

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

HOW FALL'N! HOW CHANGED:
THE VISUAL HISTORY OF MILTON'S SATAN

by
RAWAN ASSAAD NASSER

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for the degree of Master of Arts
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AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

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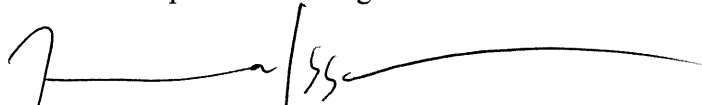
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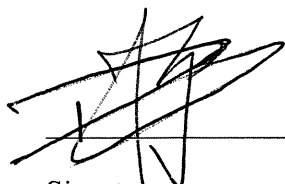
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: How Fall'n! How Changed: The Visual History of Milton's Satan

The Satan of *Paradise Lost* has long been a fascinating object of study for Milton scholars. John Milton's epic may rely heavily on the Biblical story of creation and original sin, but his creative shaping of a character like Satan has drawn the attention of not only academics but also artists over the course of several centuries. Milton's Satan is a major character in the narrative that has been examined and dissected down to his physical descriptions, his speeches, his actions, and his motivations. What are his motivations as a character and do they change throughout the poem? What does his physical description in *Paradise Lost* say about his character? Does it contrast with his rhetoric in the speeches he gives? What connections can be made between Milton's Satan and the visual representations of said Satan in art?

To explore the visual reception of Milton's Satan in art of different forms and time periods, I begin by examining some medieval and Renaissance Christian art as well as the most commonly cited and reproduced artworks and illustrations of the poem by artists John Baptist Medina, William Blake and Gustave Doré. After establishing Satan's visual presence in the artistic reimaginings of Milton's epic by these artists, I extend my visual reception of Satan to encompass new and hybrid media such as a graphic novel, two comic book series, and two television shows. How do Satan's character, physical appearance, and attributes develop and evolve across not only time but also different media? What does a comparison of the stylistic choices of illustrations and adaptations imply about not only Satan but also Milton's own choices in the portrayal of this character? I attempt to analyze both text and art and find common ground between the two that will analyze the role of the visual in establishing Satan as a potentially heroic figure within the text and an omnipresent cultural touchstone beyond it. Lastly, I discuss Milton's and more specifically his Satan's presence in the Arab World.

By 'reading' the visual and 'viewing' the poem, I give a fresh account of the connections between Milton's Satan and his renditions in other media.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

... Him the Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie
With hideous ruine and combustion down
To bottomless perdition, ...
—John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 1.44-47

God's biblical antagonist has been known by many names, most dominantly Satan and Lucifer. Each of these carry different connotations and histories, though they theoretically refer to the same character. This figure was labeled the Devil and credited with being the source of evil that supposedly corrupted humankind since the beginning of their time. Satan's corruption has endured over the ages with the potential for evil living in every human being simply because they are descendants of the so-called first man and woman to walk the Earth, Adam and Eve. The doctrinal basis consists of certain verses in the Bible itself, such as Psalm 51: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me".¹ Aesthetic and theological traditions around this figure have engendered all kinds of work, a landmark among them being John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667). Milton's epic deals with the story of the Fall beginning from Satan's decision to rebel against God by threatening His most precious creation, humanity, and ending with the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden as well as the consequences that ensue from the

¹ King James Version; all further Bible citations will be from this translation.

Fall. In Milton's version, Satan is a major character who plays a crucial role in the series of events that take place, far exceeding the bare Biblical account. Satan is given a prominent voice in Milton's epic. He undergoes a literal and characterological journey over the course of events of the epic, his character developing and evolving from the beginning of the first book until the very end of the text. Satan's journey and his qualification as an epic hero have inspired poets, artists, and scholars for centuries. What are his true motivations as a character and do they change in the course of the poem? What does his physical description in *Paradise Lost* say about his character? Does it contrast with his rhetoric in the speeches he gives? Milton's epic invites one not just to read but also to visualize Satan, and artists and illustrators have taken up the invitation, both in the West and globally. With such a visually rich text as Milton offers, I aim to explore the visual reception of Milton's Satan in art of different forms from Milton's own time until today. I recognize that Milton's visuality and imagery as well as his Satan in particular have been studied and critiqued by many scholars. This thesis does not encyclopedically survey previous scholarship on Milton's Satan. Instead, it will consider a new -- and literal -- way of looking at Milton's epic, which is through the lens of artworks both relating to the epic or to Satan himself.

Attending first to visual representations of Satan in parallel with the text, I will establish connections between and ruptures with the archetype of Satan's physical appearance among artists and Milton. This examination begins with consideration of representations of Satan in medieval Christian art, in order to build on the background of what Satan was perceived to have looked like in the eyes of artists pre-*Paradise Lost*. This genealogical approach continues through an analysis of the famous epic's rich imagery of Satan, as well as the most commonly cited and reproduced artworks and illustrations of the

poem by artists John Baptist Medina, William Blake and Gustave Doré. Extending earlier scholarship, my understanding of visual reception also encompasses new and hybrid media. Therefore, I will also look at Milton's Satan in the West in more versatile art forms such as a graphic novel, two comic book series, and two television shows. I will survey the variety of visual reimaginings of *Paradise Lost* and also a perhaps unexpectedly direct Miltonic influence on contemporary popular cultural texts that present a picture of Satan. How do Satan's character, physical appearance, and attributes develop and evolve across not only time but also different media? What does a comparison of the stylistic choices of illustrations and adaptations imply about not only Satan but also Milton's own choices in the portrayal of this character? I will attempt to analyze both text and art and find common ground between the two that will analyze the role of the visual in establishing Satan as a potentially heroic figure within the text and an omnipresent cultural touchstone beyond it.

This thesis comprises an introduction, two major chapters, and a brief coda that opens this study out into a non-Western context. The first chapter will include a concise historicization of seventeenth-century England, Milton's life and the circumstances around the time of his conception of the famed epic which will include social and political contexts that influenced Milton's writing, the reception of this text when it was first published, and subsequently a close reading of the moments in which Satan is depicted as heroic or rendered as almost human; for example, when Milton bestows on him human traits such as fallibility and the ability to evoke sympathy from the reader. This chapter will also focus on Satan's mental and physical journey which has been likened to that of the human sinner's. This will be done by examining passages that describe Satan, both in terms of physique and character; the findings of this examination will be linked to visual representations of Satan

in paintings in the next chapter. Through close reading, I will consider specific passages and instances that deal directly with Satan in the text to plot his journey, with a focus on formal elements such as style, tone, allusion, structure, and imagery to build a basic profile of Satan as a character.

In the second chapter, I attempt to sketch a genealogy of the visual culture surrounding Satan in Milton's own day. I trace the trajectory of the visual representations of Satan, beginning with medieval Christian art and moving into the history of illustrations of *Paradise Lost*. This illustrative tradition began in 1688, with John B. Medina, and was continued by many successors, including most famously William Blake and Gustave Doré. I follow the developing tradition down to my own primary case study: the re-presentation of *Paradise Lost* as a graphic novel in Spanish by artist Pablo Auladell. Auladell, I argue, is conscious of his inheritance as an illustrator, but is also a major innovator; at the same time, even Auladell's apparently radical choice of medium (graphic novel) can be shown to have roots, or at least analogies, in much earlier phases of illustration. From this graphic novel, I turn to two comic book series, the first being *The Sandman*, by Neil Gaiman, which features a character called Lucifer that Gaiman claims was inspired by Milton's Satan. The second series I will look at is entitled *Lucifer*, by Mike Carey, which is almost a continuation of the story of the character from the *Sandman* series. I end this study with popular culture representations of the character of Satan in television today through the television shows *Lucifer* and *Supernatural*. I will perform a comparative study of the different portrayals of Satan through a close reading of the artworks alongside Milton's text, comparing the different physical appearance he seems to have in all of the above-stated works as well as the differences and similarities in overall character and background.

Looking specifically at imagery, I will focus on artists' variegated responses to Milton's choices and their respective levels of engagement with the text through the amount of detail featured in each of their illustrations and how much they differ from it. I want to also attempt a close reading of the adaptations and illustrations themselves as I look for similarities and differences between them. By 'reading' the visual and 'viewing' the poem, I will give a fresh account of the connections between Milton's Satan and his renditions in other media.

Lastly, I bring the thesis to a close with a coda that will discuss Milton outside Western culture, and specifically in the Arab World. I very briefly explore Milton's reception in the Arab World, more specifically the Arab-Islamic World, and then connect this very briefly with Egyptian films like *Safīr Jahannam* and *Maw'ad ma' 'Iblīs*, which feature their own versions of the Devil.

CHAPTER II

MILTON'S *PARADISE LOST*: SATAN'S TRANSMOGRIFICATION

A. Seventeenth-Century England and the Birth of *Paradise Lost*

In the year 1667, John Milton published the first version of his epic poem *Paradise Lost*, which has been praised (or dispraised) on almost every conceivable basis, including its visually evocative style of verse. However, an approach to Milton through the visual must grapple with a crucial biographical fact: Milton, blind since 1652, wrote *Paradise Lost* not by his own hand, but through dictation to several aides. Such a condition only makes the visual impact of his epic and the rich history of the poem's reception in visual media all the more impressive.

John Milton was born in London on December 9, 1608, to John Milton senior and Sara Jeffrey, a well-off middle-class Puritan family. From early childhood, he exhibited an inclination and talent towards literature, though he claimed that his father had planned for him to serve the church. Yet, his father encouraged and nurtured his son's love of learning: "Much of Milton's childhood was given over to study, arranged by a father who was eager to give his extraordinary son the best education possible. Between the ages of five and seven, most likely from a private tutor, Milton learned to read and write in English and to do arithmetic" (Lewalski 5). Milton was raised as a churchgoer and attended the church that he was baptized in, All Hallows, but came to renounce the teachings of its Puritan minister and his traditionalist stance on marriage and divorce (both of which Milton wrote about

polemically and influentially in later pamphlets) even though Milton was affected by the minister's "antipapist diatribes and his readiness to censure the sins of the powerful – usurers oppressors of the poor, morally lax aristocrats" (Lewalski 4). Wider conflicts between Protestants and Catholics across Europe were a major context not only for the formation of his own belief system but also his political views and writings, even as his personal theology evolved in idiosyncratic ways away from both the established Anglican church and from the Calvinism of his father.

Milton played a prominent role in British politics and influenced a variety of issues through his outspoken pamphlets published across several decades. However, the political instability and sense of political experimentation and reinvention that dominated the atmosphere in England at the time did not begin with Milton, nor was his voice the only prominent one in the stormy public debates that characterize the period. England in the seventeenth century was rife with instability, political unrest, and religious crisis, which seems to have been brought to the fore by the death of Elizabeth I. After her forty-four-year reign, King James VI of Scotland was crowned king of England, becoming James I and beginning the Stuart dynasty. Though he ascended the throne without dispute, the transition was not without tensions that sprang from many sources: "He was a foreigner, married to a papist, and son of Mary Queen of Scots who had been the Spanish and papal candidate to replace Elizabeth on the throne" (Hill 18). At the beginning of the seventeenth century, England was undergoing a reshaping as a result of the economic instability which was caused by an increase in population alongside an "ideological rivalry", fueled by religious conflict between Catholic power and Protestant. Hill explains that James had a desire to play mediator between the Protestants and the Catholics, but ultimately lacked the means,

especially financially, to do so. As such, Milton was born into a world that was already changing at an alarming rate. James was trying to act as a kind of intermediary between Catholic Spain, which had also been at war with England during Queen Elizabeth I's rule, and the English Protestants but to no avail as the Spanish were only interested in making sure the King did not support Protestant military action abroad.

Lewalski explains that because Milton was raised in a Puritan church amidst people who worked diligently and were slowly but surely raising not only their incomes but also their social standing within the professional class in London, it would have been difficult for him not to become attuned to the struggles that occupied England on not only a political level but also on a religious as well as cultural one (4). The atmosphere of England, London in particular, in the seventeenth century was rife with unrest because religion was so tightly intertwined with politics up until that point in time, which made any political instability affect the religious system and vice versa. James' ineffective efforts at sectarian mediation, as well as the widely perceived and despised corruption of his court, exacerbated rather than reduced the major social conflicts. As Lewalski explains, James was passionate about absolutism, which he tried to import into his own government, but also constantly clashed with parliament, which seemed to become more and more envious of the power and advantages demanded by the monarch. James was also looked upon unfavorably because of his desire to play mediator between the two religious sects in conflict then: "A pacifist king disposed to mediate between Catholic and Protestant powers in Europe and a queen openly supportive of Spanish interests were opposed by a militant war party eager to fight for international Protestantism – especially after the loss of Bohemia and the Palatinate by the Protestant Elector Palatine touched off the Thirty Years' War" (4). The Thirty Years' War

was especially connected to James I as it was sparked by his son-in-law's ascension to the Bohemian throne, without the support of his father-in-law. Further adding to the instability in England was the fact that the English court was made up quite noticeably of a decadent and morally unscrupulous nobility and upper class that was much more Catholic or Catholic-sympathizing than the citizenry, especially in London, and riddled with scandal in the eyes of a "London citizenry self-styled as hard-working, wealth-producing, and morally upright, and a country-based aristocracy sensible of its diminished honor and power" (4). During the Thirty Years' War, many things changed in England, but the sources of social conflict described above remained in place and came to a crisis during the next reign. King Charles I ascended the throne in 1625 and elevated as Archbishop of Canterbury William Laud, whose reinforcement or reintroduction into Anglican doctrine, worship, and church architecture elements seen by his many opponents as "Catholic" and as undoing the work of the Reformation. Charles and Laud sought to exercise power in an absolute and personal manner, as Charles refused to call a Parliament for a full eleven years from 1629 to 1640 (Hill 19). The political instability eventually incited the English Civil Wars, which ended with the execution of Charles I in 1649. The Civil War period and its aftermath brought to special prominence and power Oliver Cromwell, a man by whom Milton was heavily influenced, and for whom he worked as Secretary for Foreign Tongues (Lewalski 237-38). In the early 1650s, Milton wrote a sonnet praising and advising Cromwell. In 1653, Cromwell established England as a Protectorate with himself at the head: in the judgment of many contemporaries and historians, a monarchy in all but name. Though there have been conflicting opinions on whether Milton supported Cromwell's views or actions, the sonnet has been used as evidence for his accommodation to Cromwell's role in the state,

while still hoping that Cromwell would be responsive to public counsel and debate:

“Milton’s sonnet to Cromwell shows the path on which he can move from support for Cromwell-as-Lord-General to continuing support for Cromwell-as-Lord-Protector” (Lobo 776). As Lobo argues, Milton was devoted to the cause of conscience, which Cromwell shared as well, and which could be a basis for political appeals.

With such a complexly charged environment, it is of no surprise that its subject as well as influence spilled over into Milton’s work in all its genres, which make his writings contradictory in the eyes of some of his readers. A sense of self-contradiction (or productive tension) across works and across time has also been identified around less politicized matters. Christopher Hill claims that Milton has puzzled or even offended readers with “his apparent rejection of all human learning in *Paradise Regained* and the *De Doctrina Christiana*” (11). Milton’s style has also been labeled “archaic” in a sense that it is over-complex and indirect, and it is even blamed for what would come to be “the artificial eighteenth-century ‘poetic diction’” (11). Hill also claims that there have been attempts for such reasons and more to depose Milton from his elevated position as part of the canon, with T. S. Eliot leading such efforts in the early twentieth century: “Milton has been regarded as playing a big part in the ‘dissociation of sensibility’ which is said to have taken place in seventeenth-century England; critics have wagged fingers at him for not being Shakespeare or for not being a metaphysical poet” (11). From the later seventeenth until the twentieth centuries, not being a monarchist (or a conformist in religion) also led to the devaluation of works beyond his famous epic. Yet *Paradise Lost*, and more specifically Milton’s Satan, have continuously captivated poets, readers, and artists, and are still read and reinterpreted today in popular culture, as works to be discussed in this chapter,

including Pablo Auladell's *El Paraíso Perdido* and Neil Gaiman's *The Sandman* series as well as Mike Carey's *Lucifer* and a television show of the same name, help to demonstrate.

Many critics have explored the relationship between Milton's epic and the politics of seventeenth-century England. The appropriateness of political reading is strongly signaled by the vocabulary through which Milton discusses the verse in his prefatory note in which he explains the reasons behind his nonconformity to the tradition of rhyme. Milton's justification is that rhyme is to poetry what bondage is to freedom and his choice not to conform to its restrictions is his way of setting an example of the liberty of which poetry has been deprived. This is only the first of many signs that Milton used *Paradise Lost* to make a statement about liberty and politics. David Norbrook states in his book chapter "*Paradise Lost* and English Republicanism" that Milton did in fact begin work on the epic while he still occupied a post as a government official (434), which indicates that he was still very much in the thick of the political instability while he dictated his epic. Norbrook claims that it was Milton's conscious decision to make *Paradise Lost* political, at least in certain aspects. Indeed, he claims that Milton even timed the publication of his epic according to the political climate: "Milton seems to have delayed publication until a moment when he would be least threatened by censorship, at a time when the government was in disarray after the Great Plague, the Great Fire, and a mismanaged war with the Dutch which contrasted strikingly with the republic's successes" (Norbrook 435). The political elements in Milton's epic can be most clearly seen in the hierarchy of the angels and Satan's characteristic speeches given throughout the epic. The language of Satan's speeches seems to lean towards monarchist while that of the unfallen angels in Heaven leans toward republican.

Norbrook equates God's making his Son above the rest of his creations with a monarch elevating someone to the status of "Vice-gerent" and offers God's speech in *PL* 5.600-15 as the support of his claim: "his imperative speech-act demands that knees should be bowed without offering any reasons for his choice." Such an act would serve as motivation for Satan to launch a rebellion, a reasoning which Milton himself would most certainly relate to. "Like the monopolists Milton had attacked in the 1640s, God has 'ingross't/All Power,'" which includes the power over language (Norbrook 445). The monopoly over language is in fact something Milton wrote about in his *Areopagitica*, which deals with the idea of the freedom of language and speech and condemns censorship. "Satan calls not for total equality but for equality in freedom" Norbrook explains, "but it is hard to see why Satan should be condemned for views which Milton regularly expressed" (446). Satan does not want equality; he does not wish to be put on the same level as God's Son. On the contrary, he believes that he is above the latter, as he is "self-begot" (*PL* 5.860), while the Son is God's creation. It is this same reasoning that does not allow Satan to make himself prostrate to Mankind.

