

## REVIEW ARTICLE

### Jews and *Goyim*, Greeks and Barbarians

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Adi Ophir and Ishay Rosen-Zvi, *Goy: Israel's Multiple Others and the Birth of the Gentile*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. ISBN 978-0-19-874490-0.

This is a fascinating book on an important topic, very learned and full of sharp insights and observations. It deals with a specific period in the history of the concept of *goy*, from the Biblical period until that of the Mishnah (the Roman age) and persuasively traces essential shifts in the meaning and use of the term. It is undoubtedly essential reading for those interested in the history of Jewish attitudes to non-Jews through the ages. As the authors note themselves, the history of the concept '*goy*' has never been studied systematically. The topic of the book is the transformation of 'gentile', as '*goy*' is translated, from 'people' to 'non-Jew'; more specifically: from the designation of collectives to that of non-Jews as individuals. They do not study the history of the relationship between Jews and *goyim* in actual fact, as events; the work belongs entirely to the category of the history of ideas.

It is therefore highly regrettable that the style is unappealing: turgid and full of jargon. A professional ancient historian should not be forced to read many or most of the sentences twice (at least) to gain an understanding of what is said. That is all the more annoying since much of it is repetitive. To make things worse, the index is unsatisfactory. The general index is quite complete in its listing of modern authors, but highly selective in the ancient personal names it contains. To mention just a few absurd instances: Montaigne and Justin Martyr are included, but not R. Yehuda ha-Nasi and Aristotle, who are mentioned in the book (and, the latter, in the index of authors cited).

The Introduction, pp. 2-6 has an interesting analysis of a fresco depicting scenes from the Book of Esther in the synagogue of Dura Europos (AD 254-6). My first criticism here is aimed at the publisher rather than the authors. On the dust jacket of the book only part of the fresco is reproduced, while all of it is discussed in the book. Missing is Haman in servants' dress with Mordechai in Persian dress on a horse, an essential part of the fresco. If the dust jacket is lost, as happens all the time in libraries, there is no image to be found at all in the book. One expects better of the Oxford University Press for a book that costs £75 (\$94). The point of the argument concerning this image is the difference between men in standard Greek attire (chiton and himation) and a man (the king Ahasverus) on a dais or a platform and others, including Esther, all dressed in Persian-style clothing. The men in Greek dress are clearly Jews, the others Persian or dressed as Persians. Ophir and Rosen-Zvi (henceforth: O&R-Z) argue that there is an ethnic difference here, but not necessarily one that views the non-Jews as

representatives of a collective of *goyim* / gentiles. I cannot see the validity of this interpretation: since Mordechai and Esther are dressed as Persian aristocrats and the Jews as Greeks this cannot be construed as a rendering of Jew versus *Goy*.

The aims and methods applied in the book are described on pp. 9-14. They are sound and persuasive — for those who are prepared to read twice or three times sentences like:

...the division of humanity into Jews and gentiles functions as part of a larger conceptual grid and is a relatively stable configuration, situated in a network of relations and oppositions. This formation includes a field of subject positions, axes of problematization, and a series of theological and political implications.

And so on.

At this point I should state unequivocally that I am competent to review only some aspects of the book. I am not a professional student of the Hebrew Bible or of Talmudic literature. My qualifications extend to two aspects: 1) the study of ethnic prejudice and attitudes towards foreigners in Graeco-Roman antiquity and 2) Greek, Hellenistic and Roman history in general. I shall therefore not attempt to review the treatment of many important topics in which I have no academic expertise.

Chapter 1 discusses the terms for ‘others’ and strangers in the Pentateuch and later books of the Hebrew Bible. *Goyim* is the neutral, generic term for ‘peoples’, *nokhrim* for ‘strangers’, or ‘foreigners’. In the late second Temple period *goyim* become virtually synonymous with *nokhrim*. A *ger* is someone not of Israelite descent residing within the domain of the Israelites; the opposite is *ezrah*. They are to some extent part of the community. They may bring sacrifices in the temple, but cannot share in the paschal sacrifice.

