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TUDOR THEATRE

ALLEGORY IN THE THEATRE
L'allégorie au théâtre

Volume 5
Table ronde VII

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Garden of Eden

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The iconographic representation

> *Il vedere questo giardino, il suo bello ordine, le piante e la fontana co' ruscelletti procedenti da quella tanto piacque a ciascuna donna e a' tre giovani, che tutti cominciarono ad affermare che,* se Paradiso si potesse in terra fare, *non sapevano conoscere che altra forma che quella di quel giardino gli si potesse dare, oltre a questo, quale bellezza si potesse aggiungere.*
>
> BOCCACCIO, *Decamerone*, Terza Giornata.

Before we can talk about the iconography of paradise and look for the ways in which it was portrayed in medieval theatre, we must first of all identify the paradise we wish to consider. In fact, when used without any particular context the term paradise in Italian and French means heaven, whereas in English paradise is normally taken to mean the Garden of Eden.

The object of our attention in the first part of this brief exposition will be the iconographic representation of paradise, that is the Garden of Eden; while the second part (Higgins) will be about its staging in the Middle Ages.

This task is not facilitated by the fact that in both figurative art and in surviving theatrical sources the representations of this paradise are much more circumscribed than those of heavenly paradise, representations which are not only much more numerous, but also much more detailed in their scenic elaborations (Massip, 1996, p. 61-82). In any case, among the many scenographic elements of medieval theatre there does exist, even if limited to a couple of examples (the famous *Jeu d'Adam*, in particular), a documentation of performances of the so-called *paradiso sensibile*, a tangible as opposed to an imaginary place of pure delight, where no suffering is possible and where transcendence and spirituality are indicated by showing the human figure only from the shoulders up.

The primary purpose of this study is to support the theory that the motifs of traditional iconography, transferred to or interactive with those of sacred plays, represent an interesting phenomenon of reciprocal influence owing to the fundamental similarity of situations and intentions.

For the spectator of the Middle Ages sacred drama functioned both as the portrayal of topics of current relevance and as an extension of religious ritual, of which it constituted a sort of visualization and explanation.

An example of the interpenetration between figurative art and theatrical forms which goes back to the tenth century can be seen in the 46 miniatures of the *Homily of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale). Here the scenes are presumably inspired by one of the sacred performances in vogue at the Byzantine court. Documents attest to the fact that the emperor himself and all of his retinue entertained themselves by acting out episodes of sacred history.

In Hebrew-Christian tradition Paradise, as distinguished from the paradise where the elect reside in heaven is identified in a painting by Giovanni di Paolo as the Garden of Eden, which, according to the biblical description, is situated east of Palestine beyond the sea, perched high in the mountains above the flood waters, and from which flow four rivers[1].

A source of primary inspiration and the origin of every representation of paradise is, of course, the story of Genesis, where Eden is described:

> Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. And the Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground – trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
> A river watering the garden flowed from Eden, and from there it divided; it had four headstreams. The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there. The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.
> The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." (Genesis II, 8-17)

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[1] Giovanni di Paolo (Siena 1403-1482) in a painting in the *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena* depicts angels, saints, beatified Christians, but also young women dressed in splendid multicoloured robes who lovingly embrace each other. The scene is set in a garden of trees laden with golden fruit. The artist though not unaware of the new stylistic features of the Renaissance, especially in landscape painting, nevertheless inserts tiny naturalist details typical of the stylistic elegance of the Gothic International.

Starting with the first sentence of the narration "Now God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden…" we note that the term "Eden" is associated with that of garden, to that garden of delight which often, in fact, appears in the traditional literature of the Orient.

Continuing: "…the Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground – trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food… A river watering the garden flowed from Eden, and from there it divided; it had four headstreams." This description of the abundance of water, trees and shade would serve as a maximum aspiration for the collective imagination of biblical times, to a population of the desert, subject to a hostile nature where sun and aridity are a real scourge. Thus Eden is a garden and the garden is paradise.

The word paradise is of Persian origin, derived from *pairi daeza* or "enclosure, hedge" and was used to indicate an enclosed garden, vegetable patch or park. This would be related to both the Greek term *paradeisos* – used in Greece for the first time by Xenophon in *Anabasis*[2] to indicate just that Persian notion of a place or enclosure which defined a garden with beautiful trees and animals, an orchard, or in any case a place where pleasure reigned – and to the Hebrew *pardes*, used in the Old Testament to indicate a park. The Greek version of the Bible and the subsequent editions in Latin, including the Saint Jerome version, translate the Hebrew term *gan eden* (from the Sumerian *gan* for orchard) as Garden of Eden, which, in this way, becomes synonymous with paradise.