Milton, towards the end of his life, struggled and was faced with many obstacles as he wrote and later published *Paradise Lost*, both personal and political. The most obvious of such obstacles was his blindness. Milton became blind in the year 1652, though he had been steadily losing his eyesight first in the left then in the right eye over the course of many years. His blindness not only forced him to rely on others to get around and confined him more and more to his home, but it also affected his ability to write, though not his ability to create. He wrote *Paradise Lost* through dictation, utilizing at times "paid secretaries but [more] often friends and former pupils, including his two nephews"

(Lewalski 278-9). The concept of spoken composition has captured the interest of Miltonian scholars more and more. Bjork and Rumrich explain that “*Paradise Lost* was not a mute manuscript but a narrative voice attentively heard and transcribed” and that reading it silently for the first time “utterly effaces the stunning auditory impact of Milton’s verse” (52). An example of an instance that absolutely requires Milton’s verse to be spoken aloud would be “the preponderance of sibilants in Satan’s words to Eve” which evoke the sound of a hissing snake (53). The fact that Milton’s verse is so audiovisual in textual form makes it all the more impressive considering his blindness. A facile conclusion from this biographical circumstance would be to imagine that his blindness must have had a negative effect on his writing, limiting his ability to create visually intriguing imagery. Yet the opposite is true; Milton has been praised and admired for his level of creative imagination in the imagery he uses in the epic.

B. *Paradise Lost* First Received

To further understand how Milton’s political views affected his writings, it would be useful to consider how his epic was received by its first readership in seventeenth-century England. David Norbrook offers insight into the time period in which *Paradise Lost* was first read, discussing how the political revolution that was going on at the time of this text’s conception is related to Milton’s portrayal of Satan as a “warmaker,” a character whose primary focus is rebellion. Indeed, Norbrook compares Satan with the canonical “warmaker” Lucan’s Caesar from the *Pharsalia*, which Milton alludes to in the epic by featuring a listing of the different serpent creatures similar to a catalogue in Lucan’s

Pharsalia, as well as through his original ten-book design for his poem and a thematic emphasis on defeated rebellion (Teskey, ed. ad 10.521-28). Satan's "warmaker" label only serves to emphasize the question of his role as hero, anti-hero or villain of the epic, which in turn raises the notion that his portrayal visually by artists could provide some kind of answer to the ongoing uncertainty of his character's label. Norbrook likens Satan's character with a military strategist, seeking to conquer a new domain, which Norbrook compares with Cromwell's own strategy of Western Design. He groups the fallen angels into the different parties they represent based on their arguments when Satan puts forth his plan to travel to Eden to corrupt God's creation in Book 2: Mammon and Belial who "call for a commonwealth for preservation" while Beelzebub and Satan call for "a commonwealth for increase" (453-54). However, Norbrook explains that Satan's speeches are not consistent with one party, but rather oscillate between the republican and the monarchical, which he links to Milton's own struggle in riposte to the Protectorate. Satan's language becomes more and more monarchical as he descends into sin when he sets out to tempt Eve. He uses liberty as a shield as well as weapon to convince his fellow angels to rebel with him in his cry for war and his quest to corrupt humanity: "As Satan plans and executes his expedition to earth, a chain of allusions links him with Lucan's Caesar and creates a parallel between the loss of republican liberty at Pharsalia and the loss of Eden" (455). It seems that such allusions would have been more familiar to the readers of the seventeenth century as they would have better acquainted with Lucan's *Pharsalia*, which leads to the exploration of how exactly seventeenth-century readers received such an epic text and what they took from it.

Nicholas Von Maltzahn's "The First Reception of *Paradise Lost* (1667)" gives a brief overview of the kind of reception this epic poem received when it was published in 1667 and the promising circumstances surrounding it as it brought hope of a new kind of freedom in a time of great political as well as economic turmoil. "*Paradise Lost* came to the press in a winter of discontent" which can be clearly seen in "many publications from 1666-7 [that] reflect the ominous and sometimes apocalyptic mood that had grown on the nation" (Von Maltzahn 481). The 1660s were fraught with many events that kept the political climate unstable such as the rise of the Cavalier Parliament and the "aggressive use of civil power in ecclesiastical causes" because of the Restoration Settlement of the Church of England, there were also other events that caused great turmoil among the people of England such as the Great Fire of London in 1666 as well as the outbreak of Plague between 1665 and 1666 (Von Maltzahn 480-81). The country as a whole was in upheaval as it struggled on several fronts: political, spiritual, economical and governmental (with the restoration of the monarchy). With all the chaos taking place in England, it is of even greater significance that Milton was able to write and successfully publish such a text. In order to establish credible sources on the reception of said text in seventeenth-century England, Von Maltzahn reviewed the responses of three readers: Thomas Tomkins, Sir John Hobart and John Beale. Each of these readers brought a relevant perspective to the perception of the epic. The general consensus that Von Maltzahn raises (approved too in the article by Lobo cited above) is that of the cause of conscience, and though each of the three readers offers a different way of reading *Paradise Lost*, they all agree on one thing: Milton's goal with such an epic written at such a turbulent time for England was to "persuade humans to faith", which he accomplished through literary excellence (498-99).

Balachandra Rajan also focuses on the readers of the epic in the seventeenth century, more specifically their reading of Satan in the book chapter “The Problem of Satan.”² He studies how Satan’s character and development in the course of the text is seen by scholars at the time. Their opinions range from reading Satan poetically and nothing more to seeing Satan’s ‘glory’ decline as the epic takes its course. This declining ‘trajectory’ Rajan discusses is useful in this thesis as a means to trace the visual representations of both *Paradise Lost* and Satan in different forms of art and media, which will be discussed in the second chapter of this thesis. Rajan refers to critics such as C.S. Lewis, Sir Walter Raleigh, Charles Williams and many others in an effort to establish a background of what opinions were like towards the epic when it was first published as well as how it continued to be received by critics. He explains that there were two main viewpoints surrounding Satan which contemporary critics also tended to have, which he borrowed from Calvin’s *Institutes* and Defoe’s *The Political History of the Devil*:

If like Calvin they thought of Satan as ‘an engine that is in courage most hardie, in strength most mightie, in policies most subtle, in diligence and celertie unwearable, with all sorts of engins plenteously furnishd, in skill of warre most readie’, that was only so that they could stand guard more vigilantly against their relentless opponent. If like Defoe they saw him as ‘a mighty, a terrible, an immortal Being; infinitely superior to man, as well in the dignity of his nature, as in the dreadful powers he retains still about him’, the vision served to remind them inescapably that it was only by God’s grace that they could hope to overcome the enormous forces against which they were contending. (Rajan 107)

Either way, Satan was a character that possessed heroic qualities: his might and his fortitude, which are used for the purpose of evil by him, as Calvin and Defoe describe. Yet,

² See B. Rajan’s *Paradise Lost and the Seventeenth Century Reader*.

how Satan uses these characteristics does not detract from the fact that he does have them. This is the struggle that many a critic has had to confront when the question of Satan's hero status is raised.

Another voice that contributes to this debate is Stanley Fish. In his chapter "The Harassed Reader in *Paradise Lost*", Fish concludes, with the aid of Waldock³, that what alarms critics and readers alike about Satan is not whether he is written as a hero or anti-hero but rather that his heroic qualities in the epic are far too attractive to a susceptible reader, which causes the reader to resist out of a sense of self-preservation. Fish explains that "Satan's initial attractiveness owes as much to a traditional and accepted idea of what is heroic as it does to our weakness before the rhetorical lure" (174). Thus, Milton's writing of Satan as a character imbued with heroic traits is meant to subtly teach the reader a new kind of refined discrimination that allows said reader to accept what Fish calls 'Christian heroism'. He clarifies that what identifies "Christian heroism is a willingness to move in a world where moral decision is imperative, but where moral guidelines are obscure" (174). Satan is heroic in his qualities, yet what keeps him from being labeled a hero are his actions which lead to the Fall of Adam and Eve. However, if one considers Fish's statement, then Satan attempts to navigate the world of 'moral decisions' and even questions his own choices and experiences regret in Book 4 as he contemplates that his expulsion from Heaven is of his own doing. Therefore, Satan can be said, in some respects, to exhibit Christian heroism, which makes labeling him a hero more plausible in spite of the outcome of his actions in the epic.

³ See A.J. Waldock's *Paradise Lost and Its Critics* (1961).

The study of the first reception of *Paradise Lost* would not be complete without also including its first reception as an illustrated book. John Medina was the first to design illustrations to go with each of the epic's books. In keeping with the spirit of reception studies, I will be surveying Medina's illustrations of *Paradise Lost* along with a variety of other artists that illustrated either the epic in full or its iconic Satan character. However, before engaging with the melting pot of artists and their illustrations of Milton, it would be useful to examine Milton's own method of visual imagery in his text.

C. Satan as Epic Hero: An Object of Empathy

It is crucial to determine that not only is there a relationship between word and image, but also that they are interwoven and cooperate harmoniously to produce a form of art that is incredibly sensory to its audience, be it a poem, a novel, a painting, a sketch or otherwise. W. J. T. Mitchell's article title "There Are No Visual Media" makes a bold claim from the onset. Mitchell argues that no medium can engage only one of the human senses. He relates that any form of media brings the senses together in an artistic experience: "The fact is that even at its purist and most single-mindedly optical, modernist painting was always, to echo Tom Wolfe's (1975) phrase, 'painted words'. The words were not those of history painting, poetic landscape, myth or religious allegory, but the discourse of theory, of idealist and critical philosophy" (258). The concept of "painted words" has in fact been discussed as far back as the time of Horace's *Ars Poetica*: "Ut pictura poesis", which literally translates to "A poem is like a picture" (480-81). Mitchell's suggestion that even paintings are made up of words makes it almost inevitable to consider word and image

not just alongside each other, but as complicit partners in the quest to create literary works of art. From this inference, I choose to think of *Paradise Lost* as text, both verbal and visual. Therefore, Satan himself is a verbal and visual construct of not only Milton, but also every artist, of any medium, that has attempted an adaptation of the character. To take this further, I will explore the instances in Milton's text that deal with physical descriptions of Satan. Milton describes Satan many times over the course of the epic; Satan is seen as a monster and creature of legend, a beautiful cherub, a giant, and even different animals. Satan has the ability to change his form at will, something that Milton takes advantage of.

Milton's epic *Paradise Lost* has been studied, examined, criticized and adapted many times, garnering an established but still dynamic historical school of reception. Many critics have unpacked various facets of its characters, themes, plot and what they see as the overarching messages Milton tried to convey in this epic. One debate that endures in this scholarly universe revolves around the character of Satan, a favorite subject among critics. The question remains unanswered, with substantially different opinions about Satan's role: malicious villain or misunderstood epic hero. My intention is to contribute to this enduring debate and navigate both primary and critical texts in the pursuit of the classification of Satan as hero or villain through an exploration of the visual adaptations and portrayals of the character by many artists and their different mediums. The achievement of such a goal begins with the study of Milton's style of visual imagery in relation to the character of Satan.

Many scholars have dissected and analyzed Milton's style of imagery including Roland Mushat Frye, Isabel MacCaffrey and Stephen Dobranski. Frye authored a lengthy book on the topic, *Milton's Imagery and the Visual Arts*, surveying Milton's possible

connections to the visual arts both in his education and travel as well as in his writings. MacCaffrey on the other hand explored Milton's imagery in terms of its connection to "myth". Dobranski's recent *Milton's Visual Imagination* offers a detailed look into Milton's style of imagery, delving into the complexity of Milton's visual imagery and how it plays a crucial role in the construction of not only the narrative but also the various dimensions of the characters.

When embarking on an exploration of the visual Satan, one must first examine how Milton himself viewed the visual Satan to establish a baseline to hold other adaptations to. This examination begins with a look at Milton's style of imagery, which Isabel MacCaffrey sheds light on. Satan's character has often been credited with human-like traits and emotions by critics, which make him a relatable character with whom readers can more easily relate. When a divine character such as Satan is shown to feel emotions like jealousy, hubris and despair, these attributes necessarily have the effect of making him more familiar to a human reader. "The elements of his character that Milton borrowed from heroic legend and epic link his adventures with those of the archetypal hero-figure" explains MacCaffrey in relation to Satan. She also clarifies that "the elements that belong to the Devil in Christianity help us to see the hero himself in proper perspective, as one who makes the best of a fallen and sin-bound condition" (179-80). Satan is human in his flaws despite his divine heritage while Adam, who is in reality human, is paradoxically not relatable as such to a fallen reader because he is innocent and ignorant of any reality outside Paradise. In Book 4, Milton offers insight into the troubled thoughts that run through Satan's mind:

... Horror and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts and from the bottom stir
The Hell within him, for within him Hell
He brings and round about him, nor from Hell
One step no more than from himself can fly
By change of place. (*PL* 4.18-23)

Satan's mind is literally Hell. Satan can no more escape from Hell than he could his own mind, which draws the parallel between the two. There are many instances in the text where Milton describes Satan's mind and thoughts as turbulent and chaotic just as the landscape of Hell is described as well. He begins to second-guess his actions as the rays of the sun remind him of the divine light he has fallen from.

... how glorious once above thy Spheare;
Till Pride and worse Ambition threw me down
Warring in Heav'n against Heav'ns matchless King:
Ah wherefore! he deservd no such return
From me, whom he created what I was (*PL* 4.39-43)

Satan acknowledges his mistakes and is aware that the fall was indeed his own doing, a result of his "Pride and worse Ambition" (*PL* 4.40). He feels regret as he remembers the events. He knows that he owes his existence to the Almighty and questions how he could have betrayed his creator. This statement is in direct contradiction with one that he made in Book 5 which occurred before the Fall. It is in this speech that Satan claims that since no angel can remember being created then they must be "self-begot" (*PL* 5.860) and not actually created by God. He continues to shift blame from himself to God and back again. He lays the blame at the Creator's feet for his current misfortune and hellish relocation. Yet he claims that "Which way I fly is Hell, myself am Hell" (*PL* 4.75). However, Satan

himself makes the following statement early on in Book 1 in his speech to Beelzebub: “The mind is its own place and in itself/Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven” (*PL* 1.254-55), which suggests that he himself has made his mind a Hell willingly, choosing to live in this state rather than try to make the best of what he was given. Instead of choosing to prosper in Hell, he dwells on what he has lost and so chooses to live in a Hell of his own in his mind, another choice that is human. This choice also contradicts his perhaps most famous statement in the whole of *Paradise Lost*: “Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven!” (1.263). He makes this claim but then travels to the Garden to ruin God’s creation, negating the statement since he makes clear he is not satisfied with ruling Hell. Such statements made by Satan in Book 1 contradict his thoughts later on in Book 4, which lends credibility to the idea that what Satan said in Book 1 was nothing more than mere bravado on his part in front of his followers and maybe even himself while the inner chaos of his soliloquy in Book 4 is the real insight into his thoughts. Satan’s mind is also prone to the human flaw of reliving memories that one wants to put behind them. “Now conscience wakes despair/That slumbered, wakes the bitter memory/Of what he was, what is, and what must be” (*PL* 4.23-25). Satan does indeed have a conscience, a purely human construct, and also feels the very human emotion of despair. As such, it is of no surprise in the least that he could be viewed as a relatable character to readers, making his categorization as epic hero even more plausible. Therefore, is it plausible to consider Satan *the* hero of the narrative? Also, if Satan can truly be categorized as an archetypal hero, is such a thing detectable in Milton’s imagery when it comes to this character?

What many critics begin with when tackling Milton’s imagery is his use of similes. Milton employs similes as his primary technique for visual descriptions in his epic.

MacCaffrey points out that there are in fact three types of similes Milton uses in his writing: the first, which is actually associated with Milton himself, is that which draws on mythological histories, referred to as “classical” similes. The second draws on history and the third on nature. The latter two are not nearly as fascinating as the first: “His similes descend from the universals of myth to instances in history, legend, and nature, and so show something of the life-history of the archetypes” (MacCaffrey 120). By drawing on all of these figures, places, and events from history, Milton incites not only an appreciation for a vast survey of culture through his use of simile but also a curiosity in those who are not well versed or familiar with the references he makes.

In fact, the study of similes in Milton’s epic is a subject that many a scholar has tackled, including Stephen Dobranski as well as Anne Ferry, John Leonard, Karen Edwards and Balachandra Rajan. Dobranski’s book begins his first chapter with an epigraph by Samuel Johnson, for whom Milton featured as the longest and most complex of his *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* (2009): “His eyes are said never to have been bright; but if he was a dexterous fencer, they must have been once quick” (Johnson 274). With this quote as an opening, Dobranski sets up his chapter “Of things visible” perfectly to begin a discussion on Milton’s blindness and its presence as well as effect on *Paradise Lost*, a topic which many critics have commented on in terms of Milton’s imagery and its connection to his vision loss. He asserts that “Milton already sounds detached from his physical world as he turns from an unspecified ‘vernal bloom’ to ‘flocks, or herds,’ a group of images that sound more like standard pastoral topoi than parts of Milton’s lived experience in seventeenth-century London” (2). The turn which Dobranski speaks of begins to occur at the beginning of Book 3, when Satan has left Hell as he journeys to the Garden of Eden.

The fact that Milton's imagery becomes "more like standard pastoral topoi" when Satan leaves Hell is peculiar to say the least, suggesting some kind of favoritism perhaps on Milton's part in terms of setting. Many scholars of *Paradise Lost* have found Milton's "detached" imagery to be potentially problematic in his text. One of these critics was none other than Samuel Johnson himself. Johnson was dissatisfied with Milton's use of imagery, a fact which critics like Dobranski argue against. Just as Miltonists seem to be divided in the categorization of Satan as the hero of the narrative, so too are they on the issue of Milton's imagery and its power of visuality or lack thereof in relation to his blindness at the time when he wrote the epic. Satan's shield and spear, both of which have strange descriptions in Milton's text, serve as good examples of Milton's complex imagery:

... His ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large and round,
Behind him cast. The broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesolè,
...
His spear (to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills to be the mast
Of some great admiral were but a wand)
He walked with to support uneasy steps
(*PL* 1.284-295)

In keeping with Milton's practice, both shield and spear are described through the use of similes. Satan's spear bears a paradoxical description when it comes to size. It is first compared to Norwegian pine trees and then reduced to a wand. Also, as a mere wand, the spear is said to be used like a walking stick "to support his uneasy steps" (*PL* 1.295) as he first reaches the shores of the burning lake. That the archangel's weapon of choice would

be used as nothing more than a walking stick speaks to Milton's shaping of Satan's character. Satan's true weapon as it turns out is his ability to change his shape. Milton shows Satan as changing shape and form many times over the course of the epic: from fallen angel in Book 1 to cherub to an assortment of birds and four-legged creature to the animal he is most famously associated with, the serpent, in Book 9. The fallen archangel then resumes his original shape (that which he begins the epic with: his shape as fallen rebel archangel) only to be punished by the Almighty for his misdeeds by being forced back into the shape he used to tempt Eve (*PL* 10.511-17). However, even when he is being punished, he is still distinguished as superior from the rest of the fallen as he is forced to become a reptile, but a dragon/python rather than a simple serpent while the rest of his fellow rebels are turned into snakes. Such a distinction bears further exploration in terms of visual portrayals of Satan in this moment and others that involve his physical transformations in adaptations and illustrations of the epic. These will include not only iconic illustrators of the poem such as John Baptist Medina, William Blake and Gustave Doré, but also Pablo Auladell who adapted Milton's epic into a visual narrative in the form of a graphic novel.

