

Yuko Kanakubo Noro, "A Review of Gordon Campbell and Thomas N. Corns, *John Milton: Life, Work and Thought*," *Studies in English Literature* 52(2011) 日本英文学会発行。

Gordon Campbell and Thomas N. Corns
John Milton: Life, Work and Thought

Oxford / New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. xiii+488pp.

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In 2008, to commemorate the quartercentenary of John Milton's birth (December 9, 1608), several influential books of Milton studies were published: *Is Milton Better than Shakespeare?*, by Nigel Smith; *John Milton: Paradise Lost* edited by Philip Pullman¹ and *A Concise Companion to Milton* edited by Angelica Duran. There are three biographies as well: *Milton: Poet, Pamphleteer and Patriot* by Anna Beer; *John Milton: A Biography* by Neil Forsyth; and *John Milton: Life, Work and Thought* by Gordon Campbell and Thomas N. Corns. The three biographies differ from each other in the following ways: Beer's attitude towards Milton's life reminds the reader of Wordsworth's invocation to Milton in his sonnet, which begins with "Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour: / England hath need of thee:". In short, by appreciating the great poet's life and works, the reader is to share Milton's thought, energy and posture towards the world's difficulties and problems, and live positively, imitating Milton as an exemplum. The base of Beer's approach is sympathy. Neil Forsyth's approach is to some extent similar to Beer's, but he seems to grasp the figure of Milton more objectively than she does, and he seems to entertain his readers by solving the problem as to, "[W]hy Milton is so loved and admired, and even, sometimes, detested"(p. 7).

On the other hand, Campbell and Corns are firmly determined not to sympathise with Milton at any rate. They are strictly cautious in their treatment of Milton's autobiographical writings because those parts are written for his polemical purposes, which should be regarded as the way of his self-fashioning strategy. While almost all the biographers make use of Milton's own words, usually verbatim, Campbell and Corns's method makes their idiosyncratic feature of their biography into a clear relief. In the second place, as they elucidate on in their introduction to this biography, one of the distinguishing features of *John Milton: Life, Work and Thought* is, viz. "the historiography that underlies our understanding of the early and mid-seventeenth century....Stuart historiography has developed in the last thirty years with a vigor and subtlety in comparison with which even historically informed literary criticism sometimes seems jejune" (p.2). And Edward Jones, the chief editor of *Milton Quarterly*, declares in *The Review of English Studies* (hereinafter *RES*) that it will prove "the book of choice for scholar-teachers", showing "a narrative informed by and grounded upon documentary evidence and Stuart historiography." Thirdly, Campbell and Corns insist that their biography depicts Milton as "flawed, self-contradictory, self-serving, arrogant, passionate, ruthless,

¹ Pullman is also the author of the very popular trilogy for young adults, *His Dark Materials*, and the most distinguished contributor of the reintroduction of Milton into the secular world.

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ambitious, and cunning" (p.3). However, their sometimes perfunctory treatment of Milton's works – both poetical and prosaic—and their lack of normal, scholastic respect towards the object prevent their biography from establishing the figure of Milton as they claim to do. And the reason is that the two biographers are overtly cautious in treating Milton's words, including his autobiographical writings. Their method excludes a large amount of sympathy. But is it possible for a human being to be totally detached from the object he is involved in writing about? The answer is, "No, it is not."

Before starting my discussion in opposition to the third claim of this biography, I will comment on the three major indispensable Milton biographical studies. Every Miltonist will nominate David Masson's *The Life of John Milton: Narrated in Connexion with the Political, Ecclesiastical and Literary History of His Time* (London, 1859-80, 7 Vols.) as the most massive, exhaustive and erudite biography. Although written in the 19th century, it is renowned throughout the field of Milton studies, and does not lose its value in the present days. Masson marvelously engraves the figure of Milton as a well balanced, noble and highly cultivated puritan. It is an astoundingly elaborate seven-volume work, useful in learning Milton's historical background.² Jonathan Bates, the standard-bearer for "Romantic Ecology", describes the reaction of contemporary readership towards the publication of Masson's first volume as "getting far more attention than *The Origin of Species*...and Masson regarded Milton as a 'representative man', the embodiment of his age."

