

Hatrurim but Mezaḏ Tamar. On the maps Archelais is a little too far to the south, the monastery of Theodosius is on the wrong side of the wadi, that of Euthymius shifted to SW; Socho is too far from the road, Gabaon too far to the south and Monumentum Rachel is too far north of Bethlehem. There may be a few more which I have not discovered, but they are surprisingly few in number. One real shortcoming, though no fault of the compilers, is, to my mind, the method of indicating differences of elevation on the maps. This is a cartographic problem which is the responsibility of the Survey of Israel. The fuzzy method of shading differences in height without the use of any contour lines does not provide a clear or reliable impression of the terrain. For a more satisfactory method one could look at the Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain which, on a 1:625,000 scale, gives a much better impression through the use of four different shades. The ideal method is that employed by the Atlas of the Greek and Roman World, now under preparation under the auspices of the American Philological Association. A sample map of Byzantium and the surrounding area on a 1:500,000 scale combines eight elevation tints with contour lines. This may be too expensive for a map produced by the Survey of Israel, but a compromise could surely have been found. Again, this is not the fault of the compilers who have produced an invaluable tool to be used gratefully by all those interested in Palestine in the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods.

Benjamin Isaac

Tel Aviv University

Louis H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World. Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993. pp. xii + 679. ISBN 0-691-07416-x.

A book published by a major scholar with a major academic press, presenting unconventional views on a major theme in ancient history, will justifiably attract serious attention. When the theme reflects, or is perceived to reflect, urgently debated existential issues of the modern world, discussion may dissolve into passion and partisan argument. The present book has already occasioned a harsh session at an international conference, as well as several extreme reviews, both hostile and laudatory. It has become the kind of book which is more often judged than read (especially since it is so long).

The main point of the book is two-fold: 1) to demonstrate that, in the millenium from Alexander's conquests to the codification of Roman law under Justinian, Jews not only resisted assimilation into the various cultures they knew and lived in, but were widely admired by Gentiles and attracted substantial numbers of new adherents in the form of "sympathizers" or actual proselytes; and 2) to explain this phenomenon as a result of the inherent strengths of Judaism itself. The main focus throughout is on the "Gentile" of the title: how Gentiles perceived and reacted to Judaism. Developments and variations in Jewish identity and practice within the thousand-year period selected are subordinated to the main line of inquiry, and in some cases are even denied. Thus, an *external* history of the Jews, and in this respect different from most standard treatments of that sub-category of ancient history called "Jewish history".

The first order of business is, logically, to deny that Jews and Judaism were to any significant degree changed or diminished by their contacts with Gentiles and Gentile

cultures, both within Eretz-Israel (chapter 1) and in the Diaspora (chapter 2). Next, an analysis of the nature and causes of anti-Jewish sentiments and actions by governments (chapter 3), populations at large (chapter 4) and intellectuals (chapter 5); the purpose being to demonstrate that anti-Jewish "bigotry" was not endemic to ancient society. Governments, with whom Jews enjoyed a "vertical alliance", were usually protective of Jews, mob violence against Jews was motivated by envy and fear of the Jews' very successes, and intellectuals who criticized Jews were a tiny minority who often exaggerated for rhetorical effect and mocked things which could "backfire" (e.g., the charge that the Jews kept an ass' head in the Temple may have "produced a positive reaction" because the animal is valued in a Homeric simile as stubborn, it was sacred to Dionysius, etc.). Anti-Jewish sentiments having thus been set within narrow confines, the sources for "the attractions of the Jews" are explored, and very definite answers are found: the Jews' antiquity (chapter 6), their "cardinal virtues" of wisdom, courage, temperance, justice and piety (chapter 7), and "the towering figure of Moses ... [who] was a tremendous boon to the Jews" (chapter 8). Finally, an attempt is made to establish that the Jews were successful in gaining "multitudes of proselytes" (chapters 9 and 11), as well as a large number of "sympathizers" (chapter 10). For this latter group, 31 additional "attractions" of Judaism are spelled out.

The presentation of the theme is detailed, patient, unflinching and unnuanced. This will not surprise readers of the same author's massive and industrious *Josephus and Modern Scholarship (1937-1980)* (1984). In some respects the present book is as reliable a catalogue to the ancient sources on specific subjects as the bibliography is to modern scholarship on Josephus. The questions posed here did not affect the assemblage of evidence; on the contrary, they rather ensured that every conceivably relevant detail would be mentioned. A reader may find, for example, a complete compilation of ancient comments on the Jews' antiquity (chapter 6), without worrying about whether the question asked about them — the degree to which a given remark is a "compliment" — is a good question.

Research and debates about ancient history, particularly (but by no means exclusively) ancient Jewish history, often arise from modern agendas. One who writes about the Jewish Diaspora, assimilation and exclusivity, and anti- and philo-Judaism in antiquity may expect strong reactions, but the present author has done much to bring criticism on himself by openly adopting the Jews of the Middle Ages and modern era as a model for understanding the Jews of antiquity (pp. 43-4 and *passim*). This model reveals much about how the book is organized and written. Without the model, for instance, there would have been no need to write so extensively about Jewish economic power and influence exciting Gentile jealousy, admiration and hatred. Despite some wealthy and influential individuals, the Jews as a group had little such power, and in antiquity they were not a merchant, banking or tax-collecting class (*all* sources cited on pp. 107-13 are misinterpreted). Moreover, unburdened by anachronism, ancient Judaism would appear less similar to modern orthodoxy than the portrayal in this book would suggest (e.g., *universal* observance of Sabbath and other customs is alleged). The ancient evidence simply does not fit the desired picture, which is accurate only for another time.