D. The Visual Satan in *Paradise Lost*

A crucial component of Milton's visual imagery when it comes to Satan is his inclusion of the physical transformations that Satan undergoes in the epic, ending in his final forced transmutation, his punishment for his first crime against mankind. The study of each transformation and its significance raises the issue of Satan's freedom, even

as a banished and fallen angel. How is Milton's style of imagery related to Satan's freedom? What does it say about his potential role of hero of the narrative? Satan's journey of shapeshifting commences at the very beginning of Book 1 of *Paradise Lost*. When he is first introduced to the reader, it is implied that his original shape has been changed by the first line he speaks. He addresses his fellow fallen angel Beëlzebub with the following:

If thou beest he (but O how fall'n! how changed
From him who in the happy realms of light
Clothed with transcendent brightness didst outshine
Myriads, though bright!) ... (*PL* 1.84-87)

With Milton's use of words like "transcendent", "bright" and "outshine", the implication is that the original angelic form relates to light and a kind of divine ethereal beauty, which has been changed after the Fall. As Beëlzebub, an angel, has changed since landing in Hell, then it can be deduced that Satan's own form has also changed. Furthermore, the use of the word "happy" in reference to Heaven, the place that these angels fell from, is clearly meant to make clear the reader from the start that this new place these angels now dwell is far from happy. This is apparent as the beauty that Beëlzebub once possessed was in the "happy" place where they used to be, but he is now changed for the worse as he has fallen to another place, an un-"happy" place. Satan's choice to rebel is what caused his expulsion from the "happy" place. When he tried to assert his freedom of choice, his freedom of movement was impeded as God expelled him from Heaven, exiling him to Hell. His exile also meant he lost his freedom of choice when it came to his physical form; he changed from a beautiful angel to something ugly. It is ironic then that after attempting the highest form of freedom, revolting against God in Heaven, he is reduced to a place of radical un-

freedom in which both his mobility and his choice in shape has been reduced. This reduction is further emphasized with Milton's first description of the monstrous figure that is Satan in the ensuing passage.

With head uplift above the wave and eyes
That sparkling blazed. His other parts besides,
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood
.....
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature. On each hand the flames
Driv'n backward slope their pointing spires and, rolled
In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale. (*PL* 1.192-224)

The Arch Fiend's size is compared to that of the legendary monsters of old such as the Leviathan, Titan, Briareos and Typhon; all are monstrous legends from Greek mythology, which serve as allusions to other classical texts, highlighting Milton's own intellectual and educational prowess. The comparison to such creatures coupled with the repetition of the word "huge" three times as well as "long and large", "monstrous" and "mighty" all serve to add to the reader's visualization of Satan's giant size. He is equated with these great monsters who were giant in size and wrought havoc, yet he is chained to the flaming floor, unable to move even his head. The irony is that the implication of his size is that he is a powerful large creature that should be unstoppable, but he is in fact unable to even lift his head from the floor because his freedom of movement and his freedom of choice have been taken away by God as punishment for Satan's choosing to rebel. Nevertheless, Satan, although exiled to Hell with his angelic form changed into that of a monstrous being, still has his wings, a defining feature for angels; "with expanded wings he steers his flight" (*PL*

1.225). Angels do indeed have wings that allow them to fly, and so Milton's angels should be no different: "Characteristically, angels travel either by flying or by walking. There are many different kinds of angels, but wings are explicitly associated with most of them" (Corns 31). This is significant as Satan's wings represent his freedom of movement; with his wings, he is able to travel to the different worlds: Heaven, Hell, Earth.

So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay
Chained on the burning lake. Nor ever thence
Had ris'n or heaved his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heav'n
Left him at large to his own dark designs (*PL* 1.209-13)

Satan, when he first awakens on the floor of Hell, is chained and unmoving. He has no freedom of movement. He has no control of his own movement and therefore his freedom is not his own. However, by "high permission of all-ruling Heav'n" (*PL* 1.212) he is freed and allowed to roam in his exile. After being punished by banishment to Hell, his freedom to choose and his freedom to move are both restored by God's will, almost as if God is testing Satan. Having been punished for his first crime, God seems to be giving Satan a second chance, almost like an experiment in liberalism on God's part in order to see what Satan will do with this gift of reacquired freedom. However, the first act on Satan's part is to travel to Earth and attempt to corrupt God's creation. On his way to the Garden, Satan encounters the angel Uriel. When he sees the angel will be an obstacle in the way of getting into the garden, Satan changes his shape in order to put Uriel at ease and allow him to pass. Satan chooses to change into a cherub, an unassuming angel.

But first he casts to change his proper shape
Which else might work him danger or delay:
And now a stripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime yet such as in his face
Youth smiled celestial and to every limb
Suitable grace diffused, so well he feigned.
Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek played. Wings he wore
Of many a colored plume sprinkled with gold,
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand. (*PL* 3.634-44)

This passage, in contrast with the passage describing the angel Beëlzebub's former beauty, focuses not only on beautiful light but also on youth. This focus on light can be seen in the use of word such as "stripling" and "youth" as well as "celestial", "grace", "flowing hair" and "colored plume", not to mention the use of both silver and gold. All of these adjectives combined paint a picture of the utmost divine youthful beauty that re-emphasize what Milton hinted at in the beginning of the poem with his description of the former Beëlzebub, which is that angels in the "happy" place are radiantly beautiful. Since Satan, in this passage, is standing at the stairway to the gates of Heaven, he is just close enough to the "happy" place to make his change in appearance warranted. Here also, the mention of the wings is worth noting because the difference in their description is important. When Satan takes flight in the first book, his wings are not described, only mentioned in connection with his flying. However, here when Satan is transformed into a divine creature again, his wings are given a rich description that involves colors. This descriptiveness attached to the wings of a creature that has not fallen, unlike Satan, makes it plausible to suggest that these wings of an unfallen being are more decorative. The fact that the cherub wings are decorative serves to contrast the use of the word "proper". Satan's proper wings are not

decorative or beautiful it seems since Milton makes a point of using the word “proper” in relation to the shape Satan was in before he became the cherub. The word “proper” implies ownership, Satan’s proper shape is his true shape. His true shape is neither beautiful nor graceful.

Thence up he flew and on the Tree of Life,
The middle tree and highest there that grew,
Sat like a cormorant. ... (*PL* 4.194-96)

In the above passage, Satan has perched himself on a tree in order to watch God’s favored creation, Adam and Eve. He has chosen to transform into a cormorant, a bird, as he sits and gazes spitefully at the humans, plotting and scheming their demise. The choice of the cormorant is starkly smaller than that of an angel. It is far less imposing than a monstrous giant and much less majestic than a youthful cherub. Nonetheless, he has still chosen a form that has wings, which retains his freedom of movement, however much smaller the wings may be in comparison to either of his previous forms. Still, he chooses to reduce his freedom of movement by choosing a creature that is smaller in size. Yet the bird is one of many in Satan’s journey to a loss of freedom of movement.

This next passage marks a distinct change in Satan’s choice of form. Here, he begins to choose forms that have no wings, which therefore have less freedom of movement.

Then from his lofty stand on that high tree
Down he alights among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kind, himself now one,
Now other, as their shape served best his end

Nearer to view his prey and unespied
To mark what of their state he more might learn
By word or action marked. About them round
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare,
Then as a tiger who by chance hath spied
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Straight couches close, then rising changes oft
His couchant watch as one who chose his ground
Whence rushing he might surest seize them both
Gripped in each paw ... (*PL* 4.393-408)

He begins by changing into something of a four-footed kind that is part of a herd, implying an animal that is not fearsome, but rather one that runs with the herd, a follower; this is evident in the use of the word “sportful”, which carries the connotation of being part of a group. This changes quickly as he discards that form in favor of a predatory lion and soon after a tiger. Both animals are fierce and vicious, stalking their prey. The use of words like “fiery” and “seize” carry the implication of an animal that enjoys preying on weaker beings and conquering them, something he wishes to do to Adam and Eve. Yet, what is a truly stark change is the fact that none of these three animal forms have wings. Satan willingly chooses to transform into creatures whose mobility is limited to running on the ground. Given that he chooses to relinquish his ability to fly when he gives up his wings, Satan’s freedom of choice here consists of a drastic reduction of his freedom of movement by essentially grounding himself. He sacrifices one for the other in favor of completing his evil scheme. As the Book continues he assumes another form that is even smaller and less mobile than the previous predators.

... Him there they found
Squat like a toad close at the ear of Eve
Assaying by his dev’lish art to reach

The organs of her fancy and with them forge
Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams,
Or if inspiring venom he might taint
Th' animal spirits that from pure blood arise (*PL* 4.799-805)

The animal Satan chooses next, after already having transmogrified into four-legged animals, is that of a toad, an animal whose movements are limited to slow hops. He chooses this form as he whispers in Eve's ear in an attempt to sway her into corruption. The toad seems to carry evil connotations, evident in the use of words like "dev'lish" and "venom", both of which speak to his desire to create not only mischief but also mayhem and destruction. Satan's choice of an animal whose limited freedom of mobility is yet another sacrifice Satan makes in favor of his freedom of choice. Nonetheless, his freedom of choice does not end here. The word "venom" also acts as a foreshadowing device for the creature that is yet to come, the iconic serpent that Satan is famous for.

... Thus the orb he roamed
With narrow search and with inspection deep
Considered every creature: which of all
Most opportune might serve his wiles and found
The serpent subtlest beast of all the field. (*PL* 9.82-86)

In the above passage, Satan has inhabited the vessel he is most famous for: the serpent. He has observed all the creatures around him and found the one most suitable for his task; this is evident in Milton's use of the word "opportune". The description of the serpent always involves, either directly or indirectly, the use of the adjective "subtle". The use of this adjective is quite telling in terms of Satan's choice of the animal. That the serpent is subtle means that it makes little to no noise as it slithers around, its presence undetected.

However, what this also means is that it is not imposing or intimidating in its form since it is not seen. Another important point to make about the serpent is that it not only has no wings but also that it doesn't even have any appendages. Although Karen Edwards speculates in *Milton and the Natural World* about the nature and species of the serpent, even going so far as to suggest an amphisbaena, the implication of the choice of a reptilian creature without appendages is clear. Its mobility is quite radically reduced to simply slithering around on its belly. This is Satan's ultimate sacrifice of his freedom of movement through his freedom of choice in taking the serpent as his latest vessel. He could not fulfill his chosen task without sacrificing this freedom.

And now their way to Earth they had descried,
To Paradise first tending when, behold!
Satan in likeness of an angel bright (*PL* 10.325-27)

After having committed his crime of corrupting Mankind, Satan sets off to return to Pandemonium and give his fellow fallen the good news. For this, he transforms into an angel with wings, to allow himself to fly back to Hell. He does not choose to go back to the ugly monstrous form God forced him into at the beginning of the epic, but rather chooses, despite having to go back to Hell, to wear the form of an angel that is not fallen. This is evident in the use of the word "bright" which is equated with an unfallen angel. This form is Satan's last act of freedom of choice when it comes to his physical shape. He chooses to take back his true angelic form which gives him back his wings and so his freedom of movement is restored once more. He has employed both freedom of choice and of

movement here as he takes a form that will bring him back to Hell. However, this freedom is fleeting.

Satan's transformation in Book 10 is his last, the one transformation in the entire epic that was against his will. After having accomplished what he set out to and seducing Eve into eating the forbidden fruit which results in humanity's corruption and subsequent fall, Satan returns to Pandemonium to boast of his accomplishment only to find himself transformed into a serpent once more as punishment for his crime. Interestingly, his form isn't that of an ordinary serpent as the rest of his followers were forced into. Instead, he is changed into a dragon, larger than the rest and retaining his power and superiority over them. This distinction shows still some favoritism on the part of God when it comes to his fallen archangel. Given that Satan incited the rebels, led them to revolt, and then went in person to tempt and manipulate Eve and therefore Adam to fall, it is strange that God would still choose to favor Satan, even in punishment, over the rest of the rebels.

The last instance of shapeshifting that Satan undergoes is the final mention of Satan in the epic. This occurs in Book 10, the events of which are the consequences of the original sin committed by Eve. Satan arrives in Pandemonium and brags to his fellow fallen about his misdeeds, expecting applause and adulation. Instead,

... He wondered but not long
Had leisure, wond'ring at himself now more:
His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
His arms clung to his ribs, his legs entwining
Each other till supplanted down he fell
A monstrous serpent on his belly prone
Reluctant but in vain: a greater pow'r
Now ruled him, punished in the shape he sinned (*PL* 10.509-16)

In this last passage from Book 10, Satan undergoes his final transmogrification as punishment for his crimes. His ability to change forms is used against him now as he is “punished in the shape he sinned” (*PL* 10.516). The description Milton gives here of Satan’s physical transformation is new as the reader has never before been privy to the details involved in Satan’s previous shapeshifting instances. The use of the word “prone” does not go unnoticed as it is also used in the first description the reader gets of Satan after the Fall when he initially awakens in exile in Hell: “Prone on the flood” (*PL* 1.195). As he was first seen at the beginning of the epic: sprawled and chained on the floor of Hell, so too is he seen now at the end of the tale, reduced to a form that is animal as well as confined to Hell. His freedom of movement is restricted and his freedom of choice is taken away completely. Considering the sequence of events that had taken place leading up to this moment, Satan was indeed on an epic journey, just as many critics have claimed. He set out from a bad situation with a quest and he fought, manipulated and fooled his way into fulfilling that quest and returned victorious to his “home”. However, the classification of him as hero becomes shaky when one considers the nature of the quest and the sheer immorality of his actions in pursuit of that quest. This debate on Satan’s label as hero or otherwise will be further explored through visual representations of his character by a bevy of artists in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

THE VISUAL SATAN: FROM MEDIEVAL PAINTINGS TO CONTEMPORARY TELEVISION AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

A. The Satanic Serpent: Medieval and Renaissance Representations

The advent of Milton's epic changes not only the literary but also the visual representation of the devil, contributing importantly to the overturning of conventions established in the Middle Ages. Satan's character undergoes many physical transformations throughout the epic as outlined in the previous chapter. These transformations were milestones in Satan's epic journey and demystified Satan's role as hero. Moreover, Milton's textual transformations grow out of and give new momentum to transformations of the Satan figure in the visual arts. I will address how Milton's most iconic illustrators have treated Milton's Satan, and I will do so in the context of how Christian artists prior to Milton imaged the character of Satan, to establish a baseline of what Satan looked like for artists before Milton and his ground-breaking *Paradise Lost*. The illustrative tradition thereby gathers a double genealogy: Milton's poetic text and the inherited iconic tradition in which that text intervenes. The crucial moment in that tradition is of course Satan's appearance as the serpent, and I offer here an initial survey of the multitude of artists who have reimagined this scene.

Even a cursory look at Christian art stretching from the late Middle Ages into the Renaissance yields a fascinating variety of depictions of Satan and his serpent, as this was the Satanic transformation featured in one of the first chapters of Genesis. The differences

between the portrayals speak not only of the evolving styles of art but also of the artists' and their broader cultures' general perceptions of Satan. A central axis of difference is gender: an exploration of Christian art produced in the later Middle Ages shows many examples of paintings that deal with the temptation representing the serpent portrayed with the head or upper body of a female. Well-known examples by influential figures in this tradition include *The Temptation of Adam and Eve* (1425) by Tommaso Masolino da Panicale, *Creation of Eve and Original Sin* (1432-36) by Paolo Uccello, *The Fall of Man* (1470) by Hugo van der Goes and *The Fall and Expulsion* (1508-10) by Michelangelo Buonarroti. What all of these paintings have in common is that their concept of the serpent that tempts Eve is not simply a regular, zoomorphic snake. Each of these paintings features a female head on the serpent's body in the scene of the corruption of Eve. Some even go so far as to have an entire female upper body attached to the serpent tail. This is pertinent considering that the traditional story features Satan – presumed to be masculine – as the corrupter of a female victim. With a female head on the serpent's body, however, the implication is that Eve was corrupted not by Satan, but a kind of hybrid female evil, which in and of itself insinuates the concept of the female gender as the source of evil (or at least a contributory factor) and ultimately to blame for the fall. This in turn suggests that a study of the serpent, Devil or otherwise, will only add to the already existing archetype that is the character of Satan. In fact, the creature that is featured in the above-mentioned paintings is one of myth that was commonly associated with the Devil-serpent that tempted Eve. The Draconopedes, according to Gerhard Jaritz's translation from the *Hortus Sanitatis*,

are big and mighty serpents that have faces similar to the ones of human maidens ending with bodies of dragons. It is credible that this is the species with the help of which the devil deceived Eve – because it had (as Bede says) a maiden-like face. This way, the devil joined and attracted the woman to allure her by similar appearance. He showed her only the face and hid the rest of the body under the leaves of the trees. (86)

The *Hortus Sanitatis*, an encyclopedia of plants, animals and minerals, offers a possible reasoning behind the choice of a woman's face on the devil-serpent. That Eve, a woman, would see a female face and recognize the familiarity of that face as being one of her own gender would make her more susceptible and easily seduced by the serpent could be the reason for so many of the previously mentioned artists to render a Draconcopedes rather than an ordinary serpent (Matthews and Matthews also refer to the Draconcopedes as the creature from the myth of the Garden). This possible explanation would also indicate that Satan's ability to change shape was not restricted to animals that were found in nature. He was even capable of changing his theoretically male gender, or at the very least the physical manifestation of said gender, into something not only other but also a hybrid with a creature that is indeed found in the garden. This assumption is supported by Milton as he explicitly states that angels have such an ability: "... for spirits when they please/Can either sex assume or both, so soft/And uncompounded is their essence pure" (*PL* 1.423-25). Yet, the Devil here did not hide his snake body from Eve, as is suggested in the *Hortus Sanitatis*, because she clearly fingers the serpent as the culprit behind her temptation, which means she saw the snake body. The paintings mentioned above all feature a version of this creature in their own way in the scene of the fall of man.