As summarized on p. 57 — I quote:

1: in all layers of the Pentateuch, Israel is not opposed to a distinct, abstract, or encompassing Other that stands for the many different nations with which it interacts and from which it is separated. 2: the plurality of types of non-Israelite does not allow for a binary relationship between an individual Israelite and his or her other. 3: Full binary relations existed only between God and his others. 4: human alterity in its various forms was never an element in a simple binary relationship but rather a pole in a triangular structure, in which the opposition depends on a mediating third element, God.

Chapter 2 discusses Ezra and Nehemiah which, as the authors note, is ‘probably the most xenophobic text in the Hebrew Bible’. Throughout these two books there is a marked hostility toward aliens. This is expressed particularly in fierce disapproval of exogamy:

The people of Israel, the priests, and the Levites have not separated (*nivdelu*) themselves from the peoples of the lands with their abominations ... For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons. Thus the holy seed has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands, and in this faithlessness the officials and leaders have led the way.

(Ezra 9:1-2)

It is noted that this is the first text which demands strict separation and prohibits mixed marriage. The essence of such ideas is related to the concept of pure lineage, as propagated in Greece, and known from Roman authors. The Athenians, famously,

claimed it for themselves, stating that they were ‘the most ancient people in Greece, the only Greeks who have never migrated’ (Herodotus 7.161). They regarded themselves as ‘autochthonous’. As I have noted elsewhere, this idea is closely connected with claims of special ties with the land, found in the work of Thucydides (1.2.6), clearly resembling Israel’s assumed ties with the land. However, the background is different. The Biblical argument is not that endogamy results in a better quality of people, as both Greeks and Romans asserted, but that religious purity and holiness must be maintained. I would argue that the Greek and Roman ideas come close to an early form of racism,<sup>1</sup> unlike the Biblical phenomenon, which is not racism, but far-going xenophobia, based on religion and cult.

Exogamy defiles and generates desecration. There is one element, however, that brings Ezra and Nehemia close to genuine racism, namely the assertion that the corruption, caused by exogamy, is transmitted by birth from parents to their offspring and is irremovable. As O&R-Z phrase it: ‘The expulsion ... of foreign wives and their children ... implies that aliens cannot be purified enough to become part of the separate community...’. As they point out, foreigners are not banned because of their actions and behaviour; rather their defiling element is somehow embedded in their very existence and transmitted from mothers to offspring. The issue thus seems bio-political in a strict sense (pp. 61-3). Impurity has become a permanent, irremovable quality, passed on from generation to generation. Consequently the foreign women and their offspring must be removed. However, the authors then conclude, surprisingly, that ‘it would be wrong to ascribe to Ezra ... a new “ideology” or doctrine of purity, a prototype of a bio-political regime or a proto-racist interpretation of people-hood which applies to one nation only’ (pp. 71-4).<sup>2</sup>

This is an essential matter and I disagree. It may be true, as they argue, that ‘The text gives precedence for the performance of separation over the logic and principle of its justification’. I hope I will be excused when repeating my published, wordy, definition of racism:

an attitude towards individuals and groups of peoples which posits a direct and linear connection between physical and mental qualities. It therefore attributes to those individuals and groups of peoples collective traits, physical, mental and moral, which are constant and unalterable by human will, because they are caused by hereditary factors or external influences, such as climate or geography.<sup>3</sup>

The essence of racism as defined here is that it regards individuals as superior or inferior because they are believed to share imagined physical, mental and moral attributes with the group to which they are deemed to belong, and it is assumed that they cannot change these traits individually. This is held to be impossible because these traits are determined by their physical make-up. It is true that these qualities are not rationalized, defined or reasoned in Ezra and Nehemia, but there are important elements of racism present: the

<sup>1</sup> B. Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (2004), 109-148.

