

pp. 28-29, II. 1.5: "für die Vögel zum Bankett" does not translate the printed text, but rather the (preferable) reading of Zen.: οἰωνοῖσι τε δαίτα.

p. 29, II. 1.7: should read "d e r Atreide".

p. 560, I. 2: "Xenophanes Nr. 19. mit Anm. 3" should read "Anm. 9".

These are all minor slips in a volume which has much to recommend it. It fulfils admirably the aim that the editor has set himself. It is certain to give every reader a clear understanding of the nature of archaic Greek poetry and to stimulate interest in further reading of this literature.

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A. Kasher, *Jews and Hellenistic Cities in Eretz-Israel. Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum* 21 (Tübingen 1990), 372 pp.

The subject of this book is of fundamental importance, not only to the understanding of the relationship existing between Jews and Greeks during the Second Temple period, but also to the understanding of the basic features of Hellenistic and Roman rule in Eretz-Israel. Kasher deals with it, as always, in a clear and systematic way, following a chronological order from the early Hellenistic through the Hasmonean periods, to Roman rule. The series of indexes at the end of the work and the bibliography are useful for further investigation. His numerous and detailed maps of the Hasmonean conquests are especially helpful (pp. 67, 89, 103, 115, 130, 143, 146, 156, 170).¹

As for Jewish-Greek relations, much changed in the four hundred years between Alexander's conquest in 332 B.C.E. and the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in 70 C.E., yet their fundamental characteristics remained unchanged. These characteristics include religious incompatibility between the pagan world and Jewish values, demographic pressure and tension between a basically urban (Greek) and a rural (Jewish) population, which brought about social and economic rivalry. The importance of this religious incompatibility is not to be underestimated, since it did not affect religion only, but covered almost all aspects of life. In fact, Kasher identifies the features of the Jewish-Greek conflict in Hellenistic and Roman times with those of the national-religious conflict existing between the Phoenicians-Canaanites and the Jews in Biblical times: he devotes a chapter (pp. 29-48) to a description of the pagan rituals in the Hellenistic cities, which seem to have incorporated a fusion of Canaanite and Phoenician deities and Greek mythology. An example of religious incompatibility is offered

¹ On the consequences of the Hasmonean conquests, see now A. Kasher, "The Changes in Manpower and Ethnic Composition of the Hasmonean Army (167-63 BCE)", *JQR* 81 (1990), 325-352.

by the research on the action of Simeon ben Shatah in Ascalon, written by J. Efron and published as an appendix to the book (pp. 318-341). Trying to establish the historical value to be given to the story which appears in the Jerusalem Talmud, Efron stresses the deep contrast between the rituals of the goddess venerated in Ascalon, which were accompanied by fornication, debauchery and licentiousness, and the Jewish values, which saw in prostitution the symbol of idolatrous deviation.

There is no doubt that in attempting to reconstruct the relations between Greeks and Jews, the main problem lies in the fact that Josephus is not only our main source, but almost always our only source. This makes comparisons impossible, and in addition there is the familiar difficult problem of the interpretation of Josephus' testimony. It is necessary to read between the lines, taking into account his political and personal position towards Rome, which is responsible for his views on the Jewish revolutionaries, not only during the war of 66 C.E., but throughout the Roman period and possibly after the destruction of the Temple. To complicate the picture, Josephus' testimony contains contradictions, both in the chronological order and, more important, in the light in which the events are presented; these contradictions appear not only among his *BJ*, his *AJ* and his *Vita*, but also between different sections in a single work (see, for example, pp. 268-276). We should not forget, moreover, that for the reconstruction of some historical periods, for example the Hasmonean, Josephus probably used sources which displayed anti-Jewish positions, like Nicolaus of Damascus. It is clear that the description of Jewish-Greek relations is distorted, but because of the lack of non-Josephan information developing an alternative picture is not entirely possible. A significant example is the evaluation of the Hasmonean wars against Hellenistic cities, developed by Kasher following Efron's theory. The attitude of contemporary scholarship has often been influenced by the negative way in which Josephus presents the Hasmonean wars of conquest. Kasher (pp. 119-122 and 160-163) brings out what Josephus ignored, *viz.*: the nationalist, social and religious motives which led Hasmonean rulers, from John Hyrcanus I to Alexander Jannaeus, to undertake their conquests; the hatred that developed because of the religious and national dangers which had threatened the Jewish settlement in Eretz-Israel ever since the religious decrees of Antiochus IV; and the wish to purify the country of idolatry. Josephus depicts the Hasmonean wars as motivated by a thirst for conquest, as though the Hellenistic cities were merely innocent victims of arbitrary Jewish aggression and empty of combat troops at the time of the attack. But the archaeological finds, Kasher maintains, show that damage must have been more limited than Josephus would like us to believe. There are also reasonable grounds to assume that not all of the pagan citizens were deported or exiled from their cities, otherwise it would be difficult to explain their rapid return to power there in the days of Roman conquest (on this point, see also p. 175). The reason for the distorted picture which emerges in

