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Book Reviews

Claire Clivaz, Andrew Gregory and David Hamidović (eds.), *Digital Humanities in Biblical, Early Jewish and Early Christian Studies*. Scholarly Communication Series 2. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2014. €110.00 / \$142.00. Pp. 260. ISBN: 978–9–00426–432–8.

It is undeniable that Digital Humanities, that is the application of digital tools and creation of digital resources for Humanities research, is an area of ever increasing productivity. This can be seen in the growing number of websites and databases becoming available (whether freely accessible or commercial) and the number of projects utilizing some form of electronic media. Aware of this proliferation in what can sometimes seem a too-technical field for those trained in the Humanities, the editors of this volume have been organizing workshops to bring together those working in the field of Biblical studies and cognate areas. The volume is a welcome product of such meetings so that others may participate in the conversation. The editors suggest the papers are not aimed at experts in the particular areas but at those wishing to learn about methods and techniques in cognate disciplines. The range of papers demonstrates well the different ways electronic resources can be applied in Humanities research.

The first section is classified under the theme of digitized manuscripts, largely representing the possibilities of displaying images on the internet or using the internet for text search programmes. Pnina Shor opens with a description of the project to digitize the Dead Sea Scrolls ('The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library: The Digitization Project of the Dead Sea Scrolls'). As well as explaining the technology used, she highlights the importance of collaboration. The Israel Antiquities Authority brought together expertise from the University of Eastern Piedmont (experienced with spectral imaging), the Preservation Research and Testing Division of the Library of Congress (who were working on the aging of parchment), and the Institute of Chemistry at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where the physical properties of parchment and ink were researched. The online access to the images, in multiple languages and formats, was made possible through collaboration with the Google R&D Center in Israel. The benefits of such collaborations are then demonstrated in an essay by David Hamidović ('Dead Sea Scrolls Inside Digital Humanities. A Sample'), who shows how the images of the

Scrolls can be enhanced for improved readings and restitution of missing words. He demonstrates this using 4Q173a and 4Q225 as samples. He concludes by noting the opportunities afforded by the digital images for identifying scribal hands and determining the size and evolution of the scribal schools behind the scrolls.

The electronic form of manuscript transcriptions is the topic of Hugh Houghton's study ('The Electronic Scriptorium: Markup for New Testament Manuscripts'), arising from work on producing the *Editio Critica Maior* of the New Testament. He describes the advances made with the introduction of XML, but also the 'Workspace for Collaborative Editing' platform that renders it easier for scholars to enter transcriptions of manuscripts. Elie Dannaoui continues the New Testament theme by describing the construction of a database for the various witnesses to the Arabic Gospels ('Digital Arabic Gospels Corpus'). The database allows for the variety of text formats to be recorded, opening up possibilities for linguistic research and especially for text-critical questions regarding the different forms of the text of the Gospels. Sara Schulthess continues the theme of the Arabic New Testament by considering the contribution of the internet to the study of the discipline ('The Role of the Internet in New Testament Textual Criticism: the Example of the Arabic Manuscripts of the New Testament'). She recognizes the importance of the digitization of manuscripts to democratize access to the data, and which significantly brings in Islamic scholars to the discussion. The study of New Testament Arabic manuscripts is a truly hybrid discipline bringing together text critics and scholars of Islam, thanks to internet forums. This section on digitized manuscripts is brought to a close by Charlotte Touati describing a project to record the heritage of Ethiopian Jews in a database and on a website ('The Falasha Memories Project. Digitalization of the Manuscript BNF, Ethiopien d'Abbadie'). It records both the culture of the Falashas themselves and the history of scholarship in the 19th century.

The second section of the book gathers papers on digital academic research and publishing. Juan Garcés writes for an audience concerned about the particular issues of Greek lexicography of the Septuagint, and explains in detail the problems of identifying definitions for Septuagint words ('The Seventy and Their 21st-Century Heirs. The Prospects for Digital Septuagint Research'). He advocates the greater deployment of electronic resources (and especially use of the CATSS database) for both lexicographic and text-critical work. Ory Amitay proposes an ambitious project use digital media to examine the theology and origins of monotheism beyond the confines of the field of Biblical Studies ('Digital Approaches to the Study of Ancient Monotheism'). He lays out different methods of searching and analysing data and the possibilities for collaborative work so that a history of monotheism in antiquity can be written. This theme of networks on the internet is continued by Claire Clivaz ('Internet Networks and Academic Research: the Example of

the New Testament Textual Criticism'). She discusses the importance of open scientific networks and then examines some current examples of networks in the New Testament field including private lists, forums, and blogs. She encourages a greater degree of open access in the field, and concludes that computational methods should be used to exploit better the content already available but dispersed across the internet. Laurence Mellerin introduces Biblindex, an online source of biblical references in Christian (and in due time Jewish) sources of late antiquity and the middle ages ('New Ways of Searching with Biblindex, the Online Index of Biblical Quotations in Early Christian Literature'). He demonstrates the many methods that can now be used to search and present the data. The topic of Greek lexicography returns in Romina Vergari's application of corpus linguistics to biblical Greek ('Aspects of Polysemy in Biblical Greek. A Preliminary Study for a New Lexicographical Resource'). The essay focuses on a technical discussion of the nature of polysemy more than on the computational technology itself. Digital publishing is a topic that all scholars encounter on a day to day basis, and therefore Andrew Gregory's essay is a welcome discussion of the theoretical basis of digital books and an examination of a range of examples of electronic publishing ('Publishing Digitally at the University Press? A Reader's Perspective'). Finally, Russell Hobson contrasts the online presence of Assyriology, where many texts re open source and the field of biblical studies, where texts are mostly accessible through commercial software ('Does not Biblical Studies Deserve to Be an Open Source Discipline?'). He calls for greater collaboration in the production of online resources for biblical studies, freed of the additional and unnecessary commercial features.

All the papers are informative and engaging on their particular topics. In most cases the technology being used is standard fare these days, but the innovative application in the research fields is a lesson on what possibilities there might be. Many readers will never have the access or ability to apply the methods to their particular research, but this volume records what is being done and could be a source of inspiration for those seeking new ways to represent their data or even ideas for research grants.

James Aitken
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Erin Darby, *Interpreting Judean Pillar Figurines: Gender and Empire in Judean Apotropaic Ritual*. Forschungen Zum Alten Testament 2. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014. Pp xx + 588, incl. 35 figures and 79 tables. €99.00 ISBN: 978-3-16152-492-9.

Eric Darby's study of the female pillar figurines of ancient Judah (Judean Pillar Figurines, hereafter JPFs) offers an engaging multi-faceted approach to the topic, which complements and challenges prevalent scholarly trends, particularly since Kletter's (1996) essential work. This monograph is a publication, with some changes, of Darby's 2011 PhD dissertation at Duke University, as reflected in copious footnotes and detailed appendices (128 pages): a mine of information which underpins Darby's study.

The variety of approaches can make the book complex to follow. The journey, however, is well worth the effort as Darby weaves together archaeological and textual data to address the meaning and function of the JPFs. The introductory chapter discusses the category of apotropaic ritual and considers how ritualised activity leaves a trace in the archaeological record. Darby raises important methodological questions on the interpretation of archaeological context, and the use of ethnographic analogy, to present her own approach: a regional focus on Jerusalem, a detailed study of disposal patterns, and consideration of Neo-Assyrian ritual texts. Darby dedicates the second chapter to the history of interpretation of the JPFs. She takes to task the regrettable flattening of the more nuanced interpretations of older works which yields a simplistic understanding of the figurines as goddesses, and as Asherah in particular, despite the lack of clear iconographic or textual associations. She critiques the reading of JPFs in terms of popular versus official religion, often with a facile connection with female religion. Darby further builds her case with an excursus through the figurine rituals in Neo-Assyrian texts (Chapter 3). As she rightly notes, though 'the Neo-Assyrian texts cannot be used to recreate, *ipso facto*, Judean ritual use of clay figurines' (p. 96), they can be used to question and appraise assumed meanings and functions.

The next two chapters take an in-depth look at the archaeological contexts of figurines from the southeastern hill of Jerusalem. Darby focused first on Kathleen Kenyon's (1961–67) excavations (Chapter 4), and tentatively proposes to read Cave I as a linked to pottery production, and the 'extra-mural' street as an itinerant pottery market. Darby is right in arguing against the assumption that spaces where figurines were found are cultic. However, Cave I lacks many of the diagnostic elements to clinch its use for pottery production (cf. p. 134–135). Chapter 5 considers the contexts from Yigal Shiloh's (1978–85) excavations,

with a focus on Area G and the Area E. Darby's study shows that the JPFs can be associated with household rather than public spaces, but cannot be connected to one domestic shrine, female activity spaces or other cultic paraphernalia (p. 180). These chapters would have benefitted from plans that show the spatial distribution of figurines in the various areas discussed. Chapter 6 interprets the results of the petrographic study (Ben Shlomo and Darby: 2014) commissioned as part of the PhD project. The study confirms that figurines were produced locally, but were unlikely to be produced by specialised figurine producers (rather than as part of normal pottery production), nor were they produced by regular inhabitants in the home. The figurines are then considered in the regional context (Chapter 7) including Jerusalem, and the sites of Mevasseret, Moza, Ramot, Ramat Rachel, Gibeon and Tell en Nasbeh. Similar to what is known in Jerusalem the JPFs come from domestic contexts, and are not strongly associated with shrines and cultic paraphernalia. The regional picture also confirms the particularities of style typical of the region, such as the pinched heads.

