

five, on Margaret Cavendish and the Royal Society, Cavendish is confusingly said to value sense over reason in philosophy (144) despite the fact that Miller's central argument in the chapter is exactly the opposite: Cavendish values Cartesian reason over sense. Twenty-six pages into the Cavendish chapter, when Miller turns her attention to Milton, the following sentence shows up: "Even Margaret Cavendish, a strong and satirical voice against experimental philosophy and the practices it incorporates, titles her 1666 text *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy*, a clear indication, according to Judith Moore, that Cavendish perceived the growing market share of experimental philosophy when involving this specific meaning of 'experiment'" (162). After over twenty pages of learning exactly this about Cavendish, we surely do not need this introduction. One assumes the sentence is an artifact from a stand-alone essay on Milton's own sense of experiment; why it was not edited out of the book chapter is incomprehensible. Perhaps reviewers are the only ones who read a monograph cover to cover anymore, but surely for that reason alone, a press and an author should place some editorial priority on converting several discrete essays into a *book*. That there is scarcely any sign of those priorities here is much to the detriment of what might otherwise have been an unequivocally ambitious book.

Laura Lunger Knoppers, ed. *The Complete Works of John Milton: Volume II*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. civ + 170 pp. + 10 illus. \$135.00. Review by LARA M. CROWLEY, TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY.

The first volume to be published in the highly anticipated Oxford edition of Milton's works bases texts of *Paradise Regain'd* and *Samson Agonistes* upon the first printed edition of 1671, though editor Laura Lunger Knoppers asserts that the volume actually was printed in late 1670. Knoppers offers copious explanatory notes, which prove informative without imposing interpretation, and an introduction with an innovative focus on the poems' print event. Attending to recent critical interests, the editor focuses on political, religious, and bibliographic contexts for the 1671 and 1680 octavo editions, contributing much to our knowledge of publisher John Starkey and printer John

Macock while offering a glimpse into exegetical responses by early readers. While the introduction attends only briefly to Milton's literary invention, its emphasis on seventeenth-century production and reception of the poems affords fresh, timely insights alongside the beautifully formatted Oxford texts.

This meticulously prepared volume is the second of what will be eleven volumes in *The Complete Works of John Milton*, by General Editors Thomas N. Corns and Gordon Campbell, Textual Editor Archie Burnett, and a team of scholars from the United Kingdom, North America, and New Zealand. Knoppers outlines in brief her editorial procedures for this volume, which seem practical and appropriate, such as retaining original spelling and punctuation, except for occasional regularizations (like i/j and u/v) and expansions. The edition's text usually follows the 1671 copy-text, and changes indicated in the 1671 Errata are included in the text and indicated in the textual notes. Overarching editorial principles are not delineated in this volume of the series, but one might suppose that they will appear in Volume I: *Paradise Lost*.

The "General Introduction" is divided into four sections. The first section, "England in 1670-1671," builds upon recent scholarship on Milton's historical contexts, including Knoppers's own studies, such as *Historicizing Milton*. The editor attends primarily to tensions in 1670, when "opposition and discontent" lingered from Charles II's restoration a decade earlier, thanks to the court's wasteful spending, recent legislation on religion, and the English king's alliance with Louis XIV of France (xxi). Knoppers notes parliamentary bills and remarks made by Marvell and other figures "close to, or kindred spirits with, Milton" (xxi), in order to illuminate dissenting perspectives in this unsettled historical moment, looking beyond printed (and thereby public) accounts to personal responses.

The next section, "John Starkey and Radical Print in Restoration England," illustrates that, while Milton likely collaborated with the print house and booksellers, authorial intention and involvement were not the only factors to determine how these poems were presented to the public. Knoppers sheds light on the politically influenced careers of Starkey, the publisher, and of Macock, printer for the first and (according to Knoppers) the second editions. She emphasizes that

Starkey was known for his republican (and anti-Catholic) leanings by analyzing his other printed publications, such as James Harrington's incendiary 1660 tract outlining the tenets of an ideal republic, and scribal publications, including Starkey's seditious 1666-72 newsletters to Sir Willoughby Aston. As Annabel Patterson and others have shown, press censorship encouraged covert resistance in literature. Knoppers argues that Starkey and Macock offer clues to Starkey's informed clientele that oppositional opinions pervade these poems: even the act of including Starkey's seemingly radical catalogue of printed books in the 1680 edition place the poems in "a radical print context" (xlix). In addition, the fact that Starkey was an acknowledged radical "would have alerted the reader to political overtones of seemingly innocuous works, especially when combined with Milton's own notoriety" (xxxiv). According to Knoppers, Milton was likely aware of Starkey's republican reputation; she hints that Milton might have chosen Starkey as publisher of *Paradise Regain'd* and *Samson Agonistes* for this reason.

