

lypse. Then comes his reading of the Son's rejection of the extended temptation of kingdoms for an inner one. Similarly Simpson tracks Milton's receding horizon of expectations for the apocalypse amidst the many polemics and astrological prognostications of his time in order to display *Paradise Regained's* imagistic projections of Christ's ultimate kingdom only at the end of time. Meanwhile *Paradise Regained* presents the literary edification of the invisible church in the testament of the biblical word interpreted by the words written on the hearts of the faithful.

Granting, as I do, the premises that *De Doctrina Christiana* is Milton's, that his prose and poetry form a coherent pattern of evolution as he examined traditional and current theological controversies and that he extended them to radical ends, Ken Simpson's *Spiritual Architecture and Paradise Regained: Milton's Literary Ecclesiology* provides a comprehensive and persuasive complement to the thematic reading of the progressive identification and proclamation of the mystery of the Son of God in that of an ongoing revelatory definition and declaration of the invisible church of believers. The next task for this alignment of readings would be to expand and systematize beyond our current intermittent and allusive political interpretations a comprehensive political definition that evolves through *Paradise Regained*.

Brooks, Douglas A., ed. *Milton and the Jews*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. xii + 226 pp. \$95.00. Review by JOHN MULRYAN, ST. BONAVENTURE UNIVERSITY.

This collection of eight essays explores, in both Milton's poetry and prose, his attitude toward the Jews. I find this approach problematic, because it confounds Milton's approach to Jews and Judaism in his controversial works with his aesthetic deployment of Jewish traditions in his poetry. In many instances, Milton cited the Hebrew Bible in order to promote his anti-monarchical position, even to justify the killing of a king. In contrast, his treatment of the Book of Genesis in *Paradise Lost* and the Book of Judges in *Samson Agonistes* demonstrates a distinctly more creative and respectful elucidation of Jewish traditions (save for the Pauline transfer of the "elect" designation from Jews to

Christians). That being said, each of these learned essays contributes to our knowledge of Milton and the Jews, and builds on earlier, definitive scholarship on the subject, particularly Jason P. Rosenblatt's *Torah and Law in Paradise Lost* (1994) and Jeffrey S. Shoulson's *Milton and the Rabbis: Hebraism, Hellenism, & Christianity* (2001).

In "England, Israel, and the Jews in Milton's Prose, 1649-1660," Achsah Guibbory examines why Milton was "curiously silent on the issue of readmission" of the Jews (13) and concludes that "it was unlikely that he would have welcomed the Jews or expected their conversion any time soon" (34). I find this "argument from silence" unconvincing. By 1652 Milton was totally blind. Shortly thereafter his wife Mary died after giving birth to their daughter Deborah. Widowed, blind, and the father of three daughters, perhaps Milton was not disposed to consider the "Jewish question" in any detail in 1655, when the Whitehall Conference on the readmission of the Jews convened. Moreover, since one of the assumptions (later dropped) was that the readmitted Jews would convert to Christianity, and Milton was rightly skeptical of that occurrence, he could not in conscience support the motion for readmission. Hence, in my view, his silence was not "curious" or strange. I therefore object to using Milton's "failure" to speak out on the Jewish question in 1655 as a litmus test of his commitment to the Jews.

In "Milton's Peculiar Nation," Elizabeth M. Sauer explores England's and Milton's appropriation of Jewish history as a tool to justify English imperialistic self-definition: "In England, Protestantism and biblical nationalism underwrote history and sanctioned the nation's expansionary and exclusionary policies, including the historical and rhetorical treatment of the Jews" (56). In "Making Use of the Jews: Milton and Philo-Semitism," Nicholas von Maltzahn examines the ambivalence of Milton's words and acts, some of which are distinctly philo-Semitic, while others might be construed as anti-Semitic or at best indifferent. On the oft-debated subject of the conversion of the Jews at the end of the millennium, "Milton in *Paradise Regain'd* describes the calling of Jews at the end of time in terms that nowhere propose conversion" (70).

