

them" (325). Yet, in Milton's vituperative exchanges with Alexander More, who he insisted erroneously was the author of *Regia Sanguinis Clamor ad Coelum Adversus Parricidas Anglicanos*, Milton seems to credit "an older mode of collaborative authorship, allowing that More, Vlacq, Crantz, Salmasius, and various other unknowns may be involved with it and thereby responsible for it" (325). Lewalski acknowledges that, in the heat of self-defense, Milton's tortured logic leads him to "define authorial responsibility very broadly indeed" (326). This special pleading also leads him into a contradiction that denies the significance of his own career in "the emergence of the modern idea of authorship" (x).

Identifying such unifying themes, Lewalski never glosses over the discontinuities in Milton's life and thought. Rather, by isolating these patterns she can more clearly expose the points of rupture and contradiction in Milton's lived experience.

Lewalski ends her story of a poet's life with proof that, as Milton believed, a good book possesses "a life beyond life" (*Areopagitica*). Her epilogue takes the reader on a whirlwind tour through centuries of Milton's influence on Anglophone literature and thought. After finishing the final page of this comprehensive, but terse epilogue, I remembered Dr. Johnson's dictum on *Paradise Lost*—only in reverse. I wished both epilogue and book had been longer.

Jeffrey S. Shoulson. *Milton and the Rabbis: Hebraism, Hellenism, & Christianity*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001. xiii + 340 pp. \$52.50 cloth; \$19.50 paper. Review by ELIZABETH SAUER, BROCK UNIVERSITY.

Milton studies is marked by what John Rumrich described in *Milton Unbound* as a "neo-Christian" bias, a phrase he borrows from William Empson. Despite Empson's criticism some 30 years ago, the Miltonic *oeuvre*, as Rumrich observes, has with few exceptions remained firmly entrenched in traditional Christian thinking, while also being characterized until recently by an insistence on Milton's

methodological prudence and orthodoxy. In *Milton and the Rabbis*, Jeffrey Shoulson successfully challenges both of these trends in Milton scholarship by reinterpreting *Paradise Lost*—a poem marked by textual indeterminacy and internal contestation—in relation to several traditions that shape the poem: Hebraism, Hellenism, and Christianity. All three traditions are likewise “fraught with tensions” (5) while being interconnected, despite the cultural forces that insist on their distinctiveness.

The exchanges Shoulson establishes between the Miltonic and midrashic texts—the Jewish writings of the first five centuries of the Common Era—are represented not only in the subject matter but also the structure of his study, which is interspersed with accounts from the Hebrew texts. *Milton and the Rabbis* is invaluable not only for the new insights it offers into Milton’s epic and the critical tradition thereof, but also for its revelations about the lessons that Hebraism provides and the *light* it can shed on Christianity and Hellenism—the latter receiving less attention in the book overall. A number of the best Miltonists, including Jason Rosenblatt, Michael Lieb, and Regina Schwartz have led the way in exploring Milton’s indebtedness to the Hebraism; but Shoulson’s inclusion of an extensive amount of material from Hebrew texts, his construction of a dynamic conversation among the Hebrew, classical, and Christian traditions is a very welcome and important contribution to Milton studies.

The first chapter of *Milton and the Rabbis* develops illuminating parallels between rabbinic post-Temple Judaism and Milton’s experience of political disillusion and his “innovative refashioning” of Christianity in the post-Reformation and also the post-Restoration period. In his multi-sectioned second chapter, Shoulson moves freely among a variety of concerns relating to the status of Israel’s nationhood, the Hebraic tradition (ancient and contemporary), the response of early modern England to these issues (including the proposed Readmission of the Jews), and Milton’s engagement in his antiprelatical tracts with Jewish precedent and the “cultural hybridities” of Hebraic literature. The remaining chapters, which make equally great demands on the reader, con-

centrate on various philosophical aspects of *Paradise Lost* as a midrashic poem. Chapter 3 complicates the commonly invoked distinction between the Hebraic and Pauline features of *Paradise Lost* in an analysis of the accommodated representation of God and the Son in Book 3, and in terms of rabbinical biblical hermeneutics and anthropomorphic depictions of God. In the rabbinical tradition, divine creativity is intertwined with the human imagination, creation, and desire; and thus the fourth chapter treats the multiple competing narratives of creation, and examines them in relation to the equally fraught midrashic commentaries on the first three chapters of Genesis. Chapter 5 compares the vexed constructions and phenomenologies of history, the experience of suffering, and the possibility for renewed political agency in the rabbinic literature and the final books of *Paradise Lost*. Samson is featured in the Epilogue as a product of “contradictory impulses,” which exhibit a synthesis and interaction of Hebraic, Hellenistic, and Christian influences.

