places. Learned, seventeenth-century readers would have had some familiarity with Renaissance atlases, with Britain, and with Poly-Olbion. Furthermore, the Cambridge dons and students to whom the memorial volume was addressed would have known that King died when his ship foundered somewhere between Chester and Dublin, a route that, as A.L. Owen notes, passed the east and north coasts of the Welsh island of Anglesey (52). This fact, together with a familiarity with atlases, many of which label Anglesey as "Mona," would allow these readers to identify Mona as an archaic toponym for an actual place. They might have associated the burial-place with several other points in the general region of the islands north of Wales, places that the chorographers tell us are associated with holy men or saints, and quite possibly they would think of the tiny island to the south, Bardsey, on which, as Camden notes in Britain, "twenty-thousand Saints" lay buried (203). They might remember that

Camden quotes at length Tacitus' description of the defeat by the Romans of the Druids on Mona, and the fact that this conquest was followed by the burning of the groves sacred to their "execrable superstitions," for Tacitus--unlike other writers who helped disseminate the traditon--thought the Druids performed sacrifices to a plurality of pagan gods (Camden 49). Thus they would identify the setting with a specific region of Great Britain, but would understand that the charge to the absent nymphs takes place in a mythological British past, an era when Anglesey was called Mona and was wooded. Furthermore, from their perspective at Cambridge, they would regard the Welsh islands as the hinterlands, distant from the cultural and political centers of the southeast--Cambridge and London. The passage then, would seem temporally and spatially removed from present-day concerns.<sup>2</sup>

There are two ways in which chorography plays an important part in the poem. First, in the Mona passage, the poem seems to engage in the practice of chorography--that is, the act of describing the particularities of a region. Secondly, as this gloss of the Mona passage should begin to suggest, the lines also allude to chorographical texts, relying on a reader's knowledge of them to orient itself in the geography of Great Britain.

A knowledge of chorography would also help the reader begin to see a relationship between the Druids, seemingly a

passing reference, and the "real" or primary subject of the poem, King, a cleric who died en route to Ireland, and who, if he was not a poet, had poetic proclivities. The Druidic lore on which the reference depends, information compiled by the chorographers, is, as Owen writes, a literary, rather than a historical tradition (1-2). The tradition that the Druids originated in Britain, Owen notes, is credited to Caesar (Owen 15); their concerns, according to Caesar, were with worship and the performance of sacrifice (17). But their involvement with sacrifice had a dual edge, for they not only enacted blood-sacrifice of animals, they were also massacred by Suetonius Paulinus in A.D. 61, and thus were, in a sense, religious martyrs themselves.

Another tradition regarding the Druids configures them as early types of Renaissance scholars. In Hystory and Croniklis of Scotland, published in England in 1536, Hector Boece renders the islands north of Wales as a prototypical British university.

The principall sect of thir preistis wes in the Ile of Man, quhilk wes in that time the spectacle and fontane of all honest eruditioun and letteris; and, fra thir preistis wer anis profest in Catholik faith, thay perseverit with gret constance in it, bot ony spot of herise. (Owen xxv)

Quoting this, Owen notes that "both Anglesey and Man were once called Mona; such was Boece's esteem for these early moral philosophers that presumably he removed them to the more northern island in order to bring them nearer to Scotland" (29). What Boece values in the Druids is what Owen calls

their "apparent kinship" to Renaissance scholars (29-30); his depiction of them renders them as early humanists (31).

The Druids were thought of as both bards and priests, a reputation that, as we shall see, serves to associate them with King. Selden, in his annotations to a line in Poly-Olbion, in which Drayton refers to "fearlesse British Priests," notes that Drayton means "the Druids; because they are indeed, as he calls them, British Priests, and that this Island was of old their Mother: whence as from a Seminary, Gaule was furnisht with their learning" (Drayton 192). These British priests, although pagan, were, as David Berkeley points out, seen by Milton's contemporaries as "closer to monotheism than the Greeks, Romans, or Gauls" (46-47); he quotes Selden's annotation: "For although Apollo, Mars, and Mercury were worshipt among the vulgar Gaules, yet it appears that the Druids invocation was to one All-healing or All-saving power" (Drayton 193). At the same time, the Druids were believed to have been poets practicing an oral tradition; as Selden notes, "In a multitude of verses they delivered what they taught, not suffering it to be committed to writing" (Drayton 193).

The emphasis on the word "lie," which falls at the end of a line and is set off by commas, hints that perhaps the Druids, as Berkeley writes, lie "suspended" in time, "awaiting further developments" (48). This development is, in the typological logic of the poem, that of Puritanism, an

indigenously British religion, one concerned in a special way with poetry.

"Lycidas" bears a specific relationship to certain geographical texts, and that relationship signifies that this text, like its cousins, takes a particular position vis-a-vis the political conditions under which it was written. Drayton's text is important in this complex, but although many allusions in Milton's poem can be traced to Drayton's, I do not intend to argue that the original and exclusive source for any of the allusions in "Lycidas" is Poly-Olbion. None of the information I will be discussing here is unique to that poem. Drayton's main source, as Jean Brink notes, is Camden (86), and Camden drew from a broad complex of older texts; Milton, we can be almost certain, read Camden and most of the old historians of Britain. But it is Drayton, not Camden, who turns the chorography of Britain into a poem; what Camden describes, Drayton recasts into alexandrine couplets, and his main device is personification, the process of giving a personality and voice to topographical features. This device is picked up and used to a much more interesting effect by Milton.