Darby then examines the vocabulary related to clay and potters, as well as idols and idol production in the Hebrew Bible (Chapter 8). Her meticulous study provides a more nuanced picture related to the figurines. She suggests that the prohibitions related to idols may well have not applied to the figurines, and underlines the ability of clay to transmit impurity or holiness. Chapter 9 addresses elements of style and iconography, where the author deconstructs the JPF into its constituent parts and analysis the different elements separately: pillar bases, breasts, and the heads (moulded and handmade), and for each considers stylistic aspects, comparative material, as well as meaning and function, where the discussion of femaleness, protection and healing (p. 328–338) is particularly interesting. Chapter 10 then considers the figurines in their historical context, particularly the impact of Assyria on Judah, and aspects of healing and ritual in the Hebrew Bible.

Finally, Chapter 11 ties in the different elements examined, countering the standard readings of the JPFs as related to major female goddess, female concerns, and popular religion, as opposed to the official elite religion, run by priests in the state temple. She concludes that 'the figurines in Jerusalem were used for healing and protection by many different people at multiple levels of society' (p. 406–407). Her study is highly recommended, as it 'puts to rest some of the oft-repeated but unsupported interpretations of the figurines, and, more importantly, spurs new conversations and questions about one of ancient Israel's most common ritual objects' (p. VI). We should look forward to further contributions by Erin Darby taking this conversation forward and widening the approach to include not only the JPFs but also other figurines types which include humans, animals and other objects.

Ben-Shlomo, D. and Darby, E.D., (2014). 'A Study of the Production of Iron Age Clay Figurines from Jerusalem,' *Tel Aviv* 41: 180–204.
 Kletter, R., (1996). *The Judean Pillar Figurines and the Archaeology of Asherah* (Oxford).

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Hanan Eshel (Shani Tzoref and Barnea Levi Selavan, eds.), *Exploring the Dead Sea Scrolls Archaeology and Literature of the Qumran Caves*. *Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements* 018. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015. Pp. 314. €120.00. ISBN: 978–3–52555–096–0.

Shortly before his untimely death Hanan Eshel selected the eighteen essays reproduced in this volume to bring together some of his more important studies on the Dead Sea Scrolls. In the last generation Hanan Eshel was certainly one of the most insightful scholars in combining the results of archaeology together with careful readings of ancient manuscripts and other texts to make highly suggestive proposals concerning many of the details of the historical circumstances of the late Second Temple period. It was his ability at making thoroughly plausible connections that was the chief characteristic of his work. This volume arranges the essays in six categories; I will focus on the first of them.

The first group of studies are all concerned with the Damascus Document. The essay that forms Chapter 1 is a classic case of how Eshel worked with Second Temple texts: he commonly would provide a close reading that was highly sensitive to how certain details resonated with Scripture, he would then juxtapose such an understanding with other more or less contemporary texts, and then he would move to some suggestions for a likely historical scenario that might have prompted the writing of the text as it now stands. For him the 'three nets' of Belial in CD 4:16–18 are to be expounded in association with Aramaic Levi Document 6:1–3 and in the light of some likely scriptural background are understood as a critique of false prophets that is then applied to the writer's contemporary Jerusalem priesthood. The three nets thus indicate something of the movement's dispute with the Jerusalem establishment.

In my view the second essay, 'The Seventy-Weeks Prophecy in Two Compositions from Qumran,' is one of the most important in the volume. Eshel has shown how the scriptural Seventy-Weeks prophecy is variously reinterpreted through the assistance of Daniel in two further compositions, the Damascus Document and 4Q390. The enduring significance of this 2007 study lies in the way it provides insightful consideration of varying traditions that provide a focus on second century BCE prophetic fulfilment. Here is a strong argument that

needs to be kept on the table against several scholars who have been concerned in more recent work to move much of the so-called sectarian history down into the 1st century BCE.

The third essay is a fine example of how Eshel worked in reading texts in association with archaeological evidence. The discovery of stone vessels at Qumran has provoked a variety of views concerning their status in relation to purity regulations. Eshel took up the matter in an incisive short paper at the 1998 conference marking the centenary of the discovery of the Damascus Document. He based his arguments on the Temple Scroll (11QT^a 49:11–16) and CD 12:15–17: ‘The difference between sectarian and rabbinic law lies in the distinction that according to the Sages stone vessels are never susceptible to defilement, while according to the Damascus Document 12:15–17 they are susceptible to defilement after coming in contact with oil’ (p. 68). He thus combined some archaeological artefacts with Second Temple textual evidence, took account of other later traditions, and then combined all the data together into a neat and nuanced description that accounts for differences as well as similarities.

Having noted some of the major hallmarks of Eshel’s work, I mention the other studies just briefly. The second group concern compositions from Cave 1: there are two essays on the War Scroll (one co-authored with Esther Eshel) and one that is already widely referred to on the historical layers of Peshar Habakkuk (1QpHab). The third group consists of two studies on the Copper Scroll (3Q15): one study (co-authored with Ze’ev Safrai) wonders about the treasures listed in the scroll and another is a fascinating look at the aqueducts as probably mentioned in the scroll. The fourth section contains four studies on texts from Cave 4: on the so-called Prayer of Joseph (4Q371; 4Q372) in relation to Mount Gerizim, on Dibre Hame’orot (4Q504–506) in the light of the Apocalypse of Weeks, on the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and the festival calendar, and on Abraham. The fifth group are three essays on texts from Cave 11: on the Temple Scroll as a sectarian text not composed by followers of the Teacher of Righteousness, on alphabetic acrostics (co-authored with John Strugnell), and on Psalm 155 (co-authored with Shlomit Kendi-Harel). The closing set of three essays look beyond Qumran and consider the date of the compilation of the Samaritan Pentateuch (co-authored with Esther Eshel), Megillat Ta’anit, and 1st century CE high priests.

This volume gives access to valuable and exemplary studies that have an integrative approach. They will stand together here as a lasting legacy not only to Eshel’s academic skills and methods but also to his generous appreciation of those who lived, wrote, and left their traces in the late Second Temple period.

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Eric C. Lapp, *Sepphoris II: The Clay Oil Lamps of Ancient Sepphoris: Light Use and Regional Interactions*. Sepphoris Excavation Reports 2. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns 2016. Pp. xiv + 262. \$79.50. ISBN: 978-1-57506-404-8.

Ancient oil lamps are a favorite item in archaeological excavations. When found in sealed loci, they help in dating the pottery and other finds immediately. Eric Lapp's book is a corpus and a catalogue of the clay oil lamps discovered on the western summit of Sepphoris through the Duke and Hebrew Universities' excavations, as well as a detailed study of production, distribution and use of the lamps. Small oil lamps were the sole light source in the darkness of the household and each room needed one from sunset on. The oil for burning was expensive and the lamps burned only a short time, less than an hour, before needing refilling. On Shabbat evening a special filling device of extra oil was connected to the pottery lamp. A generation ago, Sepphoris was excavated by Israeli and American Universities, who unearthed a large and rich cosmopolitan city situated in the lower Galilee that was well connected to other Roman and Byzantine cities in Palestine and Jordan.

After the Jewish revolts against Rome, Sepphoris became the seat of the Jewish leadership and Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi and his colleagues, who codified the Mishnah there around 200 CE. The 24 types of lamps discovered in the excavations testify, according to Lapp, to the ethnic and demographic entity of the city from the Hellenistic until the Early Islamic period, a span of over 700 years. Lapp's corpus of the lamps is a careful study of typology, production, sources of clay and minerals, trade, art and religion. Most of the lamp types are regional and local, mainly from Galilee and the vicinity of Sepphoris. A very few arrived as souvenirs from visitors and tourists from Asia Minor and Greece and from centers with Jewish communities like Ephesus, Corinth, and Athens. A group of lamp types arrived from Jewish communities in the south of Palestine, probably with refugees after the revolts against Rome.

The book is divided to six chapters. Chapter one is dedicated to technical descriptions of the lamp. Chapter two deals with the chronology of the lamps, providing detailed descriptions of the types. Chapter three describes the imported lamps. Chapter four deals with the petrographic analysis of the lamps. Chapter five is dedicated to regionalism, trade and Sepphoris's marketplaces. Chapter six is a conclusion of the lamp corpus. 219 plates of black and white photographs conclude the volume. The Greco-Roman culture penetrated the Jewish communities in Galilee and on some lamps mythological and erotic scenes can be discerned. In the same houses the Hebrew menorah appears on other lamps.

The petrographic and trace element studies are a major contribution of this book to pottery analysis, especially of oil lamps, not only from Sepphoris, but from other centers of production. Lapp's results point to local and regional clay deposits

of the majority of the lamp types. The same can be said of the production centers around Sepphoris, like Kefar Hannanya and Shikhin, where kilns and moulds were found. To sum up, this learned book of clay lamps from Sepphoris will be consulted by archaeologists, and oil lamps specialists, interested in the classical Eastern Mediterranean world.

Shimon Dar
Israel

David M. Jacobson, Nikos Kokkinos (eds.), *Judaea and Rome in Coins, 65 BCE - 135 CE. Papers Presented at the International Conference Hosted by Spink, 13th - 14th September 2010.* London: Spink and Son Ltd, 2012. Pp. x + 245. **£50.00.** ISBN 978-1-90742-722-0.

The fourteen papers in this hardcover volume are based on presentations from a two-day international conference, of the same title, held at Spink & Son in London and co-sponsored by the Institute of Jewish Studies (IJS) at University College London. The editors of the volume, David Jacobson and Nikos Kokkinos, coordinated the conference with Philip Skingley of Spink after two previous conferences on similar topics (*The World of the Herods and the Nabataeans* in 2001 and *Herod and Augustus* in 2005). This conference dealt mainly with relations of Judaea and Rome between the Roman conquest of Judaea by Pompey and the second Jewish war against Rome, known as the Bar Kokhba Revolt, from a numismatic point of view. The papers, arranged in chronological order as much as possible, represent some of the advances within numismatic scholarship in the past few decades in relation to Judaea during the period. Those discussed below are an attempt to highlight the diversity of this volume and emphasize some important points.

