

considerations suggest that this was a Judean site. This larger historical picture, discussed in detail, complements the fine archaeological report.

The effort to reconstruct the manufacturing processes in detail is a brave effort, yet the exact processes at work remain hypothetical. The materials exploited were the local agricultural products typical to this region, mainly balsam, palm dates, bitumen and salt. Fat might have been extracted from local herds, but the olive oil had to be imported from farther afield, perhaps from the Hebron hills. The minor scale of the installations suggests a moderate rate of production, in accordance with the relatively moderate size of the plantation. The owner was, presumably, the central authority; there are no traces of any rustic villa here to suggest a private landlord.

'En Boqeḳ was a small farmstead in a small oasis of the Dead Sea. To this group belong also Qumran, 'Ein Feshkha, and 'Ein al Guweir. 'En Gedi and Zoora were settlements, not just farmsteads. A possible connection with the Dead Sea sect is considered, but the author's alternative interpretation, that this was an extension of the 'En Gedi plantation, is preferred.

A comparison with Qumran makes crystal clear the differences between these two sites. 'En Boqeḳ is a neat and simple agricultural manor; the absence of any *miqveh* is noteworthy. Qumran has 11 *miqvaot*, a communal dining room and a large cemetery — all indicating services for larger crowds, at times. At Qumran in addition to the regular agricultural industry, similar to that at 'En Boqeḳ, other activities were at work.²

The book is a remarkable contribution to the archaeology and economy of the Herodian period. The editors and all the other authors should be congratulated on their achievement.

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Seth Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001. xi + 320 pp. ISBN 0 691 08850 0.

Jewish historiography seems to be at the peak of revisionist tendencies. There is, of course, the onslaught of the 'new' 'Israeli' 'historians' on recent and quite recent events. At the other end of the chronological spectrum the Hebrew Bible has been dismissed as an historical source and presented as the brainchild of a literate ruling class of foreign transportees under Persian rule.¹ It is probably unfair to bracket Seth Schwartz (= S.) with these revisionists, for he is a serious scholar well grounded both in ancient history and in Judaic studies, and thoroughly familiar with modern historical theory and method — and social science jargon. I imagine that he prefers to see himself as a latter-day Wellhausen. For Wellhausen, Ancient Israel was a post-exilic creation; according to S., Judaism ruled by the tenets of the Rabbis came into being much later than is generally thought. Just as, according to Wellhausen, the history of monotheistic Israel was a retrojection from a post-exilic ideology and reality, so in the view of S. a Palestinian Judaism living under the

² Pace Y. Hirschfeld, 'Early Roman Manor Houses in Judea and the Site of Khirbet Qumran', *JNES* 57 (1998), 185-7, who maintains that Qumran was just an agricultural manor, see my proposal (J. Patrich, 'Was There an External Residential Area at Qumran?' *Qadmoniot* XXXI/115 [1998], 66-7 [Hebrew], and 'Did Extra Mural Dwelling Quarters exist at Qumran?' in L.H. Schiffman, E. Tov and J.C. VanderKam (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls — Fifty Years after their Discovery*, Jerusalem 2000, 720-7), that the site was, in addition, a community center for the Essenes of Jerusalem — a place to gather and celebrate their feasts, following their sectarian calendar.

¹ For the methodical dismissal of this see S. Japhet, 'In Search of Ancient Israel: Revisionism at All Costs', D.N. Myers and D.R. Ruderman (eds.), *The Jewish Past Revisited: Reflections on Modern Jewish Historians* (New Haven and London 1998), 212-33.

guidance of the Rabbinic class is a much later reconstruction from the situation prevailing under the Christian Empire. This is a serious and important thesis which deserves serious consideration.

Not only is S. a serious scholar, he also makes clear the problems of method and justifies the one he employs. It will be only fair to reflect also on this aspect of his thesis. (On the other hand I shall not follow his lead in ascribing to him possible extraneous motives, as he does rather freely to other scholars, both dead and alive. This does not mean that one should not be grateful to a scholar with only loose ties to Israeli academia for exposing here some naked emperors.)