<sup>2</sup> For the impurity of non-Jews in Talmudic literature, see the studies by Vered Noam, cited in the bibliography of the work under review, notably ‘Another Look at the Rabbinic Conception of Gentiles from the Perspective of Impurity Laws’ in *Judaea-Palaestina, Babylon and Rome: Jews in Antiquity*, eds. B. Isaac and Y. Shahar (2012), 89-110.

<sup>3</sup> Op.cit., p. 23.

factor of heredity, and the connection between spiritual and physical features which demands an absolute social separation in practice, even though it is not verbally fully defined. These points, in my view, justify speaking of a form of proto-racism.

The book next discusses quite a different group of texts, namely the roughly contemporary eschatological prophecies of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries (pp. 74-83). Here the very separation between Israel and other nations is questioned. Instead a triangular relationship between Israel, God, and other nations is posited which relates to 'all the nations' *kol ha-goyim* usually (but not always) in opposition to Israel. The focus is on the military might and political aims of the other nations. The authors conclude that the structure of relations, while flexible, never negates the difference between Israel and the nations, which is present throughout the books of prophets. It is therefore true that Ezra and Nehemia as well as the books of the prophets have this feature in common. However, Ezra and Nehemia are a reflection of the reality established at the time, while the books of the prophets represent eschatology, an entirely different matter, involving ideas and imagination rather than reality and actual practice, which is to be kept in mind when considering the question whether we are faced with proto-racist ideas. Ezra and Nehemia prohibit exogamy, while the prophets deal with subjects such as divine war and divine peace. Isaiah 56-66 (Third Isaiah), a contemporary of Ezra, gives a utopic view of the 'new heavens' on the 'new earth' promised to Israel (Isa. 65:17, 66:22). When all is said and done, however, in all three sources Israel is pictured remaining separate.

Chapter 3, pp. 86-113, considers Second-Temple literature, a far more heterogeneous group of literary works: Jubilees, Joseph and Aseneth, Enoch, Wisdom of Solomon, Tobit, the Letter of Aristeas, Judith, the Books of the Maccabees, Baruch, Philo, and Josephus.

Jubilees (2<sup>nd</sup> century BC?) 'advocates for a sharp distinction between Israel and all others, expressing radically separatist, even xenophobic, sentiments. This distinction, moreover, is based on a metaphysical conception of Israel's uniqueness originating in creation itself, from which Jubilees traces the imperative to keep the nation pure and separated' (pp. 86-90). The book supports total separation of Israel from 'the nations', apparently resisting conversion as well. For the theme of the present book it is relevant that Jubilees does not yet have an expression that groups all the nations together. There is no abstract concept of a *goy* as developed afterward. The essence of not-belonging lies in forms of behaviour, purity of lineage, threat of defilement, and idolatry.

Pp. 94-6 discuss 1 Enoch 85-90, dated sometime between the third century BC and the first century AD: 'The nations' are predators and unclean beasts of various kinds. Abraham, a white bull, is an exception. The nations are still not a collective. They are different from each another, each with its own distinct symbolism.

The Wisdom of Solomon (Egyptian, c1 BC – c1 AD) is discussed on pp. 96-100. It is fully possible to accept Joseph Reider's judgment of the text's 'arrogant and undisguised particularism' which 'sometimes borders on fanaticism'. The term '*goy*' still has not acquired its generalized and collective sense of non-Jew. Tobit (diaspora, 3 or 2 BC), discussed pp. 100-3, preaches strict endogamy, not only within the tribe but also within the clan. Similarly the Letter of Aristeas, second digression (Alexandria, 2nd century BC), demands complete separation because the others defile themselves in their sex.

The texts here discussed have in common a clear form of xenophobia, advocating separation of Israel from the hereditarily impure, while the concept of the *Goy* does not yet have its later generalized and collective sense.