The first paper, by Andrew Burnett, views Herodian coinage against the wider perspective of Roman coinage. He begins with an overview of Herodian coinage and their context, from Herod the Great to Agrippa II, as well as some other related gold coins. Not discussed is an aureus bearing the legend '*Judaea Recepta*', recently published by Gambash (Gambash, Gitler, and Cotton 2013). Some possibly locally struck silver and bronze coins are also mentioned. He concludes that compared to the mainstream coinages in Syria throughout the Hellenistic-Roman period, Herodian coinage was strikingly different. The Syrian coinage were conservative in terms of module and designs, meaning that '...it did not look to the reality of the new Roman world and its coinage as a source of innovation, as other areas of the empire did' (p. 13). This was also true for Phoenicia in the Hellenistic and early Roman periods and to Judaea during the Hasmonean period. 'But the Herodian

coinage swings right in the other direction and to an extreme' (*idem*). Herodian coinage, Burnett points out, especially coins struck under Philip, Agrippa I and Agrippa II, was even more 'Romanised' than the coinage of Asia or Egypt. The best examples of the extreme Romanisation of the Herodian coins are those of Agrippa I that embrace Roman ideology, with portraits of members of the imperial family. Another example is Agrippa II's Latin type coins of Domitian, exact copies of contemporary asses minted in Rome. The dies for these coins 'were clearly made in Rome and the coins were probably also minted there' (*idem*). Burnett explains this extreme Romanization phenomenon by noting that as client kings, the Herodian dynasty and tetrarchs were entirely dependent on Rome.

However, two issues should be pointed out: Herod himself, who was the first to bring the Roman culture in Judaea and was the one who built temples for the cult of Roma and Augustus, issued very few coins which can be interpreted as bearing Roman influence (mainly the 'Year 3' series). Herod's coins bear no evidence indicating his close relations with the Roman court in contrast to some of his successors, not including Archelaus and Antipas, while very strong Roman influence is visible, for example, in his building projects. The second issue is that the level of the Romanization of the Herodian coins seems to be dictated by the location of the mints and the area where the specific coins were about to circulate (i.e. Jewish vs pagan demographics). Another issue is the rare usage of the bevelled edge *pruta* denomination (first having appeared under the Hasmoneans) in contrast to the 'Roman' denominations and their flan shape (i.e. thick flans cut from a bar and not thin bevelled-edge flans made in a mould). The flan shape was certainly motivated by Roman coins as well as by the local city coins, which began to appear mainly in the 1st century CE. For example, Agrippa I, struck *pruta*, coins probably in Jerusalem, with no Roman symbols for the use of the Jewish population while other coins in his name, bearing various Roman types, were struck on large and non-bevelled flans in Pnias and Caesarea Maritima.

Burnett suggested understanding the Warren cup, whose iconography is exceptional according to every standard, in the context of the entirely dependent position of 'client kings' on Rome (pp. 13–14). However, it should be noted that doubts have been raised about both the cup's authenticity and date. If this cup is not a fake, and if it was indeed found in the modern village of Battir (ancient Betar or Beitar, a village and fortress in the vicinity of Jerusalem, the site of the final battle of the second Jewish revolt), it probably arrived there during the Bar Kokhba Revolt as a booty taken by the Jewish rebels (see Eshel 2013), and not earlier, as suggested so far in the research. Thus, the context for understanding the extraordinary iconography of the cup would be Hadrian's philhellenic character and not the relations between the Herodian 'client kings' and Rome, as suggested by Barnett.

Rachel Barkay's paper discusses most Jewish coin types, dating from Herod the Great to the Second Revolt and argues that the Roman influence on Jewish coins was mainly felt by the use of Roman motifs for political reasons and less by the use of elements inspired by the Roman world. This seems to be the case for Herod's successors, except of Archelaus. However, as mentioned above, one should also emphasize the Roman influence on the shape of the flans and the range of denominations which were used under Herod's successors (again, not including Archelaus). Regarding some of the types, such as the eagle on the small coin of Herod (pp. 20–21), the Roman origins of this type are yet unclear and the motive behind this image is as yet unclear (cf. Ariel and Fontanille 2012: 115–119).

Anne Lykke's paper deals with the use of languages and scripts in ancient Jewish coinage, from the Persian period to the First Jewish War. In her opinion the Jewish temple played a central role on Jewish coins, and this is mainly seen in the use of the Paleo-Hebrew script. Certainly the Jewish temple in Jerusalem played not only a central role in religious life but also a seminal role as a financial and monetary institution, as was commonly accepted in ancient cities and societies. However, the use of the Paleo-Hebrew script in the legends of the coins is not necessarily related to the temple as an institution, but to the Jewish national dreams and hopes going back to the glory of the First Temple period, when this script was the one in use before its destruction by the Babylonians. In addition, her statement 'it is more than likely that the legends written in the old script could not be read and understood by the general population at this time...' (p. 41) might be misleading since it is possible that the Jewish population during the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman periods could read short legends in the Paleo-Hebrew script, especially since Aramaic and Paleo-Hebrew scripts are very close. In any case, there is no question that the ancient Hebrew had a great symbolic value during the Second Temple period and up to the Second Jewish revolt; this can also be seen by the use of this script in some of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other Jewish inscriptions and legends from the Roman period (see, for example, Naveh 1992: 13–19).

Danny Syon studied the circulation pattern of coins in the Galilee in the Early Roman Period. He suggested that patterns can be explained through political, economic and ethnic considerations that developed historically from the Hasmonaean period. One can find a broader study of the numismatics of the Galilee during the Hellenistic–Roman periods in Syon's excellent new book (Syon 2015).

Nikos Kokkinos examined the coinages of the Roman prefects of Judaea during the years 6–48 CE. One of his claims was that the date 'Year 33' appears on coins struck under the prefect Coponius. He also suggested a new and unknown Augustan era of 27 BCE. In 2014 Donald Ariel reviewed this paper in depth (2014: 387–388). Ariel based his counter-argument on the study of thousands of coins in the Israel Antiquities Authority database, which derived from controlled archaeological

excavations and were cleaned by professional conservators. He rejected several of Kokkinos's claims, including the existence of such a date on the coins as well as the new suggested era. Ariel's arguments regarding the controversial reading of the 'Year 33' coins and the suggested new era remain far more convincing.

Kevin Butcher deals with the silver coinage of Roman Arabia. This coin group was produced under Trajan, who in 106 CE annexed the Nabataean kingdom as the province of Arabia. These coins, which bear no mint mark, were first assigned to Caesarea in Cappadocia, but later it was accepted that they were probably Arabian. Butcher emphasized that although the province of Arabia has an extensive silver coinage under Trajan, it is possible to argue that none of it was actually produced there. In his opinion there were two centres for the production of this coinage: Rome made all the tetradrachms and one issue of drachms, or the dies for them, while Antioch or another eastern mint made the drachms or their dies. It seems more logical to transfer the dies into the province and then strike them locally, rather than producing many hundred-thousands of coins in Rome or Antioch and shipping them into the province. This is strengthened by the fact that many of the coins are overstruck Nabataean coins. In the introduction of his paper (p. 203) Butcher noted that one of the reasons for including this paper on Arabia in a volume devoted to Judaea and Rome is that these coins certainly circulated in Judaea. Here, it is also important to address the point that these Arabian silver coins not only circulated in Judaea but also seem to be the main coins used by the Bar Kokhba administration as host coins for their silver emissions. In most cases it is not easy to identify the underlying coins but when it is possible, the Trajanic silver coins seem to be of the Arabian group (cf. the Bar Kokhba and the unstruck Roman denarii from the Teomim cave; Zissu *et al.* 2010: 127–136, Nos. 36, 43, 45, 47, 50, 74, 79; and pp. 137–139, Nos. 3, 4, 5, 6).

This volume, with its numerous and high-quality illustrations, is not for numismatists only; it is useful for any historian or archaeologist using numismatic evidence in research on the history of Judaea for this period. However, some of the conclusions offered in some of the papers will be subject to change in the future. The interaction between Judea and Jerusalem vs Rome will probably continue to be the subject for many more conferences and studies, hopefully also from the numismatic point of view.

Ariel D.T., (2014) 'Review of David M. Jacobson, Nikos Kokkinos (eds), *Judaea and Rome in Coins, 65 BCE - 135 CE*', *The Numismatic Chronicle* 174: 385–391.

Ariel D.T. and J-P. Fontanille, (2012) *The Coins of Herod: A Modern Analysis and Die Classification* (Leiden).

Eshel H., (2013) 'A Silver Cup Decorated with Homo-Erotic Scenes Discovered at Beitar in 1906', *Jerusalem and Eretz-Israel: A Journal for Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology*:

- In the Hill Country, in the Aravah South of Kinneroth and in the Shephelah (Joshua 11, 2): Studies in Honour of Professor Amos Kloner*, 8–9: 233–240 (Hebrew).
- Gambash G., H. Gitler and H.M. Cotton, (2013) ‘Judaea Receipts,’ *Israel Numismatic Research* 8: 89–104.
- Naveh J., (1992) *On Sherd and Papyrus: Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions from the Second Temple, Mishnaic and Talmudic Periods* (Jerusalem). [Hebrew]
- Syon D., (2015) *Small Change in Hellenistic-Roman Galilee: The Evidence from Numismatic Site Finds as a Tool for Historical Reconstruction* (Jerusalem).
- Zissu B., H. Eshel, B. Langford and A. Frumkin., (2009–2010) ‘Coins from the Bar-Kokhba Revolt Hidden in Me’arat Ha-Te’omim (Mūghâret Umm et Tüeimîn), Western Jerusalem Hills,’ *Israel Numismatic Journal* 17: 113–147.

