

England. Goodblatt offers us a very strong beginning to this project, but we have many miles to go before we sleep.

Sara J. van den Berg and W. Scott Howard, eds. *The Divorce Tracts of John Milton: Texts and Contexts*. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2010. xi + 513 pp. \$75.00. Review by ANNA K. NARDO, LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY.

The editors of this volume have brought together in a single volume the full texts of Milton's five treatises on divorce:

- *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (August 1, 1643)
- Its greatly expanded second edition (February 2, 1644)
- *The Judgement of Martin Bucer* (August 6, 1644)
- *Tetrachordon* (March 4, 1644/45)
- *Colasterion* (March 4, 1644/45)

Milton's tracts are followed by four documents that responded to his argument, and to which he responded directly in his twin pamphlets, *Tetrachordon* and *Colasterion*:

- William Prynne, excerpt from *Twelve Considerable Serious Questions* (September 16, 1644)
- Herbert Palmer, excerpt from *The Glasse of God's Providence* (a sermon delivered August 13, 1644, published November 7, 1644)
- [Anonymous], *An Answer to a book, intituled, The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (November 14, 1644)
- Daniel Featley, excerpt from *The Dippers Dipt* (February 7, 1645)

The goal of this volume is to present Milton's arguments on divorce, along with his first critics, in "an accessible, lightly modernized text for interested readers in a variety of fields within and beyond seventeenth-century literary studies" (2). Teachers of courses in literature, women's studies, history, and law will find this volume useful. It includes a contextual and interpretive introduction, notes aimed at the non-specialist reader, an eleven-page bibliography of primary and secondary sources, and an appendix listing pamphlets in the second wave of responses to Milton's argument (1644-49), as

well as modern publications (1715-1973) that document Milton's "Legacy of Reform" (451).

The introduction reads Milton's arguments for divorce, when "indisposition, unfitness, or contrariety of mind ... hinder the main benefits of conjugal society, which are solace and peace" (DDD 44), as central to his concept of liberty. "Inherently divorcive," Miltonic liberty insists that "'the inward and irremediable disposition of man' must serve as the fulcrum for private acts of interpretation concerning the reformation and regulation of the church, the subject, and the state" (Introduction 10-11). In addition to contextualizing Milton's argument in relation to his other prose works and the Westminster Assembly's debates on church discipline, the introduction also analyzes the emotional substrate of Milton's argument—his affecting images describing marital misery, his joy at finding an ally in such a respected reformer as Bucer, his longing for a worthy opponent, and his disgust at the one full answer to his argument that was published. Finally, van den Berg and Howard investigate Milton's suspicion that his opponents were in collusion with each other, by detailing the relationships between the authors, printers, and licensers of the first wave of responses.

Whereas the text of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* in the Yale Prose volume conflates the first and second editions, using a complex system of arrows and brackets to indicate additions and omissions, this volume includes the first two (of four) editions in their entirety because, as the editors rightly claim, "the conflated text ... is difficult to decipher, especially for readers not already familiar with the complexities of Milton's prose tracts" (2). Reading these two versions of his argument serially—followed by his citations of Bucer's support, the dense exegesis of his attempt to harmonize apparently contradictory Biblical texts, and his angry rebuke of an unworthy opponent—is an edifying experience. In Milton's paeans to "a cheerful conversation, to the solace and love of each other" (77), we see the genesis of his poetic rendering of Adam and Eve's pre-lapsarian bliss; in his vivid descriptions of marital misery, we hear the "murmuring and despair" of Samson (52).

But contemporary American readers will also be struck, in ways that the editors do not point out, by how relevant Milton's arguments are to hot-button issues of our past and present.

- In their appendix on the “Legacy of Reform,” van den Berg and Howard aim to document “the ongoing importance of [Milton’s] arguments as the understanding of marriage shifted slowly from a religious and political paradigm designed to regulate procreation to a new model of marriage as a private institution intended to further the personal satisfaction of each party” (25). Is, then, Milton’s view of marriage also in the lineage of revolutionary ideas that have evolved into debates over gay marriage?
- In *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, Milton claims that divorce among the Hebrews “was left to a man’s own arbitration to be determined between God and his own conscience” (72). Is this view of individual conscience in the lineage of revolutionary ideas that have evolved into debates over a woman’s right to choose abortion?
- In *Tetrachordon*, Milton uses, he believes, a *reductio ad absurdum* argument to ridicule those who fear abuses so much that they would forbid all divorce: “If the importation of wine and the use of all strong drink were forbid, it would both clean rid the possibility of committing that odious vice [of drunkenness], and men might afterwards live happily and healthfully, without the use of those intoxicating liquors. Yet who is there . . . that ever propounded to lose his sack, his ale, toward the certain abolishing of so great a sin?” (288). Of course, Americans tried such “peremptory strictness” (289) with disastrous results during the era of prohibition. Is then Milton’s insistence on liberty, despite inevitable license, in the lineage of revolutionary ideas that have evolved into debates over drug laws?

Reading Milton’s divorce tracts, in conjunction with their first responses, is a no less edifying experience. After his affecting idealism and carefully argued exegesis, the repeated dismissals of the *Answer* and the anonymous author’s low expectations of marital conversation come as a shock. Sometimes, merely repeating Milton’s argument “is enough to confute it and make it lighter then vaintie it self” (434); other times, Milton’s argument seems such “a new principle unheard of till now” that the anonymous opponent concludes only “so I leave

it" (446) without confutation. When he chuckles that any husband may seek a "fit conversing soule" from his neighbor's wife—"only let him remember to come home to [his own wife] at night" (434-35), we can understand the rage that Milton vents in *Colasterion*: "I mean not to dispute philosophy with this pork, who never read any.... I spoke [of] how unpleasing and discontenting the society of body must needs be between those whose minds cannot be sociable. But what should a man say more to a snout in this pickle?" (373, 381). By bringing all these tracts together in one volume, van den Berg and Howard make clear why Milton's arguments were doomed in his day, but remain relevant in our own.

Our reading of the give-and-take of this debate might, however, have been improved if the pamphlets had been arranged in chronological order of publication, and if Milton's two satirical sonnets on the publication of his divorce tracts had been included. Such an arrangement would illuminate not only Milton's vituperative ridicule of the "Owls and Cuckoos, Asses, Apes and Dogs" who dismissed his learned argument ("I did but prompt the age to quit their clogs"), but also his invitations in the preface to *Tetrachordon* to "those his detractors [to] any fair meeting ... with a due freedom under equal moderators" (241), and in the coda to *Colasterion* to "any man equal to the matter ... to take in hand this controversy" (389).

Anne Dunan-Page, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Bunyan*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010. xix + 187 pp. \$ 29.99. Review by U. MILO KAUFMANN, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN.

No doubt Bunyan is something of an embarrassment to a post-modern world. He was the passionate advocate of a radically imperialistic message, otherwise known as the gospel of Jesus Christ and his kingdom. He allegorized the Christian life as one which assumed the male protection and oversight of women. He believed in another world populated by angels good and bad, by a living Christ, by hosts of redeemed persons (as well as the unredeemed, carefully segregated). He believed that the believer's life was a pilgrimage, though at least in