The poet Lucan, who writes in his *Pharsalia* (593) of the conquest by Pompey of a land given over to the worship of a “deus incertus”, comes towards the end of the succession of authors appearing in Stern’s first volume, “Herodotus to Plutarch”. But still for Lucan the Jewish God was unknown, and that undoubtedly in two senses: unknown because he had no images — Pompey had found the Holy of Holies to be empty — and possibly even no name; but also because Romans could not get a clear understanding of the nature of His peculiar religion. Virtually all the authors represented in this volume evince a degree of puzzlement and misapprehension about Judaism or the Jews, whether they be hostile, neutral or admiring. Apart from this general feature, they range widely in their interests, their approach, the level of their knowledge. They span some half a millennium. Modern writers, even the most respectable, have mostly had at the back of their minds the one general problem of anti-Semitism in the ancient world, and have therefore tended to pay insufficient attention to each particular author’s period, place of origin, purpose in writing, and general ability. Even Theodore Reinach, in his useful introduction to the predecessor to Stern’s volumes, fell into this category.

Now that we have the new collection, it is much less tempting to oversimplify — though the book by no means does the student’s work for him. All the authors of whom there are passages, fragments or testimonia certainly or probably relating to the Jews, Judaism or Palestine are, to the best of my knowledge, included. In taking up references to purely geographical phenomena — descriptions of Coele-Syria, Idumaea, the Dead Sea etc. — Stern may seem to be casting his net too widely. Even characters like Lucretius and Vergil come in. But the decision seems to me a good one. Herodotus (II,104) speaks of the circumcized “Syrians of Palestine”, possibly referring to the Jews without himself knowing it; his ignorance is significant, and so too is the subsequent growth of awareness of Judaea and of the Jews there and elsewhere as distinct entities. Introductory remarks precede the entry for each author. Commentary, including extensive bibliography, follows each text and

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* Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism, edited with Introductions, Translations and Commentary by M. Stern. The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem, 1974.

1 See, most recently, J.N. Sevenster, The Roots of Pagan Anti-Semitism in the Ancient World: Supplements to Novum Testamentum XLI (1975), in spite of his acknowledgment in chapter V of the diversity of ancient views.

2 Th. Reinach, Textes d’auteurs grecs et latins relatifs au Judaisme (1895).
translation. In this way, the major problems are accurately, concisely and lucidly presented. Presumably the second volume will have an index. Many entries are, in fact, individual studies in depth. Reinach's collection was useful and perfectly adequate. But this one, apart from including, naturally enough, much additional material, is in a different class: it is a major work of scholarship, and a pleasure to work with. My only general criticism is of the use of translations from the Loeb Classical Library whenever they are available. Some of these are excellent, but other quaint and even inaccurate: thus Godley's Herodotus contains archaisms like "think on this matter" and "that indeed goes for nothing". An obscene epigram of Martial (no.241) is rendered, as it is in Ker's Loeb, in Italian!

Stern's only true predecessor is Flavius Josephus. And it is remarkable how many of the texts or testimonies were preserved for us either in that author's 
Contra Apionem, or in his Antiquities. But for Josephus, we could have had no mention here of Clearchus of Soli, Euhemerus, Berossus, Manetho, Mnaseas of Patara, Agatharchides of Cnidus, Menander of Ephesus, quite likely Posidonius, Apollonius Molon, Hypsicrates, Timagenes, the historical works of Strabo and of Nicolaus of Damascus, Lysimachus, Chaeremon, the anonymous authors on the Jewish War, and even Apion. The entries under Hecataeus of Abdera, Megasthenes, Polybius, Ptolemy of Mendes and Castor of Rhodes would have been even more attenuated than they are. The significance of these figures will emerge as we proceed.

