



THE IMAGE OF SATAN IN THE -  
1688 EDITION OF JOHN -  
MILTON'S *PARADISE LOST* -

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***Abstract***

The fourth edition of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, published in 1688 by Jacob Tonson, was the first to be illustrated. Tonson's edition contained twelve illustrations, one for each book of the epic poem. Eight of these illustrations were drawn by John Baptist Medina, three by Henry Aldrich, and one by Bernard Lens. My research focuses on the six engravings that include representations of Satan—four by John Baptist Medina and two by Henry Aldrich.

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*Paradise Lost*, first published in 1667, is an epic poem that details man's first disobedience and subsequent fall from grace. It is most noted for Milton's sympathetic treatment of Satan, who is both the anti-hero and antagonist of the epic poem. Throughout the arc of the poem, Satan's character gradually transforms from angel to devil and lastly to serpent. Milton portrayed a very different Satan than any other that had been seen prior to that time in both art and literature. The aim

of my research was to discover what influenced Medina and Aldrich in creating a never-before-seen image of Satan. Being the first illustrators of this major epic, Medina and Aldrich had to rely heavily on the well-known iconography of their time. Additionally, the minimal descriptive clues given by Milton in the poem led them to develop a new image of Satan that personifies Milton's creation. Medina's and Aldrich's engravings set the precedent for many future artists in illustrating the unique character of Satan in Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

John Milton (9 December 1608–8 November 1674) was an English poet best known for his epic poem *Paradise Lost*, first published in 1667. Originally published in ten books, it was divided into twelve books in 1674 following the style of Virgil's *Aeneid*.<sup>1</sup> In the opening lines of Book I, Milton states the main purpose of *Paradise Lost*:

. . . what in me is dark,  
Illumine; what is low, raise and support;  
That to the height of this great argument  
I may assert eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to men. (Book I, 22–26)

The poem begins right after Satan and the Rebel Angels were cast out of Heaven and chronicles man's first disobedience and subsequent fall from grace. Milton's character of Satan has long been an issue of intrigue among readers. In the poem, Satan is often a figure with whom the reader can sympathize with, portrayed with very human emotional characteristics. He is considered both the tragic anti-hero and the antagonist of the narrative.

In 1688 Jacob Tonson published the fourth edition of *Paradise Lost*, fourteen years after Milton's death. It was issued by subscription in an edition of 500. The fourth edition was the

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<sup>1</sup> To say that the poem was divided into twelve books is not to say that it was published in twelve separately bound volumes. The entirety of the poem was bound in a single volume. The separation of Books within the poem is comparable to the present day's division of chapters in a single volume.



Figure 1. Engraving after a portrait of John Milton, ca. 1688.

first to include any illustrations. This included a frontispiece and twelve additional engravings, one prefacing each of the twelve books of the poem. The frontispiece image is a portrait of John Milton (Fig. 1), accompanied by several lines of verse by John Dryden, “celebrating the poet as the heir to Homer and Virgil.”<sup>2</sup>

There are three artists associated with the illustration of

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<sup>2</sup> Robert Woof, H. J. M. Hanley, and Stephen Hebron, *Paradise Lost: The Poem and Its Illustrators* (Grasmere: Wordsworth Trust, 2004), 94.

the 1688 edition. Bernard Lens the elder (1659–1725) is responsible for the illustration to Book IV. The illustrations for Books III, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X and XI are by John Baptist Medina (1659–1710). Books I, II, and XII were once thought to be also by Medina; however, an inscription on the flyleaf of a copy of *Paradise Lost* belonging to Joseph Warton (1722–1800) states that Dr. Henry Aldrich (1647–1710) is the true designer of at least Book XII.<sup>3</sup> Experts have compared the styles of Books I and II with the known Aldrich design of Book XII and determined them to be by his hand as well.<sup>4</sup> Although the original drawings for Aldrich’s engravings no longer exist, the pen and ink drawings of Medina’s original illustrations are currently located in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.<sup>5</sup> The engravings after Medina’s and Aldrich’s illustrations were done by Michael Burghers (1647–1727), an engraver for the Oxford Press.