S.'s survey divides the history of the Jews of Palestine into three discrete phases. The first, down to the destruction of the Temple in 70, is the least controversial. Second Temple Judaism as we know it was based on reverence of the covenant of the Torah and the eschatological 'myth'. It came into being by a long process that involved not only the active patronage of the Persian and later Hellenistic rulers, but also the inclusion into Judaism of extensive portions of the population of Palestine. Following Baumgarten's lead S. contends that 'though the sects were not quite central, they were not quite marginal either' (91) in this society; the conclusion of this part affirms 'Judaism's success in creating a Jewish society, loosely centralized and frayed at the edges though it was' (99). The impact of imperialism is the theme of the second part, dealing with the years 150-350. (The fateful period, so ill-documented, between the failure of the First Revolt and that of the Bar Kokhba Revolt is not totally ignored, though perhaps it should have been granted a short separate discussion of its own.) According to S.'s analysis, Palestinian Jewish society totally disintegrated under the impact of Roman imperialism, the imposition of direct rule and the failed revolts, while the rabbis, who preserved what had been achieved in the period of the Second Temple, were a marginal element. As a result 'Jewish Palestine between c. 100 and 350 scarcely differed from any other high imperial provincial society' (104). The main thrust of this part is the necessary distinction between the history of the rabbis as emerging from their literature and the history of the Jews in general. In this view, 'rabbis and patriarchs rarely wielded much formal authority' nor had they 'much impact on the lives of Palestinian Jews' (128), though they were not totally devoid of prestige. Many Jews were paganised, since one must assume that 'pagan art used by Jews had a specifically pagan religious meaning' (159), and indeed rabbinic legislation was accommodative under the circumstances. The third part of the book bears the ominous title 'Synagogue and Community from 350 to 640'. Its most innovative thesis is that 'one of the main causes of the rejudaization of the Jews was the christianization of the Roman Empire' (179). It was their marginalisation under the Christian empire that forced the Jews to regain a new coherence. The main evidence for this 'judaization' is the diffusion of the synagogue, and it is the latter that testifies to the emergence of the community and its functions. This 'judaization' brought in its wake a process of 'rabbinization', and it was only in the later stages of Late Antiquity that rabbinic Judaism as we know it from medieval times to ca. 1800, and in certain respects to the present day, came into being.

S. starts his discussion with the astonishing assertion that 'the evidentiary basis of ancient Jewish history ... is slender' (1). Fairly soon one realises the meaning of this, a bias in favour of archaeological as opposed to Hebrew and Aramaic literary evidence. But rabbinic literature *is* evidence — though of course we should avoid interpreting it in a naïve or unsophisticated way. There is nothing revolutionary or even new in questioning the rabbis' self-presentation as the leaders of a Jewish community living by their tenets. But it is a huge leap from this reservation to the assumption that the rabbis were utterly marginal and disregarded by the other Jews (individual 'Jews', rather than a non-existent community, a wide variety of people living on a continuum between a distinctly pagan life-style and some measure of Torah-observance). For one, S. ignores the powerful *argumentum e silentio* readily discernible in M. Stern's collection of *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (Jerusalem 1974-1984), which contains not a shred of

evidence for the existence of non-observant Jews.² In fact, when S. does encounter positive evidence for the general observance of their laws by all the Jews (188-9, discussing Bardesanes), he employs special pleading to invalidate it. S. posits that the opposition between the rabbinic literary evidence for Jewishness and the archaeological remains of a pagan character is best resolved by assuming Jewish 'paganizers'. But in fact he bends the evidence in favour of his hypothesis. Thus, by his account Tiberias was an overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, Jewish city, and the pagan archaeological evidence is a proof of the 'paganization' of the Jews; but the evidence for the Jewishness of Tiberias is exclusively rabbinic, so that as eminent an historian as A.H.M. Jones could, in ignorance of the Jewish evidence, describe the city as entirely pagan. Is it not more reasonable to assume a mixed population, some of whose members left literary, and some archaeological evidence? (Much the same could be said for Sepphoris, another case extensively discussed by S.) There is hardly any need to adduce examples of communities living side by side in almost total mutual disregard. Nor is what S. calls the Avi-Yonah school, viz. an interpretation giving little ideological weight to pagan symbols, totally discredited by his arguments. The alternative method here presented, by S.'s own account sired by a modified Goodenough out of the early Neusner, is certainly not more credible. It is also convenient to invoke rabbinic evidence relating to idolatry as proof of pagan worship by Jews. Though S. realises that '[f]or the rabbis, the world of the Hebrew Bible was at least as real as the world in which they actually lived' (166), he fails to draw from this the almost inevitable conclusion regarding many of the Rabbinic prohibitions on idolatry. While for generations the search for the rabbis' *Sitz im Leben* has been a prime concern, the obvious fact that they lived, to some extent at least, in an imaginary world, has been left out of the picture.