It is here, in this garden where everything was provided without the necessity of working that man was placed by God to live in the absence of suffering but in the presence of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thus presenting an ideal space and center in which the narrative action unfolds: the drama of Adam and Eve's disobedience, their rebellion against God' s design, for which they are cast out of Paradise. "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die…"

Basic then to understanding the iconography of our subject is the description found in Genesis, which not only gives a visual representation of this place (very useful from a scenic point of view!), but also seems to intimate its historic existence by the furnishing of certain geographical details. However, even with the given coordinates (the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, for example) it seems impossible to confer upon it a real geographical location[3].

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[2] The term is cited several times in the first two books of *Anabasis* (I, 4, 10 - I, 2, 7 - II, 4, 8 - II, 4, 9).

Moreover, in the examining of these "real" or "historic" elements, we must take into consideration the amount of time that has elapsed between the original text and its subsequent interpretations, since changes in taste throughout the ages could have had their influence on the various versions that have come down to us, and consequently on the different modes of imagining and representing them.

Leaving aside the question of geographical or historical authenticity, we note that the Garden of Eden with its four rivers flowing from the central source is generally considered the primary spiritual centre, an immutable place of immortality, a meeting point between heaven and earth. Its universal symbol is the garden, expression of divine activity and the centre of the cosmos. The concept of the circular garden, the paradisiac garden – and therefore similar to Eden – is in fact typical not only of Middle Eastern culture and religion (as is documented in certain Arab and Persian miniatures), but is also found in the Far East, where the garden serves as a concise, miniaturized representation of the world.

Even the Hesperides of Greek mythology re-propose the same symbolism: the garden with the golden apples, the entrance portal guarded by a dragon, and the hero, who in entering therein expresses the desires and hopes of man in his quest for immortality. The myth deals with a type of paradise, and the terrible difficulties the hero encounters in trying to enter could well symbolize the struggle man must undergo to reach the level of spirituality necessary to attain immortality.

The return to the state of Eden, that is to say the condition of perfect happiness in which man was first created, is therefore a constant theme which many cultures have in common. Although this return is impossible in the Jewish-Christian tradition because of original sin[4] the aspiration remains universal: to recover the state of perfect happiness and innocence and thus renew contact with the divinity, which was lost as a consequence of the expulsion from Eden.

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[3] Among the Garden of Eden fabulous locations, there are some about a place at east of China, whereas the earth ends and begins, either in India or in Ceylon. "In 1340, an Apostolic Legate at the court of Khan, Giovanni de' Marignolli, located the Garden of Eden not far from Ceylon, following a certain tradition… that is about a mountain, the Olympus (from Alumbo a mountain in Ceylon island) which rises next to the paradise (Mancini, 1997).

[4] The doctrine of original sin teaches that while man may reach the threshold of happiness, he will never cross it, a situation which results in failure and death.

Returning to the representation of paradise in the figurative arts, we will limit our examples to a chronological period spanning the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries. We note that in this period this representation is closely linked with the representation of Creation, the Temptation and the Fall, and therefore not at all likely to be present as a mere function of landscape.

In the pictorial representations going back to the first centuries of the Middle Ages, for example in the mosaics of the *Cupola of Genesis* in the cathedral of Saint Mark in Venice, the mosaics of the Palatine Chapel of Palermo, as also in the frescos of the monastery of Aghios in Greece we note in fact that it is naturalistic details that predominate. Plants and especially animals relate the act of Creation and the beauty of a world irrevocably lost because of the original sin. The background in gold and the figures without depth suggest models related to the culture of Byzantium and the preceding classical tradition: divine acts are described hieratically even if there are no overt elements of indoctrination. By a series of insertions whose primary function is narrative, the text of Genesis is enriched with elements that do not blindly follow the text but are perfectly consistent with it, since "that which matters to the artist is precise exposition, the clarity of the references" (Hauser 1975). The creation of the animals predominates, and no elements of enclosure or delimitation appear which are not purely naturalistic, such as mountains or flowing water.