Throughout the arc of *Paradise Lost*, Satan’s character gradually transforms from angel to devil to serpent. Prior to *Paradise Lost*, Satan was generally depicted in one of three forms: a demonic monster, as the serpent, or as some other hybrid form. Rarely was Satan seen resembling a human or angel. How did Aldrich and Medina take on the task of creating a new visual Satan? What key components helped them in creating a figure that is both unique to *Paradise Lost* and one that would be recognizable to viewers? Being the first illustrators of this major epic, Medina and Aldrich had to rely heavily on the well-known iconography of their time as well as the minimal physical descriptions given by Milton in the poem in order to develop a new image of Satan that personifies Milton’s creation. What aspects of Satan’s character were drawn from Milton’s text to help Medina and Aldrich illustrate this new Satan, and what possible aspects were disregarded? As we will see, many

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 95.

<sup>4</sup> Suzanne Boorsch, “The 1688 *Paradise Lost* and Dr. Aldrich,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 6 (1972): 139.

<sup>5</sup> Victoria and Albert Museum: <http://www.vam.ac.uk/>

aspects of the *Paradise Lost* illustrations were borrowed from existing art pieces in the seventeenth century. Why did Medina and Aldrich use these elements to illustrate Satan, rather than create an entirely original composition? How well does the illustrated Satan represent the character of Milton's epic work? Can the complex arc of Satan's character still be read throughout the series of illustrations? My claim is that Medina and Aldrich used a combination of descriptive clues from Milton's text and figures from other artists' works to create their depictions of Milton's Satan. They pulled characteristics from other artists in order to create a Satan that was readable and familiar to their audience, yet still unique to Milton's anti-hero.

The illustrations that I will be focusing on in my research are those of Books I, II, III, VI, IX, and X—the remaining six do not concern the character of Satan.<sup>6</sup> Since Medina's drawings have survived, I will compare his originals to the published engravings by Michael Burghers to consider whether any changes between the two versions may have affected the portrayal of Satan's character. I will expand upon these changes in the discussion of each individual illustration. To the best of my knowledge, the original illustrations by Henry Aldrich are no longer extant.

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<sup>6</sup> Here I would like to address the issue of design authorship for the illustrations found in Books I and II. Until the early 1970s, Medina was considered to be the artist of the designs for the first two books. However, Suzanne Boorsch has provided evidence that the two designs belonged to Aldrich rather than Medina. Therefore, several key sources I have considered throughout my research discuss the work of Books I and II as designs by Medina. While this difference in authorship is important to recognize and will change the analysis of Books I and II in terms of personal artistic influences, it should not change the general artistic design of each Book, and I will therefore still consider certain key sources prior to the 1970s as viable scholarly sources.

## *The Artists*

John Baptist Medina was born in Brussels in 1659 of Flemish-Spanish origins and grew up in the city. Very little is known about his early career except for his talent at drawing and that he was sent to learn under François Duchatel (1616–1694), a Flemish portrait painter.<sup>7</sup> Medina traveled to London in 1686 in an attempt to find a fortune in portrait painting. There, he settled among many other artists and made “valuable contacts among some of his own fellow-countrymen.”<sup>8</sup> One of these countrymen was Bernard Lens, a Flemish engraver who had been commissioned to work on Jacob Tonson’s illustrated edition of *Paradise Lost*. After Lens completed one illustration (that of Book IV) his work as illustrator ceased for reasons unknown, and the commission was passed on to his compatriot Medina.<sup>9</sup> Medina’s contribution to Tonson’s publication of *Paradise Lost* put his name on the radar for a number of influential people. His career as a portrait painter flourished and he soon set up a studio in Drury Lane. He often catered to members of the Scottish Royal Court, including George, the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Melville, who became his patron. Around 1694, Medina traveled to Edinburgh with the Earl to work on several commissions by Scottish nobles, namely Lady Margaret, the Countess of Rothes and the cousin of Lady Melville.<sup>10</sup> His success in Edinburgh, as well as less competition among other artists, convinced Medina to move his family and studio north to Scotland. He continued to receive multiple commissions over the years and established himself as a “distinguished figure of Edinburgh society . . . and [in 1706

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<sup>7</sup> Marcia R. Pointon, *Milton & English Art* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970), 1–2.