Contemporary seventeenth-century debates are skillfully woven into the complex fabric of *Milton and the Rabbis*, and range from the political disputes about the Civil War and Restoration, to the controversy over episcopacy, to the cultural constructions of female sexuality. The Introduction also promises an engagement with millenarianism and radical Protestantism, as well as seventeenth-century debates about the Jewish readmission. While the latter issue is discussed throughout, references to the former are sparse. As Nigel Smith, Bonnelyn Young Kunze, and Hugh Barbour have observed, dissenters familiarized and identified themselves with the ancient and contemporary Jewish culture: Quaker leaders learned some Hebrew, made contact with Menasseh Ben Israel, and experienced a shared millennial interest and sense of persecution. Since radicals initially welcomed the prospect of a Jewish readmission, their culture might have served as another medium through which to view Milton’s response to the intertwined Hebraic-Christian tradition of his time.

Among the most compelling features of *Milton and the Rabbis* is the discussion of the Christian hermeneutics of typology, which

underwrites the narrative of Milton's epic. As in the New Testament, the pressure to read the history of Israel in *Paradise Lost* typologically is tremendous. Through Adam's exchange with Michael, we are instructed to regard the Old Testament laws as the forms of a nation and providential history in the making. Yet rather than being perfectly linear, typology involves an on-going encounter with what it has fulfilled and left behind. The result, as Shoulson has effectively identified it, is "an inassimilable historical residuum, one that is inextricably bound up with the figure (and the body) of the Jew" (201).

The conclusion of *Paradise Lost* strongly resists a rigidly typological reading. The transition from prophecy to narration in book 12 is comparable to the "rabbinic replacement of the visionary mode of prophecy with the hermeneutic mode of midrash," as Adam becomes an active reader and historical actor, while Milton underscores the political and literary importance of writing, Shoulson observes (231). And yet one must note that Michael's move into narrative mode in Book 12 is occasioned by Michael's efforts at compensating for Adam's impaired vision (*PL* 12.8-11), which accounts for his misinterpretations of human history. At the end of the poem, consolation and insight are derived from Michael's Pauline prescriptions that offer a corrective lens. Moreover, the heavy reliance in Book 12 on New Testament passages, including descriptions of the persecution of early Christians, serves as a reminder of Milton's identification not only with the diaspora Jewish tradition (noted by Shoulson on pp. 37-38, 55, 80, 190, for example), but also with that of the "strangers and pilgrims" (1 Peter 2:11) who comprise the primitive Christian communities.

These observations are merely intended to suggest some ways in which the richly suggestive readings of *Milton and the Rabbis* open new avenues for exploration. Challenging the reluctance to examine the textual indeterminacies of Milton's works, Professor Shoulson has exposed the sites of contestation that lie within *Paradise Lost*, as well as within Hebraic and "traditional Christian" thinking to the epic responds. In doing so, he also demonstrates that he is as sophisticated a reader of Milton's works as he is of the rab-

binical writings that shaped the milieu in which Milton and his contemporaries worked out their relationship to Christianity and to the ancient and contemporary Hebraic traditions. The results are enlightening and truly rewarding.

Larry Isitt. *All the Names in Heaven: A Reference Guide to Milton's Supernatural Names and Epic Similes*. Lenham, MD, and London: The Scarecrow Press, 2002. xxii + 457 pp. \$75.00. Review by DAVID V. URBAN, OKLAHOMA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY.

This helpful resource offers a compilation of (by Isitt's count) the 2425 names and 237 similes found in *Paradise Lost*. Although the book is primarily a reference guide, it does have a clearly stated polemical goal: to use the compiled names to demonstrate that Milton's epic is, to quote Maurice Kelley in *This Great Argument*, "an Arian document" (xv). Isitt's book contains 32 chapters divided into three major parts, whose titles I quote: Part I) a "Complete Catalogue of Names in Book Order," giving one chapter for each book of the epic; Part II) a list of "Names by Character with Added Names from Other Works by Milton"—this section includes chapters listing names of the Father; the Son, Satan, Rebel Angels, Good Angels, and Adam and Eve; Part III) a list of "Epic and Simple Similes in Book Order." Names are listed in order of their appearance, including listings for the name itself, the subject named, the speaker of the name, and the one to whom the name is spoken. Below is a sample entry:

PL 3.139-40
 in him all his Father shon
 Substantially express'd
Named: Son
Speaker: *Milton's Epic Voice*
Spoken to: Reader (51)

Many of the individual chapters are prefaced with concise but valuable general commentary on the nature of the names discussed in that chapter, and much of this commentary highlights