

Mary C. Fenton and Louis Schwartz, eds. *Their Maker's Image: New Essays on John Milton*. Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 2011. 198 pp. + 6 illus. \$55.00. Review by WENDY FURMAN-ADAMS, WHITTIER COLLEGE.

Their Maker's Image: New Essays on John Milton is the ninth volume of criticism to grow out of the biennial Conference on John Milton and the first to be edited by Professors Fenton and Schwartz. A collection of ten essays—all illuminating, some revelatory—it merits its place beside *Spokesperson Milton* (1994), *Arenas of Conflict* (1997), *Milton's Legacy* (2005), and the five other volumes edited by Charles Durham and Kristin Pruitt and published between 1994 and 2008. Each of the previous eight volumes, two of which received the Milton Society of America's Irene Samuel Prize for the best collection in Milton studies, has represented the full range of approaches to Milton's work—giving voice, by design and conviction, not only to established scholars but also to younger scholars who have gone on to become leaders in the field. This volume is no exception, representing both differing points in Miltonic careers and a wide variety of methodological lenses.

In the first section of the book, four remarkable—and mutually illuminating—essays consider Milton's use of classical sources in his radical reinvention of Christian epic. Richard DuRocher closely examines Milton's "anthropopathic" and "passible" God in the dual context of Virgil's *Aeneid* and the *De Doctrina Christiana*, to argue that "it is not beneath the dignity of Milton's God to express emotion generally" and that "if the emotion accords with virtue ... God's possession of that emotion makes it not only morally good but also spiritually 'holy'" (33). Unlike Virgil's agents, Du Rocher argues, Milton's "heavenly spirits, the Father and the Son above all, direct their passions, even their hate, toward the work of justice" (41). In short, Milton's "God feels, and he feels better" (23). Maggie Kilgour consciously engages DuRocher's examination of the passions, moving on to an exploration of *envy* and its positive twin, *emulation*. Whereas, in its classical formulations, envy is passive, "associated with inertia and melancholy," emulation is active, making us "transcend our limitations to become creative in our own right" (49). Yet ironically,

God's divine creativity—intended to inspire emulation—inspires in Satan not emulation but envy, while Milton, in his aspiration to “soar/ Above th' Aonian Mount” must constantly guard against the dampened wing of that aspiration's evil twin. Sarah Van Der Laan makes equally subtle observations of Milton's allusions to the *Odyssey's* nymph Leucothea—and of the ways those allusions serve to express the complex interaction of free will and prevenient grace in *Paradise Lost*. And finally, in an argument grounded in Milton's allusions to Virgil's Nisus and Euryalus, David Bradshaw arrives at a gorgeously nuanced reading of Eve's offer of self-sacrifice in *Paradise Lost*. Not to be conflated with the Son's entirely efficacious act, neither to be dismissed as a case of egotism parallel to that of the hapless Nisus, her voluntary action “serves as a type of the Son's love, and as such carries *some* of the redemptive power of the antitype” (89, emphasis mine).

The next six essays are more varied in both subject and methodology—ranging from the philosophical problem of free will in a newly mechanical universe to the meanings implicit in the material conditions of early modern cultural production; from the influence of Ramist logic on angelic debate in *Paradise Lost* to the theological underpinning of Milton's political argument against licensing in the *Areopagitica*; from the nature and meaning of solitude in *Paradise Regained* to the truly bizarre history of Milton's defamation as a papist in Restoration polemics. A reader might pick and choose among these essays, but all force us to think about Milton's work in exciting new ways.

Thomas Festa takes up two contrasting but related representations of God drawn from scripture and operative in *Paradise Lost*: that of the divine architect (a representation connected to God's omniscience and related to the logical process of induction) and that of the divine geometer (a representation connected to God's omnipotence and related to the logical process of deduction). Both conceptions of deity are traditionally connected, as in Milton's text, to the emblematic image of a compass, but use that image in strikingly different ways. Like his near-contemporary Leibniz, Milton is unwilling to choose between these two concepts of God; but unlike him, Milton rejects “convenient moral harmonies” for a more “vertiginous, dissonant, unaccommodating” view—one, in Festa's view, “in need of elaborate

justification” (111).