With the succession of epochs and therefore of culture and tastes, we find that even the concept of the return to the state of innocence changes, and as a result there naturally are changes in the way in which the locus deputatus is depicted. This can explain how a more symbolic representation of paradise in the twelfth to fifteenth centuries[5].

The symbol in medieval times had to possess one fundamental characteristic, that of simplicity in pictorial representation. The artistic form of the object was thus concise, simple and universally recognizable, so that for the viewer the connection between the shown object and the moral or cannonical reference must be instantly discerned. The description of the Terrestrial Paradise can sometimes be very concise, as we see in the sculpture cycles of some cathedrals (Modena, Autun, Orvieto) or in bronze doors (Verona, Hildesheim) – eleventh to twelth centuries – where a simple detail is enough

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[5] An example would be the "rose", which according to traditions of chivalry, the loved woman is symbolized by a rose, which grows in a closed garden, where the only access for the lover is through a closed door. On another level also the Madonna is allegorically symbolized as a "mystic rose".

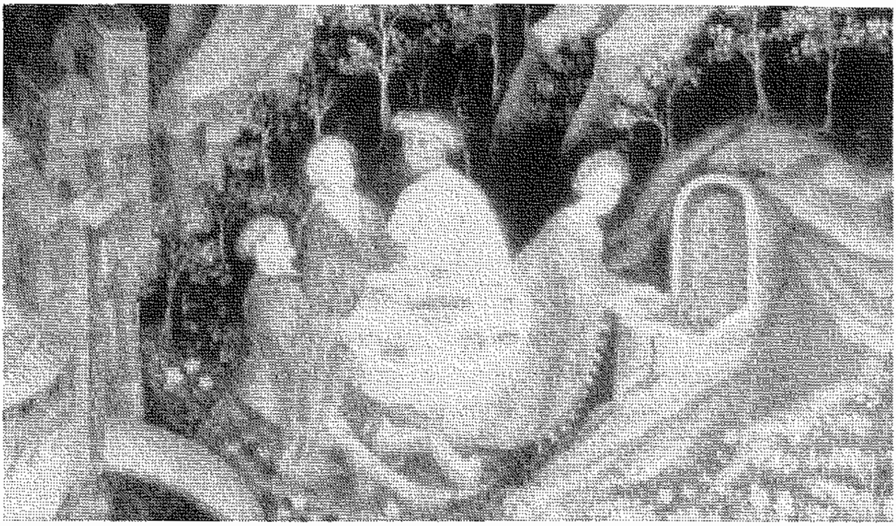
– a palm or, at any rate, nearly always a plant – to indicate the place where the Lord God put man after the act of Creation; man, the favorite of all his creatures, on whom he conferred dominion over nature and all other living creatures, as quoted in the Ecclesiasticus "…The Lord created man from the earth and sent him back to it again… and granted them authority over everything on earth… He put the fear of man into all creatures and gave him lordship over beasts and birds…" (17, 2,4).

During the XIII century the term "paradise" came to refer to an enclosed and protected garden of castles and convents. The *hortus conclusus* is its peculiar and most exemplary expression: the enclosure of trees or walls around a fountain stands for the lost and ever sought-for state of grace. In the interior of the convent, the garden, the cloister, confined to a small enclosed area with short paths diverging from the central fountain and with trees placed in symetrical positions, is also the expression of "knowledge". Knowledge understood as capacity to dominate the forces of evil and control the forces of good (of which medicinal herbes with their curative powers are an integral part). The *hortus* thus can be seen as a place reserved for the priestly caste, who possess this knowledge, and the walls which surround this space become the symbol of the limits to which this must be restricted, because misuse of knowledge can lead to death.

> The Lord God gave the following command to man: "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die". (Genesis II, 16-17)
>
> But the serpent said to the woman: "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil". (Genesis III, 4-5)

To the cloister-seat of knowledge must be added the humanistic concept of *hortus hotium*. From Petrarch to Erasmus of Rotterdam and their humanist contemporaries, the term garden, while continuing to recall the notion of paradise, came to signify a quiet place of privileged retreat, the seat of the studious *hotium*, which provides the leisure necessary for the pursuit of knowledge, that is also esoteric-philosophical speculation. Gardens, which in the early Middle Ages were restricted to small areas for various historical and social reasons, gradually were expanded and enriched, always retaining however their connection to the preceeding cloister structure (see picture p. 49).