Through the reference to Druidism in the Welsh passage, a learned reader would begin to see that Milton is rendering the setting as an early fountainhead of indigenously British religious learning. Owen notes the possibility that by



mentioning the proximity of the burial-ground to the site of King's shipwreck, Milton is somehow equating King, a Renaissance scholar, with the Druids. The mention of Druids in the passage, Owen writes, "links the poet, the Fellow of Christ's College, and the promising divine with Britain's earliest poets, learned men and priests" (54). Owen believes the "symmetry" may have been "fortuitous" (54), but there are reasons to believe that this was an association which Milton might have made quite consciously, and the link in the chain is provided by Drayton. Drayton personifies topographical features, and in keeping with this technique, his Muse listens to a personification of Anglesey, a lady called Mona, who tells about her own reputation, which extends even as far as the Hebrides, and of the Druidic sacrifices that once took place within her consecrated groves:

Sometimes within my shades, in many an ancient wood,  
 Whose often-twined tops, great Phoebus fires withstood,  
 The fearelesse British Priests, under an aged Oake,  
 Taking a milk-white Bull, unstrained with the yoke,  
 And with an Axe of gold, from that Jove-sacred tree  
 The Missleto cut downe; then with a bended knee  
 On th' unhew'd Alter layd, put to the hallowed fires:  
 And whilst in the sharpe flame to the trembling flesh  
     expires,  
 As their strong furie moved (when all the rest adore)  
 Pronouncing their desires the sacrifice before,  
 Up to th' eternall heaven their bloodied hands did reare:  
 And, whilst the murmuring woods even shuddred as with  
     feare,  
 Preacht to the beardlesse youth, the soules immortall  
     state;  
 To other bodies still how it should transmigrate,  
 That to contempt of death them strongly might excite.

(Song IX, ll. 415-29)

The passage is a poetic distillation of almost everything Renaissance humanists believed about the Druids: the rites conducted in consecrated groves of mistleto-bearing oak; the blood-sacrifices; the idea that they were early British priests; the instruction to youth; and the doctrine that the soul transmigrates from one body to another, a belief that allowed them to transcend the fear of death. It compiles information found in Camden and many earlier historians of Britain. We may surmise, however, that he would have thought not only of those sources, but of Drayton's poetic summary. Milton calls the Druids "famous," and while it was Camden, Owen points out, who made them famous (39), Drayton was the first English poet to write of them often (46).

Another set of chorographical allusions concerns the single line personifying the Deva, or River Dee. The Dee empties near Chester, the point from which King's ship departed. The phrase "wizard stream" refers to an old superstition, reported by Drayton, Camden, and their mutual source, Cambrensis, that annual shifts in the direction of the river signaled whether England or Wales would prevail that season.

The inhabitants of these points assert that the waters of this river change their fords every month, and, as it inclines more toward England or Wales, they can, with certainty, prognosticate which nation will be successful or unfortunate during the year. (460)

Camden reports this superstition, which dates to the fifth-century English-Welsh conflicts, notes that the river's name

derives from Dyffyr-dwy-Dwy, meaning either "from two sources," or "Divine water" and that the region's inhabitants "attribute Divinitie to this river Dwy above all others." He also writes that "the Christian Britains thought the water of this river to be holy: For it is written, that when they stood ready to joine battaile with the English Saxons and had kissed the earth, they drank also very devoutly of this river, in memoriall of Christs most sacred and pretious bloud" (602).

Drayton also tells about the superstition regarding the Dee's course (Song X, line 203-208), and his sources are clearly Camden and Cambrensis. But Milton's Dee seems more closely allied to Drayton than Camden, for unlike Camden's straight description, it is a personification, the first of two personified rivers in "Lycidas." In Poly-Olbion, waterways (like other topographical features) are consistently represented by figures. Drayton had a particular love for rivers, and his book is to a large extent a catalog of English and Welsh rivers, each given a particular personality and history through a process of prosopopoeia.

The connection between "Lycidas", Druidism, and chorography surfaces again with the allusion to Cambridge, which appears in personified form as Cam.

Next Camus, reverend Sire, went footing slow,  
His Mantle hairy, and his Bonnet sedge,  
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge  
Like to that sanguine flower, inscribed with woe.  
Ah; Who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?

(ll. 103-107)

The standard footnote to these lines associates them with the tenth book of Ovid's Metamorphoses: the "sanguine flower, inscribed with woe"--the hyacinth--was created by Apollo from Hyacinth's blood after he accidentally killed him; Apollo then "inscribed his grieving words upon the leaves, and the flower bore the marks, AI AI, letters of lamentation, drawn thereon" (79). But Camus' "hairy" mantle also echoes the imagery of Mona's "shaggy top," which could be taken as a forest of hair; when the two images are considered together, it is almost as though both locales are turned into bodies topped with hair.

There is, however, another, possibly stronger reason to connect the two settings--a historical debate about the role of Druidism in the establishment of Cambridge.

In a controversy over the priority of the foundation of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, Thomas Caius of Oxford claimed that philosophers had come to Britain with Brutus and settled at Oxford. John Caius of Cambridge replied that the Druids, who thrived from 1013 B.C. to A.D. 179, had been in Britain before the arrival of Brutus, and their establishment at Cambridge had therefore antedated that of the Oxford philosophers. In the augmented second edition of De Antiquitate Cantabrigiensis Academiae, posthumously published in 1574, a revised estimate of the age of Druidism then helped to place a seat of learning beside the Cam long before the name of Isis was heard on the banks of the Nile, let alone in the neighborhood of the Folly Bridge. (Owen 35)

It is quite likely that Milton and his primary audience at Cambridge were aware of this controversy. The possibility that they would be able to make such an association has also been noted by David Norbrook, who suggests that Milton "may" have read an eclogue by Giles Fletcher, published in 1633, in

which a character named "Lycidas" mourns a drowned friend; in this poem (which I think Milton must have read) Lycidas asks Camus to explain his history, and Camus relates the story of learning in Great Britain, the story of the town's founding in pre-Christian times by Britons who wished to keep alive the flame of Druidic learning (274). Thus, Norbrook argues, although Milton is not very explicit, the allusion

does provide one of the many links in the poem between the roles of poet and priest and helps to link "Lycidas" with the apocalyptic Protestant view of British cultural history. The poem thus forms a bridge between the sixteenth-century gossellers and those Whig oppositionists in the eighteenth century who associated Druids with political liberty and poetic independence" (275).

