

he wrote in the cause of ecclesiastical, domestic, and civil liberty,” Dorothea who “emerges as the heroine of Eliot’s ‘home epic’” (217).

The final two essays in the collection are “Saying it with flowers: Jane Giraud’s ecofeminist *Paradise Lost* (1846)” (Giraud was the first woman to illustrate Milton’s works) by Wendy Furman-Adams and Virginia James Tufte and—very appropriately—Lisa Low’s examination of “Woolf’s Allusion to *Comus* in *The Voyage Out*.”

The collection as a whole is both solid and diverse, with many essays contributing new information and insights on Milton’s works and four stand-out essays that may become classics—those by Guibbory, Grossman, Sauer, and Haskin. Gender is the touchstone here, not the organizing principle, and the collection is all the stronger for this. *Milton and Gender* is a book no library should be without.

Michael Lieb. *Theological Milton: Deity, Discourse, and Heresy in the Miltonic Canon*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2006. xi + 348 pp. \$60.00. Review by LARRY ISITT, COLLEGE OF THE OZARKS.

*Theological Milton* is an intricately argued defense against the charge of heterodoxy in John Milton’s theological treatise, *De Doctrina Christiana*, and in his poetry, especially *Paradise Lost*. Professor Lieb’s guiding thesis in this three part essay is that God is hidden (“*deus absconditus*”) and past knowing in any ultimate sense (his “ontology”). The parameters of *Theological Milton* begin and end in uncertainties about a God who “is beyond our knowing in any form, discursive or otherwise” (114). Lieb’s manner of argument is ever cautious, ever in the uncertain mode he says is Milton’s way: “This very uncertainty and contention governs my own ‘take’ on the God of Milton’s oeuvre” (16).

Part One, “The Discourse of Theology,” introduces the theme of the hiddenness of God in the *De Doctrina*. “Milton’s God is buried in the proof-texts” just as Milton himself “is buried in the text of his treatise” (69). The treatise, Lieb insists, is “*sui generis*” despite its obvious affinities with theological treatises by William Ames and John Wölleb, and with the logically rigorous methodological format of Peter Ramus. The thousands of proof texts Milton draws from Scripture are only accommodative, and insufficient to

reach God's ultimate ontology. Milton is hidden because the manuscript we possess is a "palimpsest" with "many layers of writing" (17) and the product of unreliable amanuenses. Thus we have no "ur-text," as it were, one representing Milton's actual thoughts (20). By this reading Lieb has thrown Milton's voice into doubtful shades significantly undercutting his affirmation that he is "a firm believer in Miltonic authorship" (4). And yet throughout, he always makes assertions that depend on Milton actually being the author of the treatise. Lieb would have it both ways, it seems, and one suspects that this is a deliberate tactic in defense of Milton's theology.

Part Two, "The Poetics of Deity," is a complex, brilliant survey of the possibility-impossibility debates in church history from the ancients through the Reformation which points to Milton's God as being entirely possible, a position consonant with such fathers as Tertullian and Origen. We must take God as Milton presents him in *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes* even though the at times fierce language characterizing him is troubling. The attributes of fear, terror, wrath, dread, and even hatred are really reflective of Milton's conception so far as God may be known at all and are "the means by which his presence is made known in accommodated form" (156). Lieb's appropriate label for such language is *theopatheia*, "a new form of passibility" (146). Such language, however, does not cancel the higher concept of *deus absconditus* found, for example, in Book Three of the epic where the angels sing of the Father as "Omnipotent, Immutable, Immortal, Infinite, [and] Eternal" (156). Lieb neatly solves the objection of those who may wish to equate God's hatred with hatred characteristic of Satan and his angels. Though he is a God of hate ("*odium Dei*"), he is no merciless tyrant but instead uses hatred, wrath, and punishment with the end in view of restoration. Though God is *odium Dei*, he is nevertheless also the *amor Dei*, whose love restores those he has punished. *Paradise Lost* "is an epic in which the theme of divine love must be viewed within the context of its apparent opposite divine hate" (183).

