

tation of the inscription on the Cross (347). But in sum this is a splendid work, which will set standards for a generation of scholars.

Joseph Geiger

The Hebrew University

Doron Mendels, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Nationalism: Jewish and Christian Ethnicity in Ancient Palestine*, Anchor Bible Reference Library, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland: Doubleday, 1992., pp. x + 450.

For a fair appreciation of this substantial and very learned work it is essential to take into account its context, purpose and intended audience. As for its context, it forms part of the Anchor Bible Reference Library, intended to complement the *Commentaries* and *Dictionary* which go under the same title. As for its purpose, the author states it clearly in the Preface (p. ix): "This book was written with the intention of reaching a wide audience of students and readers who have an interest in Christianity, Judaism, and ancient history". The book is thus not intended as a scholarly monograph, but (far all the considerable learning which it embodies) as a vehicle of communication to a wider audience. The presumed interests of this audience are also very significant: the prominent place given to Christianity in the identification of the readers and their interests is not a mere aspiration, but is borne out in the relevant part of the book.

There is however also a further dimension, the location of Jewish history within the comparative study of nationalism in the Ancient World. What the author says about this in his Introduction (p. 1) manages in a sentence to express this aspiration, reveal a number of dubious presumptions, and set out the main themes which will inform his study of Jewish history from the Maccabees to Bar Kokhba: "The nations of the ancient Near East that were the neighbors of the Jews had specific and well-defined symbols of political nationalism, namely, the temple, territory, kingship, and the army".

The project of producing a survey of Jewish history in Judaea/Palestine over three-and-a-half centuries, and making it interesting and significant to a wide audience, is quite demanding in itself. But it is made more demanding — but correspondingly more interesting and meaningful — by its emphasis on the four symbols listed. The book is to be not just a rehearsal of what happened stage by stage (which it carries out successfully), but an analysis in terms of these four elements of statehood or nationalism: Temple, territory, kingship and army. Moreover the intention, in these respects too, is to go beyond an empirical study of these elements (how did the Temple function; or what were the geographical boundaries of Jewish settlement at any one time?), to treat them *as* symbols: that is, how are these elements understood and valued in our sources, both Jewish and Christian (and, to some extent, pagan)? In that sense the book is the direct successor of Mendels' *The Land of Israel as a Political Concept in Hasmonean Literature: Recourse to History in Second Century BC Claims to the Holy Land* (1987). It is essentially about ideology, rather than mere facts; and an ideology (inevitably) mediated through literary sources, above all narrative sources. This limitation has to be accepted; "popular opinion" on these topics is simply inaccessible to us.

In these respects the book seems to me quite successful. Mendels does manage to survey the dramatic changes in the fortunes of the Jewish community in Palestine while keeping his four chosen symbols firmly in view. As regards territory, the real settlement-

history of the area would, it is true, have needed to be spelled out in more detail than is possible even in this substantial book. The complex interplay of Jewish and gentile groups is however given due weight, as is (in the context of the revolt of 66 CE) the fatal absence of any fully coherent Jewish territory. In this context Mendels makes very good use of the allusion to this issue in the speech which Josephus gives to Eleazar before the final mass suicide on Masada (p. 370); in *BJ* 7.361-3 Eleazar is made to refer tellingly to the slaughter of Jews in Caesarea by the gentile inhabitants, and to the fact that the Jews of Scythopolis had sided with the gentiles there. By the time that the author arrives in ch. 13 'The Polemus Quietus (*sic*) and the Revolt of Bar Kokhba', he seems, it is true, to have run out of steam, and perhaps space, and makes little attempt to use the now quite substantial evidence either for the territory covered by the revolt, for its army, for its possible attachment to Jerusalem and the Temple, or for the nature of individual political leadership in the rebel "state". Here, as in the treatment of the First Revolt, contemporary coins and documents play rather a small part in this book. This is a serious limitation: for, the Maccabean revolt and the creation of the Hasmonean state apart, these two revolts *are* the ultimate expression of "Jewish nationalism" in the Ancient World, and we possess real evidence, not just literary reports, about how these two short-lived states worked.

In general, the question of the Temple, and its role and significance, plays a properly important part throughout, notably in the discussion of the attitude of the early Christians to it (to speak of "Christian ethnicity", however, is not helpful). But the wider social and economic role of the Temple, not to speak of the daily and yearly cycle of sacrifices, and the annual calendar of the major festivals as celebrated there, which come out so strongly (for instance) in the Gospel of John, are all taken for granted. For modern analysis of the real role which the Temple played in communal life the reader needs to turn to E.P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE - 66 CE* (1992). One consequence of this omission is that in this book the fall of the Temple is almost soundless, echoing only in the obscure allusions of 4 *Ezra* and 2 *Baruch*. Yet the sudden and permanent cutting-off of the central feature of Jewish communal religious observances *cannot* but have been relevant to what "Jewish nationalism" was now to mean.