Two figures in "Lycidas," Camus and St. Peter, strongly resemble Drayton's personification of the river Cam: Drayton's river-genius is "a wondrous learned Flood," who reviles those who have mistreated her progeny:

My Invective, thus gooth she, I onley ayme at you  
 (Of What degree soe'r) ye wretched worldly crue,  
 In all your brainless talke, that still direct your  
     drifts  
 Against the Muses sonnes, and their most sacred  
     gifts  
 That hate a Poets name, your vilenesse to advance,  
 For ever be you damn'd in your dull ignorance.  
 Slave, he whom thou dost thinke, so meane and poore to  
     be,  
 Is more then halfe divine, when he is set by thee.  
 Nay more, I will avow, and justifie him then,  
 He is a god, compar'd with ordinary men.

(Song XXI, ll. 131-40)

Milton's Camus, in a manner that recalls the "Invective" of Drayton's Cam, defends his "dearest pledge," and St. Peter reviles the "blind mouths." Lycidas is defended by Camus and

St. Peter because he, unlike the corrupt clerics, is skilled at preaching, an art strongly connected, in both the Protestant and the Druidic tradition, to that of the poet.

Milton's allusions to chorography, especially as practiced by Drayton, begin to uncover the relationship between "Lycidas" and chorographical texts. The poem is also, as already stated, related to chorography through the regionalized quality of its imagery; this regionalization suggests that Milton is not only alluding to the practice, but to some extent mimicing it.

It appears that by mentioning certain actual places on the map of Great Britain, Milton is attempting some degree of geographical specificity, but at the same time rendering a mythologized setting. In the Mona passage, the setting shifts from the unreality of the idyll, a metaphorical equation of the pastoral realm and Cambridge, to an Arcadian version of the very actual topos in which King's death took place. Because the passage interjects a British, as opposed to a purely classical and imaginative setting into the poem, it foreshadows the abrupt shift that will follow the catalog of flowers, when the actuality of King's death breaks through the pastoral and the location of his drowned body is described. On the one hand, what is presented here is actuality; it is suggested that we should begin to think of the physical features of the land itself. The repetition of the definite

article--"the steep", "the famous Druids", "the shaggy top of Mona high"--makes the remote and generalized seem somewhat more familiar and actualized. On the other hand, the passage, with its reference to an ancient, no longer extant wood and to the religious beliefs of the distant past, makes an actual place on the map, one that would be known to those familiar with atlases, seem shaded and remote.

Drayton's organizing principle is mainly spatial, and his emphasis is on the country, rather than on cities. The poem begins with his Muse entering the county of Cornwall, and proceeding on a county-by-county basis from Cornwall to Wales, a route that allows him to circuitously avoid London until the Sixteenth Song, near the end of the first book. Brink notes that while Drayton derived this county-by-county organization from Camden, he differs in that he progresses from the southwest to Wales; Camden begins in the more populous, urbanized southeast (86); Drayton's choice reflects his country-orientation. His concern with the land, as opposed to cities, is reflected even in his subtitle, which promises a

Chorographical Description of Tracts, Rivers, Mountaines, Forests, and other Parts of this renowned Isle of Great Britaine, With intermixture of the most Remarquable Stories, Antiquities, Wonders, Rarities, Pleasures, and Commodities of the Same: Digested in a Poem . . .

Drayton, Brink writes, "sets out to show that there is an English equivalent for everything classical . . . the heroes, events, and geographical wonders of the classical world are used as touchstones to demonstrate the importance of Great

Britain" (84). Druidic religion, she points out, surpasses the Romans'; Lemster wool surpasses the golden fleece; Malvern Hill surpasses Mount Olympus; "and there are more curves in the Wye river than in the fabled classical Meander" (85). "Lycidas," similarly, configures Mona as a British version of a classical, mythologized space.

In the Arcadian quality and in the allusions in the Mona passage, "Lycidas" is involved in a complex of antiquarian texts, and especially with Drayton's Poly-Olbion, a work that is implicated in an important way, as we shall see, in that textual network that Helgerson identifies as representing a shift in allegiances from the Crown to the land itself. But in order to fully understand the geographical context of "Lycidas" and its political implications, it is necessary to examine the other mode of geographical representation that plays an important part in its imagery.

#### Cartographical "Lycidas"

Between the earlier sections of the poem and the closing paragraphs, there is one clear distinction in the rendering of the British setting. This landscape appears intermittently, almost imperceptibly, in the lines on Mona, the Deva and Camus. The Welsh passage is spatially and temporally remote; the line on the River Dee, which is slightly south of Anglesey, moves the imagery slightly closer to the centers of power in the southeast and shifts the allusive substructure of



the narrative forward in time as well--from Druidic pre-history to the period of the English-Welsh conflicts in the fifth century. The Camus passage brings the poem closer still to the contemporary center of power in London. In a very subtle way, then, the poem's focus shifts from distant spots on the map and a dark or obscure period of time toward the more populous centers of the southeast and toward the contemporary era.

Immediately following the catalog of flowers, the artifice of which underscores the fact that Lycidas has no real grave, we are presented with the austere fact: his body lies "whelmed" beneath the waves somewhere between the waters beyond the Hebrides and the southern tip of Cornwall. This very actual topos is given breadth, depth and color through geographical references. But most importantly, the country, fragmented into regions in Wales and in Cambridge and appearing intermittently within the pastoral setting, is now unified. In one great sentence Milton profiles not only the possible locations of King's corpse, but in the process, sweeps across the map of Great Britain, mentioning topographical details that shade in the area lying between the Hebrides and St. Michael's Mount.

Ay me! Whilst thee the shores, and sounding Seas  
Wash far away, where ere thy bones are hurl'd,  
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides  
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide  
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;  
Or whether thou to our moist vows deny'd  
Sleeps't by the fable of Bellerus old,  
Where the great vision of the gaurded Mount

Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold;  
 Look homeward Angel now, and melt with ruth.  
 And O ye Dolphins, waft the haples youth.

(ll. 154-164)

The image, taken as whole, resembles the cartographic portrait of Great Britain and the surrounding area, in certain ways specifically resembling the view of Great Britain presented in both Ortelius's and Speed's atlases. While I do not intend to argue that it corresponds to one or two particular maps, certain of its particulars resemble characteristics of the general maps of the nation found in these atlases, while one image--the dolphins--is meant, I think, to remind the reader of contemporary cartographical decoration.