Josephus' work is identified by Kasher in Josephus' passive use of an anti-Jewish, Hellenistic source, probably Nicolaus of Damascus (see above), who in turn may have been inspired by the propaganda which probably arose within the Hellenistic cities of Eretz-Israel. Kasher stresses (p. 163) that the reported ruin and desolation of the Hellenistic cities should be interpreted from the Hellenistic point of view. The Greeks felt it proper to claim that, as the political status and sovereignty of a polis were symbolized by its walls, the razing of those walls by the Hasmonean conquerors could be equated with the destruction of the entire polis. Moreover, as the temples and educational institutions (gymnasia, theatres, etc.) of the Hellenistic cities denoted the freedom and special cultural character enjoyed by those cities, their elimination, as the result of the Hasmonean conquest, could be considered as bringing about the cities' cultural and religious destruction.

It remains to be asked what could be the reason underlying Josephus' passive use of these sources: it is difficult to believe that he was not conscious of their political bias, but on the other hand it is also difficult to understand how this bias could serve his own apologetic purposes. Perhaps Josephus wanted to project onto the past his negative estimation of those groups among the Jews who fought against the Greek world, and especially against Greek culture, which at his time was the culture of the Roman world?

If Josephus' purposes sometimes elude our understanding, Kasher's point of view is more clearly recognizable. Both formally and substantively, his book is entirely Jewish. An effort is made to make the reader aware of the Jewish culture and ideology which lie in the background and explain Jewish political behaviour. For this reason, it is important that this work, which originally appeared in Hebrew, is now made widely accessible in the English translation. The titles given to the chapters avoid the usual mention of the foreign powers that ruled in Eretz-Israel at the time; the third and second centuries B.C.E., for example, which are named in most if not all contemporary researches as "the Hellenistic period", are presented under the heading "In the Mists of Early Generations"; the Roman conquest by Pompey and the beginning of Roman rule in Judea are treated as a subchapter called "The Roman interregnum: from Pompey's Conquest to the Crowning of Herod", in a chapter entitled "The Glory and Decline of the Hasmonean Kingdom"; while the later Roman period is called "In the Shadow of Calamity". Frequently, reconstruction of the history of the Roman provinces reveals a Graeco-Roman point of view even in contemporary research. Obviously this is due to the fact that our sources are drawn from the Graeco-Roman framework. The importance of Kasher's book therefore lies, *inter alia*, in his presentation of events from the point of view not of the governor, but of the governed. Let us take for example the choice of Caesarea as the Roman procurators' permanent seat of office. Classical historians regard it as a sign of Rome's consideration for Jewish sensibilities. M. Ghiretti, for example, considers it proof of the

large amount of autonomy given to the Jewish people by the Romans: "tale autonomia è inoltre confermata dalla scelta di Cesarea Marittima, invece di Gerusalemme, quale centro dell' amministrazione prefettizia".² This is sound. But Kasher's view offers an additional dimension: in his eyes, the choice of Caesarea was one of the factors which adversely affected the relations between Jews and Gentiles. "The choice of that site symbolized the political turning point brought about in Judaea by its establishment as a Roman province ... it was apparently also calculated to reduce the status of Jerusalem, in order to eliminate any external evidence of the latter city's authority over the non-Jewish inhabitants of the province" (p. 225). It is not by chance, therefore, that the spark which set off the conflagration of the great revolt in 66 C.E. came from Caesarea. The novelty of this approach is undoubtedly important for a deeper understanding of the difficult relationship among Greeks, Romans and Jews.