Perhaps the most successfully treated of the four symbols is kingship, which is rightly seen as having been at all stages an ambivalent and controversial aspect of nationhood and Jewish self-government. This was true of course of the Hasmonean assumption first of the High Priesthood and then of the royal title; the period of conflicting claims between the last Hasmoneans, backed by Parthia, and Herod, formally recognised by Rome in 40 BCE, and installed in power in 37; the rule of Herod and his house, during which the High Priests became mere nominees, to be appointed and dismissed, first by Herod, then by the Romans, then by the Herodians again; in the various abortive risings after Herod's death; and finally in 66-73 CE. Mendels is absolutely right to assert (p. 222) that no Herodians were ever seen as potentially fulfilling popular aspirations for a truly Jewish *basileia*. But he is surely being misleading when he writes in the same page, "The extremists among the Zealots (probably the Sicarii) tried to crown Menachem, an important figure from among their own group (not of royal descent), king in Jerusalem". For, firstly, nothing in Josephus' narrative implies clearly that Menachem ever attempted to assume the title *basileus*, or wear the diadem; and to conflate the Zealots and the Sicarii is to throw away the clear distinctions made for the first time in Menahem Stern's classic article of 1977, "Sicarii and Zealots". Josephus' isolated, and retrospective, remark, that it was the expectation of the rise of a king from among themselves which most impelled the

Jewish population to revolt (*BJ* 6, 312-13), remains a profound puzzle. But it may be that attachment to the idea of an earthly anointed king, descended from David, was more profound than we realize.

As a study of Jewish history in this highly disturbed period, then, *Jewish Nationalism* has many merits. As an attempt to set the questions of Jewish ethnicity, nationalism, statehood or self-government against the wider background of the Hellenistic and Roman world, however, it is far less successful. Its main service, not a trivial one, is to remind the reader that the history of the Jews *could* (and should) be seen against the background of that of many other ethnic groups, who were also confronted first with the supra-national Hellenistic monarchies and then with the supra-national Roman (or, culturally speaking, Graeco-Roman) Empire. But none of the possible cases (Egypt, the Idumaeans, Nabataea, Palmyra, Osrhoene, Commagene, the Phoenician cities) is explored fully enough. The distinction between attributions of ethnic identity by outsiders, on the one hand, and real evidence of ethnic self-awareness and self-definition, on the other, is never made clear. The question of what communal, or "national", institutions any of these groups actually possessed is never explored, nor is the issue of whether language was an important vehicle of ethnicity. Egypt certainly offers significant contrasts and parallels, in the maintenance of an ancient, non-Classical, culture, art, architecture and tradition. But it had two rival, geographically distinct, "temples", or *loci* of priestly activity, Memphis and Thebes. In what way Egyptian culture and society possessed effective symbols of communal and political identity is a very complex question, hardly touched on here. The best case to explore, however, would probably have been Nabataea. But in fact neither the Nabataeans nor any other "nation" in the Near East of the Graeco-Roman Period can be shown to have had all four of the "symbols" attributed to them: the temple (meaning necessarily *a* central temple?), territory, kingship and army. The Nabataeans, however, did certainly have the latter three; and they also had their own language and script (both a branch of Aramaic). But, while their communal history would indeed be well worth exploring as a parallel to that of their Jewish neighbours, the question of their "ethnicity" or nationalism could hardly be pursued without raising the unanswered question: did they also have a national tradition, written or unwritten? The rather erratic and ill-defined use which Mendels makes of evidence about other "ethnic" groups ought to serve mainly to remind us how hard it is to understand anything about them. As regards "the peoples round about", this book offers some suggestive information and modern bibliography, but does not achieve enough precision in terminology, or in the formulation of the relevant questions, to do more than evoke in the reader a healthy curiosity.

Fergus Millar

Brasenose College, Oxford

*Heirs of the Septuagint: Philo, Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity. Festschrift for Earle Hilgert. The Studia Philonica Annual. Studies in Hellenistic Judaism* 3, edd. D.T. Runia, D.M. Hay and D. Winston., Atlanta 1991, pp. 397

This handsome volume, dedicated to one of the central and industrious figures in modern Philonic research, is a special issue of the *Studia Philonica Annual*. The *Annual*, successor to the celebrated but short-lived journal *Studia Philonica*, now serves as the premier