illustrated long English narrative poem” (421, col. 1), and provide a detailed discussion of the first two illustrated editions (1688 and 1749), whose plates are reproduced in recto and verso before the text of each book of the poem. A series of “excursi” or learned digressions follow the commentary: “The Chronology of the Poem”; “To Compare Great Things [on the style and sublimity of the poem]”; “Personification, Relationship, and Allegory”; “To Venture Down and Up to Re-ascend [images of height and depth in the poem]”; “Politics in the Poem”; “When Satan First Knew Pain”; “Language and Laughter”; “Knowledge Is as Food”; “Music and the Sabbath”; “Cosmology, Astrology, and Belief”; “The Poem’s Irregular Regularities”; “So Called by Allusion”; “The First of the Visions of God”; and “Historical Measures of This Transient World.” A brief bibliography of primary and secondary sources completes the volume.

On balance, Miner’s personal touch and lively wit add a human dimension to an enterprise more often associated with drudgery and impenetrable prose. This last product from Miner’s pen is a poignant reminder of his many contributions to scholarship, and of the great loss we have endured at his passing.


Edited collections tend generally to fall into two categories: those that have a unified sense of purpose, and those that do not. *Milton and the Grounds of Contention* gathers ten original essays that contribute substantially (if unevenly) to the field, sharpening our attention to a series of perennial topics examined from fresh perspectives. As the book’s title suggests, there are multiple grounds of Renaissance and early modern contention at work here—literary reception and influence; republican, devotional, and postcolonial poetics; reformation theology; discourses of gender, subjectivity, and property law; sectarianism; textual studies and authorial intention—these among the more conspicuous interpretive perspectives devised and defended by the contributors. The volume’s ten chapters (individually and collectively) are certainly engaging and important on their own merits, but they don’t quite work together toward a common goal.
Milton and the Grounds of Contention is dedicated to "Joseph Wittreich in recognition of and in thankful appreciation for his penetrating studies of John Milton's life and works, and their afterlife" (10), and the book includes, as an appendix, a bibliography of Wittreich's selected publications. Only six of the ten chapters respond directly to Wittreich's scholarship, however, and those points of critical contact vary considerably. The bibliography is certainly useful, but would have been even more valuable if it were annotated. The collection unfortunately lacks a concluding essay that may otherwise have afforded an opportunity for the editors (or for a special guest contributor) to reflect synthetically upon the volume's engagement with Wittreich's work. True, the "Introduction" nods in that direction, but only in the most general terms, verging at times toward surprisingly vague language. For example, in one of the introduction's defining paragraphs—just before the requisite chapter summaries—a noticeable vagueness belies the collection's unified ground of contention concerning "these issues" (3-4). In all fairness, however, I should also underscore—with slight modification—the editors' most explicit statement as to the book's overall thematic organization: The first three chapters address Milton's influence upon neglected women authors of the late seventeenth century and the eighteenth century; chapters four through six investigate cultural and philosophical contexts for reading Paradise Lost, chapters seven and eight reevaluate current scholarly attitudes toward Samson Agonistes, Paradise Regained, and other minor works that inflect the full development of Milton's theology; and the final two chapters examine, within larger cultural contexts, specific aspects of Milton's theology and belief that continue to provoke divergent arguments from Milton scholars (4). This review will now accordingly follow that outline.

In "The Deleterious and the Exalted: Milton's Poetry in the Eighteenth Century," John Shawcross checks the predominant view (from Samuel Johnson to twentieth-century critics, such as F. R. Leavis) of the "line of wit" in eighteenth-century English literature, arguing that a parallel, Miltonic "line of vision" also exists in the century for "poets from the middle or even lower middle class and notably [for] poetic women" (16). Within and against such a context of neo-classical dislike for Milton's exalted (if deleterious) achievements, Shawcross rescues from the archive a generous gathering of poems by men and women who singly and collectively contribute to the legacy of Milton's literary influence: for example, John Hoadly's "To Mrs. Bowes with
y force of Truth, an Oratorio. Sonnet in imitation of Milton (1743); Charlotte McCarthy's The Fair Moralist (1745); and Mrs. Anne [MacIver] Grant's Poems on Various Subjects, by Mrs. Grant, Laggan (1803). In his final reflection upon the chapter's effort to expand the eighteenth-century literary canon, Shawcross notes that "some of the judgements about Milton's presence and influence cannot be totally sound until more attention is paid to more of the 'lesser' male poets and to all of the women poets of that era" (33). This first chapter also includes—beyond Shawcross's copious endnotes—a useful appendix of additional poems published between 1653 and 1757 that demonstrate various influences from Milton's shorter poems.

David Norbrook challenges the notion that "republicanism or Whiggery was antagonistic to the most advanced women thinkers of the [seventeenth century]" (38) in his chapter, "John Milton, Lucy Hutchinson and the Republican Biblical Epic." Through a contextualized reading of the politics and poetics of Order and Disorder, Norbrook concludes that Hutchinson's epic "closely parallels" Paradise Lost "in its literary and ideological projects" yet also strikes a more conservative stance on three significant points: orthodox Calvinist theology, the Trinity, and double predestination (50). Sharon Achinstein's "'Pleasure by Description': Elizabeth Singer Rowe's Enlightened Milton" underscores the extent to which imitations of the Miltonic style could bear "contradictory political or ideological meanings...even as his political identity remained clearly antimonarchical" into the early eighteenth century (65). Rowe's "A Description of Hell. In Imitation of Milton" provides a convincing case, following Achinstein's analysis, to "see how the Whig Milton could be, in addition to a defender of political liberty, also a religious Dissenter" (66).