Another comprehensive biography in the line of Masson is *The Life Record of John Milton* (1949 - 58) by J. M. French. This biography chronicles the things and events related with Milton and his family, sometimes from day to day, and accumulate them in five volumes. Its collection of materials is surprisingly abundant and indispensable for scholastic researches. The third work one is William Riley Parker's 1968 *Milton: A Biography* (2nd ed., 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), which Gordon Campbell re-edited. It is the largest and most scholarly biography after Masson's. Compared to Masson's, the descriptions of the historical background of Milton's age are short, but Parker's biography has a perfect command of the materials extant in those days and utilises them with the author's highly sophisticated literary discernment. It is said that to find a biography surpassing Parker's, will take one hundred years. And Campbell and Corns's *John Milton: Life, Work and Thought* consciously seeks to be placed in this line, or even beyond the three biographies just mentioned: see their claim in paragraph two above.

However, as Jonathan Bates points out, "When it comes to the vast edifice of *Paradise Lost*, Campbell and Corns mostly confine themselves to those parts of the building that have been inhabited by historically minded critics in the past couple of decades", and they do not give much attention and minute consideration and analysis even on Milton's poetical inheritance, for example,

² As for the description of Milton's biographies, I owe much to Akira Arai's explanatory list at the end of *Milton Studies* (Kinseido Publishing Company, 1974), pp.6-7.

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from Hebrew, Greek and Roman cultures. Then Bates concludes that "What is strikingly absent is the third leg of Masson's tripod: the literary context."

Incidentally, my own discussion of the flaws of this biography is largely based on literary grounds. I will posit three points and assert that *Life, Work and Thought* categorically fails in accomplishing a new revelation of Milton.

In the first place, this volume rarely seeks inquiry into the substantial content of *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio* (1651; hereinafter *Defensio Prima*), though it mentions the title and seeming outline of *Defensio Prima* on several occasions. This point should be carefully inspected, as to how Milton's concept and his way of using the phraseology of liberty is taken into consideration. In referring to the sonnet entitled by Milton's nephew, Edward Phillips, "To Mr Cyriac Skinner upon his[Milton's] blindness," Campbell and Corns cite Milton's words, that "In liberty's defence, my noble task, / Of which all Europe talks from side to side", assuming this is Milton's fiction, and bluntly concluding that "His Latin defences had little to say about liberty." (p. 267) If their comment on *Defensio Prima* and *Defensio Secunda*(1654) hit the mark, Milton, "our hero",³ would have been certainly "flawed, self-contradictory, self-serving, arrogant, passionate, ruthless, ambitious, and cunning." Strictly speaking, Campbell and Corns's statement as for Milton's mentioning of "liberty" in *Defensio Prima* and *Defensio Secunda* is half-right, but half-wrong.

At first glance, it is true that Laurence Stern's bulky and exhaustive concordance to Milton's prose works shows no quotations from either of the defenses, while it cites 28 quotations from *Tetrachordon* (1645) (all of "liberty", "liberties" and "libertie" included), 55 quotations from *Eikonoclastes* (1649), and 51 quotations from *The Readie and Easie Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* (1660; second edition); the top three containing the variables of the word "liberty" in their contents.⁴ Reasonably, because all of them are written in English, and the formal title of Stern's concordance is *A Concordance to the English Prose of John Milton* (emphasis mine). It goes without saying that Stern includes all of Milton's English prose works, and excludes his Latin prose works. Therefore, in Stern's "guide to the Identifications", neither of the two Defenses nor *De Doctrina Christiana* appear. On the other hand, according to Volumes Seven and Eight of *The Works of John Milton* by Columbia University Press, (1932, 1933) in *Defensio Prima*, the Latin word, "libertas", in its declined forms, appears more than sixty times. And in *Defensio Secunda*, it appears 30 times: no small numbers in comparison with total 28 in *Tetrachordon*, 55 in *Eikonoclastes*, and 51 in *The Readie and Easie Way*. And Samuel Lee Wolff, the translator of *Defensio Prima* and George Burnett of *Defensio Secunda* in the Columbia Milton (above), translated

³ I borrow the phrase "our hero" from Neil Forsyth's biography, published in 2008, as mentioned above).

⁴ Laurence, Sterne. *A Concordance to the English Prose of John Milton* (University Center of Binghamton, 1985)

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the Latin "libertas" into English "liberty". It may be safe to infer that Milton's Latin defenses *do* have as much to say about liberty, at least, as *Tetrachordon*, *Eikonoclastes*, and *The Readie and Easie Way*.