It hardly requires saying that in none of the cases mentioned do we have complete information; often only scraps survive. Josephus, often unjustly maligned, was by no means a "scissors-and-paste" historian. He used what suited his purpose, and provided his own framework and links. This leads us on to a cluster of questions which will occur to the user of Stern's book. How much of what once existed is missing? Can we gauge how extensive the Graeco-Roman literature on Judaism once was? Have we a sufficiently representative sample here to allow us to make any generalizations on the basis of it?3

It seems safe to assume, first of all, that Josephus would have made some use of any material of which he was aware and which was available to him. For pagan testimonies play a central role in the Contra Apionem. The second of the author's proposed objectives is to demonstrate the antiquity of the Jewish people from non-Jewish writings (CA I, 59; II,288); the third, to draw the attention of the ignorant to those Greek historians who have not left out the Jews. For this purpose, Josephus cites both foreign and Greek texts (1,161). From these, he attempts to show not only that Classical and Hellenistic Greeks knew the Jews, but also that they admired them (1,175) — that is to

3 Sevenster, op.cit., p.8, cheerfully asserts: "there were probably more writers who expressed anti-Semitic statements than just those we happen to know of."
say, he does not limit himself to pure chronology, and any mention or apparent mention is grist to his mill. Of the hostile accounts, Lysimachus' and Chaeremon's malicious versions of the Exodus story (see below) are contrasted in the first part of the work with those Josephus found in Manetho. Then the first half of Book II is devoted to refuting slanders. Most of it is focussed on Apion, who seems to have pillaged earlier attacks, such as those of Mnaseas of Patara, Apollonius Molon and (probably misquoting him) Posidonius. There is also independent reference to Apollonius Molon's work on the Jews, which Josephus apparently looked at (II,148). For all that, we know of significant texts which Josephus had not inspected. Teucer of Cyzicus, according to the Suda, wrote a Jewish History in six books not earlier than the first century, BC, and Josephus never so much as mentions him. Another Asiatic of roughly the same period, the enquiring Alexander Polyhistor, working at Rome, cited Hellenistic Jewish, Samaritan and pagan writers (including Apollonius Molon) in his collection on the Jews. This is lavishly quoted in Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica*, but only once acknowledged by Josephus, and that in the *Antiquities* (I,240). It is pervers to suppose that Josephus avoided naming Polyhistor elsewhere to disguise the fact that he was so heavily indebted to him, and Stern is kind to an absurd theory when he writes: "the extensive dependence of Josephus on Alexander Polyhistor is maintained e.g. by Hölscher and by Norden but the evidence is far from clear". Polyhistor could not possibly have done Josephus' work for him; his compilation was of a completely different kind. But he could have been a useful source of certain types of material, and the inevitable conclusion is that Josephus scarcely knew his book. There was also another category of author who needed to relate things Jewish, that is the political historian of the Seleucid or Roman East, who would be concerned with crises in relations with the Jews, above all the incursions into Jerusalem of Antiochus IV and Antiochus VII. Such authors had a part to play in the *Contra Apionem* only if they provided interesting digressions. And the *Antiquities* suggest that, while Josephus was heavily dependent on Nicolaus of Damascus' lost *Universal History* and Strabo's (also lost) historical work, he did not look further, to Polybius, Posidonius, Timagenes of Alexandria, or to a Latin writer such as Livy. He cites these writers on occasion, but only at second hand, and in a subsidiary role, simply to provide additional attestation of what he has stated. Here, then, is a significant gap in our knowledge.

Altogether, Josephus' range of source material must depend partly on literary fashion, partly on the accident of availability in library he used — the 30,0000 volumes of his patron Epaphroditus, the Palatine, some Alexandrian collection or whatever — and partly on the direction his own

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5 See the *Suda* lexicon, s.v. "Epaphroditus".
research happened to take. "My reading has not been exhaustive", is what he tells us (CA 1,216). Behind him, too, must lie an established tradition among Hellenized Jews interested in what Greek authors had to say about them, with all that tradition's particular idiosyncrasies. We may conclude that material has undoubtedly escaped the net, and there are several notable losses; but, for all that, we have a reasonably high proportion of the most important passages on the Jews written before Josephus. In the case of Roman authors, apart from the well-known poets, we are worse off; but at the same time, there was less to lose. Finally, it is likely that little or nothing has passed so utterly into oblivion that we do not even know of its existence.