Part Three, "The Heresies of Godhead," is occupied with Socinianism, the specifically seventeenth-century heresy and with Arianism, the first great heresy of the Christian Church. Socinians believed Jesus to be merely a man, while Arians held that the Son of God was not co-equal or co-eternal with the Father in the Godhead. Milton is neither one because his critics use questionable evidence and methodologies to convict him of the charges. Though the *De Doctrina* does have some affinity with beliefs held in Socinianism, there

are “important aspects of the treatise [that] do suggest a decidedly anti-Socinian point of view” (245). Arianism is likewise an uncertain case to make against Milton because, for one thing, the terms involved, all of them—*Arius*, *Arianism*, *Arian*, *ousia*, *homoousia*, *substantia*—are inaccurate, ineffective, and continuously debated by historians. Arianism is but a “construction,” a “fantasy” devised by “polemicists to counter the threat of heterodoxies that were notoriously on the rise in the early church” (265). For another, we cannot be sure of what Arius actually thought since most of what we know of him comes from his enemies, especially Athanasius, the champion of the Nicene Creed. Lieb chooses not to convict or to dismiss the charges of either heresy but leaves the poet in a valley between the certainties of critics. “[O]ne must resist the temptation simply to label Milton as this kind of heretic or that kind of heretic” because “labels of any sort are dangerous” (214). Though there is a practical level of truth in such a maxim, Lieb seems to be making more of a modern point than one characteristic of Milton’s England. Theological labels were certainly the procedure and psychology of seventeenth-century England as is evidenced in anti-heretical royal injunctions and laws and by the explicit language of confessions such as the *Thirty-Nine Articles* and the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, which in their pro-Nicene articles concerning the person of Jesus and the Son in the Trinity were *ipso facto* contra-Socinian and contra-Arian and meant to be so in order to distinguish truth from error.

If there is an overall weakness in *Theological Milton*, it lies in Lieb’s chosen method of defending the premise of the *deus absconditus* past a level recognizable to seventeenth-century defenders of orthodoxy. He has made the hiddenness of God so hidden and Miltonic authorship so uncertain in the treatise that forensic examination becomes untenable concerning the nature of Milton’s God, and of Milton himself (who in effect becomes *Miltonius absconditus*)—and that seems to be his point. “Nothing can be taken for granted [and] we would do well to err on the side of caution rather than to venture conclusions that may come back to haunt us” (278). The three parts of *Theological Milton* overlap and slide upon each other like tectonic plates in such a way that if one accepts Lieb’s premises of the hidden God and the untrustworthiness of Miltonic authorship (as well as the questionable authorship of Arius), one feels the tremors that move one to then doubt the Miltonic sponsorship of the supposed Arian or Socinian qualities of the treatise (if they are truly present at all). And if the treatise is not Milton’s then it is certain that

it cannot safely be used to draw conclusions about the heretical qualities supposedly in *Paradise Lost*. Besides, this method of glossing the epic by the treatise is one that “has been weighed in the balance and found wanting” (15). Lieb does not defend or develop this assertion; he assumes its truth and moves on. I wish he would explicitly have taken on Maurice Kelley’s famous dictum that *Paradise Lost* is “an Arian document” (*This Great Argument*, 1941), but he only does so implicitly by dismissing glossing. And I wish he would have chosen to deal with Michael Bauman who following Kelley’s lead and emphasizing the anathemas appended to the Nicene Creed, concluded: “If what was condemned at Nicea was Arianism, then John Milton was an Arian” (*Milton’s Arianism*, 1987). But Bauman is not mentioned, nor are the anathemas as legitimate determinants of Arianism. Such critics Lieb implicitly dismisses as “Miltonists of the heretical bent” (215) and “the heresy police [who are] ever attentive to the possibility of heterodoxy” (227). His manner of arguing, irenic though it is throughout, bases itself on the comforts of uncertainties, as he has declared. The reader who is ready to label, instead of avoiding labels, is ever aware that Lieb’s cautious phrasing is moving him into the hushed corners of the library, to the quiet shadows where abrupt outbursts regarding knowledge of God are forbidden.

Ernan McMullin, ed. *The Church and Galileo*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005. xii + 391 pp. \$60.00 cloth / \$30.00 paper.  
Review by LUCIANO BOSCHIERO.

Galileo’s confrontation with the Catholic Church at the beginning of the seventeenth century regarding his open support for a heliocentric cosmos has long been a source of fascination for historians of science and the subject of countless publications. So why another book on this topic? Between 1981 and 1992, a commission established by Pope John Paul II investigated the theological, scientific, legal and cultural issues related to the so-called “Galileo affair.” While the commission’s report acknowledged the Church’s failure to deal effectively with Copernicanism and Galileo’s work, McMullin argues that the historical accuracy of the report fell short of what most scholars would expect. To address the report’s shortcomings, and in light of new documents found in recently opened archives of the Holy Office, a confer-