<sup>8</sup> Rosalind K. Marshall, *John de Medina, 1659–1710* (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 1988), 5.

<sup>9</sup> The exact order in which each artist produced the illustrations is unclear. Marshall’s article was published approximately 15 years after Boorsch’s article. Therefore, Marshall knew of Aldrich’s involvement with Books I, II, and XII. However, there is no evidence as to whether or not Aldrich produced his illustrations before, after, or simultaneously to Medina’s work on the project.

<sup>10</sup> Marshall, *John de Medina*, 7–10.

was] knighted by [the Scottish parliament's] Lord High Commissioner, the Duke of Queensberry."<sup>11</sup> Sir John Baptist Medina died in Edinburgh on October 5, 1710.

Henry Aldrich was an English theologian and philosopher, born in 1647. In 1681 he was named canon of Christ Church College in Oxford, and served as the dean from 1689 until his death in 1710. Little is known about his personal life and activities, as he was a modest and private individual who shunned publicity. Aldrich was most notably an architect and composer of music. The Peckwater quadrangle in Christ Church College was of his own design, as was the All Saints Church on High Street. His collection of musical manuscripts and compositions are still well known today. Aldrich kept an extensive collection of engravings at Christ Church College, many of which were Italian and French engravings, as well as a few Dutch and German pieces. He was also intimately associated with the Oxford Press, overseeing many of the engravings done for the press during his tenure.<sup>12</sup> It was through the Oxford Press that Aldrich worked closely with Michael Burghers, our engraver. Burghers, who traveled to England soon after Louis XIV took Utrecht, was the principal engraver for the Oxford University Press for nearly fifty years.<sup>13</sup>

### *Aldrich's Illustrations*

The illustration of Book I, designed by Henry Aldrich, is entitled *Satan Rousing the Rebel Angels* (Fig. 2). This illustration, like those of several other Books, combines multiple scenes in a single composition.<sup>14</sup> The majority of the composition is

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>12</sup> Boorsch, "1688 *Paradise Lost*," 143–45.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>14</sup> The majority of the composition is taken up by Satan rousing his fellow angels from the fires of Hell. The second scene depicts the council of Pandæmonium during which the rebel angels discuss their next course of action now that they have been consigned to an eternity in Hell.



Figure 2. Michael Burghers, *Satan Rousing The Rebel Angels*, 1688. -  
Engraving after Henry Aldrich, pub. in John Milton, -  
*Paradise Lost* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1688). -

taken up by the large figure of Satan dressed in Roman armor. Below Satan in the black-tipped flames of Hell are the fallen angels, whom he prods with a spear or pike. The human forms of the fallen angels indicate their former celestial glory, marred only by the foremost angel's frayed and clipped wings and the clawed nails of an angel's foot just above the end of Satan's spear. Satan, in addition to his frayed wings, is depicted







Figure 3. Raphael, *Saint Michael Slaying the Demon*, 1518. Oil transferred from wood to canvas, 106" × 63". The Louvre, Paris.

Aldrich had access to an engraving of Raphael's Saint Michael image in the collection at Christ Church College, Boorsch suggests that Aldrich did not use this particular engraving as a basis for his Satan, since the stances of the Raphael's Saint Michael and Aldrich's Satan are quite different. Instead, Boorsch suggests that Aldrich may have drawn from a late sixteenth or seventeenth century illustrated French book, possibly an illustrated Bible or book of saints.<sup>16</sup> Mary Ravenhall provides another possible source for Aldrich's Satan. In an engraving done by Philippe Galle after a drawing in a series by Martin van Heemskerck entitled "The Wretchedness of Wealth" (Fig. 4), the character Charon ferries the figures of Lust and Greed across the river Styx.<sup>17</sup> Although the figure of Charon is nude and has bat-like wings rather than feathered, his stance is identical to that of Aldrich's Satan. Ravenhall suggests that it is quite likely that Aldrich copied from

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<sup>16</sup> Boorsch, "1688 *Paradise Lost*," 149.

<sup>17</sup> Mary Dennis Ravenhall, *Illustrations of Paradise Lost in England, 1688-1802* (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1980), 50.