Tommaso di Cristofano Fini Masolino da Panicale (1383-1440), more commonly referred to simply as Masolino, played a prominent part in Florentine painting. Among his

important commissions were those for a side chapel in S Stefano in Empoli, a fresco for the baptistery of the Collegiata also in Empoli and the Brancacci chapel fresco cycle of scenes in Florence, postulated as the starting point of his well-known collaboration with Masaccio, since they both contributed to the fresco cycle (Christiansen). Among the frescos that Masolino painted for the Brancacci chapel is one titled *The Temptation of Adam and Eve* (1425) (see Fig. 1), which features the moment in which Eve is tempted by Satan to eat from the forbidden fruit tree. What first stands out in this painting is the serpent itself. It is not in fact only a serpent, but rather a creature with a snake's body and the head of a woman. The head is distinguishable as female as it has features that are more delicate-looking than those of Adam's and it has longer blond hair, similar to that of Eve. Eve and therefore the serpent's head as well are fairer-skinned than Adam, making the gender difference more pronounced. Also, Adam has a beard and male genitalia, defining him as masculine and different from the other two who don't, reinforcing the fact that the serpent's head is female. The staging of their bodies is also significant. Adam is placed on one side while Eve and the serpent are on the other, facing him. Adam and Eve are looking at each other, establishing a connection between them, yet this connection is weakened by the fact that Eve's arm is wrapped around the trunk of the tree just as the serpent is, which implies a connection between Eve and the serpent. What's more the serpent woman's eyes, unlike the two figures it towers over, are closed, but there is a kind of content, discreet smile on its face, which only makes sense as Eve holds in her hand what appears to be a piece of fruit from the tree, succumbing to Satan's plan.

The mutant serpent/woman motif is pursued and elaborated in the work of even more influential Renaissance artists, such as Paolo Uccello.



Fig. 1. *The Temptation of Adam and Eve* (1425) – Masolino.

Paolo di Dono (1397-1475), known as Paolo Uccello, was, like Masolino, a prominent figure in Florentine art in the fifteenth century. The first recognized works credited to Uccello are the frescos in the Chiostro Verde of S Maria Novella in Florence that are usually thought to be from around the early 1430s: “The frescoes represent scenes from Genesis and are part of an extensive scheme of decoration in the cloister to which Uccello himself further contributed at a later date” (Lloyd). Among the first frescos is

Uccello's *Creation of Eve and Original Sin* (1432-36) (see Fig. 2) which features the scenes of Eve coming into being and that of her and Adam falling from grace (the figure shown below is a detailed version of the *Original Sin*). In the temptation scene, the serpent is similar to that in the previously mentioned Masolino fresco. It has the body of a snake but the head of a woman, identified by the long hair. The features, though not as masculine as those of Adam's, cannot be compared those of Eve to determine whether they are what the artist considered feminine since the reproduction of the fresco consulted is blurred over her face. This is due to the fact that the fresco was not as well preserved as it could have been because of dampness in the Chiostro. However, the fact that the features of the snake/woman are less sharp than those of Adam make it more plausible that the head is of a female. There also appears to be a kind of shadowing around Adam's jaw which could imply a beard, but this cannot be verified due to the damage the fresco had sustained from dampness. It cannot be compared to the expected non-bearded face of Eve as the latter is quite faded and damaged as well. Thus, the existence of a beard is inconclusive and cannot be used as a point towards or against the serpent head's gender.

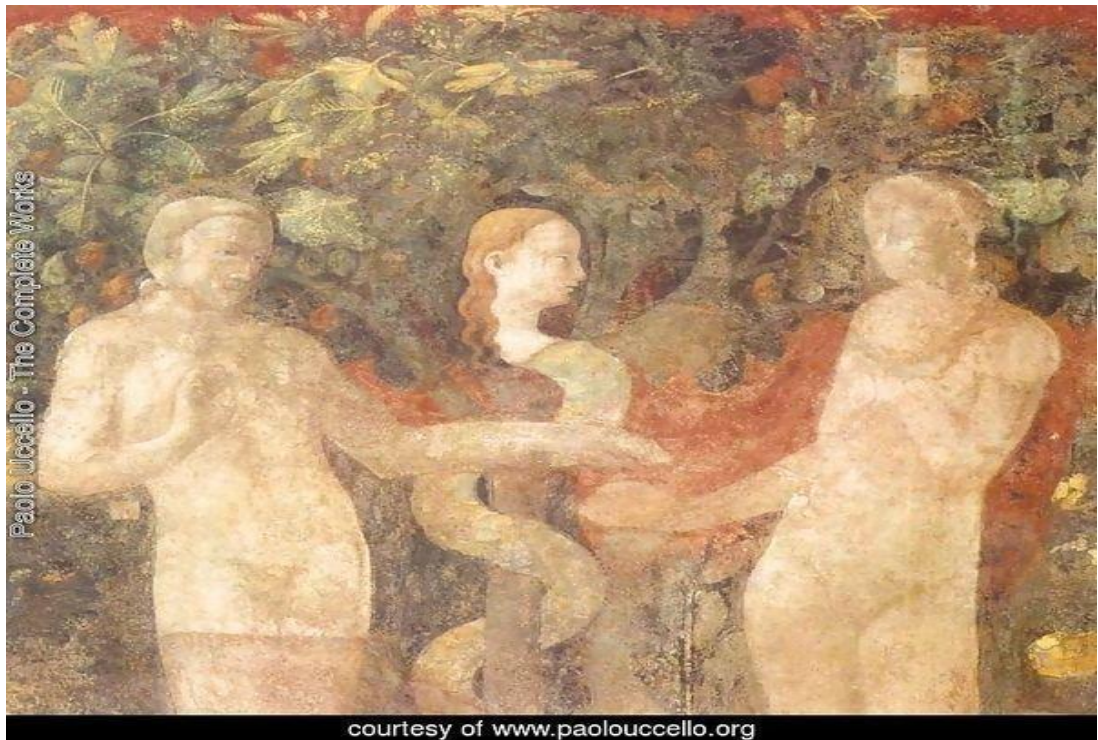


Fig. 2. *Creation of Eve and Original Sin (detail)* (1432/36) – Paolo Uccello.

Paintings and frescos depicting this scene in the story of Genesis with a tempter hybridized with respect to species and gender were not isolated to Italy. Like Masolino and Uccello, another artist who was interested in the fall of Mankind was Netherlandish painter Hugo van der Goes (1440-1482). According to Gaspar Ofhuys, a monk at the monastery to which van der Goes belonged, “Hugo was travelling back from Cologne, some five or six years after becoming a monk, when conviction of his damnation drove him to frenzy and he had to be restrained from injuring himself.” It appears that not only did van der Goes’ life revolve around religion, he seems also to have been especially obsessed with damnation. Thus, it is not surprising that he would paint the scene which was the source of humankind’s damnation. One of the panels from the Vienna Diptych he painted, *The Fall*

of Man (1479) (see Fig. 3), depicts the scene of the original sin. It is meant to be seen side by side with *The Lamentation* as a contrast between humankind's fall from grace and the subsequent redemption manifested by the people tending to Jesus Christ after his crucifixion. However, for the purpose of the examination of the 'tempter', only the *Fall* is displayed below.



Fig. 3. *The Fall of Man* (1470) – Hugo van der Goes.

Van der Goes' painting is by far the most idiosyncratic of the four as its portrayal of the tempting serpent shows a creature that is not easily distinguished as either masculine or feminine. Van der Goes almost discards the image of a snake completely as his creature

looks more like a lizard since it has protruding limbs, unlike a serpent, and it also has the head of a woman as well as webbed feet and a reptilian tail. Its hair is long and its arms are wrapped around the tree of knowledge as it watches Eve take the fruit. The fact that this serpent looks more like a large reptile with human features draws a connection between this figure and the final shape Satan is punished with, a reptile-like figure of a dragon/python. Van der Goes makes Eve pregnant in his painting, which suggests a kind of foreshadowing of the consequences she receives as a result of the events occurring in the fresco. This foreshadowing element proves that van der Goes is prone to including more than the mere event itself in the painting. The fact that he shows Satan not simply as possessing a serpent but actually as some kind of hybrid reptile-woman creature is his way of highlighting Satan's ability to transform, something that is also hinted at in the Bible.⁴ Also, Eve's apparent pregnancy suggests unfallen sex between her and Adam in the Garden, which Milton also refers to in Book 4:

[...] Nor turned I ween
Adam from his fair spouse nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refused, (*PL* 4.741-43)

Though there is no mention of lust, the words "connubial love" imply proper marital copulation between the first man and woman. Thus, van der Goes' portrayal of a pregnant Eve holding a piece of forbidden fruit in one hand while picking another for Adam iconographically implies both unfallen sex and pregnancy as the fruit of sin.

⁴ See 2 Cor. 11:14: "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light".

Michelangelo (Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni), famous for his work on the Sistine Chapel ceiling, was, in spite of his training as a painter, in fact far more productive in sculpture and architecture. Yet, his Sistine Chapel fresco cycles have confirmed his preeminence even among Italian Renaissance painters. Ironically, according to Hughes and Elam, Michelangelo initially refused the Sistine Chapel project commissioned by the Pope due to creative decisions Michelangelo disapproved of. However, it is clear that his refusal did not last as the frescos were finished by Michelangelo in 1512. The frescos all revolve around Christian stories and figures, but the one to focus on for the purpose of this thesis is Michelangelo's *The Fall and Expulsion* (1508-10). In contrast to the previously described painting, Michelangelo's Satan-serpent is more snake-like than reptile as it doesn't have protruding lower limbs, but instead the body of a snake. However, what differentiates it is that it has the upper body of a woman, complete with the long hair and breasts. This figure is wrapped around the tree of knowledge, its tail coiled around it, while it offers the apple to Eve.

Unlike Masolino, Michelangelo truly leaves no doubts about the gender of any of his characters, except perhaps the angel. Adam and Eve may both look muscular and defined, but Adam has short hair and is slightly bigger in build than Eve and his male genitalia is clearly on display while Eve's bare breasts and long hair identify her as the female figure. The serpent, much as the other paintings mentioned before, has the body of a snake but the upper torso and head of a woman. It has breasts and long hair, much like Eve, though its hair is lighter in color like Adam's, which could indicate that the serpent is not what it appears to be. Since the concept of the snake-woman is meant to imply a female evil, while the narrative actually places the blame on Satan, a male figure, the hair color,

though a minor detail, could be Michelangelo's way of identifying both Satan the male and the female evil in one creature. Its facial features are also more delicate, the nose less sharp and smaller than Adam's.



Fig. 4. *The Fall and Expulsion* (1508-10) – Michelangelo.

In all the aforementioned paintings, two things are plain to see: the serpent is no mere serpent but rather a snake/woman hybrid and the scene of temptation and action of the original sin is experienced simultaneously by Adam and Eve. They all adhere to the Bible in that Adam is present with Eve at the moment of her picking the fruit and tasting it then offering it to him. “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat” (Gen. 3:6). The use of the preposition “with” in reference to Adam being present at the time alongside Eve supports what these artists have portrayed. This contrasts what Milton himself depicts

happens in that scene. In Milton's Book 9, Eve suggests to Adam that they divide their labor, which means that she is in fact alone when she is seduced by the serpent into eating the forbidden fruit. Milton's scenario seems more plausible given the warnings imparted to Adam, who then passes them on to Eve, about the Fiend as well as the Forbidden Tree. If Adam has indeed been warned about Satan's corrupting influence, he would have likely spoken up against the serpent had he been present at the moment of Eve's temptation. However, given that Eve succumbs to the temptation, it is more conceivable that Adam was not in fact there.

The above four paintings are only a small sample of the paintings between the late 1400s and the early 1500s that revolved around the subject of the original sin, but they have been selected as highly representative of a traditional yet evolving iconographic tradition. Italians dominate this survey, in part because the major Northern European artists such as Hieronymus Bosch (*The Last Judgement*, 1482), the brothers Hubert and Jan van Eyck (*Ghent Altarpiece*, c. 1420-32), Albrecht Dürer (*Adam and Eve*, 1507), and Hans Baldung (*Eve, the Serpent and Death*, c. 1510-20), who painted scenes pertaining to the moment of the original sin or the fall of man, were themselves primarily influenced by the Italian tradition. But despite a clear Italian "mainstream", there is real variation in the portrayals of the Satanic serpent. Some feature the serpent as just that, an ordinary snake. Others, like the van Eyck brothers choose not to show the tempter at all, instead focusing only on Adam and Eve and the fruit itself. Finally, the most common portrayal, as is shown by the four paintings surveyed above, is that of a kind of Draconopedes, a mythical creature that is a hybrid between a snake and a woman with a snake's lower body but the upper body of a woman that is usually faulted with the temptation of Eve. These paintings and their variety

in portrayals of Satan's moment as the serpent offer more support to the claim of Satan's ability to shapeshift, an ability that symbolizes his freedom despite being cast out of Heaven and banished.

B. *Paradise Lost's* Paramount Painters

It is of no surprise that the Devil, a character whose very nature is meant to appeal to and seduce humans, has long fascinated artists. Adolphe Didron and Margaret Stokes' *Christian Iconography* shows in detail how the Devil has appeared in different forms, shapes and sizes in different cultures (as one can already glean from the brief survey of medieval art above):

The devil has his phases according to the style of the architecture to which he belongs: he is Byzantine or monstrous at Constantinople and Jerusalem; ugly but human in Rome, among the Latins; animal, yet his brute form modified by his human form among the Romans; human, but taking the forms of the beast among the Goths; and finally, with the Renaissance, returning to an ancient Satyr, which has the feet and horns of a goat, but the body and head of a man. (134)

Thus, there has been no universal consensus on what the Devil looks like, which explains why many artists continued to be fascinated by the character long after the Middle Ages ended. *Paradise Lost*, an epic that greatly expands Satan's role in its telling of the first human story of the Bible – the story of the Fall – became a powerful new impetus for illustrators almost from its first appearance. Simply put, the poem changed how the devil appeared. The first illustrator to be commissioned to bring the narrative to life through images was John Baptist Medina.

1. *The First Illustrator of Paradise Lost: John Medina*

Formally known as Sir John Baptist de Medina (1659-1710), he was a Flemish painter of Spanish origin born in Brussels. Medina was trained under the French painter François Du Chatel for a time. He moved to London in 1686 and began to make a name for himself as a portrait painter, especially for the Scottish nobility, which enabled him to open a practice of his own in Edinburgh. In fact, between 1697 and 1708 he produced around thirty portraits for members of the Royal College in Edinburgh's Surgeon's Company (Cast). He has often been considered the Scottish equivalent of what Godfrey Kneller was to portrait painting in London. With the success of his paintings in Scotland, he was ultimately knighted in 1707, three years prior to his death. Though he was mostly known for his portraits, Medina did in fact make endeavors into other genres such as history painting and book illustration. Medina rarely worked on book illustrations, but one of the few texts that he did illustrate was the fourth edition of the Milton's epic in the year 1688. The designs were by his own hand while the plates were physically engraved by one M. Burgess (Cast). Not all the plates were designed by Medina however; the plate for Book 4 was in fact designed by Bernard Lens. This plate is slightly different from the rest of the illustrations as the styles of Lens and Medina, though working in almost complete harmony in this set of illustrations, do differ when more closely studied. Marcia Pointon calls attention to the fact that Lens uses his clouds simply to contrast the shadows in the rest of the plate while Medina either uses them in a conventional sense, as in Book 12, in which he has angels riding these clouds, or to add to the mood of the scene (12). Yet, in spite of small stylistic differences, Lens' plate works well with Medina's and does not dramatically contrast with his.

Medina's illustrations of *Paradise Lost* portray many actions in one frame. Especially in the context of Auladell's later performance, the anticipation of comic book technique by Medina is striking. While a comic book does not usually include many actions in one panel, it does include multiple panels on one page. Thus, instead of a page presenting only one image, moment, or scene, it can include many, something that Medina accomplished as well, albeit within one frame instead of several. However, not all of Medina's illustrations follow this style. Those for Books 1, 2, 6, 7 and 12 contain only a single action. Pointon discusses how Medina was caught between two styles for his illustrations.

The first possibility was the old biblical usage of one comprehensive design for each book of the poem, every design containing a number of scenes illustrating different episodes ... The second method involved the choice of one single episode for one picture and was certainly a more effective method of portraying moments of crisis or of heightened dramatic appeal, as it involved little or no progressive nature to distract from the chosen episode. (Pointon 3-4)

A cursory glance at the illustrations of all twelve books shows that he chose to adopt the first method for some and the second for others, depending on the action he chose to highlight and emphasize from each book. For example, Books 1 and 2, mostly revolving around Satan, his speeches and plans to get his revenge as well as his embarking on the journey he suggests. In other words, there isn't physical action so much as the intention of inciting action, which Satan ends up taking on his own. Thus, it would make perfect sense for Medina to choose to include one single action in the illustrations for each of the Books since the single image would accentuate the high point of the Book. Meanwhile, others like

the ones for Book 9, which narrates the events leading up to and including Eve's temptation and subsequent fall, feature a full sequence of events rather than one moment of action.

Given that Medina was, in some plates, inclined to show many events, one wonders whether he was also inclined to show Satan's physical transformations in any of the scenes which should feature him doing so. "Satan, as he most frequently appears in Medina's illustrations ... is a combination of the traditional devil and an Italianate satyr" Pointon explains. "He has large pointed ears, horns and a tail, and notably in the illustration to Book IX, he has satyr's legs and hooves and bat's wings" and even has a "goatee beard" (5). The Italianate satyr attributes bestowed upon Satan offer further proof of the Italian style influence on artistic styles outside of Italy. Pointon argues further that this depiction of Satan was not uncommon, especially around the time of Medina's illustrations, as manuals on witchcraft were still widely circulated at that time, conventionally featuring such satyr-Satans. The sharp features that Medina bestows on Satan in his illustrations lend more to the general portrayal of an evil figure. An examination of Satan's different appearances in the course of Medina's illustrations indicates that from the outset, Satan's wings are not quite so large or imposing as one would expect them to be on such a fearsome and formerly divine creature (see Fig. 5 and 6). Satan's wings are in fact a worthwhile trait to compare in other illustrations of the epic to come.