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Reinhard G. Kratz, *Historical and Biblical Israel: The History, Tradition, and Archives of Israel and Judah*. Translated by Paul Michael Kurtz. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. Pp. viii + 280. £65.00. ISBN 978–0–19–872877–1.

This is a revised and enlarged English version of *Historisches und biblisches Israel: Drei Überblicke zum Alten Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013). The bibliography has been revised for an English-speaking audience. Ostensibly, it is a history of Israel and the biblical tradition, but it is both less and more than this. The first part is a 50-page survey of the history of Israel and Judah. Part B is a 70-page examination of the formation and history of the biblical tradition. The last part is on the ‘Jewish archives’, a 75-page consideration of the known sites where biblical and non-biblical texts were copied and studied.

The primary aim of the study is to explore the difference between ‘historical Israel’ and ‘biblical Israel’. This will remind many readers of Philip Davies’ *In Search of ‘Ancient Israel’* (1992). As Reinhard Kratz shows, however, the distinction was already made by Wellhausen; indeed, Wellhausen was anticipated by Wilhelm de Wette (though his distinction may have been more intuitive than systematically worked out). All three parts of the book explore these two related but different concepts, even though the parts can be read individually. More on these concepts below.

The first part on the history is a concise survey from the beginnings to Bar Kokhba, abundantly supported with references. It does well what it was intended to do, but it is not a full history. There had been no full history of Israel in German since Siegfried Herrmann’s *Geschichte Israels in alttestamentlicher Zeit* (1987) and

Herbert Donner's *Geschichte des Volkes Israel und seiner Nachbarn in Grundzügen* (1984–86). This lack has been made up recently with Christian Frevel's *Geschichte Israels* (2015), but I for one regret that Kratz has not given us a more extended history, since his knowledge and work in the field is clearly capacious. Most of the time, his meaning and reconstruction are clear from the statements made and the accompanying references. But now and then there are intriguing statements not supported by references about which one would like to know more. The necessary conciseness also means that it is not always possible to give a nuanced picture or suggest why one interpretation is preferred to other possible ones.

For example, Kratz states, 'The portrayal in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah—especially in the Aramaic documents of Ezra 4–7 and Nehemiah's memoirs—not only betrays the world of the Persian period but also corresponds to the framework of Achaemenid imperial ideology' (p. 38). Since Kratz goes on to say - quite correctly, in my opinion: see my article in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (ed. O. Lipschits and M. Oeming; Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 531–70 - that the 'authenticity of the Aramaic documents in Ezra is exceedingly dubious', the question is whether such doubtful documents correspond to the framework of Persian imperial ideology. No doubt a more expansive discussion would have explained precisely what is meant by the statement and why it was made, but as it stands it looks somewhat contradictory. But, as I say, the historical survey, concise as it is, still serves its purpose, which is to support Parts B and C.

The second part on the biblical tradition covers material that most readers will be familiar with and on which Kratz has done a good deal of work. But the systematic presentation is very helpful even for one familiar with the material. He makes the important point that we cannot date the tradition except in gross and relative terms. Although there is much uncertainty, he argues that the period for the rise of the concept of biblical Israel was probably the period between the fall of Samaria and the fall of Jerusalem. This section ends with a helpful sketch of how he sees the literary history of the Hebrew Bible.

The third part, Part C, considers a topic often overlooked, the archives. This focuses on those sites either where Jewish writings have been found or where the evidence is sufficiently strong to believe that literary activity took place there. He considers Elephantine, Al-Yahudu (a recently attested Jewish settlement in Mesopotamia), Qumran, Gerizim, Jerusalem and Alexandria. This section concludes the book with a look at the concepts of non-biblical and biblical Judaism and the relationship between history and tradition. He rightly cautions against a 'middle course' which seeks 'to follow both a moderate historical criticism and a biblical tradition levelled by historical criticism' (p. 205). This 'carries the danger of a reckless or malicious distortion of history', and 'might sever the tradition of the Hebrew Bible from its Israelite-Judean and Jewish origins and monopolize

it as some separate tradition in the name of special interests' (p. 206). In other words, we must recognize the distinction between historical Israel and biblical Israel while still recognizing the continuity between them.

I would like to make a couple of points, perhaps more alternative understandings rather than criticisms. First, the terms 'biblical Israel' and 'biblical Judaism' are usually talked about in the abstract. Naturally, they represent a religious view, a tradition, and this gets passed down and taken up. But religious tradition does not exist as a hypostasis—it represents the knowledge and beliefs of *people*. Who were those who created biblical Israel? Who were those who took the tradition to other members of Israel and Judah, so that it eventually displaced the historical Israel in their thinking? Kratz does not normally talk about who the circles are that bear the biblical Israel and biblical Judaism traditions. This could be discussed at length, but I would argue in brief that those carrying the tradition and disseminating it are the religious teachers, i.e., the priests. Not all religious teachers would necessarily have been priests, but priests were the main ones with the task not only of conducting the cult but also of explaining it and other religious practices to the people.

This brings me to my second point, which is the importance of the priesthood in the development of both the concept and the traditions of 'biblical Israel'. It seems to me that Kratz tends to ignore the priests, perhaps influenced by Wellhausen's emphasis on the prophetic religious innovative, as opposed to the priesthood. For example, he proposes that 'the notion of an exclusive relationship with God', an essential conception of God, 'has its roots in the prophetic tradition' (p. 76). We indeed find the concept in prophetic literature, but we need to keep in mind that the bulk of the content of many prophetic books is scribal. Were the prophets the sole or even primary creative theologians at the time? I doubt it. In any case, I would argue that the priests were at the heart of the scribal occupation. In medieval Europe the earliest scribes were clergy, and it was only later that non-cleric scribes arose. In ancient Israel and Judah the priests were the ones with the leisure and the need for literacy. The temple under the monarchy was the king's chapel, and the priests were under his control. He was in a position to use priests to carry out scribal tasks in the court as well as the temple. Priests might on occasion oppose the king (we have the wonderful examples of Akhenaten and the priests of Amun-Re, and of Nabonidus and the priests of Babylon), but generally they are his servants, even if exercising a certain amount of expected independence.

But who would be in a better position to develop theology on the deity and matters of worship than scribal priests who had religious practice as their calling and the leisure and intellectual training and interest to speculate and inquire? In the same way, who was in a better position to gather religious traditions and compile, develop, edit, expand, and otherwise work with the religious writings (i.e., engage in *Fortschreibung*) that eventually led to a collection of sacred writings widely

accepted as authoritative? Keep in mind that a number of the prophets were priests (Jeremiah, Ezekiel) or were in some way closely associated with the temple (Isaiah). While prophetic traditions—perhaps even prophetic books—might have been preserved in prophetic circles for a time, the prophetic books we have today have passed through scribal—meaning most likely priestly—circles.

The priests were of course a diverse group, and there were different ranks with different duties. There were likely differences of view point. For example, I would argue that the backbone of the Deuteronomistic movement was priestly, so that D and P represent two perspectives within the priesthood, not separate social or professional groups. This is only a far-too-brief comment on a very large issue (dealt with at greater length in my *Priests, Prophets, Diviners, Sages: A Socio-Historical Study of Religious Specialists in Ancient Israel* [London and New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 1995], especially chapters 3, 4, and 6; a revised and expanded edition is very much called for).

This book has covered an enormous range of material in a small compass. It has an excellent bibliography and set of references in the footnotes. I have learned a great deal from it and have been reminded of even more by its systematic presentation. One can always suggest areas for more discussion and development, but that is the nature of a good study: it serves to stimulate further thoughts and ideas. Highly recommended not only for students but also for seasoned scholars.

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Jacobson, David M., *Antioch and Jerusalem: The Seleucids and Maccabees in Coins*. London: Spink and Sons Ltd. Pp. viii, + 168 pages incl. illustrations and maps. £30.00. ISBN: 978-1-90742-754-1.

This excellent volume provides a valuable introduction to the relations between the Seleucid Empire and Judah that saw the independence of the Jewish state for a century. These 100 years began with the Maccabean Rebellion during the reign of Antiochus IV of Syria and ended with the Roman intervention into Judean affairs by Pompey the Great in 64 BCE. The study is geared to an educated audience interested in the background for the Jewish festival of Hanukkah, but the chronological sweep is much larger and it has an additional important twist: the contribution of the numismatic evidence, often neglected, to our understanding of the period. A concise historical narrative is provided from 200 to 63 BCE, skilfully assembling the cogent facts, derived not only from the primary sources, namely the books of Maccabees and Josephus, but also the relevant classical Greek and Latin sources for the period. But the heart of the monograph is the numismatic

evidence, beautifully illustrating the narrative, with the coins depicted at the sides of almost every page with a brief analysis and description of each. The narrative also is supplemented by full colour depictions of the major archaeological and epigraphic discoveries for the era.