The topographical references are points on a picture of the nation, beginning with places in the north and proceeding to points in the south. In both atlases, the maps of Great Britain include a fairly accurate and prominent depiction of the Hebrides in the far north. The "monstrous world," although it lies beyond the Hebrides, may well have been suggested not only by the danger of navigating the Irish sea, where King's ship foundered, but to a very conspicuous feature of Ortelius' map--a sea-monster, his gaping jaws opening just south of King's sea-route to Dublin. Bellerus, Berkeley notes, is a place-name derived from Bolerium, the name given by Ptolemy and Camden to Land's End (165), as a Latin inscription on Ortelius' map makes clear. The "gaurded Mount,"

refers to St. Michael's Mount, where the archangel is said to appear; the Mount is marked clearly on Ortelius's map of Great Britain and on Camden's map of Cornwall, and is especially noticeable on the map of Cornwall included in Poly-Olbion. Namancos in northwestern Spain is marked on Ortelius's map of Galicia.

While the dolphins are certainly meant to recall the myth of Arion, an ancient poet rescued from death by dolphins enchanted by his music, they also would have reminded Milton's readers of cartography, for while there are no dolphins on either Ortelius' or Speed's maps of Great Britain, they are a common feature of contemporary cartographical decoration, and appear swimming through the seas on several of Ortelius's other maps.

The resemblance raises certain intriguing questions. What, to a reader of Milton's time, would such an image mean?<sup>3</sup> How should it affect our interpretation of this poem? The balance of this discussion is an attempt at an answer.

### Subversion, Science, and Morality in Renaissance Geography

There is every reason why, in a poem that concerns the death of a Protestant cleric and the corruption of the clergy, Milton might intentionally refer to cartography and chorography, for by doing so, he was envisioning a new formulation of religious and political authority, a

formulation obliquely attacks the authority of the Stuart monarchy itself.

The political character of "Lycidas" has been the focus of some recent critical discussion. Norbrook argues that the tendency to read the poems of the 1630's as apolitical, purely aesthetic artefacts is due, in part, to a tendency to draw too-sharp distinctions between what he calls "the poet of the 1630's and the Puritan of the 1640's" (237) and that this may result in an overemphasis on "the discontinuities" of the canon. The political tracts of the 1640's are marked, he writes, by rhetorical subtleties setting them apart from more conventional, contemporary pamphlets; certain "comparable strategies" are found in the earlier poems. The absence of explicitly radical pronouncements in the earlier poems may well be explained by the fact that after the dissolution of Parliament in 1629, stricter controls were imposed on "orthodox channels of political debate", and the decade was marked by a tightening of ecclesiastical censorship.

The period of the 'King's peace' can be seen as the most determined attempt in English history to 'aestheticize politics', to suppress articulate discussion and to force the realm into a harmonious pattern of ritualized submission. (238)

Milton, Norbrook maintains, appeared to be "stylistically conservative" (239); in the apocalyptic manner he sought "to make the last first and the first last," by reviving "elements in the old prophetic tradition that were currently unfashionable" (240). Thus the hope of reattaining a former

harmony is the theme of "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity" (241-42). "Lycidas," Norbrook argues, is political in its affirmation of the university as opposed to the court, and in the rendering of Cambridge as a center of Druidic learning and of a religion associated with "political and poetic independence" (274-75).

But such rhetorical nuances may run deeper than even Norbrook suspects. Helgerson's discussion of the subversive quality of seventeenth-century cartography and chorography provides a groundwork--albeit incomplete and possibly flawed--for understanding how the very act of geographical representation functioned during this period as a political signifier.

Maps, Helgerson argues, were useful during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century mainly to the powerful, to those who held property (51). Their purpose was not simply utilitarian, for they had a strong ideological element: they bestowed visual form upon the goals of those who used them (56). Helgerson begins his discussion with an examination of certain iconographical features of a series of British maps, beginning with Saxton's atlas of English counties, first published in 1579. Saxton's project was undertaken by the behest of Elizabeth's government, and intended, as Helgerson points out, to satisfy the purposes of that government and to express its power (51). What is striking about the Elizabethan editions of Saxton's maps is

the way they feature the imprint of royal power--royal arms appear on every page of the work (53). This imprint says a great deal, Helgerson believes, about the relationship between land and Tudor power.

These maps proclaim royal sovereignty over the kingdom as a whole and over each of its provinces. As we turn the pages, we are invited to remember that Cornwall is the queen's, Hampshire the queen's, Dorset the queen's, and so on county by county. (54)

In the decades after the publication of Saxton's atlas, the ideology reflected in English maps began to change noticeably. Helgerson traces the fate of royal imprints on the maps that followed, particularly on those published in the reign of James I, and finds that as the land itself increased in importance, the imprints grew smaller and were shunted off to the side of each page. Ultimately maps themselves would fortify "the sense of both local and national identity at the expense of an identity based on dynastic loyalty" (56).

What emerges during the early seventeenth century, Helgerson writes, is an opposition of interests: on the one hand, there were those who would represent the land, and on the other, those who would represent royal power, and by approximately 1600, these interests had begun to diverge. This opposition becomes clear with the publication in 1612 of the first installment of Drayton's Poly-Olbion. The maps drawn by Speed to accompany Drayton's text, are in Helgerson's words, the "iconographic culmination" (59) of the movement that led away from allegiance to monarchy, and toward

allegiance to the land itself. Dynastic insignia are entirely absent from Speed's illustrations; instead, Poly-Olbion presents, in the words of its preface, "every Mountaine, Forrest, River and Valley; expressing in their sundry postures; their loves, delights and naturall situations." Such is the iconography of both Speed's maps--in which various figures are drawn to stand for or preside over various places --and Drayton's text. "Drayton's Britain," Helgerson comments, "is 'peopled' by its natural and man-made landmarks. Its streams are nymphs, its hills, shepherds; its differing regions, rival choirs" (59-60).