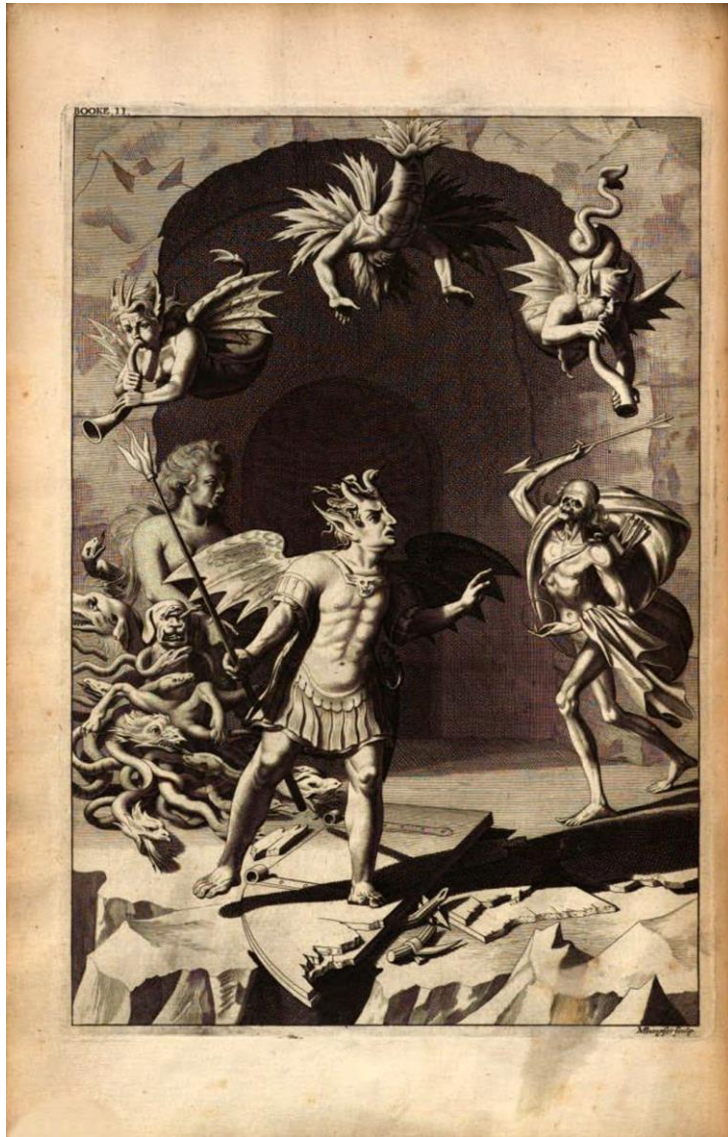


Fig. 5. John B. Medina's illustration of *Paradise Lost's* Book 2.



Fig. 6. John B. Medina's illustration of *Paradise Lost's* Book 9.

What is of special interest here is whether Medina found it noteworthy to feature any instances of Satan's transformations in the course of the epic. A closer look at the plates corresponding to the Books in which Satan does change shape (Books 3, 4, 9 and 10 in Milton's text) shows that Medina did in fact include a select few of these instances in his illustrations. His plate for Book 3 features a newly wingless Satan. It also shows a small

flying shape in the background addressing a similar shape in front of the sun. This juxtaposition suggests that this is a rendering of the scene in which Satan had transformed into a cherub is an effort to fool the archangel Uriel into letting him into the Garden. Medina also shows Satan's toad in Book 4 as well as his serpent in Book 9 in the respective plates of the books. These are seen in the form of the actual animals with no hint that they are in fact the devil in a different shape. Also, it is worthwhile to note that Medina did not showcase Satan's punishment in Book 10. He instead shows Satan back in front of his followers in Hell in the satyr-like form with no hint at what will become of him and his fellow fallen. Why did Medina not find this moment noteworthy enough to show it visually? The story, at least for Medina, seems to have become about Adam and Eve towards the middle of the epic, making his inclusion of Satan not only less but also smaller in size until he does not even grant the reader the visual closure of seeing Satan being punished, which is in fact his final moment in the epic.

2. *William Blake's Paradise Lost*

Though Medina was the first to illustrate *Paradise Lost*, he is not today the most well-known for transforming the epic from the verbal to the visual. The artist most commonly associated with illustrating *Paradise Lost* is William Blake (1757-1827), though his illustration of the epic came over a century after Medina's. In fact, what makes Blake an even more crucial illustrator is the fact that he was not only an artist but a poet as well, who made Milton an important part of his literary mythopoetics. Blake enrolled at the drawing school of Henry Pars before he studied under engraver James Basire I for eight years until

1779. The “profound political and theological radicalism” in Blake’s art “was largely derived from his London artisan background,” remarks David Bindman, yet “unlike many of his contemporaries who rose from similar circumstances to become established artists, he never sought to escape from it.” Blake entered the Royal Academy only briefly but continued to exhibit his work there for most of his life. Often cited is a letter that he sent to a friend and fellow artist, John Flaxman: “Now my lot in the Heavens is this, Milton lov’d me in childhood and shew’d me his face” (*The Letters of William Blake* 71). The relationship between Milton and Blake is more complex than one would imagine between author and illustrator, especially in a case in which the author died almost a century before the illustrator was even born. In fact, Blake’s fascination with Milton came long before he was commissioned to illustrate *Paradise Lost*. It ran deep enough that Blake wrote and illustrated an epic poem himself titled *Milton: A Poem in Two Books*. The epic revolved around Milton as a character. Pointon, citing influential exegetical work by Northrop Frye, also talks about the relationship between Blake and Milton in Blake’s epic, even going so far as to include William Hayley, Blake’s former friend and patron in the analysis: “Blake sees Milton as a saviour who will deliver his people from a Satanic figure who may be identified as Hayley, whom Blake sees as the prototype of passive conformity, that resemblance of moral virtue which is dangerous in proportion to the protection with which it is provided by society” (136). According to Pointon’s account, Blake fundamentally ruined William Hayley’s reputation by labeling him “a bigoted tyrant and persecutor” (135). It is said that Hayley tried to curb Blake’s creativity in favor of conforming to styles that would be the most profitable during the period in which he worked for Hayley, which only lasted for three years. Bindman reveals that Blake’s “employment was largely menial

(it included decorative interior work for Hayley's house), and Hayley, at Flaxman's urging, seems to have deliberately discouraged Blake (who described his employer as 'a corporeal friend and spiritual enemy') from the pursuit of imaginative work". It is strange that Blake would harbor animosity towards Hayley when he learned much from the man, including but not limited to reading Greek as well as an expanding knowledge of modern European literature and the like. Yet, many critics have remarked on the relationship coming to an end with Blake feeling "distrustful of Hayley's influence on him" (Frye 241-42). This begins to help explain Blake's association of Hayley with the Satanic figure in his epic.

Blake evidently attempted with this epic to produce a work similar in power to Milton's. Though it is only made up of two books, if one considers the cover page of Blake's illuminated *Milton*, one can see the possibility of a "12" instead of a "2" in the title *Milton: A Poem in 2 Books* (see Fig. 7 and 8). "Sir Geoffrey Keynes is definite that the '2 Books' of the title page originally read '12 Books,' and the original *Milton* would undoubtedly have followed the narrative of the scriptural epic as preserved in *The Four Zoas*" states Frye (242). The possibility suggests just how devoted to Milton Blake was and how he admired him as a fellow poet.



Fig. 7. Cover page of William Blake's *Milton: A Poem in 2 Books* (The William Blake Archive).



Fig. 8. Close up of cover page of William Blake's *Milton: A Poem in 2 Books* (The William Blake Archive).

S. Foster Damon argues, however, that Blake did not seek to emulate Milton, but rather was inspired by the poet, causing more creativity to flow in Blake's own work: "Where Milton experimented, [Blake] carried the experiments further; and when Milton expressed an idea, Blake either attacked it or extended it to new conclusions" (Damon 92). There have been many parallels drawn between works by Milton and works by Blake. Damon further relates Milton's *Comus*, also illustrated by Blake, with Blake's *Book of Thel*. Blake produced eight different sets of watercolors illustrating Milton's works, *Paradise Lost* being only the best known of them. He produced three separate sets for the epic alone, as well as two for Milton's *Comus*, one for "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso", two for "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity", and finally one for *Paradise Regained* ("The William Blake Archive").

Blake's illustrations of *Paradise Lost* began with the Thomas set, commissioned by Reverend Joseph Thomas in 1807. The very next year, he produced a second set of water colors illustrating the epic for his primary and biggest supporter and patron Thomas Butts. Though the sets illustrated the same epic, there are many stylistic differences between them, not to mention the fact that they only share eleven plates in subject matter but each differ in the twelfth. I will chiefly focus on the Thomas set, it being not only the earlier of the two but also because it includes a crucial Satan-centered scene, *Satan Spying on Adam and Eve and Raphael's Descent into Paradise*.

Blake recognized that Milton did in fact write more liberally when it came to Satan and his followers in comparison with when he wrote about the Divine. Blake's analysis of this difference is as follows: "The reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels and God, and at liberty one of Devils and Hell," justifies Blake "is that he was a true Poet

and of the Devil's party without knowing it" (*The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* 6). This is supported by Milton's text when one compares the language of God's speech about culpability in Book 3 to Satan's speech to his fallen brethren in Book 1. At the beginning of Book 3, though God does explain in detail to the Son about Satan, free will, and its ramifications, his language is not descriptive or full of imagery as Satan's is in Book 1.

I formed them free and free they must remain
Till they enthrall themselves. I else must change
Their nature and revoke the high decree,
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordained
Their freedom: they themselves ordained their Fall. (*PL* 3.124-28)

The adjectives used in God's speech are descriptive but vague, not evoking any visual imagery in the reader's mind. Words like "high", "unchangeable" and "eternal" may be explanatory as adjectives should be, but they are not detailed enough to paint a picture. Satan's speeches in Book 1 address free will in another way – by vividly evoking Satan's and his followers' past actions and future wishes in passages filled with descriptions that activate the reader's imagination directly:

[...] The Sulphurous Hail
Shot after us in storm, oreblown hath laid
The fiery Surge, that from the Precipice
Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling, and the Thunder,
Wing'd with red Lightning and impetuous rage, (*PL* 1.171-75)

"Sulphurous", "fiery", "red" and "impetuous" put Satan's language in a world of imagery absent from God's discourse. As such, Blake was defensible in his assumption that Milton favored the Devil, at least in terms of allowing him to speak in a more captivating and

imaginative way. In looking at the significance and the stylistic connections between Blake's illustrations and Milton's poem, one can see Blake's committed engagement with Milton's text that is evident in the detail in his paintings. Pointon explains that Blake is faithful to details of Milton's epic but not to the narrative itself, which is paradoxical, but consistent with Foster's reading of Blake as "symbolist" in style (91).

An immediate and powerful difference between Blake's illustrations and Medina's is that Blake used color while Medina's were in black and white. This fact distinguishes him from the many *Paradise Lost* illustrators that came before and after him such as Louis Cheron, Francis Hayman, John Martin and William Strang to name a few, all of whom used no color in their illustrations. Why did so many artists willingly chose to have their drawings in black and white? In the context of book illustrations specifically, it is probably relevant that printing was more economical in black and white. Alternatively, it could be that the subject matter of the epic and therefore the paintings were conceived by artists to be so intense that they required a black and white palette (or that Medina's effective precedent established a default). In any case, Blake, less bound to publishers or to conventions, defied this trend, and color contributes to the distinctiveness of his illustrations.

Blake's Satan is quite a handsome creature, containing no trace of the "changed" or monstrous Satan that Milton wrote about in Book 1 (see Fig. 9). Unlike Medina, who features Satan from the very first as a true devil with horns and pointed ears, Blake's Satan is more human with the anatomy of a human and a face that is not unpleasant to look at. A feature that is also different from Medina's Satan is the hair. Medina shows Satan to have straggly hair that even looks like small snakes in his Book 2 plate. By comparison, Blake's

Satan has a thick head of curling blond hair that complements his handsome face. In fact, Blake's adoption of a more pleasing visual of Satan is in keeping with Milton's view of the character, not physically but in personality. Milton's Satan is charismatic and persuasive, something which Blake shows through a handsome visage.



Fig. 9. William Blake's illustration of *Paradise Lost* Book 1, *Satan Calling Up His Legions* (The Thomas Set, 1807).

Yet another difference between Medina's and Blake's Satan in the illustrations for Book 1 is the presence of wings. Medina's Satan, though fallen and in Hell, still possesses his wings, ragged and bat-like they may be. Blake's Satan on the other hand doesn't have any wings in the first illustration. In fact, there isn't even a hint of wings until the

illustration of Book 3, which shows Satan looking on from below at Christ offering himself up for the redemption of humanity. Even more importantly, the first glimpse of Satan’s wings shows them to be a vivid red, not unlike the red of the serpent he possesses later on. The serpent is also an important element that Blake showcases. He makes sure that it can be seen in every single drawing as he made it a flaming red. He also foreshadows its role by beginning to show the serpent from the illustration of Book 4 (see Fig. 10), long before Satan actually considers it as the “fittest imp of fraud in whom/To enter” (*PL* 9.89-90).

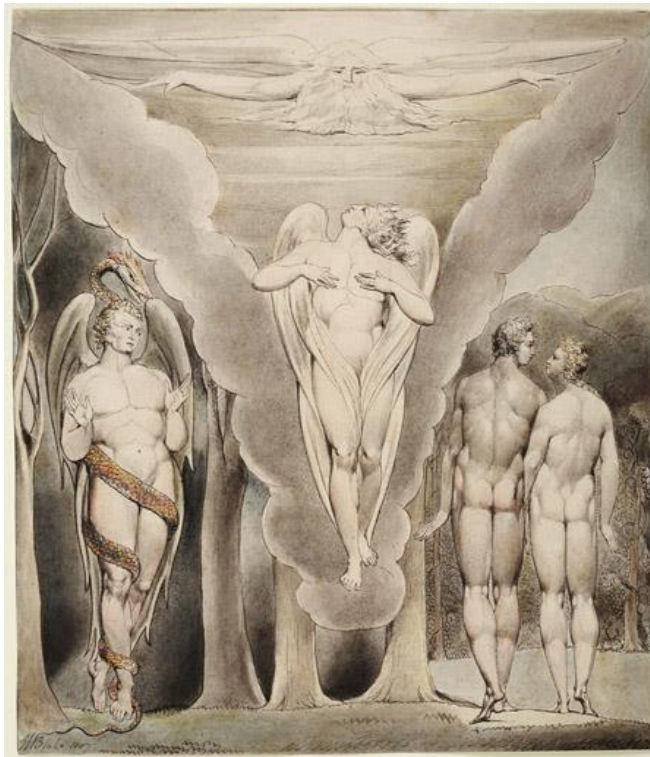


Fig. 10. William Blake’s illustration of *Paradise Lost* Book 4, *Satan Spying on Adam and Eve and Raphael’s Descent into Paradise* (The Thomas Set, 1807).

Blake even blatantly features the serpent curled around the tree of knowledge in the garden in the background of the illustration of Book 6, leaving absolutely no doubt that the serpent will be the downfall of Man. Blake, unlike other artists such as Medina, grasped the epic in such a way that he used elements like foreshadowing, as only another author and poet would understand to use. This alone distinguishes him as one of the more successful and innovative illustrators of *Paradise Lost*. Finally, there is the question of whether or not Blake gave any visual indication of Satan's shifting abilities as well as his transformations throughout the epic. Given that Blake's style, however, leans towards the symbolic and not towards strict fidelity to the details of the narrative, it is unlikely that he would choose to feature such transformations as they may not, according to him, fit into the general idea of the epic's books. A look at the illustrations of the books in which Milton describes Satan's transformations supports this fact to some extent. Blake's illustration of Book 4 shows Satan in his angel form with a serpent entwined around his lower half, but shows not even a hint of the toad that Satan transforms into to whisper in Eve's ear as she dreams, neither does it show the cormorant he turns into to watch over the garden. Yet, Satan's angelic form with wings in Book 3, given that he didn't have wings initially, implies that this could be the cherubic form Satan takes to fool the angel Uriel into letting him into the garden. The illustration for Book 9 does show the serpent, in fact it is present in the illustrations for Book 4, 5, 6 and 9. However, the way Blake links the serpent to Satan in that he uses it as a vessel, is by showcasing it entwined with Satan's person early on in Book 4 and 5. Therefore, Blake, unlike Medina, does give a hint to Satan's transforming abilities in his own way, without making it too obvious by allowing the reader to make the connections necessary.

3. *Gustave Doré's Paradise Lost Reimagined*

Another name associated with the illustration of *Paradise Lost* almost as powerfully as Blake's is Gustave Paul Doré (1832-1883). Doré was a French painter and illustrator who rendered fifty plates that illustrate various parts of *Paradise Lost* in 1866. Born to a well-off and culturally refined family, he began drawing from the early age of five. At fifteen, his drawings had caught the eye of the founder of journals *Caricature* and *Charivari*, Charles Philippon who also happened to be a lithographer himself. Philippon published Doré's first work, *Labours of Hercules*, and took him under his wing, commissioning him to sketch a drawing per week for his *Journal pour rire* for a period of three years. Gilles Chazal claims that Doré was mostly autodidactic when it came to art and was quite independent in his artistic preferences as he "relied primarily on his natural creative flair." His training was not as extensive as one might think, though he did visit with certain artists like Henri Scheffer as well as certain institutions such as the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Louvre. He began a long career of illustrating famous works of world literature which included none other than Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

The online digital collection of Doré's work from the University at Buffalo provides every illustration of Doré's plates with the passage it refers to in the poem. Each plate is labeled with an identifying line from the Book it is from. The verbal description can be seen in the image, and the different passage assigned to each individual image narrates what is taking place in the given plate. The fact that Doré connected the images to the text by titling them with lines from the epic only serves to re-emphasize the already close-knit relationship between verbal and visual imagery in terms of Milton's Satan and his visual representations. Doré's renderings of the epic were celebrated and novel. According to *The*

Ladies' Repository; a Monthly Periodical, Devoted to Literature, Art and Religion, Doré's representation of Satan is quite refreshingly different from the "brutal-faced, depraved, vulgar, ill-featured ruffian" (356) that is usually seen in prior artworks. He is praised for such a 'true' rendering.