The study has eight chapters. Chapter 1 provides the sources and description of the festival of Hanukkah. Chapter 2 deals with the impact of Alexander the Great's conquests on the Southern Levant when Judah came under the Hellenistic influence of the Ptolemies and Seleucids, the Macedonian Successors of Alexander. The remaining chapters are a chronological overview of the relations of the Seleucid kings and Judah. Chapter 3 provides the prelude to the Maccabean rebellion in the reigns of Antiochus III and Seleucus IV (200–175 BCE). Two important epigraphic finds illuminate the period. The reign of the former king by the Hefzibah Stele, a dossier providing insight to the Seleucid takeover of Palestine between 200–195 BCE (III.3.5). The reign of the latter is illuminated by the recent discovery of the Heliodorus stele at Marisa, southwest of Jerusalem, containing a royal edict and correspondence in 178 BCE regarding the appointment of Olympiodorus for supervising the various sanctuaries of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia (depicted at III.3.10). Both steles are now on display in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. The crucial section is chapter 4, which discusses the outbreak of the Maccabean rebellion in the reign of Antiochus IV. The spectacular French reconstruction of the Jewish Tobiad palace in Wadi Sir 'beyond the Jordan' effectively illustrates the grandeur of Jewish aristocracy in the period (III.4.6–9). Chapter 5 follows, with a discussion of the military campaigns of the Maccabees during the reigns of the Seleucid kings from Antiochus V to Tryphon. It perhaps is not necessary to view the titles of 'God' and 'Victorious' used by Demetrius II Theos Philadelphos Nicator (146–138 BCE) as expressions of his 'arrogance and vanity' (p. 70), but just typical divine titles of the ruler cult of the Hellenistic period. The focus of chapter 6 is the consolidation of Hasmonean rule between Antiochus VII and Antiochus IX. In chapter 7, the establishment of the Hasmonean Monarchy is traced during the disintegration of the Seleucid kingdom in the late 2nd century. Chapter 8 deals with the aftermath of development in Judah after the collapse of the Seleucid Kingdom. This is followed by an appendix, in which the classical literary works and Jewish sources are listed and discussed, each in alphabetical order, making it easy for the reader to locate the summary of a particular source accompanied with helpful and pertinent comments.

The death of the last Seleucid king Antiochus XII has normally been assigned to around 87 BCE, but Jacobson alertly notes the Damascene coinage recently catalogued indicates he was still issuing coinage in 83/82 BCE. One aside: the anonymous Nabataean king Josephus mentions as responsible for his death (BJ 1.99–102; AJ 13, 387–91) may not be Aretas III, but a Nabataean king named

‘Rabbel’, which CIS 349, inserts between the rule of Obodas I (ca. 96–87 BCE) and Aretas III (ca. 82–63 BCE). The irony that the Hasmonean king Alexander Jannaeus bears the name of the Macedonian conqueror and that he issued coins proclaiming himself ‘king’ in the Greek language should be noted. Jacobson also observes that a number of Hasmonean coins have iconography that have Seleucid prototypes.

Although not intended for scholars of the period, Jacobson has woven together a tapestry of this tumultuous and pivotal period in a masterful and skilful way that makes it accessible to a popular audience, and yet informative for specialists, with an excellent bibliography of the basic important works for those who wish to pursue the study more in depth. A few miscues were noticed. The caption on p. 24 for III.3.4 should designate the Phoenician war galley discussed in the captions to III.5.10 and 5.11 not ‘IIIs.5.10 and 5.11’. Chapter 6 begins with ‘BCE’ indicating a sentence has been dropped from the text, apparently the name of the king ‘Antiochus VII Euergetes (138–129)’. But these are minor matters that can be corrected in a revised edition that this fine study richly deserves.

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David T. Sugimoto, ed., *Transformation of a Goddess: Ishtar – Astarte – Aphrodite*. Orbis biblicus et Orientalis 263, 2014. Fribourg, Göttingen: Academic Press Fribourg and Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014. Pp. xiv + 234 incl. black and white illustrations and maps. €54.00. ISBN: 9783727817489 (Fribourg); 9783525543887 (Göttingen).

This collection of papers are the revised proceedings of an international conference, held in Tokyo in 2011, which explored the evolving representations of the goddesses Ishtar, Astarte, and Aphrodite in textual and iconographic sources. Spanning ancient Mesopotamia, the Levant, Egypt, and the Mediterranean world, from the 3rd millennium BCE until the Graeco-Roman period. The volume showcases the changing nature of these deities, who often appear independently, but are also associated variously with Inanna, Isis, Hathor, the Queen of Heaven, Tanit and Venus.

An introductory preface precedes two studies of the most prominent female goddesses, namely Ištar (the Assyrian/Babylonian goddess of fertility, love, war, sex and power) and her Sumerian counterpart, Inanna. First Eiko Matsushima discusses ‘Ištar and Other Goddesses of the So-Called ‘Sacred Marriage in Ancient Mesopotamia’, where the personification of Ištar in Nineveh, Arbela, Babylon, and her association with the goddess Nanaya, is outlined. Matsushima pays close attention to the performative aspects of the Sumerian love songs and

their accompanying ceremonial, where the purpose of such rites was to assert the king's authority to rule, legitimized through the representation of his sexual union with the most powerful goddess. As the ceremonies took place in a locus where divine statues were present, Matsushima suggests that it may have been realized by the performance of individual statues, in the form of marionette drama, with the 'libretto' or ritual lyrics recited within the temple cult (Pp. 9–12). This reconstruction (presumably involving a statue of the king also?) affords a plausible account of the role of this ceremony in its formal setting, and is particularly valuable now that such rites are no longer associated with the Greek (*hieros gamos*) sacred marriage tradition depicting the union of Hera and Zeus.

This is followed by an erudite survey of the iconographical image of the winged goddess by Akio Tsukimoto, "In the Shadow of Thy Wings:" A Review of the Winged Goddess in Ancient Near Eastern Iconography'. Tsukimoto presents the evidence from cylinder seals and plaques from the Old Babylonian period, where they appear in the Syrian, Anatolian and Mediterranean regions, explaining how these 'infiltrated gradually into the peripheral regions' (p. 30), before providing brief correlations in the depiction of divine power in the Psalms, and in the portrait of Madonna della Misericordia.

The second section opens with Mark Smith's penetrating study of 'Athtart in Late Bronze Age Syrian Texts', which traces the cultic role of 'Athtart/'Ashtart from her earliest representations in the 3rd millennium at Ebla. Of considerable interest is his discussion of the obvious gender inversion, where depictions of the goddesses hunting and at war abound, and equally the pairings of Ba'al with 'Ashtart (Emar), of 'Anat with 'Athtart, Rashap/Resheph with 'Athtart (Ugarit), together with the association between Yamm and Astarte, where Astarte is viewed as the consort of the sea. Further 'international contacts' include the correspondence of the Ugaritic 'Athtart with 'Ushḥara/ Ishḥara and Ishtar, where 'Athtart *šd* is the local Ugaritic form of Ishtar *šēri*, and also 'Athtart with Hurrian Shaushga at Ugarit. No discussion of the biblical עֲשָׂרֵת צֹאֵן 'the Astartes of the flock,' ('the young of your flock' in Deuteronomy 7:13, 28:4,18, 51) and KTU. 1.148.18, or of Delcor's (1973) work on these associations, where Smith concludes that relative lack of attention to role of hunting as a divine activity in ancient Hebrew texts may have coincided with the demise of 'Ashtart's cult.

In "Revisiting" Astarte in the Iconography of the Bronze Age Levant', Izak Cornelius pinpoints the substantial difficulties in identifying the name of visually depicted goddesses, where 'the complex and non-congruent relation between text and image', (p.89) are inordinately difficult to reconcile. He judiciously concludes that the Qedeshet-type figure (or 'Qudshu' figurine), as the female image of a woman holding the upright lotus plant, should not to be identified as Astarte, given the absence of weapons and her non-aggressive pose.

Keiko Tazawa next investigates the role of ‘Astarte in New Kingdom Egypt: Reconsideration of Her Role and Function’, within the framework of the ‘Hathor circle’, where the association *en bloc*, with Astarte, Anat, and Qedeshet, mirrored the two Egyptian groups (comprising of Sekhmet, Bastet and Hathor in the warrior group, and the overlapping Osiran group, namely Mut, Isis, and again, Hathor, with a sub-branch representing Nephtys), and where the Syrio-Palestinian dietes were more strongly associated with motherhood. The need for further investigation of the relationship of other indigenous New Kingdom goddesses, including Werethekau, Wadjet, Neith, Nekhbet, Nut and Selket, is also clarified.

Focusing on the Hebrew Bible, Stéphanie Anthonioz examines ‘Astarte in the Bible and her Relation to Asherah’, with the goal of testing whether the singular construct refers specifically to the ‘official representation of the divinity’, or if the plural alluded to ‘general cults located anywhere and everywhere,’? (p. 135). Although there was no direct engagement with Judith Hadley’s earlier work on ‘Ashtoreth in the Singular’, or ‘Ashtaroth in the Plural’, (Hadley 1996: 118–127), Anthonioz concludes that ‘most of all the polemic blurs all “other gods” into one and the same rhetoric against idolatry’, (p.139). This confirms Hadley’s reconstruction, which demonstrated how that the biblical depictions of Asherah gradually evolved into a designation of her locus, both as a cultic pole and sacred tree, and were intended to minimize the memory her patronage, in view of the monotheistic agenda of the Deuteronomic scribes (Hadley 2000).