As a corrective to the "Burke problem"—that is, what could explain Edmund Burke's ideological shift from a robust defense (ca. 1770) of the American Revolution to an attack (ca. 1790) against the French Revolution—Annabel Patterson invokes the pivotal influence of Milton's poetics and politics. Patterson's chapter, "Inventing Postcolonialism: Edmund Burke's Paradise Lost and Regained," considers striking allusions to Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained in Burke's "On Conciliation" and "Reflections on the Revolution in France" to assert that, in 1775, Milton's epic affirmed Burke's "fully developed philosophy of the Western empire, part tragic, part epic, part utopian foresight" (90). Peter Medine's "Gratitude and Paradise Lost: A Neglected Context" addresses the key role of dialogic discourse in the epic vis-à-vis
notions of gratitude from Philo of Alexandria to Aquinas to the Geneva Bible. The resolution to *Paradise Lost*, Medine argues, thematizes both gratitude and ingratitude by intensifying “the ambiguities of the expulsion through clashing perspectives on the prospects of achieving the Christian ideal and the paradise within the postlapsarian world” (116). According to Lynne Greenberg, Milton’s refashioning of the myths of Adam and Eve contributes progressively to “seventeenth century struggles over both property and gender” (151). In “Paradise Enclosed and the *Feme Covert*,” Greenberg studies *Paradise Lost* with regard to contemporary “debates over law, land and women” that culminated, later in the century, in substantive revisions to legal definitions and divisions of property that would establish a framework for women’s property rights (151).

In “Choice and Election in *Samson Agonistes*,” Susanne Woods evaluates Milton’s revision of the Samson legend with consideration to a current critical divide among Miltonists: whether (as Joseph Wittreich argues) *Samson Agonistes* concludes by emphasizing both ambiguity within and ambivalence toward Samson’s interior struggle to become a prophetic figure; or whether (as Barbara Lewalski holds) the poem portrays an emerging public hero who finally instructs the Chorus “who represents the Hebrew people” (174). This difference of opinion in fact turns out to be “exactly what [Milton] wanted,” according to Woods, because *Samson* “is preeminently about choice”—that is, about exhorting the reader to determine his or her own understanding of God’s word (175). As a challenge to the long-standing disesteem for the “awkwardness…in form and style” (188) of the early ode, “Upon the Circumcision,” John Rogers claims that this minor lyric actually plays a pivotal role in the arc of Milton’s theology by unwittingly exposing “the troubled origins of the liberal theologies of early modern England” (189). Rogers supports his chapter, “Milton’s Circumcision,” with a double thesis: that Milton’s wariness about the Atonement shapes his poem’s equivocal (if not contradictory) stance toward circumcision as a sign of not only repellent Calvinist passivity required in matters of personal salvation, but also of rational, virtuous, “obedient and chaste submission to the law” (212-3).

In the wake of the authorship controversy initiated by William Hunter in 1991, John Rumrich traces the reception history of *De doctrina Christiana* and critiques the historical and the stylometric methodologies employed in the more recently published committee report (1997) on the topic. Rumrich’s
chapter, “The Provenance of De doctrina Christiana: A View of the Present State of the Controversy,” advances the following determinations: that Milton may indeed “be confidently identified as the author”; that both the general, historical committee and the stylometric subcommittee failed to communicate effectively with one another and did not “take their own evidence into account”; and that we may “never receive an adequate answer concerning authorial revision of a document of such complex authorial genesis, one that is moreover so internally inconsistent as to be self-contradictory” (232-3).

And finally, in “Milton and the Socinian Heresy,” Michael Lieb investigates two major issues: the emergence of Socinianism vis-à-vis Milton’s views on Christian doctrine and discipline; and the critical reception of Milton’s works, following his death, within modern contexts of Socinian practice. Lieb concludes that Socinianism deeply influenced both radical and conservative strains in Milton’s religious thought and that—as is the case with the authorship controversy over De doctrina Christiana—’the debate over the heterodox Milton, as opposed to the orthodox Milton” (283) will persist as an open ground of contention.


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Because of our habit of conspicuous consumption, Americans have long been the envy of the world. As a result, it’s hard to reflect back to a time when “consumption” was an incurable, debilitating wasting disease. While syphilis and canker have lost their economic implications, consumption has been transformed into an economic virtue. Jonathan Gil Harris reminds us, in this deft study, that “metaphors of infectious disease…continue to organize popular understanding of the economic.” He shows how Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights eagerly seized on pathological images to flesh out narratives of mercantilism, and how by implication the birth of early modern capitalism was assisted by images of disease. The playwrights who staged the emergence of modern capitalism are a familiar lot: Shakespeare, Massinger, Heywood, Ben Jonson, Middleton and Dekker; while the early modern economic theorists are for the most part unfamiliar to literary scholars. Among these, Thomas Starkey worried that a nation’s wealth would be diminished by