Helgerson compares the equation of power represented by the Ditchley portrait, in which the Queen is represented as standing on a map of the realm to that implied by Saxton's royal imprints (54). On Drayton's frontispiece, a lady representing Great Britain, clothed in a map, holds the royal scepter. The icons of power are still monarchical. "But the monarch is now the land, the land as Saxton and his successors had been making it known (59-60).

The evidence, Helgerson argues, suggests something "more complex and more interesting" than the "Renaissance discovery of the self". Not only does the new emphasis on the land "parallel the emergence of the individual, authorial self," the two forces mutually imply the existence of the other.

Each comes into being in dialectical opposition to royal absolutism--an absolutism that in its most extensive form would claim both parts, would claim to be both that which is represented (the land is

the body of the king) and that which does the representing (these are the king's maps, produced by the exercise of his power). In this view all words and all images are the king's . . . The chorographies that follow Saxton never explicitly reject this royalist notion. But they nevertheless edge toward a very different sense--a sense of words and images caught in a complex and mutually self-constituting exchange between individual authors and the land they represent. (64-65).

"Lycidas" draws meaning from its relationship to this intertextual complex. The poem in part echoes Drayton's imagery, and to some extent engages in similar poetic practice: Milton's personifications, like Drayton's, turn the land--the British topography embedded within the pastoral setting--into a network of living figures: nymphs and river-spirits; "monstrous seas"; the vision of the archangel said to appear on St. Michael's Mount; gentle dolphins. This geographical prosopopoeia implies the emergence of a certain consciousness--a consciousness of the land as an area that need not be symbolized by the marks of royal absolutism, by scepter, Queen, or royal insignia. It is a land that is animated and speaks for itself.

Helgerson may well be reading too much into the royal imprints on Elizabethan maps, but the fact remains that maps became much more widely available during this time, and that familiarity with these cartographic views irrevocably altered the relationship between the English and their land, for it allowed them to grasp it visually and as a whole. Helgerson neglects, however, to take account of a crucial aspect of the ideology reflected in geographical representation, for these



beliefs are not as secular as we might conveniently assume. Cartographic representation, while it was well on its way to becoming an accurate, pragmatic, scientific process, was not, during this period, wholly modern, for this genre, this class of images, was a symbol simultaneously evoking two world-views: one secular, the other religious.

In Milton's day, maps had three qualities that are important to this discussion. First, they were novel--they jarred perceptions, forcing readers of atlases to see the world in a new way. They depicted the globe, in the words of David Harvey, as a "knowable totality" (246); presenting a kind of aerial view that had to have been particularly arresting in an age before air travel, for it existed entirely on an imaginative plane (Schulz 441). Secondly, the relationship between cartography and perspective bestowed on maps a certain scientific resonance. But thirdly--and this is most important--such representations, through both their allegorical iconography and through the employment of the Ptolemaic grid, had moral implications. They harkened back to a pre-Renaissance mappamundi tradition, a representation of the world as a realm on which the will of God was projected. Their union of two world views--God-centered and man-centered --may well be the depiction of a certain historically contingent synthesis.

"The connection between cartography and perspectivism,"

Harvey writes, "lay in this: that in designing the grid in which to locate places, Ptolemy had imagined how the globe as a whole would look to a human eye looking at it from the outside"; the infinite world was thus a "conquerable" field for human action (246). Geographical representations might well have resonated with subversive overtones in part because their perspectival quality contributed to an emerging sense of personal identity--a sense of self as a potentially active agent in a field much wider than what could have been perceived in the era before maps were widely circulated.

While the cartographic grid system is not identical, strictly speaking, to pictorial methods of linear perspective, it is both historically and technically connected to it. Samuel Edgerton, tracing what he has called "the Renaissance rediscovery of linear perspective" writes that Ptolemy's Geographia, which became known in Florence in about 1400 (93-94), offers three separate cartographic methods (99), and the third, unlike the first and second, is "akin to an artist's frontal approximation (101). This third method was "a means of representing the 'known world'"--Europe, Asia and Africa as far south as the Equator--"as seen from an individual human eyepoint" (106); this was "almost a clear-cut linear perspective based on geometric principles." The description of this method was "the first recorded instance of anybody--scientist or artist--giving instructions on how to make a picture based on a projection from a single point representing

the eye of an individual human beholder" (104).

Thus, one of the effects of this new visual technique may have been a reinforcement of the sense of individuality. Michael Kubovy, in The Psychology of Perspective and Renaissance Art, a book mainly concerned with explaining the psychological effects of certain special kinds of perspective, discusses the way that perspectival pictures, in general, make us feel that, no matter what our viewing position may be, "our perceptual system infers the location of the center of projection and we feel that we are looking at the depicted scene from the vantage point implied by the center of projection." To explain this phenomenon, he refers to the concept of the egocenter--"a spatially localized, visual egocenter that does not coincide with either eye" (150).

Perhaps perspective in some sense "created" the egocenter, or perhaps it reinforced a permanent quality of human consciousness. But it seems likely that perspective appeals to a visually determined feeling of "centeredness" which acts as a focus for ego awareness, and that both perspective and its relative, cartography, either created or reinforced a new sense of individualism.

The development of linear perspective is often seen, from our historical vantage-point, as the dividing line between medieval and Renaissance modes of perception and, by extension, between collective and individual forms of social organization. But this may vastly oversimplify matters; it

seems much more likely that even in Milton's time perspective and cartography bore both secular and religious nuances--that they embraced continuity, rather than representing a clean break with the past.

Edgerton uses in a recent essay Leonardo's Man in a Circle and a Square as an example of the way in which an image which we now interpret as "modern" may have had meanings hidden to us. The drawing, he argues, is not "a symbol of scientific progress, as supposed"; it represents, rather, "very ancient lore, even primitive human intelligence, about the form of the cosmos." The combination of the human figure "with a perfect geometrical square and circle is closely connected with cartography, especially the employment of the Ptolemaic grid" (10-11).

Leonardo's society, in a way that Edgerton argues was universal at the time, believed in the "talismanic power" of "geometrical patterns formed in othogonal relationships."