From the end of the 1300's to the first half of the 1400's the rise of the mercantile classes, particularly in northern Europe, produced an eclipse of the



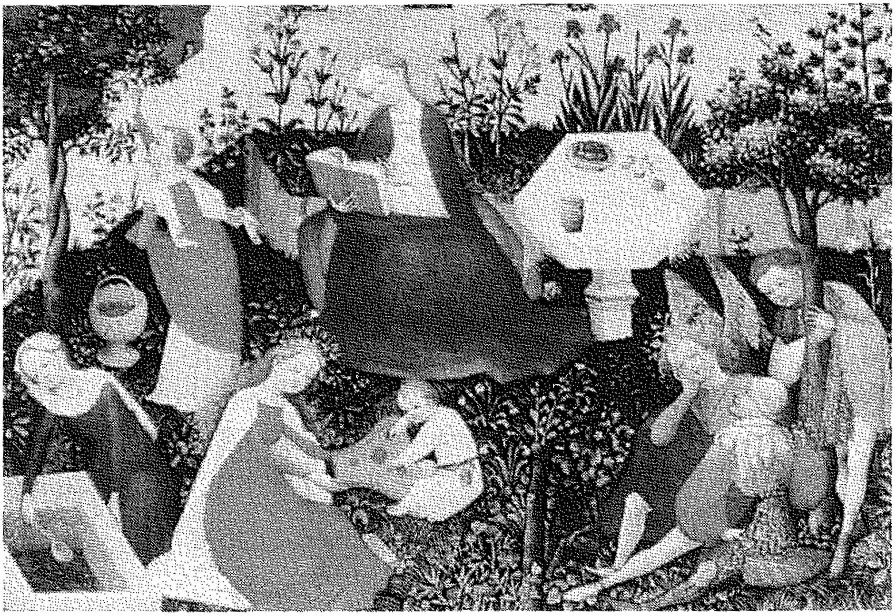
Bohemian anonymous master The springtime. *(© Castello del Buonconsiglio. Monumenti e collezioni provinciali. Trento.)*

landed feudal aristocracy, who tended to close themselves in their courts, which thus became *horti conclusi*, exclusive enclaves of an uncompromising nobility. In this way the court became the outward manifestation of aspirations of moral and esthetic perfection no longer realizable in practical (real) terms, but only entertained on a level of cultivated abstraction. Organized on a central plan with a high surrounding wall which marks the break with the outlying countryside, the castle garden, as we glean from both pictorial and written sources, consisted of "…a lawn of tiny grass, so green that it nearly looked black, flecked by a thousand varieties of flowers, enclosed within a verdant wall of orange and cedar trees" (Pietro de' Crescenzi). The garden becomes more and more the symbol of a lost paradise and therefore a container of other related symbols: the fountain calls to mind the "fountain of youth" or the "source of life" of the Jewish-Christian tradition, from which four principal paths diverge; high ornamental trees sometimes form the enclosure while fruit trees are positioned symmetrically according to a simple geometric scheme. Partially to fulfill esthetic requirements especially as regards those found within the castle walls, the castle garden also can be seen as an expression of the need to control the forces of nature, almost a desire to oppose the disorder of the world beyond the protective castle walls.

Almost all of the iconographic representations of the period are inspired by this vision. The enclosing wall and the gate impose a limit, beyond which exist only pain, disorder and ugliness. And this is true for all of Europe, from Flanders with the miniatures of the Limburg brothers, the French illuminated manuscripts, the works of the artists of the Gothic International, to the painting of the Italian Renaissance, as for instance that of Paolo Uccello in the Green Cloister of Santa Maria Novella in Florence.

In figurative art the fabulous becomes the characteristic note, even though it is accompanied by a careful attention to the description of a world completely enclosed in marvelous gardens, like that of Eden, in that they enclose a dream world which is more and more desired. The refined and manneristic tone of this depiction imbues even the figurative art of the sacred type, which in this way acquires an almost theatrical character, as in a "tableau vivant".