Next David Sugimoto (‘The Judean Pillar Figurines and the “Queen of Heaven”’) maintains that it is unlikely that the JPFs represent Asherah, firstly, because ‘there is no clear evidence among the biblical and inscriptional sources stating that “A/asherah” was an independent goddess during the kingdoms of Israel and Judah’ (p. 151), and secondly, because the figurines cannot be directly connected with the Canaanite fertility goddess. Certainly the assumptions underlying this first position ought rightly to be clarified: the assertion that there is no clear or directly explicit evidence that the A/asherah was understood as a consort for Yahweh, let alone functioned as an independent goddess, is only true insofar that current discussion of the available inscriptions remain inconclusive, and also ignores Asherah’s role in demonology, as ‘YHWH’s mediatrix’ in the magical realms (Schmidt 2016: 94–99). Yet however uncertain the precise meaning of these inscriptions remains, the very existence of the written dedications (‘Yahweh of Samaria/Shomron and his A/asherah’, or ‘Yahweh of Teman and his A/asherah’) at Kuntillet ‘Ajrud or Khirbet el-Qom, more than outweighs the complete absence of any corroboration of the suggestion that A/asherah ‘had to be understood as a cult tool for Yahweh, at least at face value’, and that ‘no matter what the sacred pole reminded people of, it still did not signify the goddess directly’ (p. 151). Nor does Sugimoto seek support for his explanation in the account of the divine instruction to Moses to

construct a fiery serpent, set on a pole, or ‘standard’, (Numbers 21:8–9, אורתו על גס, עשה לך שרף ושים on a standard’), where the construct noun גס, ‘standard’, when combined with the first common singular pronominal suffix directly referring to Yhwh is also attested in Exodus 17:15 (ויבן משה מזבחה ויקרא שמו יהוה גסי). So if an 8th century writer did wish to indicate that his offering was intended for ‘Yahweh and his sacred pole’, then his conventional linguistic choice would be יהוה וגסו, and not ‘Yahweh [of Samaria/Shomron/Teman] and his A/asherah’. This is irrespective of the separate difficulties involved in determining the identities of the various images on each pithos (either as Bes figures, or as a female lyre player), or whether or not the inscription served as a caption for each image, since the role of each vessel as a receptacle for a cult offering is not in question. Thus while the evidence for the worship of the independent goddess Asherah is not fully substantiated, it still remains significantly greater than the view that A/asherah ‘had to be understood as a cult tool for Yahweh’. Sugimoto concludes that the JPFs may be associated with the cult of Astarte or Ishtar, and probably manifest in Jeremiah’s denouncement of worship of the Queen of Heaven: a figure commonly associated with Ishtar (*šarrat šame*, ‘Queen of Heaven’), and her Egyptian equivalent (*nbt pt*, ‘Lady of Heaven’).

Recognising that ‘studies of Astarte suffer from a lack of methodological rigor’ (p.167), Elizabeth Bloch-Smith assesses ‘Archaeological and Inscriptional Evidence for Phoenician Astarte’. She provides an erudite account of why the Phoenicians chose this deity, clarifying the ‘eclectic nature’ of this worship within their broader culture, and identifies how significant ‘Egyptian/Egyptianizing’ features develop (notably on amulets). Evidence from shrines, together with temple sites from Cyprus (Kition–Kathari and Kition-Baboula), Lebanon (Sarepeta), Israel (Mitzpe Yamim), and Malta (Tag Silġ), are carefully evaluated, indicating clearly that the veneration of several deities occurred simultaneously in a single space, so that each individual temple and shrine evidently served multiple gods. In this setting the earliest Phoenician worship of Astarte was evidenced in the 10th century BCE, with further peaks in the 5th–4th centuries, prior to the demise of her cult in the 3rd–2nd centuries. The range of media examined is quite diverse, and where ‘Astarte is manifest in various forms, as an aniconic stone/betyl (also used for gods such as the god of Israel, Genesis 28: 16–18), a figurine or statue, or an attribute animal’ (p. 193).

The final essay affords an equally vigorous treatment of how the goddess Kypria (also known as Kypris, or Kyporogénia), emerged in Cyprus, prior to her reconfiguration as the Greek goddess Aphrodite (‘Before Kypris was Aphrodite’). In this piece Stephanie Budin demonstrates how this first evolved from an indigenous female iconographic tradition, which merged with an imported nude goddess style from Syria in the 15th century BCE, ‘from *Hausfrau*

to Sex Goddess' (p.196). This appeared in the late Bronze Age, in both female and highly eroticized bird-faced terracotta figurines, found mainly in domestic and funerary contexts. Textual evidence (including an Ugaritic text from Alašiya, and exemplars from the later Syllabo-Cypriot corpus) reveal worship of a wide range of deities, from which Kypris-Aphrodite emerged as the national goddess of Cyprus. This fine treatment includes an informative recount of the historical Hellenization of Cyprus, and good discussion of the significance of the impact of Greek culture on the island, which concludes with a frank acknowledgement of the inherent ambiguities that belie the existing data.

For such a tremendously fascinating topic, this volume offers a valuable assessment of archaeological and iconographical materials, while developing a number of new and exciting suggestions. Its publication coincides with Spencer Allen's recent monograph, *The Splintered Divine: A Study of Ištar, Baal, and Yahweh Divine Names and Divine Multiplicity in the Ancient Near East*, which investigates the process through which a deity is named with different, geographically associated titles, variously invoked in hymns, treaties, and other dedicatory texts. Admittedly the treatment of the written Hebrew sources in *Transformation of a Goddess* was not as impressive, where the book's title promised far more than its contents delivered, as no new textual ground was covered. What of the orthographic differences designating these goddesses (אשרים/אשרה/אשרות/עשתרות)? How might these reflect the various qualities of each indigenous deity? Does use of the goddess's name with a masculine singular pronominal suffix (Hess 1996), inform her potential representation as a cult statue in the Jerusalem temple? And to what extent do the rhetorical wordplays (Day 2000: 127–146), collectively transform the identities of Ishtar and Astarte in the memories of the biblical scribes? What also of the emendations proposed (for example) to Hosea 14:9 (e.g. Patai 1990: 53)? It was particularly disappointing that none of the essays engaged with the work of Christian Frevel (1995), whose monograph urgently needs wider circulation in English. Such textual and orthographic issues are not confined to the ancient Semitic languages entirely, but affect also of classical scholarship, where recently Howard Jacobson concluded that 'not only are Aphrodite and Asherah (Athirat) often the same goddess in terms of their roles, functions and characteristics, but they may actually have the same name ἄφρ/ ὀδίτη (Attr ym)', (Jacobson 2015: 356).

Given the price of this book, and its target academic readership, the publisher should seriously consider providing an (open access) index of textual and archaeological sources on their website. The current index of subjects and authors is of little use to anyone trying to locate a specific text, artefact, or inscription, and this would definitely help to make the volume more accessible. In view of the gaps noted above, it may also be opportune for David Sugimoto to host a

second international meeting in Tokyo, and to edit its results this meticulously again. Notwithstanding these observations, this collection is of substantial value to the study of female goddess in the ancient world.

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Gil Gambash, *Rome and Provincial Resistance*. Routledge Monographs in Classical Studies 21. New York: Routledge, 2015. Pp. 206. £85.00. ISBN 978–1–13882–498–0.

The Jewish revolts will loom large in any consideration provincial resistance to the Roman Empire, and Gil Gambash's short but densely argued monograph is no exception. The challenge thrown out to his predecessors' views on several aspects of this broad and important topic entails interesting, against-the-grain, re-readings of the Great Revolt of 67–73/4 CE, as well as brief follow-ups on the diaspora revolt of 116–7 CE under Trajan and the Bar Kokhva revolt in 132–5 CE against Hadrian. Indeed Palestine is given far more extensive coverage than any other area of the Empire, with Britain a distant second. Palestine is the only area to be accorded its own entire chapter – the book's other four main chapters are thematic, covering 'tension management', 'handling revolt', 'official appointments' and 'commemoration'. The case of Judaea also figures quite largely in these other chapters. It is the local re-readings that merit our attention here. While the scholarly and popular literature on the Jewish revolts has been extensive, it is not often

that they have been considered in the broader Roman imperial framework – the main, and distinguished exceptions, being the work of Stephen Dyson and Martin Goodman. So it is intriguing to see how far Gambash's conceptual innovations might forward our understanding of what happened to the Jews.

The author's vantage point is the question of how the Roman state chose to conduct and to interpret its ongoing relations with its subject populations, in other words, the basis of the government's decision-making, and how that intersected with local reactions to subjugation. Test cases suggest to the author that Roman rule was in the main not brutal. Roman preference was for peace versus conflict, a minimal military presence versus permanent intimidation, and acceptable governance (at times labelled 'appeasement') versus oppression. They were strong on consolidation and on routine. Therefore, except where circumstances made it well-nigh impossible, emperors and administrators alike, it is argued, systematically favoured compromise versus implacability and leniency versus punitive reaction. Resistance was to be forestalled, if at all possible, and was in general not anticipated and not part of the plan. The Romans, it is suggested, were capable of considerable finesse and delicacy in their dealings with awkward subjects and they were even aware of the need for local knowledge, at least to a limited extent. Where local governors overstepped the mark, the tendency was to replace them rather briskly. These sometimes controversial contentions beg a number of large questions about the nature of imperialism and the rationality of rulers that will no doubt in time be raised elsewhere. But how do they play out in relation to specific events on the ground?

In sharp contrast to our leading ancient source on the period, Josephus, and to what appears to have been the view of the largely lost Tacitus, Gambash presents 'the seven decades of Roman rule over Judea prior to the great revolt ...as a ...vivid example of the general efforts of the Roman administration to understand and solve local problems to the satisfaction of the indigenous population' (p. 23, cf. p. 29, 145 etc.). Nor were the Romans particularly apprehensive that the Jews might not show themselves sufficiently submissive (p. 29). He supports his case in a scattered series of closely-focussed and sharply-angled analyses, stressing, for example, the pro-Roman dimension of the troubles that followed the death of Herod the Great; the readiness of the Romans to remove Pilate when his conduct in Jerusalem proved too abrasive; the appointment of governors of Syria with local knowledge, notably L. Vitellius and C. Petronius, and, in the same vein, of Felix, who after all was married to Drusilla, the daughter of Agrippa I, as prefect of Judaea.