This does not mean that it is easy to construct a coherent picture of the development of attitudes to Judaism on the basis of these texts. Their interconnections are rarely obvious or simple, nor may the authors be assumed to be representative of whatever world they emanate from. What can usefully be done is to try and distinguish certain types of response, certain factors which seem to have stimulated interest at particular times, certain persistent clichés or areas of perhaps wilful ignorance. An account of one culture through the concepts and language of another can scarcely escape misrepresentation and distortion. Today, anthropologists are quite aware of those limitations, therefore emphasizing the need to learn the language of any people studied, and to do "field-work" by living among them. The ancients did not worry so much. They certainly did not think of learning Hebrew, nor even of looking into the Bible in Greek.6 But it is still worth noting which authors were truly enquiring, which made a serious attempt to understand, which betray any striking knowledge, however fragmentary, or lead one to suspect that what they said was not all they knew. We might also ask whether the Jews were in any different a case from other strange peoples. Some valuable insights for the Hellenistic period are now to be found in the book already referred to (n.6). Momigliano's Alien Wisdom: its appearance shortly after Stern's work is a fortunate coincidence.

The Jews became inhabitants of a Greek world, in Egypt, in Palestine and in Asia, following Alexander's conquests, and the literary reverberations of this were almost immediate. There is an account by one of Aristotle's pupils, Clearchus of Soli, of the master's encounter with a Jew who had the "soul of a Greek". Aristotle's successor, Theophrastus, produced the well-known description of the special sacrifices, nocturnal philosophizing and star-gazing of the Jews. It is evident that for Clearchus and his readers a meeting with a Jew was in itself a remarkable event, for he makes Aristotle explain how the Jews are descended from Indian philosophers and live in a country called Judaea, which has a capital with a most odd-sounding name, Hierosaleme.

6 See A. Momigliano, Alien Wisdom: the Limits of Hellenization (1975), pp. 81, 91 and 120.
The Jews were thus first seen in Momigliano's words, as "priestly sages of the type the East was expected to produce"; though this perhaps underestimates the surprise they occasioned. Awed, if slightly bewildered, respect for the philosophical character of Jewish belief was to make recurrent appearances throughout the period we are dealing with, so that one might almost call it a tradition; it was to furnish the grounds for linking Judaism with Pythagoras, and to be channelled in the end into that mixture of Greek philosophy with Jewish monotheism which was to make Christian theology. But, among pagan writers, it influenced only the select few: Hermippus, who wrote about Pythagoras around 200 B.C., Ocellus Lucanus, a real Pythagorean writing a little later,7 Posidonius, and Varro, the Republican Roman scholar, writer on res divinae, whose ideas later influenced Augustine. Varro, incidentally, said that the Jewish God was called "lao".

Also in the first period of Greek responsiveness to Judaism, and perhaps the very first writer to manifest it,8 was Hecataeus of Abdera, writing under the first Ptolemy. He too, in spite of a critical attitude towards Jewish separatism, evinced excitement about the recently discovered and strange people. His interest in the origins, customs and constitutions of peoples led him to single out Moses, the twelve tribes, the Jewish Law and the High Priesthood. The mixture of knowledge with nonsense in his account suggests some actual acquaintance with Jews, as might be expected of a man who resided in Egypt, but not prolonged exposure.9 Hecataeus can be seen as the founder of a tradition of comment more influential than the one which centered on philosophy. Indeed, Hecataeus' actual narrative was considered fit for inclusion in his World History by Diodorus of Sicily,10 some three hundred years later. Hecataeus' benign half-knowledge must have been in a way a bad influence. In the absence of a precedent of real empirical observation or proper verification, other writers of ethnography (or ethnographical digressions) substituted their own fantasies for Hecataeus'. One example is the (still quite favourable) report on Moses in Strabo's Geography,11 where it is claimed that Moses left Egypt in order to separate his people from Egyptian animal worship, but that the successful and just state which he founded in

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7 At least if one textual reading be accepted, there is a genuine allusion in the surviving fragment (Stern no.40) of this author to the first chapter of Genesis in the Septuagint translation: this would point, most interestingly, to an actual relationship between Jews and Pythagoreans at this period.
8 Stern has not been able to discuss the strongly argued case of O. Murray to this effect, in M. Stern and O. Murray, "Hecataeus of Abdera and Theophrastus on Jews and Egyptians", Journ. Egypt. Arch., 59, 1973, 159–68.
Jerusalem degenerated under his successors with introduction of superstitious customs such as female circumcision.