The small painting of the *Madonna of the rose garden* of the fifteenth century, for which attribution is contested by Stefano di Zevio and Michelino da Besozzo, places the Madonna, understood as seat of wisdom and mystic rose, at the centre of a green space delimited by a hedge. Again, in *Garden of Paradise* by an anonymous master (see picture p. 50) of the upper Rhineland "…Medieval symbolism is allied to a completely new sense of reality, characterized by a stronger interest in the objective world of nature. Maria is seated



Garden of Paradise. *(© Frankfurt, Städelsches Kunstinstitut.)*

with her companions in a closed garden, and here the garden is actually a symbol of her: the *hortus conclusus* of the Song of Song. [You are a garden locked up… you are a spring enclosed, a sealed fountain… Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates… You are a garden fountain, a well of flowing water… (Song of Songs IV 12, 13, 15)]. For the first time in German painting, the blue sky spreads its light beyond the walls of paradise, on the outside of which there are even trees and birds which fly within and without the walls. In the garden springs forth a 'fountain of life' and, in addition to the tree of life, there are growing other clearly identifiable botanical species." (Hofstätter 1968, p. 163).

Something which could be more useful for the formulation of the thesis of reciprocal influences of painting on the theatre, and theatre on the figurative arts is the very well known miniature *The Garden of Eden* taken from the *Très riches heures du Duc de Berry* of Herman, Pol and Jaennequin Limburg. In fact this miniature can be considered a sort of "summa" of the connections between the biblical story, its iconographic representation and its staging in medieval theatre. Here we find all of the elements present, which are not only related to the narration of Genesis, but also to the idea of a circular representation of the *paradiso sensible.* The paradise is encircled by a wall which delimits it and separates it from the rugged mountains placed all around. At the centre, placed under a canopy in the form of an *ostensus* perhaps inspired by the work of goldsmiths or wood inlay characteristic of the gothic art of chivalry tradition, the fountain of life is displayed. Not far away, we find the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, with the scene of the Temptation and also Lord God "…as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day…" (Genesis III, 8), and who questions the two sinners, and finally the expulsion, through a door that is being gilded by an angel (or cherubin?) all red and in flames.

However we do not find the same typology in all the paintings of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It is interesting to show, for example, this painting of Giovanni di Paolo which depicts *The Expulsion from Paradise* of 1445. The scene is divided into two parts, the second of which presents our progenitors naked, being chased out of the garden by an angel who is also naked. Eden is signified by the device of a curtain of high trees, which are laden with golden fruit (the apples of the Hesperides?). Delimitation of the garden is absent except for the mass of rock in the foreground, from which the four rivers spring.

The representation of the paradise by Hieronymus Bosch merits a separate discussion: the left panel of *Trittico del fieno* (Straw Triptych) (1500-1502) and in the *Triptych of the Delights*, in the Prado of Madrid. In both of them even the omnipresent, and one might say, scenographic artifice of the enclosing wall is absent, while the naturalistic elements are alien and artificial. Although it maintains intact its symbolic value, the representation of the paradise in the *Triptych of the Delights* does not seem to have inspired any theatre scenography, nor at the same time to have been influenced by it. Yet we know how "...the Confraternity of Our Lady, to which Bosch belonged, did not limit itself to prayer, helping others, holding funerals and, in short, all works of charity. They also engaged in performances with religious content, and dances of a symbolic and edifying nature, and fantastic choreography in which terrifying demonic motives recurred. It is very probable that Bosch took part in envisioning some of these aspects, and, perhaps, in inventing what we would call today "special effects". His mind was surely the most adapted of all s' Hertogenbosch" (Bussagli, 1988, p. 16).

With this last reference to the work of Bosch, and leaving aside later descriptions of the Garden of Eden, which, from the sixteenth century on, acquire an ever increasing estheticism (as is well exemplified by the painting *The Garden of Eden* of the Flemish painter Jan Bruegel the Elder[6]) becoming an ideal framework in which to insert the beauty of the human body, we conclude this quick overview of Paradise and its depiction in Medieval art. The description of it in Genesis remains the principal point of reference. Then it was up to the various cultures to interpret it in their own way adapting their vision of Paradise to the desires of the collectivity: trees, water and shade for the desert peoples; abundance of food (animals and fruit trees) in a dismembered Europe, disintegrating after the fall of the Roman Empire, and at the mercy of barbaric hordes; protected garden, oasis of tranquillity and beauty for the restless Medieval man.

In the next paper it will be illustrated how the two forms of representation, figurative and theatrical, are not so very distant one from the other, but rather tend to interpenetrate each other, each contributing to the other's development.

