

*Jewish Civilization in the Hellenistic-Roman Period. Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 10*, ed. Shemaryahu Talmon, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991, pp. 269

This volume is a product of two conferences held in the summers of 1986 and 1987 under the auspices of the Continuing Workshop on Teaching Jewish Civilization in Universities and Institutions of Higher Learning with Emphasis on Comparative Religion. The first part of the volume, entitled "History, Society, Literature", is devoted to Jewish civilization in the Hellenistic-Roman period generally; the second part, entitled "Qumran Between Judaism and Christianity", focuses specifically on the Qumran scrolls and marks forty years since their discovery.

The articles included are as follows:

Part One — Shemaryahu Talmon, "The Internal Diversification of Judaism in the Early Second Temple Period"; Uriel Rappaport, "The Material Culture of the Jews in the Hellenistic-Roman Period"; Thomas A. Idinopulos, "Religious and National Factors in Israel's War with Rome"; Gerald J. Blidstein, "The Import of Early Rabbinic Writings for an Understanding of Judaism in the Hellenistic-Roman Period"; Devorah Dimant, "Literary Typologies and Biblical Interpretation in the Hellenistic-Roman Period"; Maurice Gilbert, "The Book of Ben Sira: Implications for Jewish and Christian Traditions".

Part Two — John Strugnell, "The Qumran Scrolls: A Report on Work in Progress"; Emanuel Tov, "Hebrew Biblical Manuscripts from the Judaean Desert: Their Contribution to Textual Criticism"; Lawrence H. Schiffman, "Qumran and Rabbinic Halakha"; Joseph M. Baumgarten, "Recent Qumran Discoveries and Halakha in the Hellenistic-Roman Period"; Jacob Milgram, "Deviations from Scripture in the Purity Laws of the *Temple Scroll*"; James H. Charlesworth, "Qumran in Relation to the Apocrypha, Rabbinic Judaism, and Nascent Christianity: Impacts on University Teaching of Jewish Civilization in the Hellenistic-Roman Period"; George W.E. Nickelsburg, "The Qumran Fragments of *I Enoch* and Other Apocryphal Works: Implications for the Understanding of Early Judaism and Christian Origins"; Hartmut Stegemann, "The 'Teacher of Righteousness' and Jesus: Two Types of Religious Leadership in Judaism at the Turn of the Era"; Shemaryahu Talmon, "Between the Bible and the Mishna: Qumran from Within".

The volume as a whole is rather uneven. Several articles are journal-length pieces (30-45 pages), most are far shorter (12-18 pages), and four are less than ten pages. Some are handy overviews of a specific topic, others recapitulate known issues or are a restatement of articles which appeared elsewhere, and still others offer interesting insights on specific questions or report on work in progress in a given field. Finally, a number of articles are geared specifically to teachers and include useful bibliographical references.

Since an evaluation of each and every article would make this review unwieldy, we shall focus on a small number of contributions only. Two of the fifteen articles written by the editor, S. Talmon, dominate the volume, as they are the first and last articles and encompass altogether some seventy pages -- more than one quarter of the entire book. The unifying motif in both pieces is the importance of the Qumran finds and their implications for understanding Judaism of the Second Temple period. The first article covers a broad sweep in the history of Judaism, from the sixth to the second centuries BCE. Talmon touches on a series of important issues, which he considers seminal to the understanding of Second Temple Judaism. Noting two fundamental changes in the sixth century and onward -- a new leadership network and greater geographical distribution -- Talmon

claims that the homogeneity characterizing pre-586 was now replaced by heterogeneity, and earlier monocentricity by multicentricity. Taken together with the newly crystallized emphasis of the Babylonian returnees on Jewish identity and more scrupulous observance of religious ritual, these factors served as underpinnings for the formation of Second Temple Jewish sectarianism. Talmon proceeds to deal in some detail with the two salient sectarian examples of subsequent centuries, the Samaritan schism of the fourth century BCE and the Qumran successionists of the second century BCE. Both phenomena are analyzed in the light of the messianism and millenarianism which Talmon sees as a major legacy of the earlier prophetic period; the Samaritans were largely bereft of such proclivities, Qumran suffused with them.

In his second essay, Talmon analyzes Qumran material from an engaging point of view:

In the ensuing deliberations I seek to highlight the distinctive posture of the *Yahad*. I purport to show that the Qumran Covenanters were poised between an ideational attachment to the world of the Hebrew Bible and the emerging world of the Mishnah. They hovered between the historical reality of the Hellenistic Roman era and a utopian identification with the historical past of biblical Israel. This setting in an existential twilight zone appears to cause a good many of the immense difficulties which confront the modern interpreter of the Covenanters' literature and their spiritual universe (pp. 224-225).