Figure 4. Philippe Galle, *The Wretchedness of Wealth Series*, 1563. Engraving after Martin van Heemskerck, 6.7" × 9.1". British Museum, London.

Heemskerck's image of Charon, altering the facial expression to support Milton's description of Satan as a humanistic fallen angel, while keeping the horns and elongated ears that are associated with demonic figures.<sup>18</sup> Although there is no evidence of this engraving in the Christ Church Collection, Ravenhall suggests that it may have been at some point in the past, or that Aldrich may have seen the engraving elsewhere.

A subtle difference between Milton's work and the engraving after Aldrich's design can be seen in Satan's act of stirring the fallen angels into action with the end of his spear. The Satan of Milton's poem does not rouse the angels so much physically as he does with the mere power of his presence and strength of personality:

They heard, and were abasht, and up they sprung -  
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch -

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 52.





Figure 5. Michael Burghers, *Satan, Sin, and Death*, 1688. Engraving after Henry Aldrich, pub. in John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1688).

although the scale of his image is slightly reduced. Milton offers no further insight to Satan's physical appearance. Despite this, Aldrich takes it upon himself to illustrate the evidence of Satan's further degeneration. His ears and horns are more elongated, the locks of his hair are more serpentine, and his feathered angel wings have been replaced by bat wings. His fig-



Figure 6. Cornelius Galle, *St. Michael Fighting the Rebel Angels*, 1621–1650. Engraving after Peter Paul Rubens, 11.4" × 8.4". British Museum, London.

ure also appears squatter and his face less attractive. Satan's serpentine locks are thought to be taken from an engraving by C. Galle after a Rubens painting depicting Saint Michael overcoming the Devil (Fig. 6).<sup>20</sup> In addition to the similar hair, the two figures also share similar facial expressions and features.

Aldrich may have chosen this image to base his Satan on

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<sup>20</sup> Ravenhall, *Illustrations of Paradise Lost*, 63.

due to his knowledge of the association between Satan and Envy. In Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1593), Envy is described as an ugly woman with snakes as hair. The snaky locks are given to the figure of Satan as a result of envy being one of Satan's chief sins, especially in *Paradise Lost*. When Milton explains the reasons for mankind's transgressions in Book I, he states that it was

Th' infernal Serpent . . . whose guile  
Stird up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv'd  
The Mother of Mankind, what time his Pride  
Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his Host  
Of Rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring  
To set himself in Glory above his Peers,  
He trusted to have equal'd the most High,  
If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim  
Against the Throne and Monarchy of God  
Rais'd impious War in Heav'n and Battel proud  
With vain attempt. (Book I, 34–44)

### *Medina's Illustrations*

The next illustration is that of Book III, *The Creation of Man*, designed by Medina (Fig. 7). Like Aldrich's designs, Medina's illustration combines several scenes within a single composition. Medina, however, does not confine his figures to an architectural framework as Aldrich does. Medina uses spacious landscapes as the backdrops for his compositions.

Despite the fact that the majority of Book III takes place in Heaven with a council between God and the Son, Medina chooses to illustrate other scenes. The background scene showing Satan flying towards the angel Uriel—we will get to the main scene in a moment—takes place in the last few pages of Book III. In Medina's original pen and ink drawing, the winged Satan is depicted with horns and pointed ears. The engraving by Burghers (Fig. 8), however, was altered to represent Satan as a cherub. In the text, Satan indeed changes his ap-



Figure 7. John Baptist Medina, *The Creation of Man*, ca. 1688. Drawn with pen and bistre, washed in with Indian ink, 11.8" × 7.3". Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

pearance in order to fool Uriel—"But first he casts to change his proper shape, / Which else might work him danger or display; / And now a stripling Cherube he appears."<sup>21</sup> Perhaps Medina chose to draw Satan as himself rather than the cherub in order for it to be clear to the viewer that the figure was Satan and not actually a cherub. Ravenhall supports this alteration, maintaining that it does not distort the episode's meaning, but merely asserts Satan's ability to transform his appearance in a way that can deceive even angels, and therefore will successfully deceive Eve in the scenes to come.<sup>22</sup> The decision to alter this minor scene was likely made by Francis Atterbury, an Oxford scholar.<sup>23</sup> Atterbury attended the Christ Church College