Above all, Hecataeus opened the door to the malevolent and totally twisted versions of the Exodus story and descriptions of the Jewish cult which emerged in Egypt, presumably as the product of bad relations between Greeks and Jews. If what Josephus attributes to Manetho, a Hellenized Egyptian priest who wrote in the third century B.C. is genuine, the process began early — and Stern (p.64) accepts both these propositions. It is undisputed that Manetho told how the Hyksos, a dynasty of negative character, were expelled from Egypt and settled in Judaea. The further ascriptions include the preposterous tale of the mass departure of 80,000 polluted persons which was to have so extended a history. Variations of it were to be found in Lysimachus, Chaeremon and of course Apion. Another popular slander, that of Jewish ass worship, is certainly attested almost as early, in Mnaseas of Lycian Patara; even if Stern is obviously right in saying that we need not trace all its later appearances back to one source (p.98). On this theme too Apion embroidered; and indeed that show-off, "cymbalum mundi", seems to have been the culmination and crowning glory of the whole tradition we are discussing. It was evidently because of his comprehensiveness and his popularity, as well as his relatively recent date, that Josephus chose him as the principal butt of the Contra Apionem. Some at least of these various constructions, in contrast to that of Hecataeus, were surely produced by men who, at the back of their minds, knew them not to be true. But the psychology of the authors of such publications is never easy to fathom.

Both the exodus of lepers and the association with the ass still found a place in the excursus on the Jews with which Tacitus preceded his account of the fall of the Temple (Histories V, init.). The former he regards as the most authoritative of the six accounts of the origins of the Jews which are available to him. This shows clearly how ignorance, prejudice and malice could survive the circumstances which gave rise to them, travelling far from their original milieu. Tacitus is outside the scope of this first volume. What emerges from the material included in it, is how the pattern of calumny became fixed in Hellenistic Egypt, as Josephus himself pointed out (CA 1,223).

In fact, it might be said that it was in the Hellenistic age that most of the important trends in writing about Jews were established. This is not to say that there were not a number of interesting developments during the Roman period. Three deserve to be singled out: the impact of Pompey's conquest of Judaea in 63 B.C., the active participation of Asiatic Greeks in Augustan

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11 Which may well go back to Posidonius of Rhodes in the first century B.C: see my remarks below.
prose literature, and the increase in proselytism\textsuperscript{12} among all classes of the Roman population during the first century A.D.

Of the first, we can only trace the somewhat remote reverberations; none the less, there is little room for doubt. Plutarch tells us that in his triumph of 61 B.C. Pompey celebrated victory over fifteen Asiatic peoples, and the capture of 900 cities. We know that Pompey himself publicized what he had done, and in a speech to the Roman people bragged of the overthrow of twenty two kings. We hear of more than one inscription enumerating (and somewhat exaggerating) all the successes. And we know that the conquest of Jerusalem was particularly stressed: Cicero in a letter jokingly called him “hic noster Hierosolymarius” — as Stern has not omitted to note.\textsuperscript{13} We should expect Romans’ curiosity to have been aroused by this glamorous new world which, they were assured, they had totally laid low. It need not have been only those scholars and writers who were actually in Pompey’s pay or patronage who responded. Of writers on the Jews, Alexander Polyhistor, Teucer of Cyzicus, Posidonius and Varro are reasonably assigned to this movement: two of them, as we have seen, are notable for their extensive treatment, one (Varro) for the profundity of his approach. In the case of Varro, and also Posidonius, we can, indeed, go further. There would seem to be a specific connection between Pompey’s astonishment at discovering the Holy of Holies to be empty, and renewed interest at just this time in the incorporeality and invisibility of the Jewish God. We know that Livi, in his account of the happening, said this in so many words (no.46.133).