Chapter 4 on 'Nations and *Goyim*, *Hellēnes* and Others', pp. 114-139, begins with the significant observation that in the Hebrew Bible Israel is also a *goy*, this being a term for any nation. In the Septuagint, however, there is a distinction between Israel and (other) *ethnē* (p. 114). In this period the authors locate the development which resulted in the application of the term *goy* to any non-Jewish group or individual, their non-Jewishness being the only relevant feature. The authors suspect that this individuation of *goyim* is a second- and first-century BC development in Hebrew speech, taken over in the Greek language.

There is an extensive section on Philo and Flavius Josephus (pp. 120-136). To begin with let me note that I disagree with their appellation of Jews in this period as 'Judaean', although it is currently popular. This follows the suggestion launched by Shaye Cohen and Steve Mason.<sup>4</sup> O&R-Z follow them, but I reject this practice because several authors, such as Strabo and Plutarch, refer to Judaea as the country of the *Ioudaioi* (Judaean) where these clearly are not meant to be 'Jews' or 'Israel', but 'the people of Judaea', all of them, Jews and others.<sup>5</sup>

As O&R-Z explain, Philo followed the Septuagint in using *ethnē* only in its collective sense, applied to all non-Jews, but even so he uses it rarely to refer to the nations in opposition to Israel. He gives descent a significant place in his designation of being *Ioudaios*. For Philo too intermarriage is forbidden. Conversion is understood foremost in a theological sense as abandoning idol worship.

Next are discussed the terms *ethnē*, *hellēnes* and *allophyloi* in the work of Josephus (pp. 127-133). *Ethnē* is a collective marker, as in the Septuagint. About *Hellēnes* there is disagreement between Tessa Rajak, Daniel Schwartz and Judith Lieu. O&R-Z plausibly conclude that the vast majority of the usages of the term are political, e.g. strife between Jews and Hellenic inhabitants of Caesarea and Alexandria (*War* 2). Concerning *allophyloi* in Josephus' work there are also differences of opinion. It seems that it connotes any kind of foreignness: geographic, religious, political, and ethnic, while often it equals enemies.

In his later works several authors see Josephus as close to Philo representing a Diaspora outlook. Both regard intermarriage as a political problem: being attracted to a foreign law and forgetting God's *nomos*. Torah is a source of pride for Jews, a constitution. There is, understandably, no emphasis anymore on the biblical land, but separatism is encouraged as well as a difference in approach to biblical Israel and contemporary Jews.

The conclusion here is that separatism is key in the literature of this period even if it is not always expressed in terms that would approach an early form of racism.

<sup>4</sup> S.J.D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness* (1999), chapter 3; Steve Mason, 'Jews, Judaean, Judaizing, Judaism: Problems of Categorization in Ancient History', *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 38 (2007) 457-512; D.R. Schwartz, "'Judaean" or "Jew"? How should we translate *ioudaios* in Josephus?' in J. Frey et al. (eds.), *Jewish Identity in the Graeco-Roman World* (2007), 3-28.

<sup>5</sup> Strabo 16.4.2 (767); Plutarch, *Pomp* 45.4.5; Ant. 36.3.