In the third part of the book S. falls into the trap he so often discerns at the feet of others: the archaeological remains of Late Antique synagogues are indeed by far the most impressive material vestiges of the Judaism of the period, but it is precisely the role of the historian to balance his conclusions without being overwhelmed by the mass of the available evidence. Thus in this scheme the synagogue and the community associated with it not only take pride of place, but serve almost exclusively to represent Late Antique Jewish society. Here, as in other sections of his discussion, S. overrates in my view the importance of the synagogue. As S. readily admits, there is only so much you can derive from archaeology in default of written sources. Nevertheless he proposes to replace Weiss' admittedly somewhat far-fetched interpretation of the Sepphoris mosaic floor with a far more speculative one. (One example: Isaac's binding is now interpreted as part of a cosmic, rather than Temple-centred scheme — ignoring the fact that in Jewish tradition Isaac's binding took place on the eventual location of the Temple. I, for one, find it hard to believe that any Jew would not associate the binding of Isaac with the Temple.) Another object of overinterpretation is the introduction of the Jewish month-names into the zodiac: rather than 'another hint of anxiety' (256), can it not be understood merely as a convenience for people necessarily acquainted, from the festive calendar, with the names of the Jewish months but not with the calendrical occurrence of the signs of the zodiac?

A good example of S. building on his hypotheses as if they were facts in the next section is the following, an important component of his thesis in the third part of the book: 'The *piyyut* offers unambiguous evidence for the rabbinization of liturgical practice in sixth century Palestine' (263). True, the *piyyut* is in perfect conformity with rabbinic prescriptions. But to see in this a confirmation, even an indirect one, for a process of rabbinisation is patently absurd: since rabbinisation is a

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Recently in a discussion of George Orwell's anti-Semitism reference has been made to the following: 'In a corner by himself a Jew, muzzle down in the plate, was guiltily wolfing bacon.' (G. Orwell, *Down and Out in Paris and London* [Penguin ed., 1940], 118). This is exactly the sort of expression one would have expected from such ancient writers as Martial and Juvenal, for instance, had it any correspondence in reality.

hypothesis rather than a proven fact, the *piyyut* may with at least as much force be invoked as an argument against it, i.e. as a proof for the generative power of rabbinic Judaism. Is it not more reasonable to assume, not that '[t]he *payyetanim* ... relentlessly rabbinized' (273) but that they were in fact offshoots of rabbinic culture? This of course does not amount to a blanket denial of the possibility of some Christian influence on the form and function of the *piyyut*. In the same vein one must not overestimate the importance of the influence of church architecture on synagogues.

Since S. discusses extensively the relationships between the Jews of Palestine and its hellenised, and later Christian inhabitants, it is only fair to remark here on the fact that S., like practically everybody else, disregards what must have been an important segment of Palestinian society. In addition to the Jews (defined either conventionally or by S.'s hypotheses) and the Greek-speaking pagan inhabitants, a sizeable Aramaic-speaking and little hellenised pagan population, probably mainly rural, lived in Palestine as well. The fact that this population did not leave behind a literature and did not possess the epigraphic habit does not prove its non-existence or negligible importance, but does explain their being ignored by scholars. Non-Jewish literary Aramaic was soon to proliferate in its Christian guise, and not too far from Palestine, as Syriac. As witness to the tenacity of the language in this geographical context one may of course also recall the survival of Aramaic-speaking linguistic islands in Syria and Lebanon well into the twentieth century. I have maintained elsewhere³ that the proud self-presentation of Scythopolis as a Greek city of the Decapolis must have been directed against the Aramaic-speaking countryside as well as against the Jews. Our previous disregard of this Aramaic-speaking gentile population should serve as a warning against an overly positivist use of the evidence.

The editing, proofreading and production of the book are not quite up to the standards of a first-rate university press. Some locutions are strange, e.g. pp. 20 and 55 (twice) Persian emperor(s), 52 n. 11, 53 Seleucid emperor, 56 and 57 imperial (not Roman) sponsorship; on p. 107 S. implies in a strange formulation that 'the Seleucids and their Herodian and Syrian epigones' were simply kings, 'no subjects required' (but Herod is attested as King of the Jews). A case of inexact definition is that of *halitzah* undergone by a childless widow (122); of course it is incumbent rather on the widow of a childless man; and the statement that there was no pentateuchal conception of 'town' (228) strangely disregards the legislation concerning the idolatrous town (Dt. 13:13-17). Sometimes there is no correspondence between references and bibliography (247 n. 17, 248 n. 22), or different references are given to the same publication on the same page (264 nn. 59 and 61). Some of the typos are irritating, e.g. 45 Sedducees; 50 n. 3 I Maccabean; 130 'Ioudas ... one of the city elites'; 187 n. 23 (and in the bibliography) read *Das Judentum und der römische Staat*; 223 n. 24 for world read word; 271 n. 83 for Palms read Psalms; 293 (bibliography) Baer's paper appeared in *Zion*. At a time when Jewish history of the Hellenistic and Roman age is written by scholars completely innocent of Hebrew and Aramaic it would be petty to complain about the not always accurate transliteration and vocalisation in the titles of Hebrew books and papers. (Titles of Hebrew books and papers are often cited in transliteration, but sometimes in English translation, at times without specifying their original language.) Poussin's 'Titus' Destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem' on the dust-jacket is for some reason a mirror-image.⁴