A look at the quotes that serve as titles to the plates allows for the division of the illustrations into groups of their corresponding books. The fact that there are fifty plates, which cannot be evenly distributed across twelve books, raises the question of which books got the most illustrations and the significance of such dedication to certain books. The books that had the most plates illustrated on them were Books 4, 6 and 9, with seven illustrations for the first two and six for the last. Books 4 and 9 are crucial moments of transformation for Satan, though Doré doesn't acknowledge Satan's transformations in Book 4 but shows Satan's most iconic change into the serpent that tempts Eve. In fact, the only other physical change that Doré portrays for Satan is that of his punishment in Book 10, entitled "dreadful was the din" (*PL* 10.521) (see Fig. 11). In this panel, Doré exhibits the gradual stages of punishment that Satan as well as his fallen brethren go through. Doré, instead of giving the final shape that they are all forced into all at once, shows different figures at different stages of transformation: serpents, lizards, dragons, etc. What is most worthwhile to note in this plate, however, is Satan's physical shape. He is shown to be standing in front of his throne facing his crowd, still in a human form though he does still possess wings. The only hint Doré gives that Satan is being punished just like the rest of the creatures is a long, slithering tail that stems from between Satan's legs and downwards onto the stairs. This tail, a small detail though it may be, links Satan's shape to the rest of the

fallen with tails of their own in that it is implied he will also be assuming the reptile-like shape the others have as well.



Fig. 11. Gustave Doré's illustration of *Paradise Lost* Book 10, "Dreadful was the din" (1866).

It is relevant here to compare Doré's portrayal of Satan with Blake's. The first noticeable difference between Doré's work and Blake's is the lack of color in Doré's plates while Blake uses brightness and some color in his renditions to emphasize the divinity of the angels in comparison to humans and nature. Another major difference is the emphasis on the serpent. Blake includes the serpent, a long red snake whose placement always draws the viewer's attention, starting with the second painting, before the seduction of Eve even begins while Doré includes it only in the three plates that correspond to that specific scene. The serpent is the symbol of Satan. The different choices of these artists' emphasis on it speak to the fallen angel's importance in the scenes. Doré's rendition is more proportionate in size to the rest of the plate while Blake draws attention to the snake by painting it red and making it larger in size. The differences in artistic choices show varying levels of engagement with the text and its contexts. Satan, before his encounter with Eve at the Garden of Eden, had been initially described in Book 1 as a giant creature rivaling only the monstrous giants of legend such as the Leviathan and the Titans of mythology. Yet, when he chooses to confront Eve in the Garden, he chooses to inhabit the body of a snake, a creature who has since and thereby gained much in the way of negative connotations. Blake gives more importance to the snake than Doré does. Blake's illustrations of *Paradise Lost* almost always included a snake slithering or wrapped around the figure of Satan, even before the scene where he approached Eve in the Garden. The serpent was almost a part of him. However, Doré incorporated the snake only in the scene when it was actually a part of the story. Satan is seen to be contemplating the serpent, as though devising a plan to use it rather than already knowing it would be his vessel as Blake's illustrations suggested.

4. Henry Fuseli's "Milton Gallery"

Among those who were commissioned to illustrate *Paradise Lost* is Henry Fuseli, an artist recognized for putting together and exhibiting his own "Milton Gallery" in 1799. Johann Heinrich Füssli (1741-1825), more commonly known and referred to as Henry Fuseli, was taught art history with an intensity by his father. He also always had a vested interest in literature, which is of no surprise considering he dedicated an entire gallery to a poet. Fuseli does not, unfortunately, belong properly in the pantheon of Milton's illustrators as the commission was canceled and the projected edition never realized. However, the commission itself inspired Fuseli to continue working on illustrations for the poem, finally accumulating about thirty paintings that revolve around the epic and putting together what he titled the "Milton Gallery". Luisa Calé, in her book *Fuseli's Milton Gallery*, states that Fuseli explained to his primary patron who was banker as well as abolitionist writer William Roscoe, that the concept of the literary gallery came out of a desire to respond to the British art scene at the time (43). The paintings featured in this gallery revolve around not only *Paradise Lost*, but also Milton himself as well as his *Paradise Regained*, "L'Allegro", "Il Penseroso", *Comus* and "Lycidas" (Pointon 255-260). The gallery, however, was open for exhibition for only a short time as it did not bring in enough profit to sustain it.

5. El Paraíso Perdido by Pablo Auladell

In 2017, Pablo Auladell published an English translation of his graphic novel *El Paraíso Perdido*, an adaptation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* by Ángel Gurría. In his author's

preface, Auladell talks about being approached as early as 2010 to adapt the epic into a graphic novel and how it took a period of five years to complete the project and get it ready for publication. He ends this preface with an interesting remark which he borrowed from another illustrator: “only now that I have finished drawing it do I feel truly ready to start drawing *Paradise Lost*” (Auladell vii). This can be compared to Milton’s own process of creating *Paradise Lost*. He initially wrote the epic poem in ten books. However, seven years after the first edition was published, Milton had a second edition released which included twelve books instead of ten. Perhaps Milton felt that his work was unfinished and even after officially publishing it, he was then more prepared to work on such a project which resulted in the publication of the second revised edition, a sentiment Auladell may have shared. However, Milton’s choice to publish a second version of *Paradise Lost* consisting of twelve books instead of the original ten may contradict what he originally set out to do since an epic of ten books, in his own reasoning, was meant to make a statement about breaking from tradition. This fact is also supported by his “Note” at the beginning of the epic defending his non-traditional choice of doing away with rhyme, another established convention of poets at that time. As such, it is all the more fascinating to approach *Paradise Lost* today, as a work that is still evolving and changing as artists like Auladell reshape and rework it in different ways, almost as Milton did in the second edition. Looking at Auladell’s literal combination of word and image, I will compare both the imagery and the text itself to Milton’s epic, noting similarities as well as differences and what possible significance each has. There are many visual elements that Auladell engages in in an effort to render Milton’s metaphors and visual imagery. Examples of these

elements are the colors Auladell has chosen for his palette which establish difference among settings in the graphic novel for a greater visual impact.

In order to look at a graphic novel of Auladell's sophistication, it is important to be familiar with the art of graphic novels, their history as well as how to approach studying such a text. For this purpose, I begin with the work of Will Eisner, a comic book artist as well, who wrote several books that serve as a kind of theory of comics, the most commonly referenced of them being *Comics and Sequential Art*. Eisner has been dubbed the father of the graphic novel, as he is considered to have written the first graphic novel, *A Contract with God*.⁵ According to his *Comics and Sequential Art*:

The format of the comic book presents a montage of both word and image, and the reader is thus required to exercise both visual and verbal interpretive skills. The regimens of art (e.g. perspective, symmetry, brush stroke) and the regimens of literature (e.g. grammar, plot, syntax) become superimposed on each other. The reading of the comic book is an act of both aesthetic perception and intellectual pursuit. (Eisner 8)

Eisner articulated the fact that a comic book is an ideal combination of word and image working together to engage more of the reader's senses than either of the former could on their own in the pursuit of telling a story. The fact that images are accompanied by words makes the reader work that much harder to grasp both visually as well as intellectually what the artist is trying to bring across. Since Eisner is a pioneer of the graphic novel, it makes

⁵ His importance in the history of graphic novels and comics as a pioneer is evident by the awards named after him which occur annually at the San Diego Comic Convention. As of 2018, there are 31 categories in the Eisner Awards. See "Eisner Awards Current Info." *Comic-Con International: San Diego*, <https://www.comic-con.org/awards/eisner-awards-current-info>.

sense to use him as a theoretical source in approaching Auladell's text. In Eisner's own words, there is a distinction between the artist and the writer when it comes to graphic novels: "The writer must at the outset be concerned with the interpretation of his story by the artist, and the artist must allow himself to be a captive of the story or idea" (123). In this case, it is interesting to note that although Auladell took an already written text to adapt into a visual narrative rather than a strictly verbal one, he did in fact serve as both writer and artist as he took some creative license when it came to the text as he translated it into Spanish for the purposes of his graphic novel as well as sketching out Milton's imagery into visual pictures.

Unlike Milton's epic, which (in the 1674 edition underlying modern texts and translations) is divided into twelve books, Auladell's novel is made up of only four parts, called "cantos," which in itself is an interesting choice since cantos are more commonly used in songs and poetry than in graphic novels. He begins each canto with not only a title that reflects the main theme but also includes an epigraph from one of the books of Milton's epic which corresponds to the main action to occur in the coming canto. The first canto's epigraph is one of the most iconic lines associated with Satan: "Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven" (*PL* 1.263). The second canto, which is entitled "A Garden of Delights" portrays the events of Books 3, 4, and the beginning of 5, and has the epigraph "God has[th] pronounced it death to taste that tree" (*PL* 4.427). The epigraph of the third canto is, "Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince/[...] lead forth to battle these my sons/Invincible" (*PL* 6.44-47). Finally, the fourth canto, which carries the title "The Flaming Sword", quotes as if to finish the sentence the title started: "which with torrid heat/[...]/Began to parch that temperate clime" (*PL* 12.634-36). Because the focus of the

first canto, entitled simply “Satan,” focuses on the character of Satan, I will primarily examine it. The epigraph of this first canto reinforces the centrality of this character, quoting Milton’s text word for word: “Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven” (*PL* 1.263). The inclusion of this most iconic line from *Paradise Lost* is both fidelity to Milton’s text as well as foretaste of the theme of the canto.

The first page of this “Satan” canto is a collection of four panels. The opening panel is basically a dark abyss, not showing much with the dark shades of grey and black Auladell uses. The dark abyss is an image Milton evokes numerous times in his descriptions of Hell as well as Chaos. An example of the former lies in the very first image the reader receives of Hell: “A dungeon horrible on all sides round/As one great furnace flamed yet from those flames/No light but rather darkness visible” (*PL* 1.61-3). An example of the descriptions of Chaos, also intensely articulated by Milton, can be found in Book 2: “[...] Ye pow’rs/And spirits of the nethermost abyss,/Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy” (*PL* 2.968-70). Both Chaos and Hell are connected to the concept of an abyss and darkness, which make it all the more feasible for Satan’s fall to take the trajectory it did. In the initial description of the Hell that the Fallen have been banished to, Milton writes that this darkness is the foreshadowing of sorrow, despair, and loss of all hope. Auladell has attempted to convey this image and the sentiments that go along with it in a single frame, the very first in his graphic novel. The image of the abyss is also mentioned towards the end of Book 1: “For this infernal pit shall never hold/Celestial spirits in bondage, nor th’ abyss/Long under darkness cover” (*PL* 1.657-59).

The second panel is a portrait of a woman with long hair with symbols on her face. The fourth panel features Satan for the first time. He is embracing this woman. The identity

of this woman serves as a source of fascination as it is not made clear from the beginning exactly who this woman is in relation to Satan other than the fact that they are intimate. Could she be the Muse that Milton invokes at the start of Book 1? This would have been a fascinating portrayal of the character if it were so. However, as is evident later on in the first canto, this figure is none other than Satan's daughter, Sin, whom he mates with and who is also later banished to guard the gates of Hell along with her offspring. As for Satan, his wings are partially visible, and he is evidently bald. The fact that this Satan has no hair and sharp features suggests the existence of a different aspect of the archangel's physical appearance as compared to portrayals of him by artists such as Blake and Doré and even all the way back to the first illustrated edition of Milton's text in 1688 by John Baptist Medina. Auladell's overall style, however, could be described as a blend of Blake and Doré along with his own artistic interpretation. The colors he uses when showing the non-fallen angels are bright and light in shades reminiscent of Blake's own color palette. His style in drawing the physical bodies of the creatures, angel, human and animal, is also similar to that of Blake, especially in the lines. However, his color palette when it comes to the fallen angels is more similar to the style of Doré. Also, his use of sharp facial features is more like Doré's own drawings of Satan's character as well. Yet, both Blake and Doré feature Satan with hair, slightly long hair that drapes around his face, while Auladell has chosen to keep his Satan devoid of such a human feature, instead choosing to keep Satan bald. This could be justified by the introduction of the hat that Satan comes to wear throughout most of the novel, yet another thing distinguishes Auladell's Satan from the more commonly viewed portrayals of him from artists like Blake and Doré. One can also see in paintings preceding Blake and Doré, throughout the tradition of medieval Christian art, that Satan is universally

given hair, even in scenes depicting him as a serpent with a human head. It is curious then to ponder whether this difference is intended to make Satan less attractive or simply as a result of standards of beauty having evolved over time so that by the time of Auladell's drawings long hair no longer has the appeal it previously had. The topic of hair in *Paradise Lost* has gained the attention of many Miltonian scholars, resulting in rather interesting articles that discuss the significance of both Adam and Eve's hair in *Paradise Lost*, including Stephen Dobranski, Wendy Furman-Adams, Virginia James Tufte, Amanda Muledy, and Robert Newman among others. Furman-Adams and Tufte, in a co-written article, discuss the significance of hair in Eve in both the text as well as in paintings and the relation to the serpent and how Eve's character had been linked with evil and the snake in art. Dobranski's book, *Milton's Visual Imagination*, studies Milton's imagery in detail, looking at elements such as Satan's shield, the physical appearance of "bad" angels, and last but not least hair. In his chapter entitled "Clustering and Curling Locks: The Matter of Hair in *Paradise Lost*", Dobranski explains the cultural importance of having long hair in Milton's times and anything short of flowing locks was considered unfashionable by Royalists while Parliamentarians were of the opposite opinion. This small historical fact that Dobranski introduces his chapter with offers an explanation for Auladell's choice to make Satan's character bold and giving his not-Fallen brother Michael long flowing locks.

Auladell also appears to be setting up a good vs evil dichotomy in the very color palette of the graphic novel. The scenes depicting not only Hell but also all the fallen angels are not only in shades of grey and black but are also more prone to featuring darkness, such as the abyss that is shown at the beginning of the canto. The scenes depicting Heaven and angels that have not fallen from grace, such as Michael, are very bright, something that

Milton himself articulated in his diction when it comes to description of Heaven by using words such as “beams”, “bright”, “celestial” and “glittering” (*PL* 3.361, 362, 364, 366). They also feature a generous amount of light blue in both the backgrounds as well as the characters. For example, Michael is shown to have light blue eyes, while Satan’s eyes are shown as black, even in the initial scene while he is still in Heaven. Another distinction is the inclusion of the color gold in scenes that have to do with the divine, those not Fallen that is. This rendering is in keeping with Milton’s own descriptions in the epic, which include generous use of the word gold in relation to many things Heaven-related.

At the beginning of this canto, an object is introduced that raises many questions. After showing a panel of Michael himself standing guard on the roof of a building in Heaven, looking across an abyss, Auladell draws four consecutive panels that feature a black hat, not unlike a fedora, adorned with white flowers with two white ribbons flowing from it. This hat is shown to be falling into the dark abyss. Where did this hat come from? Given that Auladell has introduced it immediately after a drawing of Michael, does this suggest that he was the one to throw it into the dark? What is the significance of this hat and what does its presence add to the narrative? It is also fascinating to question whether these flowers could be from Heaven, since Auladell seems to imply that the hat itself fell from on high. Might these flowers be the “Immortal amarant” (*PL* 3.353) that Milton talks about in Book 3 when he describes Heaven? The amaranthus, an unfading flower, is mentioned in 1 Peter 5:4 in the Bible as well in reference to faithful servants of the Lord being crowned with this flower by the Chief Shepherd (Teskey, ed. ad 3.353).

It is not long before Satan is shown to be picking up this hat off the floor of Hell and putting it on his head. The hat stays on his head throughout most of the novel, only disappearing when he changes his form, up until the very last time he is shown as he is being punished for his crime and turned into a dragon (see Fig. 12). The fact that Satan actively seeks out this hat by flying up when he wakes on the floor of Hell and looking for the hat until he finds it indicates the importance of this object. What could this hat possibly do for Satan's situation? As soon as he puts this hat on, he moves to attack, kill, and behead a bull. Has the hat given him power or strength? He removes this creature's head and places it on the head of Beelzebub, the angel Satan claims has changed. Is this bull's head supposed to support Satan's statement about Beelzebub's divine beauty changing as he is now a fallen angel? Is it meant to show that Beelzebub is now hideous? That he is taking on a bestial character? What adds to the mystery of the significance of this bull's head is the fact that as soon as Satan places this head on Beelzebub, the fallen angel is now able to rise from the floor of Hell and fly side by side with Satan. Did the bull's head allow him to break free from the burning lake?

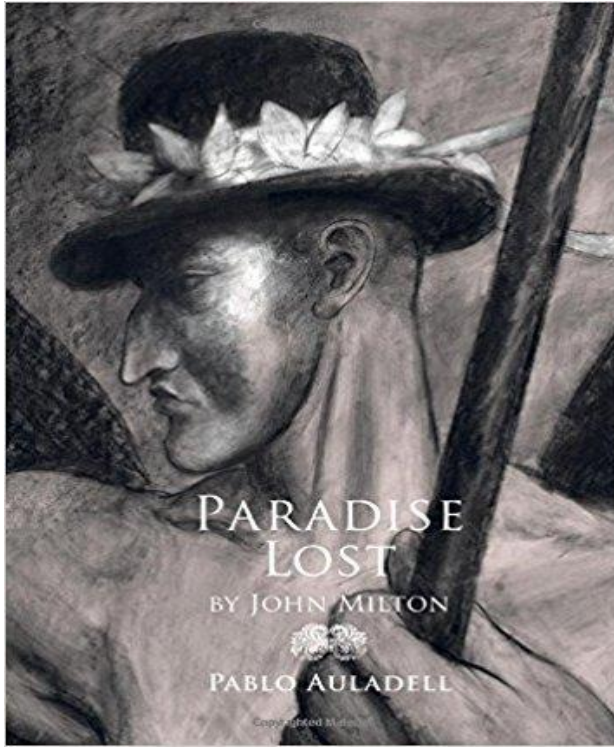


Fig. 12. Cover of Pablo Auladell's *Paradise Lost: A Graphic Novel*, 2017.

