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Empson's Milton's God and His Chinese Experiences

William Empson had 2 teaching experiences (1937–39;1947–52) in China before his writing of *Milton's God*. There are papers discussing his influence on Chinese Milton scholars: there are dozens of students who were inspired by his courses dedicated to promoting Milton studies in China, among them Yang Zhouhan, Yin Baoshu, Wang Zuoliang, Zhao Ruihong, Jin Fasheng are the founders of Milton studies in China. This paper tends to map out that how Empson's Chinese experiences in turn exerted influence on his own Milton studies, which typically displayed in his *Milton's God*. The paper mainly argues from three aspects: 1) Chinese non – Christian belief and the Communism acted as a promoter which put Empson's early propaganda against the God into practice. 2) The reception of Satan in China has an impact on Empson's attitude towards Milton's God. Both the influence of Romantic poets and the Luxun Tradition make Satan a hero in China, which concurs with Empson's view of Satan. 3) The Chinese patriotism Empson experienced during the wartime made him concede to Milton's God: Empson found that the monster – like God seems almost decent in Milton's poem. He compares Milton's belief in God with Chinese people's patriotism in the wartime, and points out that the two sentiments are not contradictory. In this way, Empson construct a more complete, moral consistent Milton in his book. Besides, the interactions reflected in Empson's Chinese experiences is also a typical cross – cultural case that deserves our further investigation.