There are, naturally enough given the wide field discussed, many statements in the book with which other scholars will disagree. For example, I do not believe that arguments for a continuous Jewish-Christian presence in Palestine can be based with any validity on the suspicion that fourth-century churches must have been founded on earlier Christian traditions among local people (128). I find unconvinning all the suggestions that the proximity of Jewish sites to Christian ones is testimony to religious contact of any kind (10, etc.); present-day Jerusalem demonstrates well enough how communities can exist physically side by side but in separate mental worlds. In a way, however, such substantive disagreements matter less than unease about the general example set by the authors in the methods for using archaeological material. I find myself most inclined to dissent from Meyers and Strange when they cease to write simply and authoritatively about archaeology and turn to historical interpretation of the literary texts. It is not so much that the secondary works on those texts on which the authors rely seem to me often to be misguidedly chosen – Kimelman on the minim (32), Oppenheimer on the am-haaretz (36-38), Avi-Yonah on the urbanisation of Palestine (44-45) – but that it is a reflection of their use of archaeology that this should lead the authors so much astray. Their approach to archaeological evidence is precisely not that advocated by the new archaeology so popular in the United States and described by them in glowing terms as the attempt to recreate whole societies from archaeological evidence (23), but rather the older sort of application of new finds to the illumination of specific texts that classical archaeologists, lured by their wealth of literary sources, have been much more slow to shed than the rest of the archaeological world. The authors state, rightly, the need to change this orientation (33), but they have not done so. Furthermore, for a guide to students far more needs to be said on the limits of archaeology than the brief remarks in this book (28-30) permit. More is needed on the hazards of incomplete excavation, the inherent biases of surface surveys, and the dangers of large hypotheses based on limited material, like the assumption that ceramic forms are useful indications of cultural influences (46). Not least important should be the constant reminder that dated material always provides a terminus post quem rather than an absolute date, which the authors themselves occasionally overlook (131).

This book will, then, do a service to students by bringing little known material to attention. Readers should be warned that, despite the title, the authors sensibly avoid duplicating the efforts of others by saying almost nothing about Qumran, though they cheerfully cover the same ground as CRINT and Schürer in providing a worthy discussion of languages in Roman Palestine (62-91) in which the prevalence of Greek is probably over-estimated.

Martin Goodman


This is a record, dedicated to Joseph Aviram, of the convention held in Jerusalem in 1978. The editor has retained the atmosphere of the original meeting to the extent of including the speeches that welcomed the official opening (9-16). But he has also ensured that the volume will prove useful by expanding to eleven the original series of eight concise surveys of archaeological achievement within Israel over the thirty
years up to 1978. The new papers are by no means the least interesting: E. Stern on the Persian period (86-90), Rosen-Ayalon on the Muslim period (112-16), and Prawer on the period of the Crusaders (117-28). The surveys contrive to be very full despite their brevity, though they are naturally for the most part poorly documented and the handsome apology by Joseph Naveh for taking a personal approach to his material (75) warns readers of the dangers as well as the advantages of asking specialists to summarise work in their own fields. Papers by Avigad, Mazar and Shiloh summarise the results of recent excavations in Jerusalem. Yadin on the Temple Scroll fits in rather unhappily here, and the two historical papers by Malamat and Rappaport, stuck with a geographical survey by Amiran at the end of the book, are, though interesting in themselves, incongruous in the context of the book as a whole. It is for the summaries of the magnificent achievements of archaeologists in Israel up to 1978 that the book will be read.

MARTIN GOODMAN


Historians have long bewailed the paucity of information about the Bar Kokhba revolt. That tragic episode in Palestinian Jewish history may have caused almost as much physical devastation and spiritual trauma as the first great war against Rome (A.D. 66-74), but it is hard to assess its significance, or even to be sure of the main events. There was no Josephus for the second revolt. Scholars have been sorely tempted to offset this lack by making the most of every scrap of information that can be gleaned from the ancient sources. Some, with great ingenuity, have managed to write sizeable essays or monographs on Bar Kokhba. Schäfer demonstrates that much of this historical writing lacks any solid foundation: it is often based on an uncritical use of the sources, and ignores elementary problems of form- and redaction-criticism. Few reputations emerge unscathed from Schäfer's attack. Of Yeivin's Milhemet Bar-Kokhba he writes: "Freilich hat sich auch in kaum einem anderen Werk solide Information so sehr mit Phantasie und Spekulation vermischt wei bei Yeivin" (pp. 1-2). Yadin's Bar Kokhba is characterised as "eine interessante Mischung aus Abenteuerroman und wissenschaftlicher Information" (p. 3). Schäfer sets out to show just how problematic and uncertain the sources are. His purpose is quite consciously destructive - to destroy the current clichés about the revolt. "Die Methode ist also die einer rigorosen und 'atomistischen' Quellenkritik. Das in der Sekundärliteratur mit viel Phantasie und Scharfsinn zusammengetragene farbenprächtige Mosaik 'Bar Kokhba-Aufstand' wird in seine einzelnen Steichen zerlegt und jedes einzelne Steinchen auf seinem Quellenwert hin untersucht" (p. 6). His conclusion is that most of the tesserae of the mosaic are historically not worth much. What he offers us is not a continuous history of the war, but an analysis of a number of key issues: the chronology of events; the causes of the revolt; the figure of Bar Kokhba (did he or did he not have messianic pretensions?); the question of whether the rebels captured Jerusalem and tried to rebuild the Temple; the problem of the theatre of the war (was fighting confined to Judaea, or did it embrace Galilee?); the image of Hadrian in Rabbinic literature; and the problem of the