When revolt did occur, the Romans here, as everywhere, reacted speedily. But it was only in 66 CE, after the Jewish rebels against all expectation routed and forced the withdrawal of a force of 30,000 men commanded by Cestius Gallus,

governor of Syria, which should have nipped their insubordination in the bud, that the Roman attitude ‘changed dramatically’ (p. 144). The trauma was comparable to that of Augustus’s unforgettable Varian disaster of 9 CE. Now Judaea was no longer treated as part of the provincial system, but as a foreign power to be given the full treatment and resoundingly defeated. This now, was a conquest rather than a reconquest. Hence Vespasian’s approach to the campaign: willing to bring his whole army to bear on relatively small engagements such as the sieges of Jotapata and of Gamala. It was in the nature of such a campaign that he operated with caution and he took his time. And hence the striking profusion of *Judaea capta* coins issued in the wake of the Jewish defeat, with the implication of that a new province had been acquired, and the Jews represented there as barbarians – they had become a foreign enemy. The Romans liked to publicize such conquests, while seeking, Gambash claims, to minimize awareness of internal, provincial resistance, rather than to broadcast its failure by way of deterrence, as they are often assumed to have done. By contrast, however, Gambash chooses also to highlight the issue of a single unique *Judaea recepta* coin type, which seemingly points to a parallel desire speedily to reintegrate Judaea into the system and to return to ‘normal’.

In the end, then, the Jewish case was special, but not because there was anything special about the Jews, nor about Roman attitudes to them, but because of the particular turn taken by their revolt. Gambash’s stimulating thesis is doubly welcome in that it by-passes old and weary debates. It remains, as yet, quite far from proven. But what he has demonstrated successfully and indeed triumphantly, is that it is only by thinking much harder than we have done hitherto about what the Roman government was really up to that we stand any chance of understanding the fate of the Jews under Roman rule. His book does not always make easy reading. But will surely make a quite long-lasting impact on the future historiography of Jewish resistance to Rome.

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Astrid Swenson and Peter Mandler (eds.), *From Plunder to Preservation: Britain and the Heritage of Empire, c.1800–1940*. Proceedings of the British Academy, 187. Oxford: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. 304 incl. illustrations, facsimiles, and maps. £70.00. ISBN 978–0–19726–541–3.

These are the collected papers from a Cambridge conference under this title held in March 2009. As with most endeavours of this kind, the contributors have apparently presented material arising from their current research interests, leaving

the editors to mould it into some kind of coherent shape. The net is spread very wide – it covers areas as diverse as Hadrian’s Wall, Jerusalem, Khartoum, Imperial India, Polynesia and Native American territories – and the editors have managed the task with commendable adroitness. That said, the finished article does not really respond to the expectations aroused by the volume’s title. Readers might anticipate, from the title, a narrative of the gradual abatement of the avaricious pillaging of ancient sites by opportunistic explorers, followed by the growth of a more respectful attitude towards archaeological remains in their cultural context. But they are swiftly disabused: as it turns out, the volume is hardly concerned with archaeology at all.

In her introduction Swenson declares that this is about ‘the invention of heritage... [and] the central importance of imperialism to histories of British (as well as many other) heritage movements’ (p. 5) To this end, ‘preservation and imperialism were increasingly used for mutual legitimation’, so that ‘the protection of monuments explicitly became a symbol of a nation’s ability to rule overseas – a measurement of civilization’, with the aim of remedying ‘supposed local neglect and ignorance’ – a reference to the activities of Lord Elgin (Pp. 8–11). Care of colonial heritage establishes ‘credence as ruling powers... an essentially imperial duty’. Thus plunder becomes ‘no greedy theft, but a liberation and “repatriation” of art’ (p. 22) by the civilized from barbarians – for they alone know how to appreciate it. The bulk of the volume is divided into four parts: ‘The Classical World’, ‘The Biblical World’, ‘Empires and Civilizations’ and ‘The New World’. While all the sections contain interesting essays, the first two will be of most concern to readers of this journal; so the rest of this review will concentrate on these, and particularly on the intriguing contribution by Simon Goldhill.

Edmund Richardson’s essay, ‘Of Doubtful Antiquity: Fighting for the Past in the Crimean War’, posits the uncovering of ‘heritage’ as part of imperial policy, and the British forces in the Crimea as ‘an army in search of the past’. By this view, officers with a classical education hardly had time to fight the war as they were too busy digging up antiquity. But what antiquity? By subtle imaginative transference, episodes from the *Odyssey* were placed in the Crimea, or ‘ancient Crimean culture’ was imagined to owe itself to trade relations with classical Greece, ‘making the classical past visible on the Crimean landscape after a gap of at least two millennia’ (p. 40). Unfortunately these efforts produced no evidence that could achieve plausible results: in Byron’s words, ‘the Gods of old are silent on their shore’.

Mary Beard, discussing Hadrian’s Wall, (‘Officers and Gentlemen? Roman Britain and the British Empire’) also notes the perspective of ‘public schoolboys, steeped in classical literature’ and with experience of imperial service, viewing Hadrian’s Wall as a ‘metaphor for the North West Frontier’, so that ‘Romano-

British archaeology amounted to imperialism pursued by other means' (pp. 51–2). Beard thinks this is a cliché and that approaches to Roman archaeology were more nuanced, but gives no evidence. She points to the fact that Hadrian's Wall was largely a ruin reconstructed by drystone wallers in the 19th century and therefore that the tourist's view of it as a powerful frontier is a fiction. But this surely is a case of archaeology in the service of creative reimagining rather than 'one of the classic ironies of (plunder and) preservation' (p. 61). As far as we know, the wall was indeed constructed as a barrier marking the northern frontier of the Roman Empire, so its rebuilding is not ironic or an instance of plunder but a plausible reinstatement of its purpose.

The land of the Bible, like the world of the classics, is held by the British 'even more firmly to be part of their own patrimony, and the Holy Land their land'. By this view, according to the editors, the British imperialists considered 'Western Christianity as the natural custodian of those places'. This was because they believed themselves greatly superior to the moribund Ottoman Empire they were replacing, and therefore entitled to 'impose a ludicrously Western Christian idealization upon Eastern Christian and Jewish sites' (p. 91). Thus David Gange ('Unholy Water: Archaeology, the Bible, and the First Aswan Dam') points to how Egypt and the Nile, starting with the Joseph story, are assumed (with a straight face) to be the cradle of Christian culture – 'our biblical heritage' and by extension the raw material with which 'to reconstruct the racial history of mankind' (p. 97). So 'the progress of modern civilization that was assumed to culminate in Britain began by the Nile'. Since irrigation in Egypt was imagined by 19th century archaeologists to originate with Joseph, the Aswan project becomes 'the restitution of biblical engineering', so building Aswan and 'destroying ancient temples by flooding Upper Egypt was an act of historical restoration' (Pp. 103–105). By this means Joseph becomes not only an Egyptian Hebrew 'but also a revered model of inventive Englishness' (p. 113), causing the religious and the pragmatic to link hands in the (justifiable) destruction of antiquity.

Simon Goldhill's characteristically fascinating essay ('The Cotswolds in Jerusalem: Restoration and Empire') also deals with the process of foisting Western culture onto the biblical landscape, achieved largely via the artistic vision of Charles Ashbee, the hero of his story. Ashbee had, by an odd sequence of coincidences, been recruited in 1919 by the commander of Jerusalem, Ronald Storrs, to be his civic adviser, effectively the town planner of the city, thereby making the city's 'restoration reliant on the predilections of one British Mandate official' (p. 138). Goldhill stresses the (till now ignored) 'influence of Ashbee's development in the Arts and Crafts and Garden City movements on his activities in Jerusalem' (p. 143). In particular, it was Ashbee's 'Pre-Raphaelite training which led him to privilege the medieval' features of Jerusalem over those relating to historic Jewish

tradition (p. 129). In pursuance of this consciously medievalizing programme, a law was passed requiring all buildings to be at least faced with Jerusalem stone, a policy typical of Arts and Crafts infatuation with the use of traditional materials (though often erroneously credited to Israeli regulations). Secondly, Ashbee produced a plan for the Old City and its environs, with built-up areas surrounded by rural belts, which bear a striking resemblance to his town plan for Letchworth Garden City (the two plans are illustrated) – clearly an importation of Arts and Crafts aesthetics to the Judean landscape. Thirdly, Ashbee established guilds of workers in ‘traditional’ crafts like weaving, pottery and cabinet making – another desideratum of the Arts and Crafts movement – with the purpose of ‘re-educating the natives into their own traditions, now socially restructured with an admixture of the medieval guild’ (p. 138). For Goldhill, these policies are subsumed under the need for imperial control as imposed by British officialdom, so that ‘in Jerusalem we have an extraordinary case of the principles of Morris and Ruskin, as taken up and developed by Ashbee, affecting the policies of preservation and planning... The aesthetics of the Arts and Crafts movement here becomes fully implicated and intertwined with the structures of imperial authority and power’ (p. 143).

There are several other thoughtful contributions to this volume which will interest scholars and students in various disciplines as well as general readers. Its usefulness is however undermined by some all-too-common failings. Many citations are unaccompanied by referenced footnotes, there is no bibliography or author index, and the illustrations are of poor quality. Above all, Oxford University Press, as so often, has ensured minimal access to the work by those who would most benefit from it by its exorbitant price.

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Rachel Hachlili, *Ancient Synagogues - Archaeology and Art: New Discoveries and Current Research*. Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section 1 The Near and Middle East, 105. Leiden: Brill, 2013, xxxiv + 738 pp. €218.00. ISBN: 978–9–00425–773–3.

Rachel Hachlili (Professor of Archaeology, University of Haifa, Israel) is a renowned expert on ancient Jewish art, and therefore it is not surprising that a key focus of this monumental volume concerns the artistic repertoire of the synagogues found in the area of Israel-Palestine. Her work in this volume is prompted by the fact that there have been numerous new excavations over the past decades that have greatly illuminated synagogue architecture and art. Debates have been raging about dating, typologies and origins. Hachlili enters this contentious world by

presenting the evidence judiciously, site by site, topic by topic, allowing researchers to use this volume as a compendium. However, she also presents her own analyses of key questions. While her main interest is in art and mosaics, she includes also significant data and interpretations on architectural forms and epigraphy.