Chapter 5, pp. 140-178: Paul and the Non-Ethnic Ethnē. This is one of two central chapters in the book. As argued by the authors, Paul uses the term *ethnē* frequently for individuals and groups. He is the first to do so consistently in a general way, ignoring distinctions between the different (sub)-groups. The term gentiles denotes all non-Jews in a generic manner, applying it to groups and individuals. The model seems to have been the distinction between Greeks and barbarians (e.g. Romans 1:14-6). They assert that this is inspired by the novel project of creating a new and universal *ekklesia tou theou* of gentiles. Paul clearly has a totally different approach from Philo and Josephus in thinking about non-Jews. Paradoxically, as argued by O&R-Z, Paul was the first to employ the term in the manner that conceptually comes close to its later common meaning in Jewish texts. They assert (pp. 150-7) that Paul's God is still an ethnic god. Israel is still the chosen people. However, on ethnic grounds Paul is against circumcision as a condition for joining the new community. This, they say, is an internal contradiction. God is ethnic, but the community is not. Paul finds that non-Jews who want to join the new community abandon their own ethnic divinities. The result, as Paula Fredriksen is said to note in a forthcoming study, is that the converts enter a no-man's land, socially and religiously. O&R-Z claim that this is 'the birth of the *goy*' (1 Corinthians 7: 17-31). The 'Greek' who cannot join the new community as an Israelite, is thus marked as 'non-Israel' and carries this mark with him at his individual entry into the new community. They are not joining as members of the chosen people nor as members of any other nation, but merely as individuals, as *goyim*. They remain gentiles (non-Jews).

Subsequently, however, the significance of the difference between non-Jew and Jew in the Christian community disappears.

Ch. 6 (pp. 178-214) discusses Early Rabbinic Literature and is the second decisive chapter, following the discussion of Paul.

The *goy* first appears consistently as an established category, that of the non-Jew, in early rabbinic literature. Intermediate categories are no longer recognized. The biblical *ger* becomes 'one who converted' (*ger shemitgayer*), while the resident *ger (toshav)*, who is not converted is gradually dismissed as a secondary group until the completion of this process according to the Talmuds which actually compare him to a *goy* 'in every respect'. Either a person converts and becomes a Jew, or he remains 'a gentile in all respects'. The demarcation of the boundary between Jew and gentile becomes sharp and absolute.

Then follows discussion of specific groups such as the Samaritans. The authors agree with Yuval Shahar who concludes: 'Up to the beginning of the third century, the Jews of Palestine tended to relate to their Samaritan neighbours as to distant relatives. In most areas of life, the Samaritan was seen as a kind of inferior Jew of unclear origins who did not take proper care to observe a number of religious laws.' (Reference in n. 36 on p. 188). The rabbinic literature no longer maintained this intermediate position. The Samaritans became a halakhic issue: each case was decided on the basis of their specific practices. They were marked as defected Jews, but Jews all the same. Apostates (*meshumadim*) and sectarians are regarded in earlier literature as those who left the Jewish people: 1 Macc., Philo and Josephus. In the Tosefta and Tannaitic *midrashim*, however, they remain Jews, although bad, deviant Jews. This is all part of the development by which the boundary becomes an absolute one. All gentiles become one

and therefore ethnic distinctions are erased. This principle, however, does not mean there are no ethnic stereotypes. They are found indeed in Talmudic literature.

One of the means whereby the separation was made more clearly defined was the process of conversion. A non-Jew can become a Jew, but through a specific formal procedure. Furthermore, Talmudic literature discusses rules regarding contact between Jews and gentiles (m. Av.Zar. 2:1). Jewish women may not midwife gentile women, but a gentile woman may nurse the son of an Israelite woman. It is prohibited to eat cheese of gentiles. Separation and division are the aim. O&R-Z concluded that the attitude towards the *goy* remains constant in the sources, once the concept was created.

Chapter 7, *One Goy, Multiple Language Games* (pp. 214-246). The subject is interesting but the present reviewer is not competent to discuss it. We move on to Chapter 8: *Gentiles are not Barbarians* (pp. 247-263).

Here the concepts of the Barbarian and the *goy* are compared. O&R-Z argue that 'Barbarian' is a flexible concept (p. 249f.). They note that it refers quite freely to foreigners, neighbours and enemies. But, they say, it does not necessarily indicate 'the Other'. I agree that this is not necessarily the case, but saying so is a simplification of the meaning of the concept for the Greeks. There definitely were authors who saw the Barbarian very much as the 'Other' and there were Greek views of the Greeks themselves as the 'Self' even if it is true that the notion of 'barbarian' in fifth-century Athens did not have all of the heavy negative load that the term carries in modern English.