The arrival of Ptolemaic scientific cartography with its longitude and latitude grid system did not necessarily dispell these primordial beliefs. Instead, the new grid cartography, especially in the hands of the Roman popes, tended to reinforce faith in the divine mission of Christianity to convert the world. That is to say, by Leonardo's time the cartographic grid had become in its own right a talismanic symbol of Christian authority . . . the cartographic grid in the Renaissance was believed to exude moral power, expressing nothing less than the will of the Almighty to bring all human beings to the worship of Christ under European cultural domination. (11)

Milton gives us, in the Hebrides passage, a symbol of the will of God and the individual conscience, merged into a

single vision, a vision that is fundamentally religious. Puritanism, in the most general terms, was a matter of independent thinking, the free exercise of individual conscience. "The quintessential quality of a Puritan," Lawrence Stone writes, "was not the acceptance of any given body of doctrine, but a driving enthusiasm for moral improvement in every aspect of life"; the drive

found expression in a desire to simplify the services of the Church and to improve the quality of its ministers, to reduce clerical authority and wealth, and most significant of all, to apply the strictest principles of a particular morality to Church, society and State." (99)

This reformist zeal would become, of course, a fundamental cause of the Civil War. Despite the fact that Puritans generally strongly believed in "the preservation of traditional social and political hierarchies" (102), the question of whether political leaders were members of the Elect, whether there were "limits to the obedience a godly person owes to a sinful magistrate" (100), questions necessitated and legitimized by Puritanism, necessitated political subversion (102).

A "Puritan perspective" would involve the assumption that the viewpoint of a right-thinking individual represents the proximity of human and Divine perception. The underlying assumption could be stated in this way: as a Puritan, my perception of the earthly realm, guided as it is by conscience and by scriptural enlightenment, is akin to God's; my world-view is therefore valorized, set above the carnal concerns of

my contemporaries.

This elevated perspective is definitely not without precedent in Renaissance literature. As Walter Gibson writes in his study of sixteenth-century Flemish painting, the viewpoint reflected in both cartography and landscape, a relatively new art in Milton's time, expressed "a Renaissance sense of philosophical detachment, a sense of disillusionment or even cynicism concerning humanity in general" (57). Gibson then traces this detached viewpoint to its classical roots--to the closing section of De re publica, in which Cicero relates the dream of Scipio Africanus the Younger. Scipio dreamt he was taken by his grandfather to the realm of the stars, and a description of the earthly scene is accompanied by his grandfather's lecture on the insignificance of all that lay below. One sense conveyed here, as Gibson comments, is that "it is senseless for human beings to strive for a reputation so limited in time and space." This concept appears in works as diverse as Lucretius' On the Nature of the Universe, Lucian's Icaromenippus, Erasmus' Praise of Folly and St. Ignatius Loyola's Spiritual Exercises.

In emulation of Cicero and especially Lucian, writer after writer in the Renaissance described imaginary trips to the moon or some other lofty station, where the author or his protagonist mocked or mourned the insignificance of man and his works." (58)

The literature suggests, Gibson writes, "that maps, at least mappae mundi, stimulated similar meditations on the smallness of the world and the vanity of human pursuits" (58). Several

medieval manuscript texts of Macrobius' Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, for example, "included a mappa mundi that not only illustrated Cicero's geographical information, but allowed the reader to contemplate, like Scipio, the insignificance of the world" (58-59). Macrobius' text remained popular beyond the medieval period; many editions were printed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It may have inspired Ortelius to use a quote from Seneca as an inscription on the world map in the second edition of the Theatrum, "Is this that pinpoint which is divided by sword and fire among so many nations? How ridiculous are the boundaries of mortals." The second inscription on the map is by Cicero: "The purpose of the horse is to carry, the ox to plow, the dog to hunt and guard. Man, however, is born to contemplate the universe." Thus, as Gibson points out, Ortelius "unites the two philosophical strands. . . contemplation of the greatness of God's creation and contemplation of the futility of earthly endeavor" (58-59). And this cartographical "perspective," I might add, is imprinted not on a medieval map, but on a relatively accurate one, a map based on scientific principles still in use today. The idea that maps are philosophical or religious symbols was not abandoned at the end of the medieval period.

The ideology expressed in the Hebrides passage has two dimensions. On the one hand, the image of Great Britain

signifies the emergence of the individual, anti-authoritarian conscience. At the same time, the image signifies something that, from a modern and secular point of view, might be harder to grasp: the world--the earthly realm configured in the Hebrides passage--is a domain belonging neither to the individual nor to the Crown; it is a field on which Divine will is executed. In 1637, it was becoming clear that the will of the Divine and the will of the Crown might well be mutually exclusive.

"Fresh Woods, and Pastures new":

The Puritan Perspective in "Lycidas"

If its critics are to be believed, "Lycidas" often appears to be a poem in search of a subject. Is its "real" subject Edward King? Or is it Milton himself, who, late in 1637, was still mourning the death of his mother and anticipating his own impending journey over water, with its attendant possibility that his career might, like King's, be cut short by the Atropos' shears before it had come to fruition? I do not deny the validity of these readings, but I find it difficult to believe that a poem as involved as "Lycidas" in the geography and history of Britain could be narrowly personal. I would like, therefore, to enter the fray by arguing that "Lycidas" has another, unacknowledged "subject": a concept of nationhood reflecting a new set of allegiances, offering the promise of a new vision of true



authority.

"Lycidas" is about a young cleric whose career was cut short by sudden death. Whatever the forces that caused his ship to sink, there is no explicit or obvious connection between his death and the corruption of the clergy, and thus St. Peter's condemnation of the "blind mouths" has appeared to many critics to be a digression. But Lycidas plays two parts in the poem. His role as a poet-shepherd is the focus of lines 1-84, and his role as priest-shepherd is dealt with in the middle of the poem in lines 85-131. These two roles are linked to Druidism: Lycidas is the antitype of the Druids. Through both functions, he is presented as the antithesis of the corrupt clerics: we understand him to be both worthy and bidden, and we understand him to be a faithful practitioner of the "Herdsman's art"; his death is associated not only with Orpheus', but with that of the "fearlesse British priests," and his songs contrasted to the "lean and flashy" gratings of the modern clerics.