The book has a good initial chapter (I) about the synagogue as an institution, which summarises also current debates about synagogue origins, arguing ultimately for a complex approach: the ‘synagogue did not develop from one origin; rather, it evolved and progressed in time and place according to the needs of particular congregations’ (p. 21). However, Hachlili curiously does not refer to the work of Anders Runesson, Donald Binder and Birger Olsson, *The Ancient Synagogue from its Origins to 200 C.E.: A Source Book* (2008), which is a shame as it also outlines the current state of research on origins and lists the synagogues of Israel-Palestine, though it includes also the Diaspora.

Chapter II focuses on Second Temple Period synagogues, which Hachlili defines as inherently problematic in terms of identification, since ‘they lacked distinctive architectural features and symbols, making classification difficult’ (p. 23). Nevertheless, the evidence as presented from Jericho, Masada, Herodium, Qiryat Sefer, Gamla and Modi’in does seem to show a kind of standard model of a rectangular space with columns in the central area, and stone benches around the walls, even without a Torah shrine. In fact, Hachlili notes, that the ‘most important and distinctive element of these Second Temple period communal synagogue structures are the benches lining the walls, which must have been specifically added for the congregants to sit upon when congregating and worshiping, the focus being the center of the hall’ (p. 46).

Perhaps what complicates the picture most during the Second Temple period (through to 135 CE) is that synagogues at this time could be private. Indeed, Hachlili presents the evidence that they have been found within or adjacent to private palatial complexes at Jericho (pp. 28–30), in the First Revolt occupation of Masada (pp. 30–33) and in the Bar Kokhba period occupation of the palace-fortress of Herodium (pp. 28–29). Critics of the identification of the Jericho structure as a synagogue can assume it had to have a public use to be so designated, and, as Hachlili (p. 30) states: the Jericho synagogue ‘is more reminiscent of Hellenistic-Roman villas and may have been part of one’. From the evidence as shown, though Hachlili does not state this definitively, it is obvious that people with sufficient resources could construct an enclosure they utilised for Sabbath assemblies within their personal precincts. However, Hachlili shies away from a sure identification of some private structures as synagogues. The 1st-century BCE benched structure adjacent to *miqva’ot*, identified in Shuafat (Khirbet a-Ras) within an agricultural complex, may then also be a synagogue, but here she is sceptical: ‘the building complex is no longer identified as a synagogue’ (p.39). One wonders why not,

given it has the remains of *miqva`ot*, and there was a room with benches around the walls. There was even a niche in the wall oriented towards Jerusalem.

Further chapters in the volume are rich and comprehensive. Chapter III covers 'Recently Excavated and Newly Published Synagogues', meaning post-Second Temple structures found in the last 30 or so years, and Hachlili provides an excellent review. Hachlili then goes on to provide insightful discussions in: IV, 'Synagogue Architecture and Ornamentation'; V, 'Synagogue Art, Significance and Impact'; VI, 'Jewish Symbols'; VII, 'The Jewish Calendar Represented by the Zodiac Cycle'; VIII, 'Illustrated Biblical Tales'; IX, 'Motifs in Jewish Synagogue Art'; X, 'Artists, Workshops and Repertoire'; XI, 'Inscriptions'; XII, 'Coins and the Synagogue'; XIII, 'Women'; XIV, 'Dating'; XV, 'Conclusions', with a supplement on the late 2nd century CE structure at Qazion, re-excavated by Hachlili herself with Ann Killebrew in 1993–97. In regard to the latter case, the question is whether Qazion can be considered a synagogue or else a temple-like 'monumental complex'. Radically, for Hachlili this is 'a Jewish cultic space that preserved the importance of the Jerusalem priesthood in the centuries after the destruction of the Second Temple and the Jewish and Bar Kokhba revolts' (p. 669). It provided 'an ambiance for the performance and preservation of some of the temple rituals and ceremonies originally carried out by the priests' (p. 672), with some connection to honouring the emperor, given that Septimius Severus and his family are specifically mentioned in the lintel inscription.

The chapter on women is particularly interesting to this reviewer. Hachlili discusses the representation of women in Byzantine synagogue art, largely as 'Virgo' (Betulah) and as The Seasons (focusing on hair, head coverings/ornaments, jewellery, dress and shoes), but also as real women (donors?) in the recently-found in the 5th century synagogue mosaic of Huqoq. She asks whether women were seated separately from men (p. 579), but concludes after a too-brief summary of views that 'women worshipped together with the men' without separation, and that 'the contrary opinion, that women worshipped in a gallery or in a separate section of the hall, has not been proven' (p. 580). Here Hachlili's date of publication means she just missed an important article by Chad Spigel (2012), who explored the question of separate seating in ancient synagogues. A key question is whether there was an upper women's gallery. In the Palestinian Talmud there is a reference to the slaughter of Jews in the Alexandrian synagogue, described as a דיפליסטון, *diplistoon*, a term similar to that found regarding secular basilicas (Vitruvius, *De architectura*, 5: 1: 6), implying a higher and lower level, which is borne out in the words of the women who say, after the men have been killed, 'Do to those above as you have done to those below' (j. *Sukkot*, 5: 1 [55b], but see Spigel 2012, 71 n.40 on the textual and translation problems). According to Spigel this type of

synagogue construction seems to be evidenced in Khirbet Susiya (4th–8th centuries; see Hachlili, 118), or Khirbet Shema` (Spigel 2012:75; Hachlili, p. 73) dating from the 3rd century. In Gush Halav (Hachlili, pp. 63–4), a simple single-storey synagogue structure dating to the mid–3rd century was modified in the 4th century to have a mezzanine level, which Spigel (2012: 76–8) suggests would be a women’s gallery. Spigel (2012: 69–71) notes that the separation of men and women – with women above on a balcony and men below – is indicated in m. *Middot* 2: 5 (cf. m. *Sukkot* 5: 1–4) and in t. *Sukkot* 4: 1 this is defined in terms of when there was festive dancing in the water drawing ceremony of Sukkoth. On the basis of this the Babylonian Talmud (b. *Sukkot* 51b-52a) defines the *mechitza* as a dividing wall between men and women. In fact, one-level gendered divisions of space are also evidenced: a partition of canes is mentioned by Rabbi Raba and one of rugs by Rabbi Abaye is noted in b.*Kidd.* 81a (Spigel 2012: 72). Thus Spigel (2012: 78) suggests that in Gush Halav the Jewish ‘community may have made a move from separate seating using a non-permanent room divider in the main hall to separate seating using a mezzanine’.

Also of interest is the question of dating of synagogues, in chapter XIV. While Hachlili notes my dating of the synagogue of Capernaum to the 5th century, she still sides with the excavators, who date it slightly earlier, to the 4th–5th century CE, despite the presence of coins sealed beneath its floors that would suggest the later dating (pp. 590–3). She appears quite clearly opposed to Magness’s re-dating to the 6th century, suggesting that the evidence for 4th–5th century coins and pottery underneath the white synagogue (and occasional possible 6th century material, according to Magness) is the result of later renovations. Perhaps only new excavations at the site will settle these questions. Overall, Hachlili is quite conventional in her dating of the building of synagogues, noting that there were two key boom times: the first one in the late 3rd and early 4th centuries, and the second in the 6th century. She does not draw out these conclusions by looking to the wider historical context in any detail.

This volume deals with a field of research still being illuminated by new discoveries, Such is the energy of current excavations of synagogues that already there are sections of the volume that are out of date. On the section covering the 5th–century synagogue of Huqoq (pp. 66–67) continuing excavations (directed by Jodi Magness) have since brought to light further mosaics. In 2013 a new mosaic was discovered which shows a meeting between a Jewish High Priest and the Hellenistic ruler, accompanied by battle elephants, possibly referencing the Books of Maccabees (Magness 2013). In 2015 a mosaic inscription was found at the centre of a panel surrounded by humans, animals and mythological creatures associated with Dionysus, and there was also painted ivy on the plaster around the pillars. In

2016 another mosaic was found showing Samson carrying the gate of Gaza on his shoulders, suggesting to the excavators that the synagogue had a Samson cycle. as well as depictions of pairs of animals going into Noah's ark.

The publication of this volume also just missed out on including the synagogue at Horvat Kur, excavated as part of the Kinneret Regional Project led by Jurgen Zangenberg (Zangenberg et. al. 2013), in which a stone table was found, in secondary use, with significant similarities to the table found in Magdala (illustrated in Hachlili's volume on Fig. II: 13). There was also a stone seat, and a mosaic with an inscription and also a tabernacle menorah, dating from the first phase of synagogue construction at the site in the 4th century.

In the summer of 2016 at Tel Reches, near Mount Tabor in Galilee, excavations led by Motti Aviam of the Kinneret Institute for Galilean Archaeology (Kinneret College) discovered a 1st century BCE/CE synagogue. It measured 7.90 × 9 m, and there were the remains of limestone benches around the walls, and one square pillar base. This adds to the repertoire of Second Temple synagogues and falls squarely within the common type. At the same time Zeev Weiss found the remains of a possible 1st century CE synagogue (destroyed 3rd century CE) in Sepphoris (Zippori). However, this large public building included colourful frescoes including paintings of a lion, a bull (?), a bird and a leopard (?).

Notwithstanding the need for some updates as a result of these discoveries, this is a very impressive volume. It is a magnificent, expertly-researched book and one that is richly illustrated, including a large section of coloured plates at the back. Hachlili's study is wide-ranging and thorough in presenting the material and highlighting key questions about synagogue use. This is a work that is essential to have in any library that deals with ancient Judaism and its archaeology.

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