Secondly, the main theme of *Defensio Prima* is to "justify the ways of" the English people by proving that the people, not the king, have the right and liberty to select the form of their government, and it is given by God as their birth right. Here some of Milton's words may be cited from *Defensio Prima* and be investigated in their context. (All the English translations are cited from in the Columbia Milton.)

He [Christ] himself, by being born, and serving, and dying, under tyrants, has purchased all rightful *liberty* for us....so he has not forbidden us to strive nobly for our *liberty*—nay, has granted this in full measure. (p.145; italics mine)

...by that right whereby, before kings were instituted, men first united their strength and counsels for their mutual defence, by that right whereby, for the preservation of all men's *liberty*...(p.273; italics mine)

Milton's opponent, Claudius Salmasius, in his *Defensio Regia* (1649) denounces the English government as dregs, cruel murderers and gangs who are devastating the laws of God, defending Charles I on the ground of patriarchy and developing the theory of the divine rights of kings. Conversely, in *Defensio Prima*, Milton asserts that men must conquer tyranny and superstition in order to gain true liberty. He inveighs against Salmasius as the slave of tyranny and the blind follower of superstition; the concept of "the divine rights of kings" is a mere product of tyranny and superstition. What Milton demonstrated in *Defensio Prima* has developed into common sense nowadays, but it was an abnormal notion in Milton's time. The present-day superstition that kings are derived of God, and given sovereign power by Him was common sense in those days. Milton even in his age realises the common sense in the present world, and blames Salmasius for not utilizing his abounding talent for the people though having plenty of knowledge. In Milton's viewpoint, Salmasius cloisters his talent in superstition, becomes the advocator, and tries to make the people slaves of kings and superstition. Therefore, Milton vituperates Salmasius as the slave of slaves, or a fool with much knowledge, but without wisdom, and so on.

As for Milton's vituperation heaped upon Salmasius, Campbell and Corns argue, relying on John Hale's claim, that such a style of oratorical argument was widely current in Milton's days (p.233). However, they should have mentioned more about the oratorical style of Milton's days as both panegyric and diatribe. As Donald A. Roberts briefs in his introduction to *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, Volume Four edited by Don M. Wolfe (New Haven: Yale UP, 1966), in

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panegyric, the nobility or greatness of each aspect of the life of the subject [the English People in this case] is presented, while "in diatribe, the opposite process is followed" (p.540). Therefore, Milton highly praises "the English People" as the great liberators of their mother country, while he severely and relentlessly reviles his adversary as the crudest slave of tyranny. By this measure, Campbell and Corns's discussion seems beside the point, representing Milton as only a shrewd and cunning advocate, only good at slandering, who fancies offense is the best defense.

Another unsatisfactory point of this biography is its [mis-]understanding of Milton's interests in the visual arts. No Milton scholar would interpose an objection to the academic values of *Milton's Imagery and the Visual Arts: Iconographic Tradition in the Epic Poems* by Roland M. Frye, 1978. In this book, the author focuses on the words, "viewing" and "seeing the sights" in Milton's writings, and asserts that in Milton's time, these expressions "usually referred to the observation of antiquities, great architecture, and other works of art"(p.24). Thus, the author shows how the visual arts and their imagery prevail in Milton's poems. For example, his frequent references to "mosaic work and other forms of inlaid stone, which appear to have been favorites with Milton" in *Paradise Lost* (1667), convince the reader that Milton and his imagery in *Paradise Lost* owe much to his journey to Italy as far as visual arts are concerned (pp.23-37). Conversely, *John Milton: Life, Work, and Thought* omits any reference to this point except for the blunt expression, "it was relatively unusual for a Protestant of Milton's class to undertake such a journey [to Italy]...he [Milton] had no particular interest in the visual arts." (p.103; Frye's book is not on the list of their extensive bibliography.) It is certain that Milton hardly mentions Italian visual arts in the retrospective account of his journey to Italy in *Defensio Secunda*, but this is because of "his polemical purpose in 1654 rather than recalled from his time" in Italy, just as Campbell and Corns themselves explain Milton's way of describing his trip to Italy.