<sup>21</sup> Milton, *Paradise Lost*, bk. III, lines 634–36. -

<sup>22</sup> Ravenhall, *Illustrations of Paradise Lost*, 85–86. -

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 86. -



Figure 8. Michael Burghers, *The Creation of Man*, 1688. Engraving after John Baptist Medina, pub. in John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1688).

along with Aldrich, and was an important figure during the publishing of the fourth edition. He was intimately familiar with Milton's work, and therefore cognizant of the subtle effects the illustrations would have on the reader.<sup>24</sup>

The main scene of the composition is the confrontation between Satan and the Messiah, a scene that actually takes place within Book IV. Medina may have chosen this scene for the main illustration of Book III for two reasons. First, to simultaneously demonstrate God's power of will—described in Book IV—as well as the eventual sacrifice of the Son for Man's

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 21–22.

sin—discussed in the Heavenly council of Book III. This is a key moment within *Paradise Lost*, as the reader realizes that God is aware of Satan’s presence in Eden and of his plans to tempt man, yet does not plan on interfering, stating that He has given Adam and Eve the power of free will and the knowledge to overcome Satan’s temptations. God, with his power of foreknowledge, knows that Satan will succeed, and the Son offers his sacrifice in order to redeem man from sin. All of this is represented in the illustration for Book III by the inclusion of the cross as well as a set of scales in the banner on the right hand side. Secondly, we can assume that the illustration for Book IV was completed before Medina illustrated Book III, as Book IV was done by Bernard Lens, and he passed on the commission to Medina when he could not complete it himself.<sup>25</sup> Lens depicted several scenes of Adam and Eve in the garden, along with the angels who guard Eden.

Medina’s main figure of Satan in Book III is further degraded in character. He no longer wears the Roman armor of Aldrich’s illustrations, and he has also lost his wings. Medina’s exclusion of Satan’s wings may be due to his choice of depicted moment. In Book III, Milton describes Satan’s arrival to Earth: “Mean while upon the firm opacous Globe / Of this round World, whose first convex divides / The luminous inferior Orbs, enclos’d / From *Chaos* and th’ inroad of Darkness old, / *Satan* alighted walks.”<sup>26</sup> In his illustration, Medina shows Satan already alighted upon the outer globe, and therefore without wings. While still in human form, Satan has gained an increasingly animalistic appearance. His thighs are covered in shaggy fur, and he now has a tail. A small spur is located on the heel of each foot. The locks of his hair are no longer serpentine, but have transformed into a beard. The Satan of Book III closely resembles the medieval figure of the Devil as a satyr. Kimbrell asserts that Medina’s Satan is not only a satyr but a likeness of the Greek god Pan, despite Satan lacking the goat-

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<sup>25</sup> Marshall, *John de Medina*, 6. -

<sup>26</sup> Milton, *Paradise Lost*, bk. III, lines 418–22. -



Figure 9. John Baptist Medina, *The War In Heaven*, ca. 1688. Drawn with pen and bistre, washed in with Indian ink, 11.8" × 7.3". Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

like legs of the shepherd god.<sup>27</sup> Satan's increasing animalistic qualities and his association with Pan further display his character's increasing depravity in Milton's epic, which is evident in the beginning of Book IV when Milton gives us a glimpse of Satan's inner thoughts on his actions: "Satan *now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprise which he undertook alone against God and Man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil, [and] journeys on to Paradise.*"<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Kimbrell, "Illustrations of Paradise Lost," 41–42.



Figure 10. Michelangelo, *Last Judgement*, 1534–1541 (after restoration). Fresco, 48' × 44'. Sistine Chapel, Vatican, Rome.

Satan witnesses Adam and Eve and admits that they are beautiful creatures that he could love, but nevertheless decides to ruin their Paradise in his endeavor to overthrow God's reign in Heaven.

