Werner Eck wie ein Detektiv die (v.a. epigraphische) Lupe auf (vermeintlich) kleine Stellen und vermag so auf überzeugende und gewinnende Art neues Licht in die noch immer häufig schwer zu durchschauende Lebenswelt des antiken Palästina zu bringen. Dafür kann man dem Autor nur dankbar sein. Dass das Buch zudem äußerst sorgfältig produziert ist und mit hilfreichen Namens- und Ortsindices endet, ist eine weitere Zugabe.

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Joseph Geiger, *Hellenism in the East. Studies on Greek Intellectuals in Palestine*. Historia Einzelschriften 229. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag. 2014. 177 pp. ISBN 978-3-515-10617-7.

Joseph Geiger has here produced a characteristically erudite monograph. His assiduous probing into obscure figures and arcane matters exhibits wide learning distilled into accessible form. The book can serve as reference work on a large number of individuals only marginally known to most classicists, and as an illuminating set of observations on a few intellectuals whom Geiger explores in some detail. The individual items offer much that is valuable.

The structure as a whole, however, is peculiar and idiosyncratic. And Geiger does not profess to develop an argument. What are the objectives of this study? The title itself, *Hellenism in the East*, suggests something far more sweeping than a brief treatise could encompass. The sub-title, *Studies on Greek Intellectuals in Palestine*, rightly limits the scope, but not as precisely as it might. Geiger affirms as his aim the placement of Greek intellectuals in their Palestinian surroundings. Further, and more broadly, he poses the question of whether Hellenism in a particular region (i.e. Palestine) has distinctive characteristics or was representative of Greek culture generally (pp. 8-9). He opts firmly for the latter. But it is not clear that the range of his survey or the available evidence that he so carefully provides can establish that conclusion.

The architecture of the book has an unusual shape. The first part (about a third of the whole) is devoted to a prosopography of Greek writers, rhetors, philosophers, sophists, and others in Palestine for whom there is evidence of Hellenic education. Its value (not insignificant) lies in the collection of names, with citations of discussions in the relevant reference works, like *RE*, *PLRE*, and a substantial number of other modern treatments, both standard ones and less familiar ones. The entries are, on the whole, brief. Geiger only rarely ventures to make conjectures of his own. Among the rare exceptions are some suggestions regarding Apsines, Flavius Boethus, and Theodorus 10 (pp. 15, 17, 37). The second part (more than half of the book) focuses exclusively on Ascalon and those intellectuals who can be associated with it. Geiger here engages in some narrative and in expanded treatment of more than a dozen persons, including philosophers, grammarians, historians, poets, mathematicians, and even a metrologist, who were either born in or lived in Ascalon. The final part, the briefest, assembles instances of the use of Latin in Palestine.

Geiger does not provide a rationale for this particular structure or for how the parts fit together. Nor does one get a clear sense of justification for each part. The prosopography, so Geiger maintains, aims at listing all known Greek intellectuals from Palestine (p. 11). But this is immediately qualified by a geographic restriction to Palestine west of the Jordan. We are not told why. And the restriction is compromised by the inclusion of Gadara, also for unexplained reasons. Further, Geiger excludes ‘writers of the so-called Jewish-Hellenistic literature’ (p. 11). Here at least he supplies an apparent explanation: there is already too much written about them. Fair enough. It would, however, have been useful to know just who falls into that category and what is meant by “so-called”. In fact, Geiger does list a number of individuals in his prosopography about whom a great deal has been written (e.g. Antiochus, Meleager, Menippus). Just where he draws the line is obscure. Useful though it is, the prosopography does contain some peculiarities. Geiger labels it as a listing of Greek intellectuals in Palestine. Yet a number of the persons identified wrote in Latin: Flavius Agrippa, Eutropius, Hierius, Julius Africanus, Priscianus 2 (pp. 13, 22, 24,

26, 33). Do writers of Latin count as Greek intellectuals? Or does the prosopography encompass all known intellectuals from Palestine (p. 11)? The final segment of the book, on Latin literature in Palestine, implicitly raises the question of whether "Hellenism" includes intellectual activity expressed in Latin — a question left unanswered in the book.

How narrowly or broadly should "intellectual" be defined? Geiger includes actors, even pantomime actors in that company (pp. 35, 79-80). Most ancient intellectuals would not so categorize them. Criteria for inclusion or exclusion can seem rather arbitrary. Geiger devotes a separate appendix to those who happened to visit Palestine for whatever reason and however briefly (pp. 44-47). But do we really learn much about intellectual life in the land from the fact that Agrippa visited Herod there, that Hadrian founded Aelia Capitolina, or that Marcus Aurelius passed through on the way to Egypt? Geiger even includes Strabo (duly bracketed) in this company, while observing that such a visit never took place! Three other appendices to the prosopography also seem rather questionable. One collects the names of persons who had some connection with Herod, whether as friends, advisers, or officials at the court. One of them was a certain Gemellus, Latin tutor to Herod's sons, thus hardly a Greek intellectual (pp. 48-49). A second appendix adds a few more names of Jewish writers who wrote in Greek but did not write about Jewish matters, thereby setting them apart from "Jewish-Hellenistic writers", who are excluded from the catalogue — a distinction that seems particularly arbitrary (pp. 50-52). The third appendix lists intellectuals from Petra (pp. 53-55). Why do they receive mention, despite the fact that Geiger elsewhere set his geographic limit at the Jordan (p. 11)? Further, one item (or its relative absence) in the prosopography causes frustration. Geiger is altogether inconsistent in providing dates. Occasionally the figure is well enough known or connected with another well-known figure so as not to require chronological specificity. And the majority do get located in the proper century or even more precisely. But far too many sit in a chronological vacuum. This somewhat reduces the value of a prosopography, and could have been easily remedied.