Secondly, the reader of *Epitaphium Damonis* (1639) encounters the lines which clearly show Milton's deep interest in visual arts closely related with Italy. *Epitaphium Damonis* takes the form of a Latin pastoral elegy devoted to his close friend, Charles Diodati, who died during Milton's stay in Italy; and it was written a few years after he returned from Italy. In lines 198-219 of the last stanza, the poet-hero mentions the pair of cups Manso has given Milton (Giovanni Battista Manso, the marquis of Villa, is a famous patron of the Italian epic poet, Torquato Tasso, and the lyric poet, Giambattista Marino, and kindly entertains Milton in Naples). The English translation is by David L. Blanken.⁵

Manso, who is not the least glory of the Chalcidian shore. A marvelous work of art they

⁵ Yuko Kanakubo Noro and David L. Blanken, "'Milton's *Epitaphium Damonis*: Two Views of its Principles of De-Pastoralization". *The Bulletin of Tokyo Seitoku College* (1995), pp.123-4.

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[the cups] are, and a marvelous man is he. An engraving with a double motif goes all around them: in the center are the waves of the Red Sea, and the perfumed springtime, and the extended shores of Arabia, and groves redolent of balsam. Among these the Phoenix, that divine bird unique on earth, glitters cerulean with parti-coloured wings, and watches Aurora ascending from the glassy seas. Another part shows the limitless sky and mighty Olympus, while here too (and who would have supposed?) Is Cupid with his quiver ringed in clouds, his coruscating arms, His torches and his bronze-tinted darts....(ll.181-192)

These cups bear the double motif of the Arabian phoenix and of Cupid. As for the function of the cups, both John Milton French (vol. 1, p.398) and W. R. Parker (p.827) note that it means an actual pair of cups or books. If they are real cups, the lines demonstrate Milton admires the engraving and delineate the marvelous, picturesque designs, and if they are books expressed metaphorically, Milton depicts the contents, borrowing the image of marvelous engraving, one form of the visual arts. *Life, Works and Thought* mentions this pastoral elegy three times only perfunctorily—Campbell and Corns do not seem to have savored it.

In the third place, I pose the following question, "Is Milton really and ultimately self-contradictory?"

I straightforwardly admit the fact that Milton sometimes behaves in a self-contradictory manner, or self-servingly as Campbell and Corns assert. For example, the image of Milton as self-serving, ruthless and cunning is thrown into relief when Campbell and Corns place their focus on *Lycidas* (1637), the *chef-d'oeuvre* of Milton's early poetry. This *memorial* poem was originally written in 1637, to mourn the death of Edward King, one of Milton's acquaintances at Cambridge University. Reprinting the pastoral elegy in his 1645 edition, Milton appended the words, "And by occasion foretells the ruin of our corrupted clergy then in their height." In the same year, William Laud, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was executed: he had held the top position of the prelacy, and had opposed the parliamentarian faction including Milton. Milton fictionalizes his elegy as divinely prophetic, Campbell and Corns assert, because "in 1637 the issues would not have seemed so clear" (p.99). Campbell and Corns here demonstrate "Milton's habit of shaping his life and his personas to suit the exigencies of particular pieces of writing," (p.2) as a kind of hindsight.

Campbell and Corns lead the reader to Milton as self-fashioning when they refer to Milton's retrospective account in *Defensio Secunda*, where he gave up traveling in Sicily and Greece because of "the melancholy tidings from England of the civil war" (*the Columbia Milton*, p.125). Their retort to Milton's claim is to show that there was no civil war in England at that time, that Milton took six months to reach home, and that Greece was not a suitable place for cultured travelers like

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Milton in those days. Then Campbell and Corns conclude that Milton had no intention of going to Greece, and the reason he gave for coming back to England was produced as hindsight for polemical purposes (pp.121-122). Their way of argumentation is persuasive, and the reader is convinced of the necessity of careful interpretation and a great measure of detachment while reading Milton's autobiographical passages.

However, the experience of reading *John Milton: Life, Work and Thought* critically shows aspects of Milton different from the two biographers' apparent intention. Milton is depicted as a thoughtful and natural teacher of his pupils, both Phillips brothers (Milton's nephews) and Thomas Ellwood (a Quaker friend and student of Milton). Consistently from his younger days to retirement, Milton supervised their studies while giving enjoyment and creating ingenious methods for teaching Latin, rules of inflection first, then the grammar (p.322).

Thus we confront Milton as unyielding and inflexible—not "self-contradictory" nor "self-serving", when he refuses to work as a spokesman for the Royalist cause during the Restoration. According to Cyriack Skinner, Campbell and Corns state, just after the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion (29 August 1660), Milton was visited by a chief officer of the state, and required to advocate for the royal government. Many who had previously advocated for the republican government changed sides: John Canne, a theologian who had worked with Milton in the republican government, and Marchamont Needham, a journalist and friend of Milton, were among them. Campbell and Corns continue to argue that the royalists thought his apostasy would enhance the significance of the restored monarchy because Milton had acquired an extensive international reputation through his *Defensio Prima*. (p.309) But Milton did not accept this proposal.