Given the poem's historical setting, and given the fact that Milton would write in the second, 1645 edition, that it "fortells the ruin of our corrupted Clergy then in their height," we can assume that standing behind the clergy is the shadow of Laud and the monarch who leant him his support. Both Laud and the courts of James I and Charles I participated in the repression of Puritanism. The events of the year during which the poem was written were, as Sacks points out,

pivotal, for in 1637 "Scotland rebelled against the Book of Common Prayer . . . and in June, in the presence of vast numbers of outraged sympathizers in the palace yard at Westminster, the Puritans Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton were cut and branded for sedition" (92). Milton, Sacks writes, may have joined the crowds in the palace yard during one of his periodic trips from Horton, and even if he did not, he quite likely read about the events in rapidly circulating reports (92-93).

While there are numerous interpretations of the "two-handed engine," one plausible and popular one is that it represents the sword of the Son of Man, who will come at the end of time to restore justice. "And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" (Rev. 1:16). When St. John the Divine prostrates himself before the vision, the Son says, "I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death" (1:17-18). The sword becomes an "engine" to stress its instrumentality, its potential as an active agency. It is "at the door" of both heaven and hell; an allusion that conveys the "immediate expectations of Christ's reappearance" (Patrides 220).

We have seen the association between Mona and Cam, and by implication the association of the denizens of these

respective places, the Druids and King. But the clergy passage, with its figure appearing on the lake of Galilea to revile the pretenders, also recalls Drayton's personification of Cam, and thus the priestly and poetic elements of Druidic tradition find their place in contemporary and imminent events.

The corrupt clerics are historically and implicitly connected with Laud, with Roman Catholicism, and with the monarchy: all were seen as threats to Puritanism. Behind this generalized corruption there stood, for Milton, the Antichrist. The violation of human, spiritual needs, the starvation of the "hungry sheep," is part of a pattern of iniquity and general moral decline that signals the Antichrist's appearance. If King is the antithesis of the corrupt clerics, then by a process of association, he functions in the poem as a representative of the Puritan opposition.

Thus the British setting of the first section, where King is presented as poet-priest, is united with the British setting of the second section, where he is a priest-shepherd. The entire geographic picture of the nation, and the role that this Protestant savior plays in it, comes together in the concluding third of the poem, which deals with the transcendence of the physical body. "Lycidas," by a process of association that, for its intended audience, would not have been particularly difficult, is not only about the untimely

death of Edward King or the poetic career of John Milton. It is about the salvation of the Protestant individual, differentiated from and independent of the corrupt practitioners of High Anglicanism.

Through Lycidas' death, the body of the land, without monarchical trappings, is reinscribed, for it is by mentioning the possible locations of King's body ("Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides . . .) that the outline of the map appears. The land itself, personfied in the living figures of nymphs and rivers, comes alive; it is given the capacity of speech.

Significantly, it is in the Hebrides passage that Lycidas' body is differentiated from his soul. The "great vision" is the Archangel, reputed to appear at St. Michael's Mount. The Divine mercy which the angel reflects makes it possible for the dolphins, traditional symbols of comfort, to waft the helpless youth to his true, non-physical home, just at the point where the Angel is asked to turn his sights away from Namancos and Bayona--from the horrors of the Inquisition and toward England. It is the mercy of Heaven that finally will heal the nation, threatened by unholy influences on its churches.

"Lycidas" is not only cartographical; it is strongly related to chorography, a generic relationship that, as I hope I have demonstrated, would have been suggestive to Milton's readers. Chorography, like all representations, functions, as Helgerson writes, by a process of differentiation. It was

each county's difference that made it worth describing, and local difference that gave meaning to the lives of the local inhabitants (73). At the same time, the genre had become, by 1637, inextricably tied up with the multitudinous voices--the multiple "personifications," if you will--of the various regions of the land; chorography becomes a metaphor for Parliament.

If chorography was a representative body, so was parliament. The same anatomical metaphor--the 'body of all England'--was used repeatedly of both, as it was for the land itself. And as tension increased between monarch and parliament, between court and country, so too did the importance of those things in which chorographers were specialists--local difference, local identity, and local representation--until parliament came almost to seem a living chorography, a map made flesh. (73-74).

But it would be very wide of the mark to conclude that "Lycidas" suggests that the salvation of Great Britain would be found in a wholly secularized institution. Even if it represents Parliament, the land itself hardly seems a haven for the godly; it is, after all, in the natural, physical realm that Lycidas' bones are hurled by the whelming tides. The image of the nation in the Hebrides passage harkens back to the mappamundi tradition, in which the earth represents the realm of vain pursuits; this is why the passage involves a differentiation between the death of the body and spiritual transcendence. The poem does not remove itself from the temporal world; it valorizes Lycidas by placing him in both a heavenly realm recalling the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev.

19:9) and on earth, where he will become "Genius of the shore"--the protective spirit of the very borders of the nation, of the coastline which differentiates and defines this island realm. This implies that a new "spirit" will re-animate the land.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are there shall be burned up. Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (II Peter 3:10-13)

It is by describing the undetermined location of the corpse of Lycidas/King that Milton traces out the map of England; in the process, the land is re-inscribed, the heavens and the earth renewed. The death of this Protestant cleric and poet presages the establishment of a new form of discourse--Parliamentary discourse. Lycidas's death corresponds to the impending dissolution of the old realm, and his rebirth, made possible by Divine grace, bestows upon the land "fresh Woods and Pastures new," heralding a new, Parliamentary era, and the resurrection of the land itself.

## NOTES

1. Critics who have discussed this Druidic connection include David Norbrook, A.L. Owen, and Allan Gilbert. However they have not brought out the relationship between this connection and the poem's geographical imagery, as I intend to do. In his study of the typology of "Lycidas," David Berkeley provides what may be the fullest treatment of the idea that the Druids are types of British poet-priests. He connects the Druids with the poem's intimation of a "spiritually evolving Britain" (14), and his concept of the poem's overall vision--the salvation of an individual that transcends the corruption of the earthly church--is very close to mine.