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[6] Jan Bruegel the Elder (1568-1625) also known as Jan Velvet Bruegel for his silky though morbid pictorial touch. He was much admired by Cardinal Federico Borromeo for his refined compositions of biblical, allegorical and landscape subjects, usually in rather small format.

The theatrical presentation

We have seen then that there is substantial iconographic evidence that, during the latter medieval period, Paradise (or the Garden of Eden) was often portrayed as a walled or stockaded and normally circular compound.

There is also considerable evidence to demonstrate that this is also how Paradise was portrayed in medieval drama. The Norman-French *Adam*, which was written about 1150, begins with a detailed direction, that I quote in Lynette Muir's English translation:

> Paradise shall be constructed on a raised place, with curtains and silk hangings surrounding it at such a height that the persons who are in Paradise can be seen from the shoulders upwards; there shall be ferns and sweet scented flowers and varied trees with fruit hanging from them, so that it appears a very pleasant place.

This is very interesting. Paradise is raised and surrounded with curtains so that the actors could only be seen from the shoulders upwards. "Why?" one must ask. It was certainly not to prevent the audience seeing Adam and Eve naked, because the direction continues:

> Then shall come the Saviour wearing a dalmatic, and Adam and Eve shall take their places before him, Adam wearing a red tunicle, but Eve in the white garments proper to a woman, with a white silk headdress. (Muir, 1970, p. 166)

One should also ask why it is important that there should be "sweet scented flowers" – not beautiful or colourful but "sweet scented". It is a question to which I shall return.

Let us first consider another lengthy direction for a theatrical Paradise. Written some three hundred years after the Norman *Adam*, it comes from *Le Mystère de la Résurrection* of Angers which was performed in 1456. Again, I quote from a Lynette Muir translation:

> Here the angel Seraph, guardian of the earthly Paradise having red clothing and face and holding a white naked sword in his hand, speaks to the Penitent Thief through a crenelation of the wall to the right of the wicket of the said Paradise, which Paradise should be made of paper and within there should be branches of trees, some in flower, some loaded with fruits of different kinds such as cherries, plums, almonds, oranges, pomegranates, figs, grapes and similar things, artificially made…

So far, everything in this crenellated Paradise is artificial, but the direction continues:

> …and other branches of beautiful May blossom, roses, etc. which should be newly cut on the day of the said play and the ends put in vessels filled with water to keep them fresh and so that they can be clearly seen through the crenelations of the wall of the said earthly Paradise.

So why, when the cherries, plums, almonds, oranges and so on are artificial, should it be specified that the flowers must be freshly picked and kept in water? Surely not just because they would look better. It is much more likely that it was, as the direction in the Norman-French *Adam* stipulates, to ensure that they were "sweet scented". Again one must ask "Why?" because, given the notoriously unsanitary conditions of medieval life (whether or not the *Adam* play was performed inside or outside a church), there would seem little point in providing anything "sweet scented" unless it was virtually under the noses of the audience.

Before finally considering this and other questions raised by the two directions we have so far examined, let us consider a third selection. These come from the Cornish *Creation of the World* – the earliest surviving manuscript of which is dated 1611, although it is now generally accepted that this is a copy of an earlier play dating from at least the early part of the sixteenth century. Like the other two examples and most medieval religious drama, but unlike the episodic English cycle plays which were the exception rather than the rule, this is a continuous play.

These are the directions for Paradise in the Cornish *Creation*:

> Let Paradyce be fynely made wyth ii fayre trees in yt And an appell vpon the tree & som other frute one the other. (Stokes, 1864, l. 351)
>
> A fowtaine in Paradice & fyne flowers in yt painted. (l. 355)

Then God, after he has created Adam, says:

rag tha garenga lemyn	(For love of thee now
me a vyn gwyll paradice	I will make Paradise
place delicyous dres ehan.	A place delicious above any.)

There is then the direction:

> Let flowers apeare in paradice (l. 363)

and later

> Let fyshe of dyuers sortis apeare & serten beastis as oxen kyne shepe & such like (l. 397)

This makes clear what we may only have so far surmised – the contents of Paradise had to be magically created during the play.