Building on the work of Shakespearean Coleman Hutchinson, Randall Ingram examines the physical volume of Milton’s 1645 *Poems* (in particular the typology and page-setting of “Lycidas”) to argue that although examining nonverbal features of an early modern text involves the risk of projecting our own preconceptions, “ignoring those features risks forfeiting sensitivity to media evident” not only in Milton’s works but in many early modern books (127). Somewhat analogously, Emma Annette Wilson reminds us of the importance of Milton’s logical education at Cambridge—and the value of understanding its influence on the structure of angelic argument in *Paradise Lost*.

The next two essays, those by David Ainsworth and Samuel Smith, will be especially useful and accessible to students of Milton and their teachers. Both are beautifully and lucidly written; each illuminates in a careful and graceful way a major Miltonic text. In his marvelous essay on “Spiritual Reading in *Areopagitica*,” Ainsworth fills a gap left by primarily political readings of Milton’s case against licensing, by reminding us that Milton understood reading “as a strenuous and rigorous form of worship, founded upon the belief that the Spirit within reveals the truth of all texts only to a reader who reads carefully and critically” (147). From this premise, Ainsworth undertakes a brilliant and attentive reading of the text itself, demonstrating the complex relations among the treatise’s various metaphors while modeling exactly the kind of reading-into-truth that Milton hoped to promote. Likewise, in his essay on the Son’s “bounded” solitude in *Paradise Regained*, Smith carefully distinguishes the solitude of Adam—the “unbounded” solitude of loneliness before the creation of Eve—from the solitude of the Son. The Son’s solitude, Smith argues, is “bounded” by a strong network of deep human relations (especially with his mother Mary); moreover it is voluntary, temporary, and undertaken as a step toward his very public mission in the world.

After these stirring meditations in something like prophetic strain, the volume’s final essay provides a sobering if tragi-comic reminder about the dangers of prophetic immortality. In “Restoration Polemic and the Making of the Papist Milton,” Nathaniel Stogdill analyzes the

remarkable evolution of anti-papal rhetoric between the Henrian and Elizabethan eras and the Restoration, when Dissenters moved into the anti-monarchical role formerly occupied by Roman Catholics. In this new political context, the “discourses of ‘popery’ and ‘antipopery’ . . . had a variety of unpredictable valences” (178)—valences so removed from their original religious meanings as to make dissent and popery politically equivalent, and to make Cromwell’s “Goos-quill Champion” a “non-falsifiable” example of both.

Readers are bound to find favorites among these essays. I know I will turn to those by Du Rocher, Bradshaw, Ainsworth, and Smith again and again, and that the ideas they embody will become parts of the re-membling of Milton I do each year in the classroom. The book itself is beautifully edited, with a graceful introduction by Fenton and Schwartz conveying the warmth of this collaborative effort that is truly a *symposium*—one in which the living voices of some of Milton’s most astute readers can still be heard. Most poignantly, those voices include the voice of Richard DuRocher, who left this life too soon and too suddenly in 2010. The book is dedicated to his memory, and will no doubt be the first of a number of fitting memorials to his wise and generous leadership in the field. The book’s (literally) inspiring cover—featuring Mary Elizabeth Groom’s glorious 1937 wood engraving of the Descent of Milton’s Heavenly Muse—perfectly represents the inspiration readers will find when they turn to the conversation inside.

Mark Knights. *The Devil in Disguise. Deception, Delusion, and Fanaticism in the Early English Enlightenment*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. xxi + 279 pp. \$55.00. Review by KARIN SUSAN FESTER, UNIVERSITY OF WALES, TRINITY SAINT DAVID.

Mark Knights in his extraordinary work challenges the commonly held assumption that the English Enlightenment began among the intellectual elite during the seventeenth century. According to Knights, the English Enlightenment had its roots in the dynamics of local and personal struggles. The Cowper and Stout families, and the local Quaker community in Hertford, England are the focus of this historical account set against the background of the two British revolutions.