The study of Auladell's graphic novel in comparison with Milton's text has revealed the visual adaptations of Milton's imagery in pictorial form. Similarly, the examination of the text Auladell uses in his graphic novel also show deliberate changes made. In what follows I will be exploring the extent of these changes. Although Milton's text is originally in English, Auladell's graphic novel did not utilize the original, but was rather re-translated from Auladell's Spanish version into a new English version. This creates a great number of nuanced differences between the original English and the translated English. There are lines that appear word for word from Milton's text while others have been altered. Instead of relying completely on the pre-existing English, Auladell went ahead and hired a translator to translate the Spanish version he had written

back into its native language. There are a few instances of Auladell's creative freedom displacing Milton's text, both verbally and visually. The first and most pressing hurdle that the textual adaptation has to face is simply scale: *Paradise Lost* is literally an epic, and it would be an impossible feat for Auladell to include every single detail Milton wrote in his graphic novel while keeping the book an acceptable length. As it happens, Auladell's text is already around the same length as Milton's after leaving out entire scenes; an example would be the scene in Book 3 in which Satan transforms into a cherub in order to fool the angel Uriel into letting him into the Garden of Eden. This scene in itself is an interesting choice to leave out. This is the only scene in which Milton explicitly describes Satan as having hair: "Under a coronet of flowing hair/In curls on either cheek played" (*PL* 3.640-41). In this scene, Milton describes Satan as a divinely beautiful being, a Cherub. Instead of using this opportunity to showcase Satan's ability to transform even into another kind of angel, Auladell chooses to move straight into Satan's transformation into a cormorant as he is already flying into the Garden. Perhaps to Auladell, showing Satan as anything other than the imperfect creature that he is in the graphic novel would take away from the dichotomy of good and evil the illustrator is trying to portray.

Since Auladell made the conscious choice to have his Spanish version translated rather than use Milton's original text fully when his graphic novel needed to be translated to be sold on a more international scale, it is important to examine whether there are drastic differences in the translated English and the original. At first glance, it appears as though the captions that are in quotations might be the direct quotations from Milton's text while the rest must be translated from Auladell's Spanish. This deduction is further supported by the difference in font of the two: the font of the captions is more formal and type-writer like

in comparison to the other text in conversation bubbles that have a font that looks more handwritten with imperfect lines. However, after a comparative study of the text in Auladell's first canto (which is a visual representation of the events of Books 1 and 2 of Milton's epic) alongside Milton's first two books, it is apparent that the aforementioned theory is not completely accurate. The captions in quotations are indeed direct quotations from Milton. Yet, this doesn't discount the rest of the text, despite the different fonts, from being direct quotes as well. In fact, most of the first canto has been taken word for word, with a little creative rearranging of the words, from Milton's. There are in fact only six instances in which Auladell added lines that were of his own composition, later translated to English by his translator Gurría. These are mostly in relation to Death's character, Satan and Sin's son, during Satan's encounter with the creature as he attempts to leave Hell. When Satan first sets foot in front of Hell's gates, Auladell adds a caption of his own writing: "Intense and unknown pestilence around him tightens like a claw invisible" (65). It is meant as a brief description of the ambience around Hell's gates as Satan approaches. The fact that Auladell chose to write it instead of just using a line of Milton's verse on the gates of Hell is strange. Why is it that Auladell believed that his description of the sensations Satan experienced when he saw the gates of Hell were more appropriate than Milton's? Was it for the purpose of conciseness? This also happens to be the most significant addition by the graphic novelist since the others are more like a simplification of more complex lines Milton has written. An example would be Auladell's "How dare thee disturb this forbidden realm?" (67). This is spoken by Death at Satan's approach. Milton's text, on the other hand, for this particular scene launches into an inquiry of whether Satan is the traitor angel and describes the traitorous actions said angel committed. It is logical for

Auladell to make this text more concise by abbreviating and simplifying the text into the gist of Milton's words.

Pablo Auladell was quite selective in the number of transformations that he allowed Satan to take, choosing not to be too strict in following Milton's epic to the letter, so to speak. Milton, as previously discussed, showed Satan taking on many forms throughout the epic until he is finally punished and forced into the shape of a serpent. The transformation itself is quite aptly described by Milton, emphasizing its importance as Satan's final moment in the narrative. Thus, I will be examining this specific instance in particular in its visual form, through the artworks mentioned already.

Milton described Satan's final shape as both dragon and python, leaving it to the reader to envision such a form. He also states that Satan's followers have all also turned into serpents. According to William Blake's plates of the epic, this moment in the narrative perhaps wasn't important enough to be shown. Blake's plates end the narrative at the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden, denying the viewer a visual of Satan's final moments. Gustave Doré, on the other hand, did show an illustration of the scene featuring not only Satan but also his followers. Doré's choice in this illustration is strangely faithful and yet not to Milton's own description of the scene. Satan's followers are indeed transformed into reptiles. However, they are not all in fact snakes. Some look more like dragons as they have both wings and limbs. They are all in varying shapes and sizes. Yet, that is not the most interesting of Doré's choices. In this illustration, he has chosen to keep Satan in a human-like form as he stands tall in front of his throne, looking down at his transformed followers. He has wings, but he also happens to have a tail emerging from behind him and coiling at his feet; a tail that is rather serpent-like. Instead of showing

Satan's final form, Doré has chosen to show him in mid-transition, caught between his angel form and a serpent. This only makes one more curious to know, given the variety of creatures the other fallen angels have been changed into, if Doré had shown Satan's final form, would it have been that of a dragon or a serpent? Doré, unlike Milton, didn't offer two images for the reader to choose to bestow on Satan, dragon or python, but he did leave Satan's final form to the reader's imagination given that he provided illustrations of both creatures among the other fallen. His choice, though not seeming to adhere to Milton's vision of the scene on the surface, ends up serving much the same purpose: allowing the reader to choose what Satan looked like in those final moments.

It is clear that Auladell has chosen not to completely adhere to Milton's text word for word. He has elected to omit certain scenes and also inject his own personal artistic vision on the visual narrative. An example of a choice of omission would be his not including the scene from Book 3 when Satan disguises himself as a cherub in order to get past the guards of the Garden. In reference to Satan's last scene in *Paradise Lost*, Auladell did indeed feature a transformation into the dragon/python creature of Milton's text in stages, something that the previous artists did not do. The figure that Auladell has chosen for Satan is neither dragon nor python but rather a strange combination of both. The creature has the facial structure and features of a dragon as well the wing of one, but the body of a serpent, devoid of limbs. It is however faithful to Milton's text in its sheer size as it crashes upwards through the roof of Pandemonium as Satan is transformed into the giant hybrid beast.

Auladell omits Satan's transformation into cherub from the physical changes he shows Satan undergoing in the narrative. However, interestingly, he adds a transformation

of his own at the beginning of the fourth canto, roughly the beginning of Book 9 in Milton's text. On the first page of the canto, Auladell shows Satan transform into a fish and enter the River Tigris, which Milton mentions at the beginning of Book 9. Although Milton implies that Satan used the river Tigris as a way into Paradise undetected, he does not make clear how Satan does this, only that Satan then rises "involv'd in rising Mist" (*PL* 9.75). The mist Auladell clearly appears on the second and third page of this canto as it travels from the body of water to the unsuspecting serpent. However, he takes creative liberty with the orange fish. Is the fish simply a convenient device to show how Satan travels into the Garden undetected or does it have a more significant purpose? There is also the question of its color. So far, Satan, in his fallen state, has been seen in shades of black and white (see Fig. 13), with the occasional splash of fleshy color in his face and dark shades of green when he turns into a toad in the second canto, which is the same color as the dark green background of the Garden. Yet this splash of reddish-orange on a fish that Auladell adds on his own is strangely bright for the villain that is Satan, especially when one considers the fact that this reddish-orange is the same shade as the one Auladell uses for the forbidden fruit later on. This cannot be a coincidence. Auladell visually equates Satan with the fruit that will bring about the downfall of humankind.

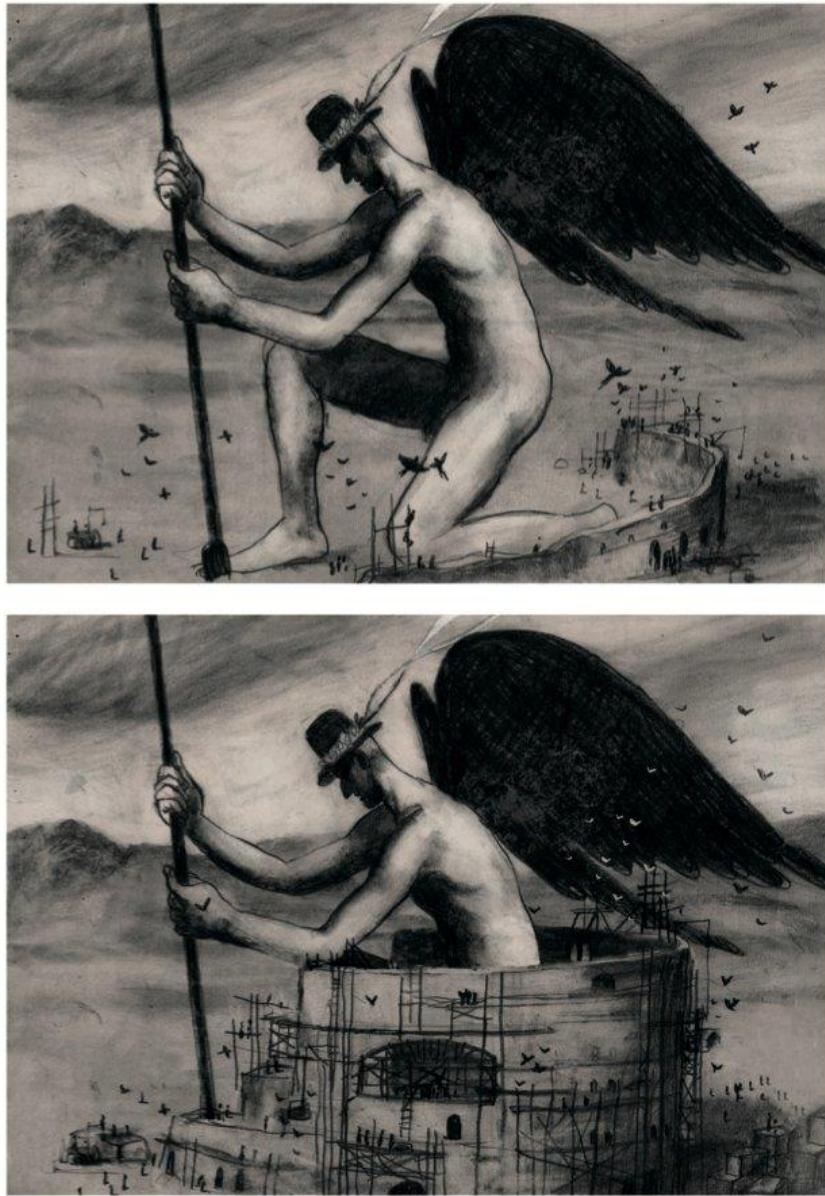


Fig. 13. Satan raising Pandemonium from Pablo Auladell's *Paradise Lost*, pp. 40.

6. Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* and Mike Carey's *Lucifer*

Both Gustave Doré and William Blake have depicted Satan as a powerful creature that had big wings and looked formidable. However, whereas Blake portrayed an ethereal creature with a superficial beauty and grace (see Fig. 9), Doré depicted Satan as more of a

forlorn being whose shoulders are always slumped and whose head is always looking downwards (see Fig. 14). Taking these two different versions of Satan into consideration, I observed Christopher Moeller's illustration of Lucifer from the *Lucifer* comic books written by Neil Gaiman, a spin-off so to speak from his bigger comic book series *Sandman*.

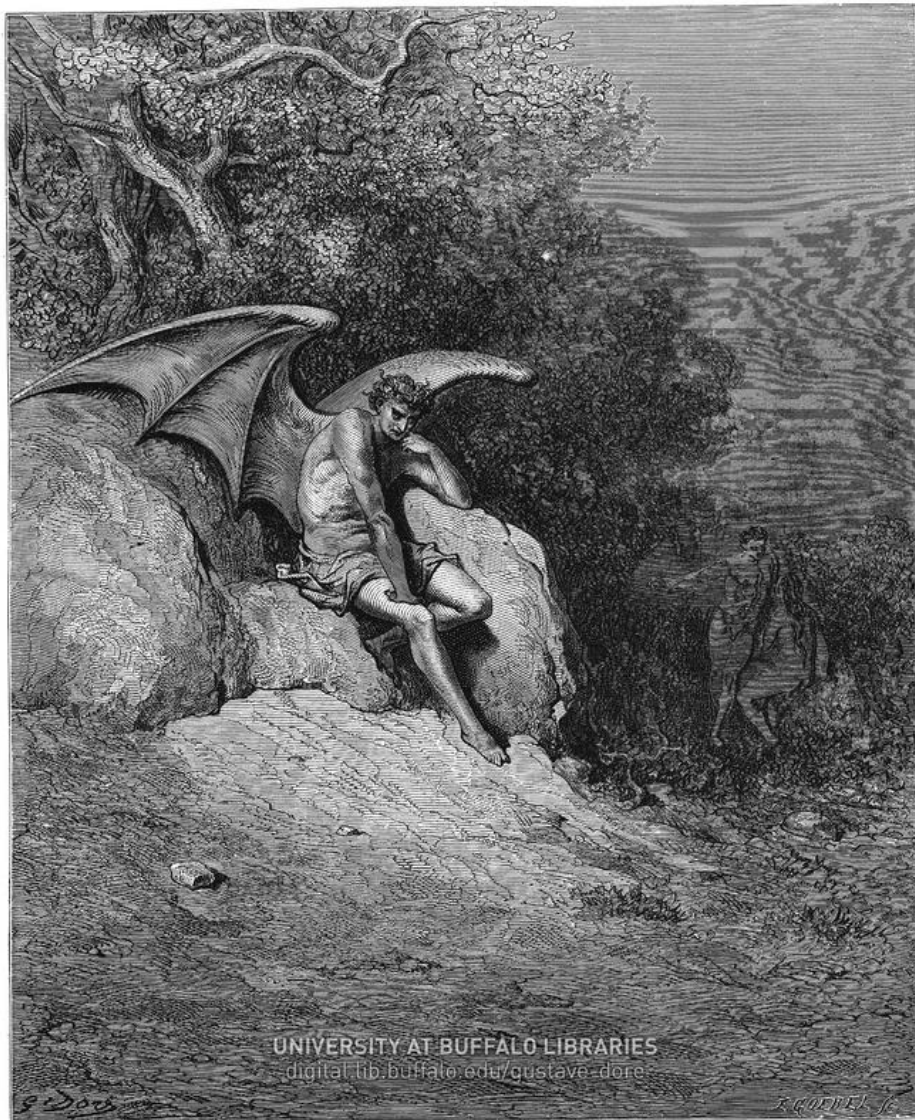


Fig. 14. Gustave Doré's illustration of *Paradise Lost* Book 9, "O Earth, how like to Heav'n, if not preferr'd, More justly" (1866).

In Gaiman's comic, Lucifer maintained Blake's beauty with a handsome face and blonde hair (see Fig. 15), yet he did not look quite as physically formidable as he had been depicted by both Blake and Doré. Instead he looked more like a 1970s hippie; Gaiman has stated that he Lucifer was modeled after David Bowie. He also had wings of a dark black-grey color that contrasted with his ginger locks. His facial expression is almost wistful, which can be linked to Satan's moment of reflection in *Paradise Lost's* Book 4. In relation to Milton's Satan,

Gaiman signals that *Sandman* is going to be offering a vision of Lucifer and Hell that differs from Milton's when he has Lucifer quote perhaps the most famous line in *Paradise Lost*: "Still, 'better to reign in hell than serve in heaven'" (1.263). But Lucifer continues, "We didn't say it. Milton said it. And he was blind" (*SM* 4.58). Using this double entendre (since Milton was, in fact, blind when he composed *Paradise Lost*), Gaiman both invites comparisons to Milton's work and suggests that Milton was wrong. (Porter 176)

Yet, Gaiman's Satan changes in appearance in the course of the series, becoming more fierce and primitive looking as he loses the long white robe in favor of a red knee-length tunic, which keeps his muscular torso on display at the same time (see Fig. 16). His wings, though still mainly black, now have hints of a reddish-gray that matches his tunic.

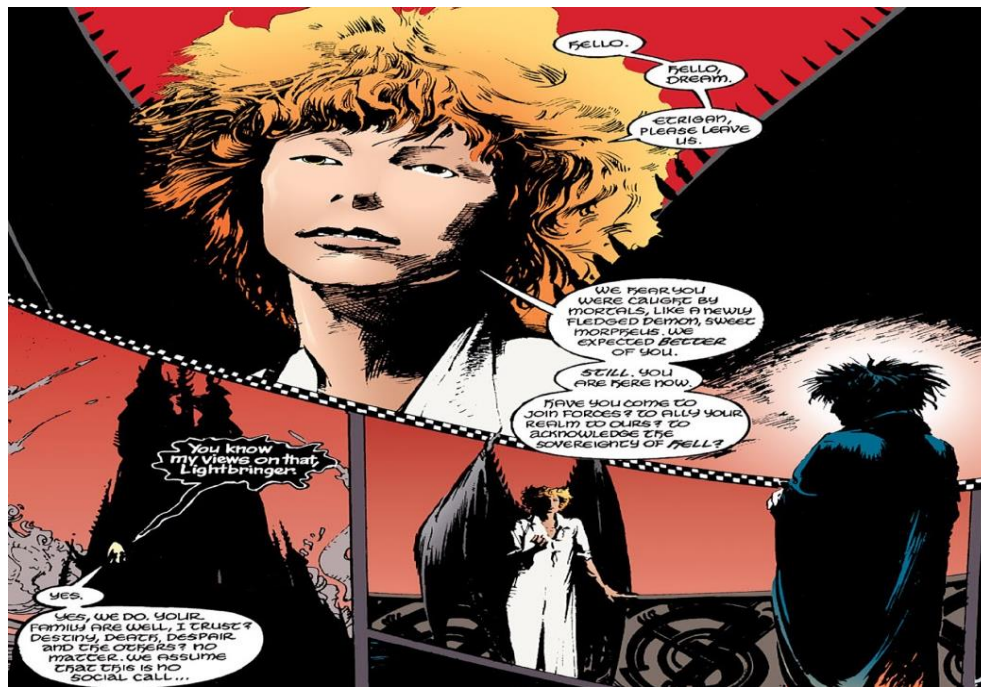


Fig. 15. Illustration of Lucifer by Sam Kieth and Mike Dringenberg for Neil Gaiman's *The Sandman* comic book from Issue # 4.