And one can see why they couldn't be there at the beginning of any Biblical play that doesn't start, as the Norman-French *Adam* does, with a scene set in Paradise. In the Cornish play, for example, 339 lines are spoken before God creates first Adam and then Paradise. During this period, Lucifer and his followers, after his failed *coup-d'état*, are dispatched to Hell after a violent sword battle waged throughout the rooms of Heaven with swords and staves. While this is taking place, it is clearly absurd for the audience to see a complete Paradise before the scene where God creates it.

Yet in an open-air theatre with multiple-staging, all the permanent stations, including Heaven, Hell and Paradise, had to be in position before the play began. In the case of the Cornish *Creation* this poses an additional difficulty because, as I explained in the paper I delivered to the first Camerino conference (Higgins, 1996, p. 67-95), it was both sensible and desirable in production terms for Paradise to be a central permanent station.

As the Cornish theatre, like many others in medieval Europe, was circular, this would mean that, as the spectators entered the theatre through the gap in the mound, they would see, immediately in front of them, whatever construction was going to be used for Paradise. It could not be complete because the Garden of Eden was still to be created. But it had to be substantial enough to hide not only the actors who were to play Adam and Eve, but also the machinery necessary to produce the trees, animals and the gushing fountain. It is also likely that it contained part of the mechanism necessary to allow God to ascend back to Heaven, as the Cornish *Creation* direction has it, "in a cloude".

So, before the play began, a lot of props and machinery for special effects had to be kept out of sight in Paradise. This being so, we can see why the lower part of Paradise was fenced, walled or curtained off. It also had to be secure enough to prevent mischievous children or other undesirables from entering. This could be achieved if, like the castle in *The Castle of Perseverance* or Paradise in the Norman-French *Adam*, it was "on a raised place". It would also greatly help if, like the castle, it was surrounded by a moat. And so some theatrical Paradises may have been. The water that gushed from the fountain had to go somewhere!

It may have been curtains that surrounded the Paradise of the *Adam* play but, by the late Middle Ages, Paradise, like most of the other stations, must have been spectacular, perhaps almost as breathtaking as the pageant created to welcome the Emperor Charles V when he entered London in 1522. On an island "set in a silver sea". There was a forest:

> ... where were dyvers bestes goyng abowte the mountayns by vyces (winch mechanism) and dyvers maner of trees herbys and flowres as roses, dayses, gyloflowres, daffadeles and other so craftely made thatt hitt was harde to knowe them from very natural flowres, and in the mountayns pondys off fressh water wt fisshe. And att the

> comyng off the empprowr the bestys dyd move and goo, the fisshes dyd sprynge, the byrdes dyd synge… Also there were ij goodly ymages one in a castell… and tthe other in an herbar (arbour) wyth rosys… (and) wth ij swerdys nakyd in there handys. Which castell, garden, and the ymages dyd Ryse by a vyce… whiche don an ymage off the father of hevyn all burnyd golde dyd disclose and appare and move in the topp of the pageant. (Quoted in Wickham, 1959, p. 84)

But what, you may be asking, has all this to do with the need for "sweet scented" flowers? I hadn't forgotten. Let us go back to the direction in the Anglo-Norman *Adam*. After describing the costume of Adam and Eve, it continues:

> … And they shall stand before the Figure, Adam however nearer, with a calm expression and Eve more humbly.

"A calm expression" and "more humbly" are instructions to the actors – instructions not as to how they should speak the words but how they should be or how they should act. Such directorial instructions are rarely found in medieval drama, but they also occur in the Paradise scene of the Cornish *Creation*. These are instruction given to Eve:

> l. 348 Then eva wondreth of the Serpent when she speaketh
> l. 378 Eva talketh famylyarly wth the serpent and cometh neare him.
> l. 625 Let Eva look angerly on the serpent and profer to depart.
> l. 672 She commeth anear the serpent agagne and geveth heed to his words
> l. 863 Eva loketh vpon Adam very strangely and speketh [not] eny thing

Adam is also given a similar instruction:

> l. 741 Adam is afrayde [at] the sight of the apple

All these directions occur while Adam and Eve are in Paradise. No similar directions occur anywhere else in the play. So why are they found only in this scene? There are many possible reasons including, for example, the perceived need for a man playing the part of Eve to be given helpful directions. But, for me, the most likely explanation for these directions is the same as the most likely explanation for the mention of "sweet smelling" flowers – the scenes in Paradise took place very close to the audience who would, therefore, smell the flowers and see the facial expressions of the actors. As similar directions are not giving for other scenes in the play, it must also be assumed that, in such plays that deal with the Creation and Fall, Paradise was the only permanent station located so close to the audience.

