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For the great revolts of 66–70 and 132–35, the discursive evidence on the role of tribute and taxation is rather slim. G. concludes that tribute was not the reason for these conflicts but a useful slogan for those who sparked them for other reasons and could then exploit the old dichotomy of “offrande et tribut”. For Bar Kokhba in particular, G. has little to go on. The short chapter (pp. 447–66) nevertheless offers thorough discussion and a punchy conclusion: when Bar Kokhba kept Roman taxes in place to finance his own short-lived realm, he did away with the opposition between “offrande et tribut” that had haunted Jewish politics since the Maccabean revolt: the tribute had become a legitimate form of taxation, although the sums remained the same, proving once again that everything depends on political legitimacy. It is a satisfying end to G.’s fiscal history, so satisfying in fact that one may easily forget how little evidence there actually is to support it.

This is an intelligent and well-researched book. G. is careful throughout to stress the limits of the evidence. While his nuanced discussions will be appreciated by any scholar, they can occasionally cause frustration—e.g. when G. dedicates multiple pages to a question only to conclude that it cannot be answered, or when several cornerstones of his fiscal narrative are labelled ‘quelque peu douteuse’ in quick succession (p. 231 on the toparchies of Gabinius, p. 233 on Crassus pillaging the temple), leaving the reader unclear about the status of G.’s historical reconstructions: are they mere “what ifs”, or serious propositions as to what happened? On several occasions, important statements are made only to be immediately nuanced to the point of downright revoking them. To give just one example, G.’s competent summary of debates around the *fiscus Iudaicus* ends with another punchy dichotomy: while in 70, an offering to god (the didrachm tax) had been transformed into tribute to Rome, Nerva’s (supposed) reform made the tax voluntary and thus a matter of religious belonging: in this case, ‘c’est le tribut qui devient une offrande’ (p. 437). The conclusion is elegant and to the point—and yet in the same paragraph, the reader is reminded that 1.) as the interpretation of Nerva’s reform is debated, the reconstruction is based on a ‘what if’ (‘si ...’); 2.) Paul could already equate “offrande et tribut” in *Romans* 13:6, well before the Jewish tax (although the argument there appears rather different); and 3.) it is unclear if this was indeed the understanding of anyone who actually had to pay the tax. It is certainly prudent to point these things out, and yet as a result, it remains unclear if G. wants to make the historical case that the tribute came to be seen as an offering to god, or if he merely wants to consider the theoretical possibility that this argument *might* be made. A reader ploughing through a book of 500 densely printed pages within the context of modern academia might well expect its author to cut some of this short and commit to a hypothesis.

On occasions such as these, the origins of the book as a doctoral thesis shine through, but they can in no way detract from the fact that this is a remarkably thorough and elegantly structured study that will remain essential reading in the field for some time to come.

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Noah Hacham and Tal Ilan (eds.). *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum V: The Early-Roman Period (30 BCE–117 CE)*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022. XXVII+216 pp., ISBN: 9783110785999

Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum (CPJ), devised by Victor Tcherikover, was a milestone in the research of ancient Judaism. In the three original volumes, which were published in 1957–1961, Tcherikover (and the editors of Volume III which was published after Tcherikover passed away) gathered all the papyri and ostraca that were deemed as connected to Jews and Judaism from the

Hellenistic Period to the Islamic Conquest. But since then, 60 years have passed, witnessing the discovery and publication of many new papyri, including some that are connected to Jews and Judaism. Henceforth, Noah Hacham and Tal Ilan decided to continue the work of the late Itzhak Fikhman and gather the relevant papyri and ostraca and create a new trilogy of volumes that will bring the CPJ up to date. This new series' first volume (CPJ IV) was dedicated to the Hellenistic Period while the second one, which is the focus of the current review, is dedicated to the Early Roman Period (30 BCE–117 CE), albeit the volumes also have some entries for documents that are dated to the 1st–2nd centuries CE, or to the 2nd century CE in general (for example CPJ 658 and CPJ 662). This volume brings documents that the editors considered as undoubtedly Jewish, and their decision was implemented using rigorous criteria that would have judged some of the documents that were included in the old trilogy as not good enough for the new series of the CPJ. As for the editors, only the highest certainty possible has been used to decide if it was to be included. Furthermore, this choice was affected by the many changes that the research underwent in the last half century, deeming certain names that were in the past considered Jewish, as not necessarily used by Jews alone.