It would be interesting to compare the Greek-Jewish relationship in Eretz-Israel with the Greek-Jewish relationship in other places: for example, in Egypt, and particularly in Alexandria, in Antioch (Kasher has dedicated thorough research to both),³ in Cyrenaica, or in Asia Minor. The sources of friction seem to be similar: a background of opposing mental, cultural and ideological values, to which we often have to add social and economic tension which sometimes led to political conflict and strife. The part played by Rome, however, is completely different. In the diaspora, the Jews, not the Greeks, represented the minority: a minority which constantly called for Roman backing and help, whenever a menace appeared from the Greek side. Apart from the case of Flaccus in 38 C.E. in Alexandria, which was an exception (as was Caligula's policy towards the Temple of Jerusalem), we find a general tendency to comply with Jewish requests. From Cyrenaica and Asia Minor we have quite a large number of instances in the first century B.C.E. and the first century C.E. in which the Romans were ready to side with the Jews, at least in theory. The question arises whether this was local policy only or whether it came from Rome itself.⁴ In any case, after Roman intervention, which in most cases defended the legitimacy of Jewish cult, the parties were left alone to work things out. Roman reactions to

² M. Ghiretti, "Lo 'status' della Giudea dall' età Augustea all' età Claudia", *Latomus* 44 (1985), 764.

³ A. Kasher, "The Rights of the Jews of Antioch on the Orontes", *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 49 (1982), 69-85; *idem*, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Tübingen 1985).

⁴ A new insight into the Greek-Roman-Jewish relationship in the diaspora, as it appears in Josephus' testimony, is to be found in T. Rajak, "Was there a Roman Charter for the Jews?", *JRS* 74 (1984), 107-123 and *eadem*, "Jewish Rights in the Greek Cities under Roman Rule: a New Approach", *Approaches to Ancient Judaism V. Studies in Judaism and Its Greco-Roman Context*. *Brown Judaic Studies* 32, ed. V.S. Green (Atlanta 1985), 19-33.

Jewish-Greek conflicts in Eretz-Israel and in the diaspora could be examined both horizontally, for the same historical period in the different places, and vertically, from the age of Julius Caesar to that of Titus, or even later, to the beginning of the second century C.E.

Kasher's book opens new horizons to investigation: for this reason, too, we owe him our gratitude.

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J.J. Price, *Jerusalem Under Siege: The Collapse of the Jewish State 66-70 C.E.* (Leiden-New York-Cologne 1992), 361 pp.

Josephus' description of the Great War against Rome in 66-70 C.E. is the longest such account of any war of similar duration in antiquity. Price's book, which is based on his Ph.D. dissertation, is an excellent detailed study of Jerusalem during that war.

Price is very systematic in his approach. He starts the study with a discussion about rebels and aristocrats. This leads him into a detailed history of the struggle until the destruction of Jerusalem. After an epilogue there are fourteen detailed appendices in which he discusses various matters such as the *BJ* as an historical source, questions of the Jewish army, and archaeology. Price is a careful scholar who does not take any risks and does not tend to plunge into unnecessary scholarly or emotional polemics. His study is cautious and balanced and concentrates on the information available from Josephus' *BJ*. At times Price alludes to the war which was going on in Palestine, but the war in the rest of the country is really just background to the situation in Jerusalem during 66-70. Throughout his book the author attempts to introduce some "order" into the sequence of events during the four years of *stasis* in Jerusalem. It is evident that as a classicist he is aware of the phenomenon of *stasis* in the Greek world, but nevertheless he does not reach hasty conclusions as a result of facile comparisons, and this is one of the book's merits. Neither does he make elaborate comparisons with modern revolutions, such as the French or the Bolshevik. This again is in his favour.

My criticism of Price concerns only matters of interpretation; the Great War can indeed be discussed *ad nauseam*, because our only source remains the *BJ* of Josephus (with minor pieces of information in other sources, in particular Tacitus; cf. Appendix 2). I will give a few examples. First, Price puts a great deal of emphasis on the distinction between "revolutionaries" and "the Jewish leaders and high priests" at the very start of the war in 66, before the incident with Cestius Gallus (p. 31). This seems to me too schematic because the term