In "Milton and Solomonic Education," Douglas Trevor chronicles Milton's fascination with Solomon as a model of wisdom and learn-

ing, who nevertheless sunk to idolatry and woman worship : “That a teacher as wise as Solomon failed so profoundly in spiritual terms further convinced Milton of how complicated—and precarious—it could be to lead a learned, devout life” (104). In “T. S. Eliot, Anti-Semitism, and the Milton Controversy,” Matthew Biberman claims that “past Milton scholarship has spilled little ink over the Son’s claim that classical knowledge is an inferior derivation of Hebrew knowledge” (106). This is manifestly untrue. Indeed, past Milton scholarship on *Paradise Regain’d* (E. M. W. Tillyard, John Shawcross, George Sensabaugh, Michael Lieb, Douglas Bush, myself, etc.) spoke of little else. Biberman says as much himself when he questions “Why have *so many* [emphasis mine] critics of Milton seen the temptation to Athens scene as an either/or scenario?” (110). Biberman then traces what he sees as a shift from an understanding of Milton as philo-Semitic and radically modern (Denis Saurat) to one in which critics (T. S. Eliot) view the poet through their own anti-Semitic lenses in order to dismiss or denigrate his work: “These two critical debates capture quite starkly how a certain kind of high modern cultural poetics uses racial anti-Semitic elements as a central medium through which to articulate a forceful and quite visible conflation of aesthetics and politics” (116). “Through the workings of this critical discourse, the perceived Jewish element in Milton is first contained and then largely erased” (119). Biberman’s real target is T. S. Eliot, claiming that his Milton essays are “clear examples of genteel anti-Semitism within the Anglo-American elite” (123).

In “A Metaphorical Jew: The Carnal, the Literal, and the Mil-tonic,” Linda Tredennick defends Milton’s allegory of Sin and Death by claiming that the defining characteristic of Protestantism is an overwhelming sense of sin that can only be alleviated by excising the Jewish traits of “legality, literalness, carnality” (132). “‘The Jew within’ is a metaphor for human sinfulness” (133). Her argument then shifts to a discussion of Miltonic allegory in terms of Jacques Derrida and Paul de Man. In my view the essay is structurally incoherent; I can only agree that “it may seem odd that an argument that began with reformation identity politics concludes with a discussion of the origins of post-structuralist theory” (149). In “The people of Asia and with them the Jews: Israel, Asia, and England in Milton’s Writings,” Rachel

Trubowitz traces Milton's view of a rich Asian (particularly Chinese) culture as "a serious threat to the moral and narrative coherence of the Mosaic account of the Fall and the privileged status of Hebrew scriptural history" (154), especially since it was associated with the Stuarts whose renewed ascendancy sealed the doom of Milton's republican ideals. Milton also associates the Jews with "the Oriental threat of bondage and degeneration," revealing "the Jew's native inclination toward slavery" (157). Access to the New World, which has also been corrupted by the slavish east, can only be gained by "a conscious, self-willed act of individual resistance to Oriental degeneracy" (168). The essay traces not only Milton's ambivalent attitude toward the orientalized Jews, but also reveals an unpleasant strain of global bigotry in Milton's approach to both the Old and the New World.

In "Returning to Egypt: 'The Jew,' 'the Turk,' and the English Republic," Benedict S. Robinson explores "the figure of the Jew and the figure of the Turk in Milton's thought" (181). Both are guilty of tyranny and idolatry and associated with the hated Stuart royalists. Both have in fact chosen slavery over true freedom: "What blocks our capacity to pursue political freedom, it seems, is an aversion to freedom inherited in our bodies and our world, and associated especially with the Turks and the modern Jews, as the putative examples of those whose own desires have supposedly left them unfit for freedom" (198). The book concludes with an extensive bibliography on Milton and the Jews.

The Milton that emerges from these pages is not a uniformly attractive figure, eager to master the intricacies of the Hebrew Bible but profoundly ambivalent about the Jews themselves. The subject is hardly exhausted by these eight essays, but they offer an excellent introduction to the place of Jews and Jewish culture in Milton's thought.