The illustration for Book VI is the first of Medina's images to be entirely composed of a single scene—the *War In Heaven* (Fig. 9), told in Milton's text by Raphael to Adam in the garden to warn him of Satan's temptations. The composition is based on Michelangelo's *Last Judgement* scene (Fig. 10), which is divided vertically with the image of the Son at the top.<sup>29</sup> In

<sup>28</sup> Milton, *Paradise Lost*, bk. IV, The Argument. -

<sup>29</sup> Kimbrell, "Illustrations of Paradise Lost," 57. -

the center of Medina's composition is the Son in his Father's chariot, driving the rebel angels out of Heaven. On the left, a group of angels watch the battle, and on the right the rebel angels fall towards the lake. In the center of the lake is the spouting Leviathan, a creature of the sea associated with Satan.<sup>30</sup>

This scene is a confusing one—the figure of Satan is indistinguishable from those of his fellow rebel angels, placing the focus on the Son as described by Milton. Both Kimbrell and Ravenhall interpret the Leviathan's presence as a symbolic representation of Satan. In addition to the Leviathan, Kimbrell suggests that the figure in the bottom right corner, of which we see only its head, is the demon Charon, with “glaring eyes and pointed ears, [awaiting] the damned.”<sup>31</sup> However, no mention of Charon is made in Milton's description of the war in Heaven, nor does Ravenhall address Kimbrell's assessment in any way. While Charon is generally depicted as a man with fierce, wide eyes, he is also shown on the boat used to ferry the dead across the river Styx, as we saw in Figure 3. The figure in Medina's illustration is only visible by his head. The rebel angels seen falling into the lake in Medina's illustration are all depicted as naked angels, still beautiful and bearing feathered wings in order to reflect their recent celestial standing. The figure in the corner may not be Charon, but rather the image of Satan after his fall into the lake. He is depicted by Medina as having elongated ears or horns to represent the depraved state of his being at the point in which the frame story of the war in Heaven is introduced, rather than be depicted as the angelic figure he was at the time of the war. It seems unlikely that Medina would have placed Charon in his composition without being prompted by the poem itself or by previous examples in art, especially in such a minimal way of only showing the top of his head. As stated in Luther Link's text, Satan is often portrayed as a dragon falling from Heaven, while his fellow angels

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<sup>30</sup> Ravenhall, *Illustrations of Paradise Lost*, 103. -

<sup>31</sup> Kimbrell, “Illustrations of Paradise Lost,” 59. -

are identical with holy angels except for their lack of halos.<sup>32</sup> Also, we know from the illustration for Book III that Medina's design was altered slightly to create a better understanding of the poem for the viewer. If the figure was meant to be Charon, it seems likely that the viewers would not recognize this fact, due to his minimal appearance, and therefore the publishers would have changed it. So, we can assume that this is the figure of Satan after the Fall.

In Book IX, *The Fall* (Fig. 11), Medina again combines multiple scenes in a single composition. The scenes can be read chronologically from front to back. The foreground is a darkened area depicting Satan considering the coiled form of a serpent. Satan's appearance is further transformed from that of Book III: His legs have morphed into goat's legs, and his hands are clawed like an animal's. His arms are hairy, and his tail longer. He is again pictured with a pair of bat-like wings, and is the largest figure of the composition, indicating his importance as the cause of man's fall from grace.<sup>33</sup>

Distinguishing Satan from the serpent in scenes of the Fall was not a common tradition, yet "Medina's emphasis on this duality . . . represents a response to Milton's particular telling of the story."<sup>34</sup> Milton describes in length Satan's journey to find a way back into Eden after being forced out by the angel Gabriel. After eight days, he is successful, and searches for the perfect creature to take form of in order to deceive Eve.

.....thus the Orb he roam'd  
With narrow search; and with inspection deep  
Consider'd every Creature, which of all  
Most opportune might serve his Wiles, and found  
The Serpent subtlest Beast of all the Field.  
Him after long debate, irresolute  
Of thoughts revolv'd, his final sentence chose

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<sup>32</sup> Luther Link, *The Devil: The Archfiend in Art from the Sixth to the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996), 165.

<sup>33</sup> Ravenhall, *Illustrations of Paradise Lost*, 118.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.