The new volume has 63 new papyri and ostraca entries, and three entries that present inscriptions, encompassing 84 new documents written on papyri and ostraca and six new inscriptions. The documents of the first and main part are organized geographically, starting with documents from Upper Egypt, then north all the way to the Fayum, and lastly presenting the ones with unknown provenance. The documents are sorted chronologically in each region. Additionally, there is another section dealing with the Diaspora Revolt in Egypt, which presents documents that may refer, or are connected, to the revolt and its results.

The first batch of documents (CPJ 620–632) is all from Apollinopolis Magna (Edfu), a city in southern Egypt where numerous documents relating to Jews were found. Many of them originated from what was defined by the archaeologists excavating the site as the Delta (δ) quarter. Due to this, the quarter was known as the Jewish Quarter, with Wessely defining it as a “Jewish Ghetto” in 1913. As the new volume shows, possibly not all who resided in this quarter were Jewish. Furthermore, there are also documents showing Jewish presence outside of this quarter, clearly indicating that this was no ghetto and not the sole place for Jewish presence in the city. Another batch of documents is the one from Mons Claudianus (CPJ 635–637), indicating Jewish presence in this mining area and showing that Jews played many roles there, including camel drivers (CPJ 636) and foremen (CPJ 637). The editors of the volume decided to date these documents to the period 98–117 CE. According to them: ‘The quarries at Mons Claudianus were most active during the reign of Trajan, but they continued to be worked in the reigns of Hadrian and the Antonines. Since two of the three ostraca can most probably be dated to the reign of Trajan, we have dated them conservatively to before the Jewish Revolt, on the assumption that Jews were no longer visible in Egypt immediately after it.’ However, there is a problem with this logic that repeats itself in the volume (for example CPJ 639 and CPJ 661). Most documents generally dated to the 2nd century CE or the 1st–2nd centuries CE, are designated as pre-117 CE because it is believed there was less Jewish presence after 117 CE. Therefore, as long as we continue dating papyri and ostraca as such, there will be less Jewish presence or, more correctly, almost no Jewish presence in the 2nd century after 117CE. There is no reason to assume that all the Jews vanished, as many would have sided with the Romans. Yes, many Jews perished in the Diaspora Revolt but not all of them and not all of the Jewish survivors, who used their Jewish name, stopped using it completely and stuck only to their Hellenistic or Egyptian one. If the documents are continued to be treated in this way, the ability to understand the Jewish

presence in Egypt will be lost. After all, the Jewish community of the later centuries did not appear in Egypt out of thin air.

The next batch worthy of special attention is the two ostraca from Umm Balad (CPJ 638–639), an area of mines and forts. Both are unique, with the first (CPJ 638) discussing the need to replace the bread that was issued to the Jews with wheat. Because of the date, Cuvigny and the editors of the volumes suggested that the reason was Passover. It is possible that the reason was different yet connected to religion. The fact that a Roman army officer deals with it may allude to what was practiced in the Roman army and beyond (we do not know if the Jews were soldiers or miners). Moreover, it may imply that the Romans went to great extents to enable the Jews to keep their faith. CPJ 639 is a drawing of a bearded man with a stick which Cuvigny suggested may be Moses, and is perhaps the earliest iconographic depiction of Moses. Yet this interpretation is not totally irrefutable.

There are a few other documents that throw light on previous unknowns. CPJ 645 brings us the first known Jewish strategos (administrative head of nome) whose name was Chelkias. It was found in Herakleopolis/Arsinoite nome, yet it is not enough to conclude that Chelkias was the head of this nome as where the document is found is not necessarily where it was written. Likewise, CPJ 659, a list of beer distribution, brings the first known Jewish head of a guild. His personal name did not survive, but his father was called Iosepos, which is, without a doubt, a Jewish name and not the only one on this list. The son of Iosepos was the head of a guild of cowherds. Another document is CPJ 661, a fragment of a contract of sale for a house that may include the name of the first known Jewish owner of a private bank in Roman Egypt, Ananios.

Two lists of taxpayers are also very important as CPJ 651 has in it 106 names, 27 of which are definitely Jews and another 20 are suspected to be Jews. This means there is an extremely high percentage of Jews in this area. In this list, three of those who are definitely Jews paid the Pig Tax which raises the possibility that this tax was transformed in the Roman period to become another type of per-capita tax and was no longer linked to raising pigs. Another list is CPJ 652, a list of payers of the Jewish Tax. This list is dated to 92/93CE, and only fragments of it survived, with 10 names starting with Φιλ. Taking into consideration that it does not include all the names starting with Φ and that it is only one letter in the Greek alphabet, would suggest that there were at least hundreds of names, suggesting a very considerable Jewish population in the area of Tebtynis (Fayum).