2. Literary historians have long enjoyed the game of attempting to pinpoint these spots--"the steep," the Druidic burial-ground, or the "shaggy top of Mona high"--as identifiable points on a map. But the ultimate effect of the lines is a kind of specificity merged with a mythologized blurring of the distinctions between one of the points and another.

George Whiting, whose annotations of the line on "the steep" is often cited, maintains that it is probably on Bardsey (103), and that Milton's source is probably Humphrey Lhuud's epistle, included at the end of the 1606 edition of Ortelius' Theatrum.

Ptolemy the Prince of Geographers, upon the East side of Ireland placeth foure islands, Monarina . . . Mona, Adros and Lymnos. The latter two are very well known unto us at this day; for that indeed they doe still retaine those auncient names. Adros of our countrey men is called Yns ador, that is, as the words doe signifie, The Island of birds. Lymnos they now call Enlii, which the English men call Bardsey, that is, as he would faine interpret it, Insula Bardorum, The Bardes iland.

Whiting also notes that Camden, in the 1610 edition of Britain, writes of Bardsey, which was called Enhly.

As for Enhly it is a name of a later stampe, and came by occasion of a certain holy and devout man, who heere lived as an Eremite. For, this Island, which toward the East mounteth aloft with an high promontory, but Westward lieth plaine, and is of a fertile mould harboured in old time so many holy men, that . . . ancient histories record there were twenty thousand Saints buried heere. Next unto this lieth Mona, that is Anglesey, which the Britains call Mon, Tir-Mon, and Ynis Dowyll, that is A darke or shady Island . . . (Camden 203)

On the basis of these allusions--Lhuyd as the source for the "bards" and Camden for the steep and the burial-ground (104)--Whiting concludes that the first locale mentioned is on Bardsey.

But this is difficult to accept. Bardsey is many miles southwest of Anglesey, north of the Cardigan Bay. King's ship went down at least thirty, and perhaps fifty miles northwest of Bardsey, and could not have been visible from both islands. Owen, who notes this discrepancy, suggests that perhaps Milton imperfectly recalled Camden, who imprecisely wrote, in the passage quoted above, "proxima hinc MONA." Milton, Owen conjectures, who had never visited the area, supposed upon recollecting the lines that Bardsey was adjacent to Mona (53).

There are two problems with both Owen's and Whiting's interpretations. If Milton had taken a quick glance at most contemporary maps of the area, such as the one in the 1610 edition of Camden, he would have seen Bardsey clearly marked "Enhly" in its proper location, and he almost certainly had seen several such maps. Secondly, the first locale Milton mentions, the one supposed to be by Whiting to have been on Bardsey, and featuring the "steep" and the Druidic burial-ground, could have been one of several islands, many very small, off the coast of Wales, not far from where King's ship went down; many of these are hilly and some are associated with holy men. Any of these might be the spots Milton had in mind in writing of the "steep" and the burial-ground.

Giraldus Cambrensis' thirteenth-century Itinerary through Wales mentions a very small island east of Anglesey where there lived a group of holy men. "The island is called in Welsh Ynys Lenach, or the ecclesiastical island, because many bodies of saints are deposited there, and no woman is suffered to enter it" (Cambrensis 449). William Worcestre's fifteenth-century manuscript, Itineraries, describes the same island, Priestholm, which, he writes, "lies beside the Isle of Anglesey, almost joined to it, where hermits lived by the labour of their hands and served God." He goes on to describe how, when strife arose between them, "a numberless host of mice appeared, and straightway these mice with which the island abounded, though extremely small, ate or spoiled all the food and drink . . . (121). The map of North Wales included in Poly-Olbion clearly marks an island east of Anglesey, near King's sea-route, and calls it the "Isle of Mice."

Another candidate for the first locale mentioned in the Welsh passage is Holyhead. This is a small island separated by a thin strip of water just west of Anglesey. Gilbert points out that Holyhead had almost all the characteristics of the place described by Milton: Holinshed mentions its "promontorie"; it was a famous burial-place of Christian (not Druidic) saints, and it was closer than Bardsey to the spot



Milton must have had in mind (24). Gilbert notes the possibility that the passage represents a composite of accounts of the general region comprised of islands north of Wales, near the spot where King's ship went down, a picture made up of written accounts of a place Milton had never seen (23). But while the composite-theory seems credible, the second locale referred to, "the shaggy top of Mona high," may well be Anglesey, for although the island is generally flat, there are many lookout points there, such as Parys Mountain (418 ft.) in the north, and the medieval castle at Beaumaris, which lies on the eastern side of the island, near King's sea-route. Beaumaris is described by Worcestre (135) and shown in a bird's-eye view on the map of Anglesey in Speed's Theatre.

Yet even if Mona is Anglesey, we are still left with the difficulty of connecting "the steep" and burial-place to a specific locale. The evidence suggests that despite Whiting's attempts to connect this first geographical reference to a particular place on Bardsey--an interpretation that is commonly footnoted in modern editions of "Lycidas"--Milton was actually thinking mainly of certain qualities of a generalized region: its proximity to King's sea-route, its points overlooking the sea, its several burial-places, and an association with Druids and holy men that involves the entire region of the Welsh islands. In describing the first locale, he may have been thinking of Bardsey, Priestholm, and Holyhead, and combined qualities of all these places into one, and finally mentioned Mona in order to make it clear that he was indicating the general area of the Welsh islands. This blurred quality of the reference, contributes, I feel, to the mythologized character of the passage.

3. This begs a certain question: how do maps, which consist of the interplay of visual image and textual inscription, convey any of their meanings? There is no doubt that they do, but their signification takes place at some meeting point between the textual and the pictorial. J.B. Harley's article on Tudor cartography attempts to shed light on what he calls the "twilight zone" of "cartographic semantics," but the difficulties of doing so have been little studied and remain unsettled.

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