The first text to mention in this context is *Airs, Waters, Places*, a 5<sup>th</sup>-century treatise ascribed to Hippocrates, but it is ignored by O&R-Z in *Goy*.<sup>6</sup> This is the first Greek text that extensively and emphatically formulates the theory of environmental determinism, the belief that climate and geography decisively influence group character. Since it negates individual variety and choice it is closely related to early forms of racism. An example (*Airs, Waters, Places*, Chapter 12): 'For everything in Asia is far more beautiful and grows to far greater size; the region is more cultured than the other, the character of the inhabitants is more tractable and gentle.' The cause of this is said to be the moderate climate. The inhabitants of Asia are described as the opposite of those of Europe. This is elaborated by Aristotle in his *Politics*, where the Greeks are described as forming the ideal in the middle.

Aristotle there developed the theory of natural slavery, which assumes that some people are suited by nature to be masters and others to be slaves, the former being Greeks, the latter barbarians.

'Among the barbaroi ... there is no natural ruler ... : they are a community of slaves male and female. This is why the poets say that it is meet that the Greeks should rule over the barbarians, the assumption being that barbarians and slaves are by nature one' (*Politics* 1252b5ff.). This is not discussed by O&R-Z. 'Wherefore Hellenes do not like to call Hellenes slaves but confine the term to barbarians' (*Politics* 1255a 29ff.). This carries the ideology another step forward: non-Greeks are enemies and must be defeated and this is in their own interest, for they are slaves by nature, functioning well only if they are ruled by the Greeks who are masters by nature.

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<sup>6</sup> Hippocrate, *Airs, eaux, lieux*, ed. Jacques Jouanna (Paris 1996).

Here we find the basis for an ideology of expansion: Greeks are naturally free and Barbarians slaves and it is taken for granted that the former should rule the latter. The superiority of Greek over barbarian is not questioned, nor is the use of this idea for an imperialist ideology, based on a doctrine of natural slavery and environmental determinism.<sup>7</sup>

Isocrates goes further, socially and emotionally: 'Towards all other peoples with whom the Greeks waged war, they forget their past hostility when they stop fighting, but towards the Asiatics they are not grateful even when they receive favours' (*Panegyricus* 157).

Similar views are found in the work of Plato, *Respublica* 470C

'I assert that the Hellenic people is friendly to itself and related, and foreign and alien to the barbarian'. 'Right,' he said. 'We shall then say that Greeks fight and wage war with barbarians, and barbarians with Greeks, and are enemies by nature ... Greeks, however, we shall say, are still by nature the friends of Greeks.'

The idea of a 'barbarian' now has become synonym with an 'enemy by nature' who should be fought and defeated.

The Hippocratic treatise, the works of Aristotle, Plato and Isocrates and others represent an outlook that should not be ignored or tucked away in a footnote (as on p. 253, n. 19 on Aristotle). On the Barbarians the authors follow Vlassopoulos.<sup>8</sup> The concept was a lot of different things to a lot of authors over time (pp. 250-251). This is true (and well known), but it is the wrong approach if we want to compare Greek views of barbarians with the Jewish Tannaitic concept of the *goy*. The view of the non-Greeks as 'the Other' existed and was represented by highly influential authors such as Aristotle, Plato and Isocrates. The issue is not whether the Barbaros was for all Greeks the same in a manner comparable to the *Goy* being the same for all Talmudic sources. The binary view existed in Greece and among the Jews, but the differences are important.

It never makes sense to blame authors for what they have not done, but there are occasions which call for comment. O&R-Z hardly discuss the Romans, which would have been appropriate, since they are contemporary with the Talmudic literature and ruled Palestine at the time. Many authors have something to say on the subject, first and foremost among them Cicero and Tacitus, but also poets such as Juvenal. There is the matter of the large-scale spread of Roman citizenship which is entirely relevant (mentioned only in footnote 38 on p. 257). They merely state: 'This instability runs throughout the Greek world, from the late archaic period to the Roman Empire'.

