form nor a cardinal instrument of self-definition. Paul was Asia's missionary, and in Pauline Christianity the rejected figure is not the Jew but the 'old man' whom we all inherit equally from Adam. His is the vicious pride that leads the Gentiles into idolatry and the Jews into a specious form of godliness; the critique of Judaism is essential to the Christianity of Paul the Pharisee, but in any Gentile churches that were free of Judaizers, as at Corinth, its equivalent was the rejection of idolatry and sacrifice. Once anti-Judaism, as in Melito, becomes a motif of Gentile Christianity, we are witnessing, not the definition of faith, but its corruption. Because the Saviour came as a Jew he was driven to his Cross by Jews and Pharisees; it is not to them, however, but to the Judaizers, as at Corinth, its equivalent was the rejection of idolatry and sacrifice. Once the definition of faith, but its corruption. Because the Saviour came as a Jew he applies the poignant words of the Johannine prologue, 'He came unto his own, and his own knew him not'.

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The present study originated in the 1994 Jacobs Lectures in Rabbinic Thought sponsored by the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies. While not purporting to be a comprehensive study of centre and diaspora in Late Jewish Antiquity, it does try to shed light 'on what the Jews of the period, in Judaea as well as in the diaspora, might have thought about their particular situation as a scattered people, and how these thoughts were translated into concrete policies and subsequent measures that shaped and defined the relationships among the various Jewish communities of Late Antiquity' (p. 12). Overall it is quite successful.

The first chapter attempts to understand how the Jews in the diaspora might have explained their existence. Dispersion was not unique in the ancient world; what was unique, though, was the ongoing yearning to reverse the process and to return to one's homeland. Unfortunately, setbacks after the Jewish uprisings seemed to make the situation even worse. Some excuse had to be found for the continued existence of the diaspora, and punishment, blessing or universal mission were among those offered.

The second chapter seeks to determine how the diaspora Jew identified with his non-Jewish surroundings, through which mechanisms he might have expressed his attachment to his new patris or fatherland and to what extent he evinced a sense of 'local patriotism'. In Ptolemaic Egypt one way to do this was to attempt to mesh Egyptian and Israelite history, thus linking the history of the Jews in Egypt with that of their non-Jewish neighbours. This was at times not just a matter of pride but also of necessity in countering anti-Semitic calumnies.

A similar technique was used in Babylonia where the local Jews sought to stress the unique role of that country in ancient Israelite history, beginning with Abraham. Once antiquity was established, it was easy to embellish, laying the theological groundwork for the eventual struggle between Babylonia and the Land of Israel over religious supremacy.

The religious and intellectual centres of Palestinian Jewry, however, could hardly have ignored the pro-Babylonian ideologies developing in that country, especially in the wake of the destruction in 70 C.E. and the catastrophe of the Bar-Kochba War which made physical existence in the Land of Israel that much more difficult. At stake was not just the status of these centres, but the very question as to whether there was a central halakhic authority in Palestine. In the next chapter Gafni deals with the
response of Palestinian Jewry that began to demand total commitment to the Land of Israel and, for the first time in Jewish History, during the talmudic period, attempted to declare life in the diaspora as illegitimate. It appeared that the two centres of Jewish life, in Palestine and in Babylonia, were on a collision course that would likely result in some sort of mutual excommunication.

This excommunication, however, did not occur, and during the next few centuries solutions were found which enabled the Babylonian community to develop and thrive, while at the same time remaining loyal to the Land of Israel and even continuing to recognize the religious primacy of that centre (at least most of the time). It is to the study of these matters that Gafni devotes the next two chapters, showing how both centres maintained a fragile relationship on matters such as burial or reinterment in Israel, Patriarch and Exilarch, calendar, court systems, rabbinical authority and the like.

There is more to it, though, than just the question of the Jewish understanding of dispersion. The major portions of Gafni's book are based on rabbinic sources and the use of such material for historical research has, of late, elicited a good deal of spirited discussion. There is today hardly a serious historian of the periods under study by Gafni who accepts the historical veracity of the traditions found in rabbinic literature at face value. On the other hand, Gafni belongs to the school of scholarship that maintains that 'a reasoned use of these materials [i.e. rabbinic literature], governed by a judicious consideration of what can and cannot be expected from a talmudic source, can still provide us with convincing conclusions' (p. 16). Gafni's work serves as a model of scholarship and proves once again why he is considered one of the leading social historians of the mishnaic and talmudic period.

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This volume represents the proceedings of an international conference on Targum held at the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin in July 1992. The conference was intended to coincide with the end of the project 'The Aramaic Bible', published by Michael Glazier, which provides up-to-date annotated English translations of the targums to the whole Hebrew Bible. It also marked the formation of the new International Organisation for the Study of the Targums. The papers presented cover many aspects of Targum study: texts and editions, language, the relation of Targum to Jewish biblical interpretation, to the New Testament and to Christian writing. Michael Klein and Stefan Reif write on the Cairo Geniza Targum texts, where the majority of manuscripts are Onqelos, followed by Haftarah collections of Jonathan. Both Luis Diez Merino and Robert Gordon detail the shortcomings of Sperber's edition and methods, though Gordon concludes that in the case of Targums Onkelos and Jonathan the consonantal text is reasonably accurate. Michael McNamara describes the history of the Michael Glazier–Liturgical Press Aramaic Bible Project, an interconfessional as well as international effort. Stephen Kaufman takes his fellow scholars to task for slack methodology in dating the language of the Palestinian Targums and denies that the Palestinian Targum can be dated as early as Qumran, while Edward Cook suggests that the language of Onqelos and Jonathan is closest to Syriac and like Syriac does not fit easily into the simple East–West schema often imposed upon Aramaic of this period.