Talmon demonstrates that the Qumran sect identified with the biblical literary and religious process, or, as he calls it, the 'biblical stance' (p. 241). Prophecy and biblical psalmody still existed, and biblical terminology and style found expression in their writings -- as, for example, in the formulation of Qumran halakha, wherein biblical materials were adapted and reworked by Qumran authors. This is in striking contrast to the rabbinic practice of carefully preserving and quoting biblical texts as transmitted. (Elsewhere in the volume, D. Dimant distinguishes between two types of usage of biblical material: the expository and compositional. The former cites the biblical element explicitly and then integrates it into the later work as sacred text; the latter integrates the biblical element without differentiating it from the later work.) Most striking in this regard is the Qumran claim that they are the 'holy seed' and the 'first returnees to the Land' after the Exile, thus ignoring the Restoration literature (Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Ezra, and Nehemiah) entirely, which not surprisingly is the most poorly preserved among the biblical material from Qumran.

Three contributions to this volume address Jewish halakha in antiquity. G. Blidstein focuses on traditions in Mishna Gittin which deal with enactments "to order the world correctly" or "for the sake of peace". Be it a matter of slavery, captives, ownership of land (*sicaricon*) or Jewish-Gentile relationships, rabbinic enactments reflect, according to Blidstein, an independent non-biblical procedure for coming to grips with perceived ills of society.

L. Schiffman offers an overview of the halakhic sources in the Dead Sea scrolls and provides a concise survey of the various sectarian understandings regarding the sanctity of the law and the place of extra-biblical teachings. He argues for the centrality of Jewish law in the Second Temple period (at least among the sectarians) and, more specifically,

that there is much more continuity than is generally acknowledged between the pre-70 halakha and that found in later rabbinic writings.

J. Baumgarten cites a series of rabbinic traditions which find echoes — and indeed parallels — in the Qumran material. Issues concerning holiday observance (*Omer*) and purity divided sects in the pre-70 period, traces of which are preserved in later rabbinic traditions. Baumgarten, like Schiffman, emphasizes the continuity in Jewish law from the earlier to the later periods, thus stressing the importance of later sources in illuminating phenomena connected with earlier sectarian controversies.

Finally, the most broadly formulated overview of the history of Judaism in antiquity, the impact of Qumran and the state of the field today is offered by J. Charlesworth. Dividing the history of research into three phases (pre-1947, post-1947, and since the late 1970s), Charlesworth calls on Jewish and Christian scholars to take full stock of the Qumran discoveries in order to reconceptualize their picture of Judaism in the Second Temple period. For Christians, at least, this would entail viewing Judaism not only as a background to the New Testament but as the “foreground” for understanding Judaism in its own right.

The title of this volume, “Jewish Civilization in the Hellenistic-Roman Period”, is somewhat misleading. There is no attempt, neither in the range of topics selected nor in their treatment, to warrant such a title. Indeed, the articles focus on Palestinian religious and literary traditions, and, more specifically, on Qumran and related literature.

The subjects discussed, as well as the scholars and institutions represented, offer impressive evidence for the range of courses being offered in Jewish studies of antiquity in universities throughout the world. This, indeed, is encouraging, as the volume's contribution is first and foremost to provide teachers in the field with the wealth of ideas, approaches, and bibliographical references from which to draw in shaping their own syllabi. Finally, the range of topics and their interdisciplinary nature make a strong argument against the tendency to isolate various facets of Jewish studies, each entrenching itself ever-deeper in textual, philological, and literary concerns. Without denying the importance of a solid textual basis for any scholarly research, time and again the writers in this volume plead for an integrative and inclusive approach, wherein various disciplines and modes of interpretation merge and blend, complementing one another and offering new insights and a broader picture of the contours of Jewish life, thought, and practice.

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*A Greek and Arabic Lexicon (GALex) Materials for a Dictionary of the Mediæval Translations from Greek into Arabic*, Fascicle 2. *Handbuch der Orientalistik/Handbook of Oriental Studies, Erste Abteilung: Der Nahe und Mittlere Osten/The Near and Middle East XI*. Band, edd. Gerhard Endress and Dimitri Gutas, Leiden-New York-Köln: EJ Brill, 1994 pp. 97-224 + 28

The first fascicle of this welcome work, whose modestly expressed title, 'Materials', recalls, as it also invites comparison with, the great *Materials* for the Old Irish dictionary, appeared in 1992, and was reviewed in *Scripta* XII, 1993, pp. 221-22. This fascicle contains another 128 pages of Part A of the work, the Arabic-Greek Lexicon, as well as a further 28 pages of the separate Greek-Arabic Glossary and the various Indices. In this fas-