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Albert C. Labriola, ed. *Milton Studies XLI*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002. 230p.

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This 41<sup>st</sup> volume of *Milton Studies* is equally divided between essays on *Paradise Lost* and others on *Samson Agonistes*, *Tetrachordon*, *Colasterion*, *Eikonoklastes*, and the question of authorship in *De Doctrina Christiana*. Even though there is no stated rationale for including the eight essays, some linkages may be discerned among the first four and the last four, taken as separate groups, that may glean an insight into the choices. The editor's omission of an introduction is problematical, however.

First is Anthony Welch's "Reconsidering Chronology in *Paradise Lost*," which argues for seeing the timelines of *PL* in terms of the various settings in the poem—heaven, hell, chaos, and Paradise before and after the Fall—rather than as a single unbroken and continuous movement in time from Book One to Book Twelve. Milton "is deliberately exploiting the imaginative power of experiential over chronometric time" (13). Next, Stella P. Revard's "Milton, Homer, and the Anger of Adam," compares *PL* and *Iliad*, analyzes the effects of wrath and love in both, and draws correspondences between Achilles and (not Satan as we might anticipate, who is simply a parody of Achilles, but) Adam, with the caveat that we recognize Adam's wrath (Book Nine) as contained within his sense of mingled sorrow and love at his own and Eve's disobedience. Revard acknowledges that Adam's mingled wrath and love for Eve are far less fundamental to Milton as a whole than Achilles' wrath at Agamemnon and love for Patroclus are for Homer.

Welch and Revard make valid points about the poem—but make them over and over. Welch grabs a chronological detail and exegetes all over it, and then moves on to the next and the next; Revard methodically lines up the parallels and disjunctions between Milton and Homer and plods book after book to the end. This sort of analysis can help introductory level students find patterns in the works, but the technique borders the tedious in the reading.

Kent R. Lenhof's "'Impreg'n'd with Reason': Eve's Aural Conception in *Paradise Lost*" describes Milton's "erotic interpretation of Genesis" and "humanity's first sin" as sexual and physical, with the physical "displacing the verbal" (38), and Eve's first partner as Satan, not Adam. Satan impregnates her with his tongue, and the offspring are sin and death. The Temptation thus "parodically prefigures the Annunciation" (70), in that a parallel is drawn between Satan and the Father, who impregnates Mary also through her ear, but brings forth Christ instead of destruction: "God does indeed triumph 'through the aire/ear'" (70). And Raymond B.

Waddington's "Murder One: The Death of Abel. Blood, Soul, and Mortalism in *Paradise Lost*" wraps the first group of the volume by discussing the unconventional aspects of Milton's depiction of Abel's death by Cain—the blow by a stone to his midriff (*PL* 11:444-47), not the head blow usually associated with the use of a hand weapon, popularly the jawbone of an ass or a club or tool—linking Milton's choice to various Renaissance and 17<sup>th</sup>-century philosophical/theological and medical theories and practices. The "massive hemorrhage" caused by the blow releases the soul in the shed blood: "Groan[ing] out his soul with gushing blood effused" (*PL* 11:447), confirming Milton's mortalism.

Both Lenhof and Waddington draw together biblical and secular tradition in refreshing ways. Especially interesting are Lenhof's connections between pictorial representations of the Fall and the Annunciation and their hermeneutic written equivalents, and Waddington's descriptions of death by crushing the midriff, an unusual but effective manner of killing.

Lauren Shohet's "Reading History with *Samson Agonistes*" initiates the second group of essays. She argues that the drama uses synecdoche to illustrate problems facing 17<sup>th</sup>-century readers in interpreting scripture. The part figures the whole and constitutes Milton's "central strategy for *Samson's* representation of how . . . people make meaning out of fragments, how they relate personal experience to larger narratives, how they understand human history in a divine cosmos" (97). Events in the drama signify fragments of the "'whole' of God's plan" (99), and Samson himself personifies synecdoche as he becomes representative of his people. The drama should not be separated from *Paradise Regain'd. A Poem In IV Books. To which is added Samson Agonistes* (1671 title page), if as this title suggests Milton intended placing the two together (with *Samson* last); Samson's "hermeneutic crisis has the last word, because we all live—and read—in history" (109). Shohet offers here an entire exegesis based on a single trope—risky, but it works.

