

***Global Milton and Visual Art*, edited by Angelica Duran and Mario Murgia, Lanham, Lexington, 2021, pp. 432, \$96,65 (hardback), ISBN: 9781793617064.**

Murat ÖĞÜTCÜ
Adıyaman University, Türkiye

Review History:
Received: 16 Dec. 2022 / Accepted: 31 Mar. 2023

How to Cite: Öğütçü, Murat. Review of *Global Milton and Visual Art*, edited by Angelica Duran and Mario Murgia. *IDEAS: Journal of English Literary Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2023, pp. 71–73.



Global Milton and Visual Art can be regarded as a textual cabinet of transcultural visual adaptations and appropriations of John Milton’s poetic works. To name a few, through illustrations, film versions, digital new media, paintings, sculptures, and illustrations, the chapters of this volume display how Milton’s works have been reinterpreted by various artists from different cultural and regional backgrounds. Highlighting Milton’s transcultural and global ekphrastic presence, the fifteen chapters, 103 illustrations and 64 supplemental web images of the book give a visual panorama of intersemiotic adaptations and appropriations of Milton’s poetry.

The book is divided into four parts and Part I outlines the contextual framework of the volume through an introductory chapter and a chapter that gives the overall conceptualisation of visualising Milton. Chapter 1, which functions as an Introduction, is written by Angelica Duran and Mario Murgia and lays out how Milton’s work “inherently” goes “beyond the realm of written language” through the use of multisensory imagery (3–4). Chapter 2 by Joseph Wittreich argues that the visual culture around Milton’s poetic works, especially *Paradise Lost*, drew its impetus from the Romantic movement to romanticise and eroticise Milton’s poetry. Wittreich speaks of the “remapping, reconfiguration and redating” of Milton by the followers of the Romantic movement that varied from “new” to common approaches (22–23). Arguing further that most of the initial visual depictions of Milton’s work functioned to supplement interlingual translations, Wittreich contextualises the correlation of the historical development of illustrations, translations, and Milton’s poetry.

Part II focuses on the much-acclaimed illustrations of Milton's works by Gustave Doré and Doré's transcultural influence over the global visualisation of Milton and his work. For instance, Chapter 3 by Hiroko Sano compares Doré's *Paradise Lost* to the Japanese pictorial genre of ukiyo-e and analyses the reciprocity of such an "influenc[e]" (75). Sano analyses the influence of Japanese art on Doré's works providing a novel perspective on art history. Similarly, Angelica Duran's analysis of a Spanish translation of *Paradise Lost* published in Mexico in 1967 foregrounds the temporal and cultural significance of Doré's illustrations, specifically in the "Mexican" context (96). Duran in Chapter 4 focuses on how Doré's black and white illustrations contrast with the colourful and specifically commissioned illustrations by Mexican artists like Miguel Fernández de Lara. Chapter 5 by Ana Elena González-Treviño draws attention to how Doré's illustrations have been used by Delta Heavy in their music video "White Flag" in 2016 and by David Gilmour and Polly Samson in their musical project "Rattle that Lock" in 2015. González-Treviño underscores how "intermediality" is achieved through the fusion of Milton's works, retro videogame styles, and their respective music in these re-interpretations of Milton's works (120).

The chapters in Part III move towards analyses of diverse artists beside Doré. Moving from famous to lesser-known artists, the chapters do not just give an overview of the visual canon of Miltonic illustrations, but also question and extend that canon. For instance, through a biographical study of some of the artists, Nathalie Collé in Chapter 6 outlines how certain illustrations as "a collective, conscious act of creation" (146) created their canon in the visual representations of Milton and his works. Chapter 7 by Wendy Furman-Adams focuses on the representation of Eve, "Milton's truly epic heroine" (165), by male artists and reorients this canon through an examination of significant female illustrators, like Carlotta Petrina and Mary Elizabeth Groom, and their contribution to the visual understanding of Eve in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Joshua Reid in Chapter 8 scrutinises Salvador Dali's etchings of *Paradise Lost* where the minimalistic sketches of Adam, Eve, Satan, and the angels highlight the intersections of "nature, gender, and desire" (204). In Chapter 9, Mario Murgia's examination of Hispanic graphic novels foregrounds Milton's "pictorial" position in popular culture (227) and how the genre-specific dark elements of the graphic novel blend with the tragic tone of Milton's epic poetry.

Part IV of this volume looks at the visual representation of Milton's works beyond books. For example, Chapter 10 by Gabriela Villanueva elaborates on Felipe Santiago Gutiérrez's painting *The Fall of the Rebel Angels* (1850) which heavily draws upon Milton's representation of the fallen and "failing" angels in his *Paradise Lost* (247). In Chapter 11, Chia-Yin Huang analyses The Milton Shield exhibited in the 1867 Paris Exhibition, which featured "the War in Heaven and the Creation" (267). Huang further compares the hall and the shield, giving further depth to the analysis of the nonverbal representation of Milton's work. In Chapter 12, Aaron Shapiro scrutinises the Milton Window at St. Margaret's Church in London (1888) which should be considered a "stained-glass biography" of Milton (296). In Chapter 13, Beverley Sherry complements Shapiro's analysis by illustrating global examples of stained-glass representations of Milton and his works as examples of "architectural art" (311), ranging

from the United Kingdom to Canada, the United States, and Australia. In Chapter 14, Islam Issa and Matthew Geary look at Jacob Epstein's sculpture of Lucifer (1944–1945), exhibited in the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, which is marked for its “androgynous and vitally orientalized” appearance (350). The chapter focuses on how the sculpture gives clues about both Epstein and Milton as creators of biblical art. In Chapter 15, Jonathan R. Olson analyses how “Milton's Satan” becomes a reference point for Terrence Malick's film *Song to Song* (2016) to depict his “Devil” through the character Cook (367, 372). Referring to painting, stained glass, sculptures, and cinematic representations, Part IV completes not only the global but also the generic versatility of Milton's visual representations.

Global Milton and Visual Art is, thus, in many ways, a ground-breaking collection of essays that looks at Milton's extratextual presence in diverse genres and cultures. By incorporating both the material culture and digital realm through printed illustrations and digital links to web images, the volume also presents novel ways for academic publishing. Consequently, *Global Milton and Visual Art* will be very helpful for academics and students from literature, art history, and media studies departments.

Work Cited

Duran, Angelica, and Mario Murgia, editors. *Global Milton and Visual Art*. Lexington, 2021.