On p. 252 it is asserted: 'A paradigmatic example of the multiple forms of the barbarian's otherness is his appearance in Herodotus' *Histories*. Cicero and others who followed him read Herodotus' *Histories* as a fantastic collection of *fabulae*'. First, this is a drastically simplified view of Herodotus and how he and Greek historical literature were read by Romans: they were not read as fantasy, but as historical fact. Second, there is an essential difference between whatever the Greeks say in their classic period and

<sup>7</sup> B. Isaac, *Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity*, 2004, 60-71.

<sup>8</sup> K. Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians* (2013), a valuable book, but one that tends to offer the author's conclusions presented as facts rather than a matter of debate. See my review in: *Mediterranean Historical Review* 32(2017), 105-107.



what one finds in Greek literature of the Roman period. In this connection: Strabo is rightly presented as Greek, but it must be recognized that he was a Greek-writing author living in the Roman Empire in the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius and identifying with the Empire in his ideology and ethnographic views.

Then follows a discussion (p. 253-6) of Thales (or Socrates) who says that he is happy to be a human being, not an animal, a man, not a woman, and a Greek, not a barbarian. This is compared with the remarkably similar pronouncement by R. Yehuda ben Ilai of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century (*Goy* pp. 1-2). He claimed that a man should say three times a day a blessing thanking God that he was not an ignoramus, not a woman and not a gentile (t.Ber.6:18). It is interesting, but the argument is a little lengthy and perhaps emphasizes the significance of these passages too much (pp. 1-2; 25-26). We do not need Thales or Socrates to prove that non-Greeks could become Greeks in practice.

‘Dionysius of Halicarnassus (p. 257) ... tried ... to show that Greeks and Roman were genealogically related ... but also to demonstrate the Hellenic nature of the Romans and the barbarization of the Greeks’. This is true, but it is also a fact that origin, descent, and bloodline were regarded as ideologically essential by the Greeks and Romans. Dionysius here touches upon a topic of central importance in the consideration of social identity. We may note that another tradition, represented by Vergil’s *Aeneid*, holds that the Romans were genealogically related with the Trojans. For the Romans such matters were no form of playing games: it was earnest, ideologically laden historical thinking. Also: the authors might have placed more emphasis than they do on the basic fact that Greeks were never a monolithic nation, had no unified leadership or central guidance. They were a nation spread over much of the Mediterranean and consisting of independent *poleis* and tribes. They had no authoritative lawgivers as the Rabbis were. There never was a R. Yehuda ha-Nasi for the Greeks.

Two details on p. 255: First, Smyrna as such was not a Hellenized city and it was not founded under Macedonian rule (n. 25). Old Smyrna was an ancient Greek city, founded in the 11<sup>th</sup> century BCE. It was restored, enlarged and fortified in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Second, Macedonians were not considered barbarians. There was an argument about their identity, but they took part in the Olympic Games.

### ***Ioudaioi* as Barbarians**

The last part of the last chapter (pp. 259-263) asks the question whether Jews were considered barbarians. As the authors go back here to the theme of Greeks and barbarians I cannot find the answer quite satisfactory. It is essential to note that the Jews were unknown to the Greeks in the fifth century BC. They appear in the Hellenistic period, in Hellenistic Egypt and in Roman sources. The point is not whether they were regarded as Barbarians by Greeks and Romans. However, this is not the place to discuss this large topic which is the subject of so many studies.

At the end of this review the moment has come to acknowledge that part of it deals with matters that are secondary to the subject at hand. The important achievement of the authors is the lucid manner in which many centuries of ancient Jewish texts have been traced towards an understanding of the concept of the *Goy*, the clarification of which is a major contribution of this book.