Fig. 16. Illustration of Lucifer by Mike Dringenberg and Malcolm Jones III for Neil Gaiman's *The Sandman* comic book from Issue # 21.

Mike Carey's *Lucifer*, in comparison, also maintained some of the physical attributes bestowed upon Gaiman's Satan, since it was inspired by it and it claims to pick up the story of the character where Gaiman's left off: his blond hair and confident stature, while altering others to make him fit more with the story line. "During the course of *Sandman*, Lucifer decides to abandon both Hell and his position as ruler of Hell: near the beginning of *Sandman: A Season of Mists*, he has Morpheus, the main character of *Sandman*, cut off his wings — the source of his power — in order to leave Hell and walk where he pleases as a mortal man. It is at this point that *Lucifer*, Mike Carey's series, picks up," explains Pam Punzalan ("Devil at the Door [2/3]"). According to Punzalan, Carey's *Lucifer* may be an antihero by literary standards, but Carey brings *Lucifer* out of the traditional archetype of his character and gives him a more fully-formed identity. Carey sets out to do what many before him have tried, to make the Devil more human, so to speak: The Devil is shown to dress fashionably, like a human (see Fig. 17). Carey succeeds concretely, which shows in the progression of Satan's image in the comic books: "Where in the first forty issues, *Lucifer* was a blonde, blue-eyed human man, the later issues show the deepening gold in his hair, the change of his eyes to gold, the re-instatement of his wings and the return — and increase — in his power as the Lightbringer" ("Devil at the Door [3/3]"). Carey's portrayal of *Lucifer* differs from Milton's in that Milton depicts Satan's downfall while Carey illustrates a quasi-redemption for *Lucifer*.

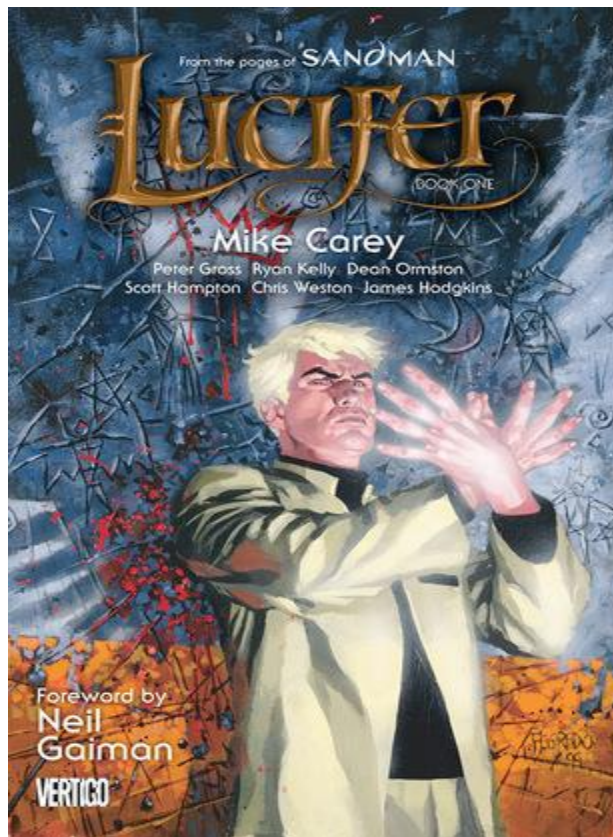


Fig. 17. Book cover illustration of Mike Carey’s *Lucifer* comic, Book One, by Christopher Moeller.

The fact that each artwork presented so far has arisen from different contexts, both historical and geographical, and has employed a distinct style in its portrayal of Milton’s Satan makes it all the more important to discriminate among what each says about the character of Satan. Milton’s Satan is seen as a “warmaker”, a rebel who seeks to fight and cause chaos, yet Gaiman’s Lucifer is a reconstructed figure who intends to walk among humanity rather than punish them, which was his motive for corrupting them in the first place, along with rebelling against God.

7. Lucifer in Television Today

The final stop on the journey of the historical trajectory of the visual Satan includes seeing Satan's representation on the television screen. One of the most interesting portrayals of Satan in contemporary television is from a television show entitled *Lucifer*. This television show is loosely based on the character created by Gaiman. I would be remiss not to perform a comparative study between the Lucifer of this television show and that of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, along with the rest of the visual representations of the character mentioned above, as the difference in how artists view a character that has been around for such a long time would definitely broaden the definition of Satan as a character. Although Satan and Lucifer seem to share many similarities in terms of the clichéd characteristics of the Devil, they do also differ quite clearly in both character and circumstance. Lucifer, unlike Satan towards the end of Book 10 of *Paradise Lost*, is not a serpent, but rather a successful man who lives among humans instead of being imprisoned in Hell. In fact, a main difference is the fact that Lucifer has the freedom to leave Hell while Satan has become transformed into a serpent, which makes it more difficult to even attempt an escape. He does, however, retain Satan's ability to change shape to some extent. From the beginning of the first season it is made clear that Lucifer has a "Devil face", which he employs to terrorize people into telling the truth, since he professes to hate liars (see Fig. 18). Yet, his ability to transform doesn't appear to go beyond the changing of his face, unlike Satan who can change his entire shape into just about anything he wishes, as exhibited by Milton's inclusion of multiple animals that Satan has turned into across the epic. Another factor that comes into play when comparison between the characters is raised is the Devil's wings. Satan's wings are almost the essence of his freedom, something which

is made more credible when he is stripped of them and turned into a limbless creature. Although Lucifer is shown to initially have wings, even when confined to Hell, he chooses to cut them off his body in order to be free of their burden and their link to God. He explains that though he needed the wings to travel from Hell to Earth, something that Milton's Satan also does, once he reaches Earth, he no longer wishes to go back to either Hell or Heaven and so removes the wings from his back. Lucifer chooses to remove his wings, a symbol of his freedom of movement between worlds, in the pursuit of freedom from his "Father", the Almighty, in walking the Earth.



Fig. 18. Snapshot of Tom Ellis as Lucifer from the television show *Lucifer* showcasing his "Devil" face in Episode 6 of Season 2.

Another representation of Satan in contemporary Western popular culture is the television show *Supernatural*, which also features Lucifer in a contemporary setting on Earth. This television show maintains the storyline of the Fall and initially shows him to be trapped in a cage of God's creation, requiring powerful magic by any witch or demon with enough power as well as an extensive amount of human sacrifice in order to free him. Unlike the previously mentioned Lucifer, *Supernatural's* Devil chooses to keep his wings and uses them to transport him around the world in instants. He even displays his wings proudly in a show of force (see Fig. 19). Meanwhile, Lucifer in the television show of the same name despises his wings and chooses to cut them off rather than keep them. Both Lucifers seek freedom, yet their version of freedom is different in each world. The quest for freedom, however, is a very humane character trait for the Devil, which continues to blur the lines between his label as hero or villain. *Supernatural's* Lucifer shows himself to be truly evil in his actions as he continually seeks to destroy or enslave humanity. Yet, there are rare moments where the writers allow the audience a glimpse of his hurt feelings towards his Father for being cast out. On the other hand, Lucifer from the show of the same name's character evolves over the seasons to profess that he is a punisher of the guilty, not the source of evil. This aspect of his character is further supported by the show's writers, which include Gaiman himself, allowing Lucifer to show his Devil face to criminals in an effort to get them to confess to their crimes to the police. Yet, he constantly criticizes God and mocks his creations. Today's Lucifers exhibit many facets of human emotion: one filled with loathing and self-destruction while the other views himself and his actions with nothing but pride. *Lucifer* shows the Devil as a hero and *Supernatural* as a villain. Even today, the debate is ongoing as to which one the Devil truly is. Perhaps, with the amount of

human qualities he is imbued with by the vast number of artists that have portrayed him, he is not one or the other, but rather a complex hybrid of both.



Fig. 19. Snapshot of Mark Pellegrino as Lucifer from *Supernatural* season 12 episode 21.

C. An Iconoclast's Legacy

Paradise Lost has served as touchstone or centerpiece for all kinds of critics in their approaches to literary studies, using as many lenses as the literary field can accommodate. The visual culture that informed Milton, however, has only been thoroughly explored in terms of the text itself, his poem's *contribution* to visual culture restricted to comments on a handful of iconic artists who illustrated the epic, principally Blake and Doré. What has not been sufficiently explored is the influence of Milton's *Paradise Lost* on art and popular culture up until the twenty-first century. A useful case study for the liveliness and global

reach of this influence would be Auladell's *El Paraíso Perdido*. Yet, there is a certain irony in the very existence of such a graphic novel, not to mention the countless previous illustrations of Milton's poem by painters who turned his Satan into an iconic figure, when Milton himself once wrote under the title "The Iconoclast".

Milton wrote *Eikonoklastes* in response to a text written by King Charles I before his execution in 1649. "Eikonoklastes", the Greek for "iconoclast", means "breaker or destroyer of images" but could also refer to someone "who assails or attacks cherished beliefs or venerated institutions on the ground that they are erroneous or pernicious" (*OED*, "iconoclast"). Both of these definitions apply to Milton's *Eikonoklastes* as the text attacks the ideas that Charles I wrote from the perspective of an abhorrence for equating the monarchy and the divine: "the Caroline publicists saw to it that the frontispiece of *Eikon Basilike* ["The King's Image"], with its king kneeling in prayer for the people and grasping a crown of thorns emblematically identified Charles I with Jesus Christ" (Cable 146). The very idea that a very human monarch could be equated, visually, with Jesus Christ is the basis for Milton's argument for iconoclasm because there is a relationship between what is labeled an icon and the viewers and devoted to said icon (see Fig. 20). "Much as the nexus of transformative desires links the writer or artist to the reader or partaker of art so the primacy of the icon in each imagination links inextricably the iconoclast to the iconophile", as Lana Cable goes on to explain (146). What Milton tried to do in *Eikonoklastes* was to break down all of the "iconic" images that Charles I utilized in his *Eikon Basilike* - verbal as well as visual - as well as shed light on the process of manipulating icons within royalist propaganda. Milton's very vocal and public attack upon the concept of "icon" makes it all the more relevant to consider how much his epic has inspired an iconic process through the

illustrative tradition.

As a multitude of artists have demonstrated over the past five centuries, Milton's epic has generated an iconic image of Satan which has become a sort of archetype that has become available for use in popular culture today. The fact that Satan has himself become almost an icon of his own is ironic considering Milton wrote to literally break icons. Yet, Satan's "iconic" portrayals frequently include human traits that don't quite maintain the usually obvious distance between human and divine, which is something that Milton also accomplished in his portrayal of Satan, as discussed in the previous chapter. Through tracking all the visual "iconic" representations of Milton's Satan up until present day, it was inevitable that I would come across depictions that were not strictly on a page, so to speak. Visual culture is a constantly evolving phenomenon that now spans a broad range of media, including television.

Satan's visual culture in particular has seeped into the world of popular television through fictional television shows such as *Lucifer* and *Supernatural*. The fact that the medium of television allows for a more dynamic rather than stationary interactive visuals, which can dramatize moments or processes of transformation, bringing them back to Milton's memorable textual transformations in a way that even the sequential and narrative style of comic books cannot quite manage. This dynamic quality that television brings to visual portrayals of Satan only serve to provide more angles to examine in terms of the debate of Satan's hero status. In today's media, it seems like his status as hero, anti-hero, or even villain is no longer the key critical question raised by his portrayal. Rather, representing Satan has become increasingly about making him more relatable to audiences,

which means making him more human, a process for which Milton already laid the foundation, doing so through narrative poetics but perhaps with his mind's eye still on the "humanized" face of Satan available in the medieval artistic tradition. The end result of Satan's representations in popular culture, at least in Western depictions, suggest that he is neither villain nor hero, but rather a complex character with very human motivations and faults. Visually, this is seen in his dressing like a human in the contemporary world, as in Gaiman and Carey's comic books and in the television shows mentioned above.



Fig. 20. The iconic illustration of Charles from *Eikon Basilike* (left); Title page of the 1649 edition of Milton's *Eikonoklastes* (right).

CHAPTER IV

CODA

THE VISUAL SATAN IN ARAB POPULAR CULTURE

The extent of Milton's influence and impact on Western culture has been demonstrated by critics, scholars and artists alike. I hope to have added to this picture and brought it up to date through my examination of artistic representations of Satan's character, as well as *Paradise Lost* as a whole, as part of a global history encompassing not only the British Isles but also France, Spain, and the United States. The Western reception is not the whole story, however. Milton's presence in the Arab World and its culture is only beginning to be addressed by Miltonists, and its visual dimension is a particularly open field for scholarly exploration. This lack may be attributed to the fact that Milton was not translated into Arabic until the twentieth century. Given that this is an area of Milton scholarship that has not yet been deeply studied, I would like to close by briefly sketching Milton's reception in the Arab world (more specifically the Arab-Islamic world) and to focus on an examination of Satan's character in Arab popular culture production, more specifically on a select few Egyptian films that feature the character of the Devil.

No translation of Milton into Arabic had been published before the 1930s, and even then, these translations were of selected short works such as some of Milton's sonnets. Islam Issa clarifies, however, that the epic was not translated all at once. In fact, the first translation consisted only of the first 155 lines by Zaki Najīb Mahmūd in 1937. However,

Issa mentions that the first full translation and publication of *Paradise Lost* was accomplished by Egyptian professor of English literature Muhammad Enani in 2002 (“Fragmentation” 221).

Paradise Lost's translation into Arabic, though late in comparison to the date of first publication of the epic in 1667 and translation into other major languages, opened up a new area of exploration of Milton in the Arab World. The fact that Milton didn't make his full-fledged Arabic debut until the late twentieth century raises the question of how the character of Satan was manifested as part of a significantly different but parallel tradition in the Arab World, especially in popular culture. There is a parallel that can be drawn between Satan in Arabic popular culture and more traditional portrayals of Satan from the West, which Issa mentions in his book *Milton in the Arab-Muslim World*. He alludes to a street illustration on Mohamed Mahmoud Street which features a serpent with the head of the political figure Suzanne Mubarak (see Fig. 21). This image is reminiscent of some of the medieval Christian art which also feature the corrupting serpent with a woman's head in paintings of the original sin, the Draconopedes. This image draws a link between Milton's Satan and the depiction/concept of the Devil in the Arab world. According to Issa's book, there has been scholarship produced recently that deals with Milton and Islam, but this research is usually limited to Milton's own knowledge of Islamic culture: “the question of how Milton's work has been received in Islamic culture has attracted little or no scholarly notice, with only one book touching on the topic” (Introduction 5). Therefore, it would be more prudent and enlightening to examine the influence and impact Milton had when being read in the Arab world, which would be best studied through a brief survey of popular culture that includes the character of Satan.



Fig. 21. *Suzanne Mubarak Snake* from “Street Art on Mohamed Mahmoud – Photos”, 2012.

It is of no surprise that such graffiti would be found in Egypt, the fountainhead for Milton in the Arab World. The graffiti of Suzanne Mubarak as a kind of Draconcopedes raises the question of what other ways has the Devil figure been portrayed in Arab popular culture, in Egypt in particular. There have been a few significant portrayals of Satan in Egyptian films from the 1940s and 50s, the most significant of which are *Safīr Jahannam* and *Maw‘ad ma‘ ‘Iblīs*. Each film features the Devil in its own way in terms of physical appearance.

Safir Jahannam is a film by Youssef Wehbe from 1945 whose name literally translates to “Ambassador of Hell”, a fitting name to be applied to the Devil; Milton’s Satan acts as a kind of ambassador for his fellow fallen angels in Books 1 and 2. In this film, the Devil is portrayed as a stereotypical demon complete with fangs, horns, an evil smirk as well as a cape (see Fig. 22). He is reminiscent of the Devil seen in Medina’s illustrations of, with the exception of the satyr lower body. He also has shoulder-length hair, a feature that is uncommon among both romantic and contemporary portrayals of Satan, as shown by Blake, Doré, Auladell, Gaiman, etc. This Satan is also unattractive, with his fangs and gruesome facial expression, which contradicts the image of a charismatic and divinely beautiful Satan established by Blake as well as the comic book and graphic novelists. The purpose of such a depiction of the Devil is clearly to showcase his “evil”. Another significant point to note about this portrayal is that this Devil has no wings. The wings, which are a prominent feature in most illustrations of Satan as discussed above, are a visual reminder of Satan’s origins as an angel. The fact that they are absent in this depiction also supports the claim that the Devil is purely “evil” in this film.



Fig. 22. Screenshot of the Devil from *Safir Jahannam* (1945).

Another Egyptian film that features the character of Satan is *Maw‘ad ma‘ ‘Iblīs* (Appointment with Iblīs/Satan) by Kamel Al Talmasanī in 1955. Al Talmasanī’s Satan is a completely different version from Wehbe’s, though the films are only ten years apart. The Iblīs/Satan character in this film is depicted as a smartly dressed businessman out to make a deal; the currency of said deal is his victim’s soul. There isn’t a hint of the stereotypical Devil seen in Wehbe’s Satan: no horns, fangs, cape or gruesome evil expression. Instead, Al Talmasanī’s Satan is a composed figure with confident posture, looking on at his victim with a calculating look on his face and the hint of a mischievous smirk (see Fig. 23). He is not, however, an attractive Devil, as artists like Blake, Gaiman and Carey have portrayed him. Rather he is a man of middle age and average looks, with no hint of the physically

appealing charmer that is Lucifer Morningstar, from *Lucifer*. Also in contrast to all the depictions of the Devil seen in the work of all the artists surveyed above, this Devil is balding. A cursory glance at this Iblīs wouldn't reveal his identity as the fallen Satan, but rather has him looking like an ordinary, though well-dressed, man that one would pass on the street. His appearance does not look evil, in contrast with Wehbe's depiction of Satan. Both Satans highlight a stereotypical image of Satan in spite of the fact that they could not be more different. The question here would be whether these depictions of Satan are Miltonic in nature? Though these films were released prior to the translation of *Paradise Lost* into Arabic, there are still some qualities of Milton's Satan that shine through in these contemporary renditions of the character. When one considers the lens I hope to have built in this thesis from a global perspective, one will see that there are in fact many more fascinating details that potentially remain to be explored and added to the rich picture of Milton's influence on visual culture.



Fig. 23. Screenshot of the Devil from *Maw'ad ma' 'Iblīs* (1955).

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