While revealing and highly suggestive, these two sections might have benefited from attention to debates regarding composition dates, an issue that the editor addresses later in the Headnote. Circumstances surrounding dissemination and reception of the poems certainly deserve the expert attention received here. But the significance of such issues for modern exegesis could be enhanced were we to ascertain that Milton was still composing, or at least revising, the poems in 1670-71. In the "Headnote," Knoppers eschews suggestions by Harris Francis Fletcher, William Riley Parker, and others that *Paradise Regain'd* was composed early, instead emphasizing contemporary remarks made by Edward Phillips, Milton's nephew who served as an amanuensis, and by Thomas Ellwood, whose role as Milton's "young protégé" she explores (xc). Knoppers concludes that *Paradise Regain'd* likely was composed "in the period after the plague and fire" (xcv) and that *Samson Agonistes* was composed after the Restoration, most likely in the period 1667-1670 (xcviii), making her focus on the socio-cultural dynamics of 1670 even more cogent.

A third introductory section, "'Verse, Epic, & Dramatic': Genre and Form in Restoration England," attends to Milton's choice of epic and tragic closet drama for his treatments of Christ's resistance

of temptation and of Samson's suffering and vengeance. Returning frequently to topical resonances, Knoppers analyzes scriptural and classical echoes while positing a rationale for literary imitation of various authors and work. She argues, for example, that, while *Paradise Regain'd* leans on epic conventions, the poem "is in many ways strikingly unlike both other biblical brief epics and classical antecedents," enabling Milton "to revise boldly the idea of the hero and the nation" (lii, liii). Thus, according to Knoppers, Milton's attention to the *Aeneid* attends to public perception that Virgil celebrated Augustus Caesar and the Roman empire: through portraying the Son as a "solitary, even solipsistic" hero whose "piety is not linked to the glory of his nation" (liii), the poem thwarts readers' generic expectations, instead subtly criticizing royal policies. One might argue instead that Milton imitates Virgil's own latent critiques of his contemporary leader's imperial project. Such added nuance would not necessarily compromise the editor's constructive claim for the epic mode of *Paradise Regain'd* as a vehicle for covert political satire.

"Early Readers and Marginalia," the final section, considers the poems' print context further by seeking explications made by readers immersed in this cultural moment, from which modern readers are distanced. Building upon scholarship by William H. Sherman, Heidi Brayman Hackel, and others, Knoppers analyzes marginalia and other early reader marks in copies of the 1671 and 1680 editions, arguing that "Like printers, publishers, and booksellers, Milton's early readers had an active role in the production of the material text and, by extension, in its meaning: both aesthetic and political" (lviii). She even identifies one probable early reader of the poems: Samuel Say (1676-1743), a dissenting minister. Although Knoppers concludes that Say's glosses prove surprisingly apolitical, she identifies in another 1671 volume bound with *Paradise Lost* (1674) what seem to be politically charged responses by an anonymous early reader. The editor argues that handwritten indexes for this volume seem to link "Restoration England with the Israel of Judges" (lxx). An image of the index is among the figures provided, which also include title pages and portraits.

The Textual Introduction and Headnote convey Knoppers's admirable labor as editor: she has collated seventeen copies of the 1671 edition and five copies of the 1680 edition, aided by a Comet

portable collator, in addition to examining numerous other copies for textual features and marginalia. The editor also attends further to printing house practices, describing the much-debated *Omissa* and Errata (missing from the 1680 printing) and suggesting how material-text elements, such as the design of the title pages, can guide the reader toward particular (and often political) interpretations. In addition, Knoppers contends that previous scholarly attention to Milton's spelling seems injudicious when one considers that spelling practices frequently reflect compositors' idiosyncrasies, a perspective that variant spelling practices in various gatherings of the 1671 edition seem to corroborate.

The elegantly formatted texts of *Paradise Regain'd* and *Samson Agonistes* are accompanied by textual variants alone, with explanatory notes relegated to the concluding "Commentary." Classical and scriptural sources provide potential contexts and allusions, particularly for frequently echoed texts, and appropriate definitions and etymologies are offered for words likely to be unfamiliar to or misunderstood by modern audiences. The learning displayed in Knoppers's commentary reflects Milton's own. These compendious notes will prove valuable to Milton scholars and to readers coming to Milton's poems for the first time.

Undoubtedly, this edition of *Paradise Regain'd* and *Samson Agonistes* will (quite rightly) become the standard edition for seventeenth-century scholars. And Knoppers's illumination of circumstances related to the production and reception of these poems within their contemporary contexts will afford valuable avenues for critical inquiry. I eagerly await the next Oxford volume.

Gary Kuchar. *The Poetry of Religious Sorrow in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. xii + 242 pp. \$99.00. Review by P. G. STANWOOD, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

The opening sentence of this book anticipates well what follows in the long introduction and the six chapters, which really are discrete essays loosely and tendentiously bound together: "Christianity is