This seems probably to have been the case with the Cornish *Creation*, but before I can demonstrate this I have to summarise some of the conclusions I have already published about the staging of Cornish drama. The dramatic action took place in four main areas of the circular playing-place:

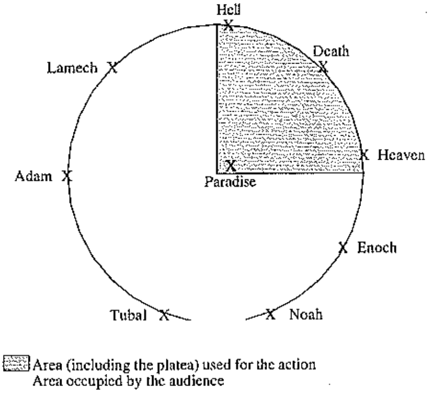
1. in and in front of the permanent stations positioned on top of the surrounding mound;
2. in and around a permanent station located in the middle of the central area;
3. in and around the various temporary stations that were positioned, as required, in the central area; and
4. in the *platea* or *plain* i.e. a part of the central area used for the action but not occupied at the time by a temporary station.

I also concluded that

1. the Cornish plays are divisible into self-contained, though linked, parts – each lasting for from forty-five minutes to an hour – that were performed in one segment of the central area that always included the central permanent station; and
2. some or all of the audience occupied all the rest of the central area, apart from the segment used for the action in that particular part.

Unlike the other two surviving Cornish plays, *The Creation of the World* does not include a plan showing the position of the permanent stations. In the paper I delivered at the first Camerino conference, I deduced what seems to me the most probable location for the stations (Higgins, 1996, p. 70-82). Paradise I located in the middle of the central area (as the castle was in *The Castle of Perseverance*). The resulting plan shows where, in the first part of the play, the action took place and where the audience stood.

The plan also shows that, during that part of the play, many of the spectators would have been very close indeed to Paradise – close enough to smell the flowers and see the actor's facial expressions.


Hell
Death
Lamech
Heaven
Adam
Paradise
Enoch
Tubal
Noah
▨ Area (including the platea) used for the action
Area occupied by the audience

I acknowledge with thanks the enormous help given to me by Lynette Muir while I was preparing this paper.

Résumé/Abstract

Garden of Eden

L'étude utilise une approche comparative puisque son propos est d'analyser les liens réciproques que l'on peut mettre en évidence entre les deux champs des arts visuels et de la représentation dramatique, en particulier pour notre sujet: la représentation du Paradis terrestre.

Le Moyen Âge se caractérise par l'importance donnée aux images dont l'effet était d'impressionner fortement l'imaginaire du commun et de remplir par ailleurs une fonction didactique et didascalique qu'utilisaient les classes dominantes pour mener à bien et exploiter leurs actions de gouvernement et de pouvoir.

Se fondant sur des exemples de l'iconographie de la période du XIIe au XVIe siècle – mosaïques, peintures ou enluminures – et les comparant aux témoignages que proposent les œuvres théâtrales de la même époque, on se demandera, en laissant de côté ici la logique de tels échanges, si la représentation théâtrale n'est pas d'une certaine façon à l'origine des représentations iconiques, ou du moins si elle n'en est pas l'une des causes principales, étant donné la ressemblance quasi spéculaire des deux séries de témoignages.

Le Paradis terrestre, lieu auquel aspirent les fidèles de divers credo religieux et que l'iconographie figure par l'image du jardin dont il est par excellence le symbole, paraît aussi avoir été scéniquement représenté – ce que disent précisément didascalies et indications relevées dans plusieurs textes dramatiques – par un jardin clos d'un mur, ou tout au plus d'une haie assez haute. Dans cet enclos, des personnages dont on ne voit que la tête et les épaules, et de suaves parfums de fleurs qui parviennent aux spectateurs massés tout autour. On trouve de semblables représentations depuis l'*Adam* franco-normand de 1150 jusqu'à la pièce du cycle de Cornouailles, *The Creation of the World* (1611) en passant par *Le Mystère de la Résurrection* d'Angers en 1456, ce qui indique la continuité depuis une époque reculée de ce type de représentation.

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