The most fascinating and suspenseful chapter is subtitled "Surviving the Restoration." While the reader is well aware that Milton was finally pardoned and subsequently was able to complete his major works, *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained* (1671), and *Samson Agonistes*, the reader's eyes are riveted on the pages and he/she will want to read this chapter through at a single sitting. Campbell and Corns scrupulously accumulate the documented facts, never inserting interpretations or fictionalizations about Milton's probable emotional state.

Campbell and Corns succeed in recreating Milton's milieu and its ever-changing atmosphere and circumstances. The biographers themselves all but experience the succeeding events throughout in spite of themselves, merely from love of Milton, while they continue to state the facts as they are in a detached way. In comparison, even Barbara Lewalski's brief comment on the same sequence of events in *The Life of John Milton* (2000), "Throughout the summer his[Milton's] emotions were surely on a roller-coaster as every few days friends brought news of debates and decisions about particular person's to be punished" (p.399), seems to dissolve the reader's mental tension and to divert his/her sympathy from Milton. However furiously roller-coasters bring you to seemingly dangerous situations, situations finally turn out to be benign while the horror of death Milton feels at

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this period is real. On the other hand, Parker's way of writing this scene presupposes Milton's survival from the outset, so that his readers are not left in suspense. Campbell and Corns analyze the reasons and circumstances as to how and why Milton had a narrow escape:

Four variables characterized the thirty three people finally excepted from the Bill of Indemnity and Oblivion signed by the king on 29 August 1660 and thus exposed to the possibility of capital punishment; they were directly involved in the trial and execution of Charles I; they were perceived to be still dangerous; they were of no potential utility to the new regime; they had too few powerful friends and too many powerful enemies among the new establishment. On all four counts, Milton's profile was promising (p.308).

After much meandering, Milton was released from the Tower of London, paying fees of £ 150. But Sir Henry Vane, Milton's close acquaintance and a member of the Council of State, and Major-General John Lambert, though non-regicides, were condemned to death, supposedly as an exemplary punishment, while some regicides were pardoned; here is a real specimen of the complex disposition of political power. In the sonnet to Vane, Milton praises his idea on the separation of religion and politics, and highly extols Lambert as a liberator of England in *Defensio Secunda*. Death had been close behind Milton, but abruptly left him. He might have regarded this result as the work of divine providence. Being imprisoned and "eyeless" in the Tower of London for some two weeks, "surprised by" some fear of death, and released from prison, he had good reason to continue asking himself about the meaning of his narrow escape like the hero in his tragedy, *Samson Agonistes*.

As for *Samson Agonistes*, Jonathan Bates reviews *Life, Work, and Thought* in the *Times Literary Supplement*, March 6, 2009, pointing out that "their biography fails to solve that other great mystery of Miltonic scholarship, viz. the date of *Samson Agonistes*." However, Campbell and Corns let the mystery remain an open question on the side of readership, after exhaustively accumulating documented information and showing certain contradictions and blind spots. Parker once conjectured the period of Milton's composition of the dramatic poetry to be between 1647 and 1653, while Lewalski convincingly and powerfully persuades the reader that it was composed after *Paradise Lost* and around the time of his composing of *Paradise Regained* (1671).

Both Bates and Edward Jones point out Campbell and Corns' very minute and scrupulous methodology, referring to the untitled poem (*incipit*: Ignavus satrapam; "kings should not oversleep") written in "asclepiads" by the schoolboy Milton, and wondering about the academic level demanded of the readership. However, if the reader sets the explanation against the whole context where Milton the schoolboy already had distinguished himself in Latin and Greek, and composed verse in response to the various requirements of his teachers, and experimented with

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metrical effects, he/she would recognize the gravity of the situation easily even without any distinctive knowledge of the verse form. Moreover, Campbell and Corns, presenting the earliest poem by Milton with its interpretation, make the implied reader realize the fact that Milton had interests in the matter of kingship very early in his life. At this juncture, Milton is demonstrated, in spite of the two biographers' apparent intention, as consistent and unshaken from early childhood to his later days.