The second phenomenon, too, had an effect which was generally favourable to the Jews. Jewish communities were to be found in most cities of the Roman East, alongside those of Greeks or rather (more often) Hellenized Asiatics. The affairs of the Greeks would, in a number of obvious ways, be intertwined with those of Jews; and historical writing reflects this process. The most striking figure here is Niculaeus of Damascus (no. 227), whose involvement was exceptional in degree, but not unexpected in its character. In his youth he had a Greek philosophical education. He became Herod’s aide, and Augustus’ biographer; he defended the rights of the Jews of Asia before Agrippa\textsuperscript{14}; and Stern, basing himself on his own earlier Hebrew article, collects and analyses the many passages in which, we can be almost certain, Niculaeus touched on Jewish affairs. Josephus’ principal departure from Niculaeus in his narration of the same period is in giving more favourable treatment to the Hasmonean


\textsuperscript{13} See passage no. 69. Pompey’s publicity is talked of in Plutarch’s \textit{Life of Pompey}, in Pliny, \textit{N.H.}, VI, 197, and Diodorus XI, 4.

\textsuperscript{14} Josephus, \textit{AJ} XII, 126–7 and XVI, 29–58.
dynasty. Another figure in the same line was Timagenes; though an Alexandrian, he does not seem to have attacked the Jews in his history; at any rate, Josephus says that he condemned Antiochus IV's raid on the Temple (CA II.83–4). Strabo, whose excursus on Moses we have already mentioned was from Amaseia in Pontus, and also fits in here. In Latin, but obviously deriving from Greek sources, is the heterogeneous account of Pompeius Trogus (no.47), noteworthy for its lengthy exposition of the theory that the Jews started in Damascus, and its allusions to Abraham and Joseph. This version has associations with material in Nicolaus of Damascus, and is much less anti-Jewish than the stories associated with Egypt, including those in Trogus himself. He has the leprous Moses returning to his ancestral home, Damascus, where his son Arruas succeeded him as priest of the Jews, and "by their justice combined with religion, it is almost incredible how powerful they became" (p.338).

Trogus was from Narbonese Gaul; his Historiae Philippicae centered on the provinces, especially those of the East. Very different was the attitude to the Jews evinced by true, metropolitan Romans — Romans, that is, not necessarily in blood, but by full self-identification and position. The Latin writers of the Julio-Claudian and Flavian periods, especially the poets, responded with a frisson of horror to the increasing visibility of Jews in their midst. There was an influx of Jewish captives into Rome after Pompey's conquest, another after A.D. 70. And, in a period when conversions of all kinds were becoming widespread, Gentiles became "sympathizers", even if not full Jews. Seneca, the Neronian politician and philosopher, objected to the spread of Judaism in the strongest terms: "the customs of this accursed race have gained such influence that they are now received throughout the world" (no. 67,186). He all but talks of a world-wide Jewish conspiracy. Epictetus, an Imperial freedman of the following generation, is recorded as illustrating imposture by the man who, while remaining unbaptized, toys with Judaism, so that others say of him — "he is not a Jew, just acting the part" (no.90,254). This shows us the attractiveness of Judaism to certain types, as well as its familiarity to the general public."

The fact that this attractiveness extended to the Roman upper classes themselves, even to the Imperial family — Nero's Empress Poppaea, and Domitian's cousins Flavius Clemens and Domitilla — must have increased,

15 Characters, incidentally, who were known also to the hostile Apollonius Molon somewhat earlier.

16 Although E.M. Smallwood, in "The Alleged Jewish Tendencies of Poppaea Sabina", JThS 10,1959,329ff., argues that nowhere are Poppaea's beliefs described as being specifically Jewish, it is still highly likely that they were, since otherwise the favours she bestowed on the young ambassador from Jerusalem, Flavius Josephus (Vita 16) are hard to explain.

17 There is a tradition that they were Christians rather than Jews, but the evidence is weak. See E.M. Smallwood, "Domitian's Attitude towards the Jews and Judaism", Cl. Ph. 51, 1956, 1–13.
rather than dispelled, public anxiety. The Roman authors of this era seem to be quite well acquainted with the more picturesque Jewish customs, which no doubt was all that they wished to know: the Sabbath and the lights kindled for it, circumcision, abstention from pork. Only the occasional mistake was made, such as the misconception, found in Petronius and apparently quite common, that the Sabbath was a fast day. These few aspects of Jewish observance became a sort of standing joke, making their appearance in Horace, in Petronius, in Martial and in Juvenal; no doubt also in the table conversation of polite Romans. They became part of the satirist's stock-in-trade, and this was an age prolific of satire. Harping in isolation on un-understood customs made it easier to classify Judaism as a "superstition", and therefore as contemptible. This definition was even offered by the literary critic Quintilian, for all that he had been the teacher of Flavius Clemens — and even that unexpected detail does not escape Stern's eagle eye (p.512). Thus, paradoxically, hostility to Judaism was the concomitant of its increasing popularity.