Figure 11. John Baptist Medina, *The Fall*, ca. 1688. Drawn with pen and bistre, washed in with Indian ink, 11.8" × 7.3". Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Fit Vessel, fittest Imp of fraud, in whom  
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide  
From sharpest sight: for in the wily Snake,  
Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,  
As from his wit and native subtlety  
Proceeding, which in other Beasts observ'd  
Doubt might beget of Diabolic pow'r  
Active within beyond the sense of brute. (Book IX, 82–96)

The next two scenes show Adam and Eve as they discuss the division of their labors and separately work in the garden. Further on, Eve is depicted beneath the Tree of Knowledge



Figure 12. Michael Burghers, *The Fall*, 1688. Engraving after John Baptist Medina, pub. in John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1688).

standing before Satan disguised as the serpent as she is about to bite into the forbidden fruit. In this illustration lies another example of an alteration between Medina's original drawing and Burghers' engraving (Fig. 12).<sup>35</sup>

Medina's original drawing depicted a smaller serpent as upright, but uncoiled. This alteration may have been introduced "at the suggestion of Atterbury, for the engraved version is even more effective in conveying the dominating eloquence of Satan. . . . This is Milton's serpent, not the serpent in the tree of traditional iconography, nor its frequent alternative,

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<sup>35</sup> The entire composition for Book IX was also flipped vertically, but does not change any assessment of the representation of Satan's character.



Figure 13. John Baptist Medina, *The Triumph of Satan and the Judgement of Adam and Eve*, ca. 1688. Drawn with pen and bistre, washed in with Indian ink, 11.8" × 7.3". Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

the serpent with the female head."<sup>36</sup> The coiled serpent represents Satan's character as a master of guile and deceit. The remaining two scenes of Book IX's composition depict the corruption of Adam by Eve and the pair shamed, disgraced, and covered by leaves.

Book X's illustration of *The Triumph of Satan and the Judgement of Adam and Eve* (Fig. 13) provides a continuation of the scenes from Book IX. In the foreground, Adam and Eve lie naked and melancholic, while the guardian angels of Paradise depart above them. Behind them, Satan greets his daughter Sin and their son Death into the world on his way back to Hell

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<sup>36</sup> Ravenhall, *Illustrations of Paradise Lost*, 120–21.



Figure 14. Michael Burghers, *The Triumph of Satan and the Judgement of Adam and Eve*, 1688. Engraving after John Baptist Medina, pub. in John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1688).

to retrieve his fellow rebel angels. Satan is again depicted as he was in Book III—short tail, hairy thighs, no wings, spurred heels, elongated ears and pointed horns.

Further back across the bridge that was erected by Sin and Death to connect Hell to the world, Satan is seen surrounded by his cohorts in Pandæmonium, all portrayed as semi-bestial forms. Here Satan tells the others in detail of his success in Paradise. Satan expects to be showered in adoration by his comrades, and instead “suffers the greatest humiliation for his hubris.”<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Kimbrell, “Illustrations of Paradise Lost,” 74.





Figure 15. Simon Francois Ravenet, illustration to Book I of *Paradise Lost*, 1749. Engraving after Francis Hayman, pub. in John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (London: Thomas Newton, 1749).

wings. Further still, he transforms into a lowly serpent in order to introduce sin to Eden, a transformation that becomes permanent after God's judgement upon his actions. This degeneration is portrayed by Medina and Aldrich in a manner that I believe the readers of *Paradise Lost* during the seventeenth century would have been familiar with and understand; yet the illustrations still adhere to the descriptions provided by Milton's text. Aldrich's and Medina's portrayals of Satan effectively illustrate the complexities of the unique character Milton cre-