One principle of inclusion or exclusion does receive clear explication. Geiger states that the list will incorporate a number of intellectuals, like Meleager, Philodemus, Procopius, and others who are quite familiar and are already the subjects of much scholarship. He will not rehearse the vast material on such figures but will confine himself to their local connections, to those aspects of their careers that reflect on their Palestinian background (p. 11). That is a perfectly legitimate approach. But in many instances these local ties barely surface or are entirely dwarfed by other associations in the subject's biography. In the case of the celebrated philosopher Antiochus of Ascalon, for instance, we have virtually no information on his background in that city but a great deal on his connections to Roman public figures and intellectuals (p. 14). A similar imbalance holds for Marinus, the 5th century CE philosopher and mathematician, head of the Neoplatonic School in Athens, about whose Palestinian provenance we know very little (p. 27). The available biographical details on the famed Cynic Menippus provide no evidence of local influence from Gadara (p. 29). Philodemus stemmed from Gadara but his far-famed intellectual career which has inspired a huge scholarly industry was spent elsewhere. Geiger has to acknowledge that we are aware of nothing that he composed in Palestine (p. 32). Procopius of Caesarea, whose works on the Justinianic age are fundamental and much of whose large corpus survives, supplies negligible testimony regarding his home town or any native influence on his intellectual career (p. 34). None of this, of course, is Geiger's fault. The nature of the evidence sets severe limitations on what can be said. But it also renders dubious any conclusions about what the individuals in the prosopography owed to their local origins or affiliations.

The central segment of the book concerns intellectuals from Ascalon. Here Geiger can develop his ideas more thoroughly and expand his analysis of individual authors and works. The choice of Ascalon is appropriately justified by the volume of material available. It allows for concentration upon a particular (though quite important) locality, and Geiger employs this site to argue that the intellectual elite of the city embraced the same literary genres and adhered to the same standards of classical style and linguistic purity that one could find elsewhere in the Greek

world. Ascalon thus serves not as an isolated case but as representative of Hellenism in the East. Geiger's impressive researches exploit testimony from epigrams, investigate closely eight individuals recorded by Stephanus of Byzantium, provide detailed examination of the poet Euenus and the rhetor Ulpian, among others, disentangle the problematic evidence on the multiple persons named Zosimus, and, most impressively, elucidate (at least for the enlightened) the very difficult material on the metrological table of Julian of Ascalon (pp. 57-124). This is scholarship of the highest order. The author's learning is evident throughout.

It detracts not at all from Geiger's achievement to ask whether this meticulous study actually resolves the question that he sets forth as his goal. Does the evidence regarding intellectuals in Ascalon establish that Hellenism was a uniform package or process, adapted in various cities of Palestine and elsewhere, with minimal variations and adherence to a larger pattern of Greek literature and learning? Since Geiger's monograph provides no parallel scrutiny of any other city for comparison and control, conclusions on this score hardly have a firm footing. And there are larger questions. Geiger speaks of 'the process of Hellenization' (p. 61). But what exactly does that mean? The example he gives is the equation of Aphrodite with Ashtarte. But this *interpretatio Graeca* is far from a process of Hellenization. Further, there is a striking gap in our evidence on intellectual activity of a Greek sort in Ascalon between the mid 1st century CE and the 4th century CE. Geiger argues that this does not signal a wasteland in the intervening period, pointing to archaeological evidence for the city's uninterrupted flourishing (p. 88). But the absence of testimony on literary, philosophical, or rhetorical figures all the way from the Julio-Claudian era to late antiquity remains troubling for the thesis that "Hellenism", however it might be defined, had taken deep root in Ascalon. And we must leave open the broader question of whether those attracted by Hellenic learning elsewhere in the east shared in a homogeneous world of elite Greek culture.

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Ludwig Koenen, Jorma Kaimio, Maarit Kaimio, and Robert W. Daniel (eds.), *The Petra Papyri II*, American Center of Oriental Research Publications, 7. Amman: American Center of Oriental Research, 2013. 236 pp. XVI Pls. ISBN 978-9957-8543-6-2.

*The Petra Papyri* volume is a group of carbonized papyrus rolls originating in a family archive that was discovered in a sacristy of the Petra "Great Church" in December 1993. Their retrieval and conservation — the latter under the direction of the Finnish scholar Jaakko Frösén during the years 1994-95 — as well as their subsequent restoration and decipherement were all exceptionally arduous tasks.[1] This second volume is actually a belated fourth publication to appear in *The Petra Papyri* series since, subsequent to the appearance of volume I in 2002,[2] volume III was published in 2007 and volume IV in 2011 with the fifth and last volume still underway. The family archive originally belonged to an archdeacon named (Flavius) Theodoros son of Obodianos (514-591 CE). The present volume is an edition of a single Greek document — *P. Petra 17* (Inv. 10), dealing with a division of property among three brothers: Bassos, Epiphanios and Sabinos, who were remote relatives of the same Theodoros (56-57). Each allotment comprised land property —

1 On the archaeological circumstances of the finds and a preliminary report on the papyri see, *inter alia*: L. Koenen, 'The Carbonized Archive From Petra', *JRA* 9 (1996), pp. 177-188; Z.T. Fiema, 'The Archaeological Context of the Petra Papyri', in: *idem. et al*., *The Petra Great Church*, Amman 2001, pp. 139-150.

2 Jaakko Frösén, Antti Arjava, and Marjo Lehtinen, (eds.), *The Petra Papyri I*, reviewed by E.A. Knauf, *SCI* 22 (2003), pp. 350-355.