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. Yadon in 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). Yadon'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
Hadrianic persecution after the revolt. As Schäfer himself notes (p. 6), this agenda is largely dictated by the interests of Realgeschichte. He has adopted it because the realgeschichtlich approach dominates the scholarly literature on the subject, and also, apparently, because he is old-fashioned enough to believe that realgeschichtlich questions may legitimately be asked even of the Rabbinic sources. Schäfer also offers an elaborate redactional analysis of the one extensive body of material on the revolt in Rabbinic literature—the so-called "Bethar-Komplex" (y.Ta'an. IV 8; 68d-69b; EkhA. II 4; b.Gitt. 57a-58a). This analysis is the centre-piece of the work, and underpins Schäfer's whole position (p. 8). It illustrates the uncertainty of the sources, and highlights the sort of problems which must be faced before we can even begin to use Rabbinic texts for historical reconstruction. This graphic demonstration of the problematic nature of the Rabbinic sources raises the methodological question of whether it is possible to extract from them genuine historical information. To raise just this question is an avowed, if secondary, aim of Schäfer's work. However, he does not discuss this problem abstractly at any length, and at the end of the book leaves it rather unresolved. His view appears to be that history can be extracted—after much tribulation.

There can be no doubt about the immense importance of this monograph. Schäfer's criticisms are devastating, and are pressed home with his usual acumen and mastery of the Rabbinic sources. We really must stop producing histories by stitching together a patchwork of diverse scraps from diverse sources. I agree absolutely with his general point that an adequate literary analysis of the sources must precede their historical use. But having conceded this I have some questions to ask. I feel he has created problems by the very thoroughness of his "Destruktion". In a sense demolition is the easy part of the job. What happens if we now try to write a history of the Bar Kokhba revolt, taking all Schäfer's criticisms into account? He seems to allow that such a history is in principle legitimate and, indeed, possible. He is simply carrying out the preliminary ground-clearing: "Ein wichtiges Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es daher, an den Grundlagen für eine neue und weiterführende Sicht des Bar Kokhba-Aufstandes mitzuwirken" (p. 4). But has anything survived the debacle with which we may confidently build? We might surely be pardoned if we came away from Schäfer's book with a profound scepticism as to the possibility of writing any sort of useful history of the revolt. Deconstructionist analysis can induce a radical historical scepticism. One thinks of its inhibiting effects on some Gospel critics, or of the historically negative impression created by Wansbrough's analysis of early Islamic tradition. It is difficult psychologically to pass over from the destructive frame of mind demanded by this sort of analysis to the constructive attitude required to write narrative history, and it may, in fact, be illogical to do so, for we may have destroyed the possibility of historiography. I am far from convinced that Schäfer has left us with any "assured facts" on which to base a meaningful history. If we can salvage some from the ruins, then to turn them into any sort of history, we will need a faculty which I feel Schäfer is in danger of decrying—imagination. Of course, the historian who indulges in "fantasy" must be wrong, but the historian who uses his imagination is not necessarily at fault. All the great historians possessed powerful historical imaginations. Moreover, sound historians have always paid attention to the nature of their sources: when were they written; how close were their authors to events; what is their bias; and so on. But I am not sure that many would regard a full-blown knowledge of form- and redaction-criticism as a necessary tool for their work. Literary analysis and historiography are quite distinct activities, however
much one may borrow from the other. Outside the realm of Biblical scholarship (which is a rather special case), it would be hard to find any practising ancient historian engaging in such a systematic literary analysis of his sources, and, I suspect, most would feel that analysis pushed this far was not of much use to them. Historiography is not an exact science in which incontrovertible results will emerge from the application of correct “scientific” method. In Britain at least it can still be regarded as a humanistic discipline in which informed impressionism plays a part. The proof of the historical “pudding” still lies in the “eating”. But these reflections lead us into very deep waters. It is a measure of the significance of Schäfer’s work that we find ourselves there. He has raised issues of great significance. In raising them so forcefully, and in providing us with such a meticulous commentary on the raw data of the Bar Kokhba revolt, Professor Schäfer has once again put all of us who work in the field of early Judaism in his debt.

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This volume, which continues the theme of Jesus the Jew, brings together in revised form ten lectures which have already appeared in print elsewhere. The 1974 C. G. Montefiore Lecture on “Jesus the Jew” is followed by the three Riddell Memorial Lectures on “The Gospel of Jesus the Jew” delivered in Newcastle in 1981. Then come two papers on New Testament interpretation in the light of Jewish literature of the period 200 B.C. – A.D. 400, a paper of 1978 on the present state of the “Son of Man” debate, two papers on the impact of the Dead Sea Scrolls on Jewish and New Testament studies respectively, and a final one on the Essenes and history. The last three share enough common ground with the subject-matter of the first seven to justify the collection of all ten in a single volume. For the Essenes belonged to the world of Judaism in the closing century or two of the Second Temple, and to that world Jesus belonged.

Let a Christian who accepts, with the fourth evangelist, that in Jesus of Nazareth the divine logos became flesh affirm that Dr. Vermes’s thesis is essential to a realistic doctrine of the incarnation. Such a doctrine requires that the logos became flesh in a particular human being, belonging to a particular family, nation, time and culture. Dr. Vermes no doubt intends his study to be a contribution to the quest of the historical Jesus (as of course it is), but even if he did not intend it to be a contribution to Christology, it is that too, and Christian theologians should reckon with it seriously.

In the preface an interesting comparison is drawn between Jesus of Nazareth and his namesake, Jesus son of Ananias, who was such a nuisance to the Jewish leaders of Jerusalem in A.D. 62 that, when they found themselves unable to stop his prophesying, they handed him over to the Roman governor. This comparison can be set alongside the fruitful comparison between Jesus and Hanina ben Dosa. Jesus was certainly a many-sided personality; in evaluating his gospel, Dr. Vermes reminds us, we must bear in mind that he was a hasid, a “man of God”, as well as a teacher. But with regard to “the real Jesus”, Jesus the Jew, I have difficulty in agreeing with Dr. Vermes that “it is a long time now since he was thought of” (p. 57). Time and again, as readers have gone back to the gospel record, Jesus has revealed himself as a