In the latter parts of the volume, there is a batch (CPJ 663–672) of documents that are connected to the Diaspora Revolt. This uprising of Jewish communities outside of Judea, mainly in Cyprus and Egypt, is usually dated to 115–117 CE, yet there is not a lot of documentation, so its length is unclear. Two of the documents in the new volume CPJ 664c–d are suggested to imply that the civil unrest continued until the end of 117 CE, and possibly the beginning of 118 CE. However, as these letters only represent a mother telling her son to be careful, they may solely attest to a general feeling of danger because of the recent hostilities, even if they have already ended and/or a mother's care and concern for her son as all mothers do. The volume also includes three fragments of the Septuagint (CPJ 673–675), and a few fragments of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* (CPJ 676–678), that attest to some of the animosity between Jews and Gentiles in Alexandria in the first half of the 1st century CE.

All in all, this is an important addition to the field. It concentrates and makes accessible a lot of important documents that were left relatively off the radar. The volume includes a lot of firsts which emphasize that Jews took part in every activity and were included in all social spheres of Roman society. Henceforth, the anachronistic notions regarding Jews in antiquity, which unfortunately still

exist, need to be abandoned, and the categorizing of the Jews of antiquity according to rules and boundaries that they did not have, nor recognized, needs to be questioned. Accordingly, it is important that this book will be accessible to any student and scholar.

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Michael Philip Penn, Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, Christine Shepardson, and Charles M. Stang (eds.), *Invitation to Syriac Christianity: An Anthology*, Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2022, 462 + xxi pages, 3 maps, 16 illustrations, ISBN 9780520299191

Syriac Christianity has its roots in a Semitic milieu, at the crossroads between the Eastern Roman and Persian empires. In this space, it had to adapt to the challenges of constant political changes (from Sassanid domination to Islamic rule, to take into consideration only the first Christian millennium). According to tradition, this branch of Christianity was in direct connection with the message of the Apostles Addai and Mari, who Christianised Edessa, the core of Syro-Aramaic Christianity. Over time, it developed a rich theological heritage, contained in unique pieces of exegesis, and a deep symbolism that was sometimes expressed with the simplicity of poetic words that can capture the imagination of readers from any cultural background. In the hierarchy of the connoisseurs and keepers of this tradition, the most intimate category includes the believers and the clerical body of this form of Eastern Christianity, those who understand it from within through their experience of belonging to this magnificent form of Christianity. Next come the researchers and historians, those who look upon this tradition from the outside, seeking to discover it and get acquainted with its treasures by studying its manuscripts, texts, inscriptions and other sources. Due to their activities, the third category of readers may now interact with it: namely, students and those who are beginning to parse some fragments of the religious history of the Middle East. These students, and other potential readers, have long needed an anthology to explore with pleasure and fascination, to guide them through the innumerable sources that Syriac Christianity has to offer.

Displaying a remarkable vision and anticipation of the increasing interest in Syriac sources in the future, the four well-known editors of this volume, experts in the field active in American universities, have fulfilled a longstanding *desideratum*: the publication of a much-needed work for students and those who want to study a selection of well-chosen texts from sources from the first thirteen centuries of the Syriac tradition.

A particular advantage of this book is that in addition to existing translations (listed in Appendix A, pp. 374–88), the editors partially revised and adapted the translations to new linguistic standards in the field. Appendix B (pp. 389–406) is also important, containing brief biographies of the Syriac authors; as is Appendix C (pp. 407–12), a glossary of important terms for understanding the field of Syriac Christianity. The three double-page maps, and the accompanying illustrations are very useful. These important support tools help the reader to locate geographically the main church centres in this Christian space and decipher their continuous historical heritage through the *longue durée*, and prepare them to discover, page by page, the originality, beauty and breadth of knowledge they can draw from this selection of sources.

The Introduction begins very pragmatically, with a distinction between the Christianity with which Europeans are familiar (including the dismantling of modern clichés in order to allow a better understanding and perspective on Christianity as a compact, clearly defined concept) and local Christians with their particular traditions and identity as rendered through the objective lens of