However, it is true that *John Milton: Life, Work and Thought* is the fruit of many years' meticulous and painstaking research. Its bibliography is divided into two parts; 1, manuscripts and 2, printed books and articles. In the first part, there are some eighty names of archives and libraries (from Universiteits-Bibliotheek, Amsterdam, to Staatsarchiv, Zürich), and approximately three hundred original manuscripts and books with manuscript annotations are listed. Based on these data, Campbell and Corns affirm that John Milton senior, as a scrivener, lent £ 300 as a loan, at 8 percent per annum, to Richard Powell, father to Mary, Milton's first wife (p.150), and affirm that a Dutch periodical noted that Milton "was freed through good promises" (p.317).

John Milton: Life, Work, and Thought is exceedingly resourceful and informative, and sometimes amusing. When the reader happens to find, in the reprint of the title page of *Defensio Prima*, the inscription in Latin by the second earl of Bridgewater (p.230), "Liber igne, author furca dignissimi ("this book is most deserving of burning, its author of the gallows"), he/she unexpectedly encounters the biographers as humorous entertainers and tricksters; the second earl of Bridgewater is the very same 11-year-old John Egerton, who played the elder brother in *A Masque presented at Ludlow Castle* (1634) with his sister, Lady Alice, and his younger brother, Thomas.(The copy of Milton's *DefensioPrima* is now in the Huntington Library.) These kinds of surprises are abundantly hidden in this biography, and they bide their time until the reader uncovers them, and if the reader is careless, or not cultivated to the level the authors require, many precious "treasures" will not be recognized and remain as if they are dust-covered potatoes or gravel.

Lastly, we must take into consideration that some Internet reviewers complain they feel "as if the authors [of *John Milton: Life, Work, and Thought*] continually get bogged down in senseless details that have little to do with the narrative of Milton's life. While the research is impressive, the work requires a lot more pruning of minutiae to be a truly enjoyable read." To their complaint, I answer, "That is the very aim of Campbell and Corns." However exhaustive, they do not think their biography is self-sufficient, because, according to Campbell and Corns, "the instability and undecidability of both text and history" is axiomatic: Milton's own description of himself is carefully crafted and politically manipulated by Milton himself, and Skinner and Phillips' records are dubious, being "partisan apologias in defence of a good friend and nurturing uncle", so these documentations themselves are to some extent arbitrary, because they are made by human beings with inevitable

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inclinations or agendas. As the writer on the cover page of *John Milton: Life, Work, and Thought* announces their approach is to "interrogate skeptically" notions encircling Milton, so the biographers are pleased to be interrogated skeptically about their way of selecting and un-selecting material on which they build their image of Milton.

Recent literary theory is pervasive and labyrinthlike. A deluge of information confronts readers, and many critical modes argue for "the instability and undecidability of both text and history." No wonder that the reader, confronted by Post-modern theory and the New Criticism, may feel like the Lady who lost her way in Comus's wood.

However, reading a solid biography of John Milton serves to deconstruct the image we have subconsciously formed of him. With the biographer's help we then set Milton in "fresh Woods, and Pastures new" —a painstakingly delightful task. The process resembles gestation: it takes a considerable time to (re)conceive one's own image of Milton as a totally organic, living person, and the joy is beyond words.

As Barbara K. Lewalski affirms in her *The Life of John Milton*, "There will be and should be as many versions of Milton as there are Milton biographers, and readers will have to judge this one by its plausibility and its insight." Lewalski's words challenge biography readers to make the most of their own discernment and integrity— if we use Milton's words, "right reason".

Students of Milton should not be satisfied with making his figure with the help of only one biography. While they read Milton's own description of himself in his writings, as creative readers, they are advised to read as many biographies of Milton as possible, ⁶and nurture their own image of Milton, always trying to review, polish and reform it to a better and more lively work of art like Milton himself did towards his works.

⁶ I recommend for the beginners of reading Milton's biographies the following three: *A Preface to Milton* by Lois Potter (Longman, 1971, revised edition 1986), *John Milton* by Rex Warner (Max Parrish, 1949), and *Milton* by Akira Arai (Shimizu Shoin, 1997). All of them are handy, easily read, and succeed in depicting Milton as coherent and sincere, and a genius "standing still" on the liberal arts, and seeking for his *raison d'être* in the age of *Sturm und Drang*, although regretfully the last one is written in Japanese language, so not available for non Japanese speaking reader.

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