But it would be entirely wrong to conclude this review on a negative note, for it could be misinterpreted as a sign of success for the book's provocative aim. Every student of history knows that nothing should be taken for granted and everything should be questioned. But we should be

³ 'Language, Culture and Identity in Ancient Palestine', E.N. Ostenfeld (ed.), *Greek Romans and Roman Greeks. Studies in Cultural Interaction* (Aarhus Studies in Mediterranean Antiquity III, Aarhus 2002), 233-46 at 240.

⁴ It might perhaps have been more imaginative to depict the recently rediscovered earlier version of the painting, now in Jerusalem, than the one in Vienna.

grateful for a book that is truly written by this maxim and that gives us opportunity to reflect on some conventionally held truths. An important example of this is S.'s insistence in raising again and again the issue of Jewish identity and its construction. (In the first part of the book he follows to a great extent Shaye Cohen, his later hypotheses have been referred to above.) Also, one can not but admire the genuine, wide learning displayed in this book, where no pains are spared in search of available evidence. Last but not least: this book reflects the growing trend to integrate Jewish with Hellenistic and Roman history in the best possible way.

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Tal Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity, Part I: Palestine 330 BCE-200 CE* (Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 91). Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 2002. xxvi + 484 pp. ISBN 3 16 16 147646 8.

This volume is intended by Tal Ilan as the first of a series of three. A second volume recording the names of Jews from Palestine from 200 CE until 650 CE, and a third one containing the names of Jews in the Graeco-Roman diaspora, are announced (the pre-Hellenistic era in Judaea is already covered by R. Zadok's *The Pre-Hellenistic Israelite Anthroponymy and Prosopography*, Leuven, 1988). Let us hope the author will be able to fulfil her promise. One can only congratulate her on the monumental effort invested in the first volume, and on the impressive result. The volume will from now on be an indispensable tool for scholars of the various fields related to the study of the Graeco-Roman era, as well as for linguists and philologists working with the languages included in the database. It will be useful not only to scholars interested in the geographical area covered by the corpus, but also to those dealing with Jewish names elsewhere in the Graeco-Roman world, as an essential basis for comparison.

The *Lexicon* is conceived both as an onomasticon and as a prosopography, providing not just a list of names borne by Jews in Palestine but data regarding the individuals themselves. The corpus includes 3595 entries, of which 2826 are names 'whose historical value is beyond doubt', that is, whose bearers were real individuals. The problem of identifying multiple references to the same person is discussed on pp. 35f. Each entry of the *Lexicon* includes six items, or 'columns': the 'orthography' of the name in its original alphabet; a 'description', providing data about the bearer, such as family connections and occupation; the place of 'find' for documentary evidence; the exact 'source' for literary evidence; 'exception', indicating, whenever relevant, that the bearer is a fictitious character (in literary sources); and 'date'. A 58-page introduction explains and justifies the organisation of the lexicon, and synthesizes its data. The conclusions drawn from the database are presented according to the six columns that make up the entries, and are followed by ten tables of statistical analysis based on the 2826 'historical' occurrences only (54-8). One may regret the absence of a chronological table. To be sure, an accurate mapping of the data according to chronological distribution is impossible, since most of the epigraphic evidence cannot be precisely dated. However, even a cursory chronological sketch would have provided an acceptable basis for a study of the development of the practice of name-giving. Thus, names like יהודאי and its diminutive form יהודאי (82) are documented only in the late fourth and third centuries BCE, while the Aramaic name יהודאי (380f.) was in use only during the Amoraic period. These names co-exist only in the *Lexicon*; they did not co-exist in real life. Likewise, Ilan nowhere discusses the chronological distribution of her database. Yet even a cursory survey of the *Lexicon* leads to the conclusion that the pre-Herodian period is poorly, and the pre-Maccabaeian period very poorly documented (of 179 occurrences of Judas, only nine, including three fictitious ones, are recorded for pre-Herodian times, 112-8.; and of 231 occurrences of Joseph, there are only eleven in the same time period, of