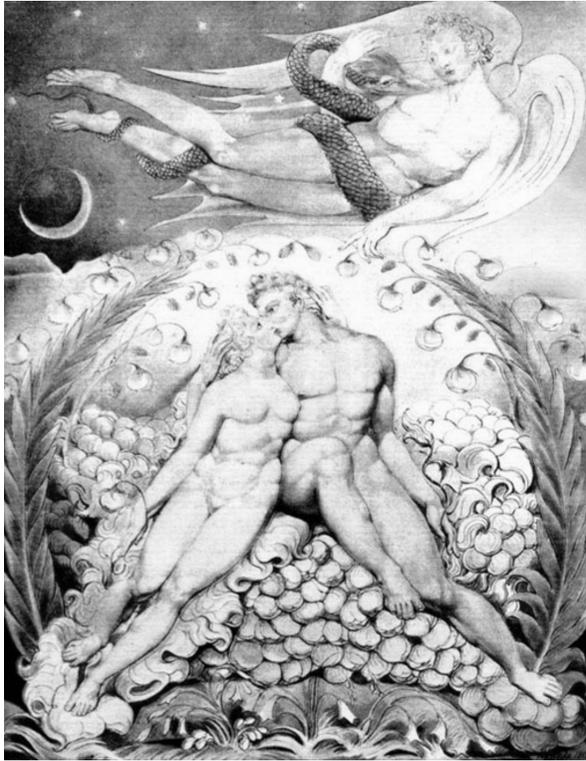


Figure 16. William Blake, *Satan With Adam And Eve*, 1808. Pen and watercolor on paper, 19.5" × 15.5". Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

ated, while simultaneously remaining a figure recognizable to seventeenth century readers. They chose common characteristics normally seen in Satan-figures: horns, snaky locks, satyr legs, and tails. They also modeled many of the compositions after well-known art works of the Renaissance period. The humanistic quality of Satan's figure represented in the illustrations provides the audience with a fresh interpretation on a staple character in religious epic literature and art.

The illustrations of the 1688 edition set the precedence for future artists' imaginings of *Paradise Lost*. Some noted illustrators of Milton's *Paradise Lost* include Francis Hayman (1708–1776), William Blake (1757–1827), and Gustave Doré (1832–1883). Each artist uses some aspect of Aldrich's and



Figure 17. Gustave Doré, *Satan Contemplating the Serpent*, 1866. Wood engraving.

Medina's illustrations in their own works. Francis Hayman's illustrations are more focused on the storyline of Adam and Eve; however, in his image of Book I (Fig. 15), Hayman depicts Satan wearing Roman armor, like that of Aldrich's. Hayman has succeeded in more closely representing Milton's character. His Satan rouses his fallen angels more by voice and force of presence rather than by any physical aid.

In his iconic 1808 illustrations, William Blake chooses to portray Satan as a human figure throughout the entirety of the poem, except for the last two Books in which he is the serpent. There is no visible degradation of Satan's character. The only scene in which Satan is represented as both a celestial being and the serpent is in *Satan with Adam and Eve* (Fig. 16).

Gustave Doré's illustrations seem to be most similar to those of Aldrich's and Medina's. Throughout a span of fifty engravings, Doré depicts Satan's degeneration of character, beginning as a celestial warrior and ending as a serpent in Hell. Doré was able to spend a greater amount of time in illustrating the details of Satan's degeneration, as he produced a greater number of images. Doré adapted many qualities from the 1688 edition into his own works. For example, Doré, like Medina, chose to depict the scene in which Satan considers the serpent's form (Fig. 17).

While no other artist's illustrations are a direct remake of Aldrich's and Medina's designs, it can be said that the majority of *Paradise Lost* illustrations have gained influence from the original 1688 illustrations, which are still considered by some to be the greatest illustrations to date. Marcia Pointon expresses that Medina<sup>38</sup> "benefited from the lack of a precedent and his designs as a consequence are a great deal more interesting and vigorous than those of many later artists."<sup>39</sup> Likewise, Kimbrell<sup>40</sup> also asserts that "Medina's greatest contribution to Milton's poem lies in having set the subjects to be illustrated."<sup>41</sup> Due to the lack of precedence available to Aldrich and Medina, their designs will undoubtedly remain the greatest and most accomplished illustrations of Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

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<sup>38</sup> The writings by both Pointon and Kimbrell were published prior to Boorsch's article naming Aldrich as the artist for the designs previously thought to be by Medina's hand, and therefore do not take Aldrich into account.

<sup>39</sup> Pointon, *Milton & English Art*, 3.

<sup>40</sup> See note 38.

<sup>41</sup> Kimbrell, "Illustrations of *Paradise Lost*," 83.

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