James Egan's "Rhetoric, Polemic, Mimetic: The Dialectic of Genres in *Tetrachordon* and *Colasterion*" also interprets Milton's language and genres, and notes that his arguments for divorce (first and second editions of *Doctrine and Discipline*) generated an unexpectedly undignified oratory and diatribe of a personal nature from his respondents. In his polemic, Milton mimics and confutes his detractors with various 17<sup>th</sup>-century rhetorical genres and prose forms, including "the sermon, the jeremiad, the animadversion, the exegesis, and the Marprelate satire" (133). Egan sustains and supports his point that the controversy "proves to be as much a contest of genres and styles as it is a contest of hermeneutics over the scriptural meaning of divorce" (133). Ultimately, it is an evolution of Milton's

“literary self-presentation” from “literal exegesis in *Tetrachordon*, through protodrama in *Colasterion*, and then into poetry” (133).

Like Shohet and Egan, John D. Staines’ “Charles’s Grandmother, Milton’s Spenser, and the Rhetoric of Revolution” illustrates rhetorical devices in Milton, particularly in *Eikonoklastes*, where he turns Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots and Charles I’s grandmother, into a figure of “rhetorical and emotional manipulation” and Edmund Spenser into a figure of “absolute truth” for “local, historical ends” (141). Staines examines the political rhetoric, including emblems and paintings—beloved of the “Image-doting rabble” (*Eikonoklastes*, 3.601) and illustrated with plates throughout the article—both Mary and Charles used that contain numerous parallels. Both are presented, by themselves and their apologists (as in *Eikon Basilike*) as martyrs, using appeals to the emotions of the populace to generate a rhetoric of revolution from the sympathy executing a king or queen inspires. In *Eikonoklastes*, Milton argues that *Eikon Basilike* is not a sincere profession of belief but an exercise in “rhetorical, iconic power” (Staines 158), and he offers the “iron flail of righteousness” (Staines 160) from Book Five of the *Faerie Queene* as an “unlikely” (according to Staines 159) solution to the conflict between an ideal justice and the exigencies of politics.

Finally, like Staines, Michael Lieb’s “*De Doctrina Christiana* and the Question of Authorship” provides historical context, positing that Hunter’s questioning of Milton’s role in the authorship of the work (discovered in 1823 and published in 1825) and the responses of his detractors are largely misguided, since the issue of authorship will not be resolved conclusively with the evidence and information currently available. Arguing the issue with uncertainty “suits [Lieb] just fine,” for it allows us to engage the “question of what it means to have ‘authored’ a work” (172). Lieb considers authorship in light of a work’s “genesis, recovery, and publication” (172), not whether the ideas it contains square up or disagree with those discernible in other works by Milton. Lieb considers the publisher, the press marks of the manuscript, its transcriber Daniel Skinner, the “romance” of the manuscript’s unearthing, the multitude of texts, even the name “Ioannis Miltoni Angli” and “Posthumi” in the title as relevant for “author-creation” supposition and evaluation (174).

The heart of the volume lies in Staines, Egan, and Shohet; Waddington’s is for the lay reader and student the most generally interesting, Lehnhof’s the most visual, and Lieb’s the most scholarly. On the downside, the volume does not include the brief contributors’ bios describing their credentials in Milton we have come to expect in journals and essay collections, and the volume could use an index. More tellingly, the volume launches the essays without explaining the reasoning

governing the inclusion of *these* articles or at least a *raison d'être* for their inclusion and possible interrelatedness. Without it, the volume is merely a hodge-podge of articles, arbitrarily offering four on *PL* and four on other works assigned to Milton's canon. The series' editorial board consists of 12 members, all well known in Milton studies, two of whom are represented with essays in the volume. On its copyright page, the volume states its focus for the forum it provides: the Board accepts articles that are biographical, interpretive, or contextual (literary, intellectual, or historical), and allows for studies of Milton's contemporaries, the traditions of his milieu, contemporary philosophical and religious thinking, influences of and on him, and histories of critical responses to his works. It would be useful to approach the essays with a deeper and more detailed understanding of where the volume is going and why the destination is worth the journey.

Otherwise, all the essays address reasonably interesting and some address fairly seminal concepts related to Milton's works and times. Since none of these writers appears to be in love with technical bafflegab, all eight essays are readable, which is nice. The volume would work well to supplement Shawcross, Flanagan, or Hughes in an upper-division or graduate course. ❀