We should note, however, at least one exception among Latin writers. It is a measure of his impressiveness as a scholar that Pliny the Elder offered, in his Natural History, a highly informative account of the Essene sect, even connecting them with the Dead Sea (for it is apropos of the Dead Sea that the description occurs). Stern, no doubt judiciously, does not speculate as to the sources of Pliny's knowledge (pp.465 ff.).

Pliny apart, Greek intellectuals are far more impressive than Roman writers on the subject of the Jews, even if it was the Roman framework which was responsible for what they wrote.\(^{18}\) The volume closes with Plutarch, from mainland Greece, but with important Roman contacts, who, in a relatively little known but highly interesting section of his Quaestiones Convivales (no. 100,258), presented discussions of two questions: "whether the Jews abstain from pork because of reverence for, or aversion from the pig", and "who the God of the Jews is". Moiragenes, an Athenian, tried to prove from the character of the festival of Tabernacles and the drinking of wine for the Sabbath that He must be identical with Dionysus. This assimilation of a foreign deity to his own pantheon was perhaps the highest compliment that a conventional pagan could pay. For him, it was a real way of making sense of the unknown. The extract vividly illustrates what difficulties stood in the way of ordinary Greeks, however well-meaning, who wanted to grasp the nature of Judaism.

In spite of the influence of tradition, the sensitivity and perceptiveness of the individual had a lot to do with what he wrote. That is why the user of Stern's collection needs to be told a certain amount about each one. Just

\(^{18}\) See Momigliano, *op.cit.*, 149-50.
occasionally, the author fails us, as when he omits the fact that Epictetus was the ex-slave of a Neronian-Flavian freedman, the Epaphroditus who by some has been thought to be the dedicatee of Josephus' later works; these are points of interest and significance, especially the first, for it is most unusual to have a record of the sentiments (albeit indirectly\(^\text{19}\)) of a man who was not a member of the upper classes.

But such lapses are rare. On the whole, Stern's commentaries are distinguished by their appropriateness and great good sense. He is excellent on the derivation of Strabo's Moses excursus, dismissing the theory of a Jewish source, and recognizing the plausibility of the older German view of a Posidonian origin; quite right about Cicero when he points out that his denigration of the Jews in the *pro Flacco* is of little significance, in view of his remarks about Asiatics in the same speech, about Gauls in the *pro Fonteio*, and so on, depending on the case he had to argue (p.194); suitably cautious in dealing with the view that the author of the tract "On the Sublime", with its quotation from the opening of Genesis, was a Jew;\(^\text{20}\) refreshingly down-to-earth in his preparedness to accept most of what Josephus gives us under the names of Hecataeus and Manetho as genuine, and to give a rest to "pseudo-Hecataeus" and "pseudo-Manetho".\(^\text{21}\)

We may safely expect Stern in the next volume to despatch in similar style the absurd scholarly assertions that have clustered around Tacitus' preposterous excursus on the Jews; a good commentary on that excursus is much needed. One hopes that the volume will not be too long detained in the press.\(^\text{22}\)

\(^{19}\) The utterances of Epictetus were recorded by the second century A.D. writer Arrian.

\(^{20}\) Passage no.148. This is the first actual quotation from the Bible in a pagan author, and, I think, the only one in Stern's collection.

\(^{21}\) A few small errors have crept into this volume. One is fairly widespread: authors tend to be referred to by names not customarily used in English — and even that not consistently. We find "Ovidius", "Lucanus", "Origenes", "Horatius", sometimes "Plutarchus" and 'sometimes "Plutarch", Juvenal's "Sermones" for "Satires" (p.321), "Ilias" for "Iliad" (p.365). On p.464 there is "Jonian Sea", and on p. 547 "two times" for "twice". This sort of thing is a small price to pay for the convenience of having the volume in English.

\(^{22}\) I am grateful to Professor F.G.B. Millar for various comments.