

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-

cicle, the coverage goes from the root *a.h.r.* to the root *a.š.l.* Advantage has been taken of the opportunity afforded by fascicle-publication to revise and expand the last two pages of the previous fascicle (a fact indicated inside the front cover of this); among other benefits, this has led to the listing at the head of the long (pp.97-118) article *āharu* of its separate divisions and of some of its many sub-divisions. Some idea of the density of the coverage provided here may be gleaned from the fact that pages 91-129 are devoted to the root *a.h.r.* alone.

Part B, the Greek-Arabic Glossary, is seen here to be cumulative: this is excellent news for those who had feared that they might have to spend their declining years hunting through multiple issues of this part of the work for scattered references to a single word in the various fascicles (and evidence, if such were still needed, of the value of computers in this type of work); the Indices accompanying this section of the Glossary are similarly cumulative as well.

The covers of the succeeding fascicles should be kept as they are issued, at least for the time being, even if the separate fascicles are intended to be bound: this fascicle's cover constitutes an integral part of the work, as it contains important Addenda and Corrigenda to the List of Sources (here thus seen to be expanding), as well as Additional Abbreviations. So far at least the editors are maintaining an impressive rhythm of publication. It is to be hoped that this will be maintained throughout this valuable work.

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Philip Mayerson, *Monks, Martyrs, Soldiers and Saracens. Papers on the Near East in Late Antiquity (1962-1993)*, Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society in association with New York University, 1994, pp. ix + 371.

Nessana, in the north-western corner of the Negev desert close to the border with the Gaza Strip, was at the beginning of this century little more than sand dunes and heaps of rubble. Excavations conducted there by the Colt Expedition showed it to have been at one time a thriving town, one of a number strung out through the Negev and surrounding areas, on the edges of and actually inside the desert, serving at once the political, the economic and, especially, the religious needs of a larger, Christian society. The papyri found there in the course of the excavations have conferred on the town an exceptional degree of importance. This importance derives less from the character of the town itself or from any specific significance which it may have had in Late Antiquity, and more from the extreme rarity of such documentation in general, a rarity which attracts considerable scholarly (and occasionally more than scholarly) attention to the places where it is found.

Covering the period of the transition from Byzantine rule to that of early Islam, these papyri document the thriving life of a small Christian city almost in the desert in the sixth and seventh centuries, continue into early Islamic times, and, petering out in the eighth century, bear witness to the way in which the city was gradually abandoned under the rule of the Muslims.

Although the excavations were published, admirably, along with the papyri, both literary and non-literary, astonishingly little note has been taken of the potential which they offer for integrated study of the fascinating character of Christian life in these small desert cities and their painful adaptation to the coming of Islam, which led to their ex-