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978-1-107-04127-1 - The Ancient Jews from Alexander to Muhammad

Seth Schwartz

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## THE ANCIENT JEWS FROM ALEXANDER TO MUHAMMAD

This is an accessible and up-to-date account of the Jews during the millennium following Alexander the Great's conquest of the East. Unusually, it acknowledges the problems involved in constructing a narrative from fragmentary yet complex evidence and is, implicitly, an exploration of how this might be accomplished. Moreover, unlike most other introductions to the subject, it concentrates primarily on the people rather than issues of theology and adopts a resolutely unsentimental approach to the subject. Professor Schwartz particularly demonstrates the importance of studying Jewish history, texts and artefacts to the broader community of ancient historians because of what they can contribute to wider themes such as Roman imperialism. The book serves as an excellent introduction for students and scholars of Jewish history and of ancient history.

SETH SCHWARTZ is the Lucius N. Littauer Professor of Classical Jewish Civilization, and Professor of History and of Classics at Columbia University. He is the author of *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 BCE to 640 CE* (2001), which received the National Jewish Book Award and was a finalist for the Koret Book Award, and *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society? Reciprocity and Solidarity in Ancient Judaism* (2010).

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## *Preface*

This book is in part an abbreviation, rethinking, updating and re-orientation of Schwartz 2001. If it is unusually argumentative for a Key Themes book, that is because the topic demands, I would argue, an argumentative rather than a magisterial style, but it is far less argumentative than its remote source. It is more concerned to present a historical narrative, as far as possible, and to give full accounts of various issues in political history, especially the Jewish rebellions of the Hellenistic and Roman periods, which were given short shrift in the earlier book. I have also made an effort to summarize the most relevant new archaeology of the past decade. Most bibliographical items cited in *The Ancient Jews* were published after 2000.

I could not have written this book without a year of leave, in 2012–13, a semester of which I owe to the happy arrival in May, 2012, of Jonah Margolin-Schwartz. I owe the rest to the goodwill and ingenuity of Mark Mazower and Margaret Edsall. I thank René Bloch for his comments on Chapter 2 and Beth Berkowitz for her comments on Chapters 5 and 7, though neither is responsible for any remaining defects. I derived immense benefit from numerous e-mail exchanges with Hannah Cotton; Walter Ameling and John Ma gave me important advice about Hellenistic Jerusalem, and John sent me in addition some not yet published papers which contain the most original ideas about the background of the Maccabean Revolt since Bickermann's. I am likewise grateful to Gil Gambash for sending me his manuscript on the British and Jewish revolts against Rome. My gratitude to Peter Garnsey and Paul Cartledge for their good-humoured encouragement and support should go without saying. Paul's editorial interventions were an education in themselves. Michael Sharp, the editor for Cambridge University Press, has been unfailingly kind and helpful. The emotional roller-coaster ride of parenthood has finally distracted me, now and then, from history (though it has, alas, completely deprived me of television, too), and for that I thank the aforementioned Jonah, his big sister Ayelet, and Judy. With any luck by the time I finish the next book I'll have the TV back.

*Abbreviations*

<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>ANRW</i>	H. Temporini <i>et al.</i> , eds. <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> . Berlin, 1972–.
<i>BASOR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
<i>CEHGRW</i>	W. Scheidel, I. Morris and R. Saller, eds. <i>Cambridge Economic History of the Graeco-Roman World</i> , Cambridge, 2007.
<i>CHJ</i>	W. D. Davies, <i>et al.</i> , eds. <i>Cambridge History of Judaism</i> , 4 volumes. Cambridge, 1984–2006.
<i>CSEL</i>	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i>
<i>CPJ</i>	V. Tcherikover, A. Fuks and M. Stern, eds., <i>Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum</i> . 3 volumes. Cambridge, MA, 1957–64.
<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<i>GLAJJ</i>	M. Stern, <i>Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism</i> , 3 volumes, Jerusalem, 1976–84.
<i>HSCP</i>	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
<i>INJ</i>	<i>Israel Numismatic Journal</i>
<i>INR</i>	<i>Israel Numismatic Research</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>J ECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JRA</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism</i>

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- P. Yadin Y. Yadin *et al.*, eds. *The Documents from the Bar-Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters*, 2 volumes, Jerusalem, 1989–2002.
- PAAJR *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*
- PCPS *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*
- PLRE H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale and J. Morris, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, 3 volumes, Cambridge, 1971–92.
- REJ *Revue des Études Juives*
- SCI *Scripta Classica Israelica*
- Schürer-Vermes E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 BC–AD 135)*, revised and edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar and M. Goodman, 3 volumes, Edinburgh, 1973–87.
- XHever/Seiyal H. Cotton and A. Yardeni, *Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek Documentary Papyri from Nahal Hever and Other Sites (Discoveries in the Judaean Desert 27)*, Oxford, 1997.
- ZPE *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*