

over from Herbert Hoover. One thing mediocre presidents seem to do is to prepare the ground for better presidents, and in some cases great ones. When it comes to who will succeed George W. Bush, I make no predictions. But there is reason to think that four or eight years of Republican largesse to big business, accompanied by such extreme efforts to keep its generosity from public scrutiny, will prepare the American public to appreciate why government is necessary and why its policies must, above all else, be fair.

The next chapter in the way our politics treats the rich and the poor is unlikely to take the forms that it has taken in the past. If Kevin Phillips's book is any indication, populism has run out of gas. No credible coalition can be built on the basis of nationalistic anger in this age of global capitalism, leaving populists sputtering with impotent rage. And if Michael Moore speaks for what passes for the American left—he must be speaking for someone, as his book is a best-seller—no help can be expected from that quarter either. But this should be taken as a sign of hope rather than a sign of despair. It opens the

political territory for a challenge from a Roosevelt-style Republican such as John McCain. It also suggests to Democrats that they will need to address directly, and with considerable passion, the warping of priorities that occurs when government shifts so decisively in favor of the rich.

Neither task will be easy. For McCain, it would mean, as it did for Theodore Roosevelt, a break with his own party—not exactly the easiest path to the presidency. For Democrats, it means finding a way to capitalize on the gains that Clinton's centrism bequeathed to the party while breaking with his all-too-frequent subservience to big business, a trick that no potential Democratic candidate for the 2004 nomination has yet pulled off. But there is every reason to believe that there exists a hunger for leadership in America even though not much leadership is in evidence. Finding ways to do what seems difficult if not impossible is a crucial aspect of leadership. Any Republican or Democrat capable of overcoming those odds would, if elected, be in a good position to repair the damage done by the election of 2000 and its aftermath. ■

Mediterranean. Neither military compulsion nor the vicissitudes of captivity had brought most of them to those places. To state the point a little differently: the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple in 70 C.E. did not cause the second diaspora. Many ancient Jews—probably most ancient Jews—had by that point lived outside the land of Israel for centuries. They did so, evidently, because they wanted to do so.

Why did these Jews leave their homeland? What were they doing abroad? How did they continue to live as Jews and, thus, to think of themselves as Jews? And how did their non-Jewish neighbors live with and think of them? The answers to each of these questions are various and surprising. Various, because no blanket explanation (like that conjured by invoking the idea of ancient “anti-Semitism”) can speak to so many different local situations. Surprising, because this vast and vigorous Mediterranean Jewish civilization, a major force in the development of Western culture, has been until recently almost invisible to the non-specialist.

THIS INVISIBILITY is itself a significant part of the story. Its reasons are linked to each other, and to the Bible. The two major religious traditions that descended from this period—Gentile Christianity and rabbinic and post-rabbinic Judaism—have constructed their respective historical identities and their respective scriptural canons in ways that caused these ancient Jews to disappear. Consider, for example, the double canon of the Christians, the Old and New Testaments. These concentrate on events occurring in and around territorial Israel. The trajectory of the Christian biblical story stretches from Adam to Abraham through Moses to David, then to the prophets, and then to Jesus of Nazareth. The narrative time of the Old Testament stops somewhere in the mid-fifth century B.C.E., when exiles returning from Babylon try to reconstitute their lives back in Jerusalem. (Some texts, such as Daniel and Esther, were in fact written later, but they present themselves as much earlier.) The narrative time of the New Testament begins with the birth of Jesus—around 4 B.C.E. if you rely on Matthew, around 6 C.E. if you rely on Luke. The Greek-speaking Jews of the western diaspora simply vanish into this four-century-long narrative lacuna between the Testaments. The loss is not without irony, for the Gospels and the letters of Paul—the core canon of the Christian Testament—are the literary products of this effaced community.

Jewish religious memory does no better. Judaism, too, has a double canon. The Tanakh—the biblical scriptures in Hebrew

Everywhere at Home

By PAULA FREDRIKSEN

Diaspora: Jews Amidst Greeks and Romans by Erich S. Gruen

(Harvard University Press, 386 pp., \$39.95)

EXILE, DISPLACEMENT, wandering, loss: in Biblical tradition and in later rabbinic commentary, in the medieval poems of Yehudah ha-Levi and the modern political screeds of Theodor Herzl, the idea of diaspora has dominated Jewish identity. In its religious mode, “diaspora,” perceived as punitive, has served as a penitential device. The people sin, and God uses foreign armies (Babylonians for the first exile, Romans for the second exile) as the instruments of his wrath, to call the people to repentance. In its secular mode, “diaspora” has served as Zionism's foil. Modern Jews renounce their exile, take control of their history,

and re-found their commonwealth in their own land. In both equations, guilt is a constant: in the first instance, guilt about “causing” the diaspora; in the second, guilt about choosing to live there.

Few ideas can give so much coherence to so many centuries—twenty-five, to be exact—of Jewish experience. Yet this construct, as Erich S. Gruen points out, has a problem: it is historically false. Eloquent, learnedly, persuasively, Gruen invites the reader of his new book to consider familiar evidence from the Jewish past from a new—one might say a non-diaspora—perspective. His point is simple, but its historical implications are profound. As he observes, in the nearly four hundred years that stretch between Alexander the Great (d. 323 B.C.E.) and the emperor Nero (d. 68 C.E.), Jews could be found in large numbers, and in well-established communities, throughout the

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comprising the five books of Moses (*Torah*), the prophets (*Nevi'im*), and sundry writings (*Ketuvim*)—forms the older portion. Jewish biblical narrative ends with the end of the Babylonian exile, in the 530s B.C.E., though other writings within the collection take the story up to post-exile Jerusalem. The newer portion of the Jewish canon is the Talmud, the vast anthology of rabbinical traditions in Hebrew or its linguistic cousin Aramaic. The earliest Talmudic text, the Mishnah, was redacted around 200 C.E.; the Gemara (later commentaries on the Mishnah), redacted separately in Palestine and Babylon in the fifth and sixth centuries C.E., completes the collection. To close the gap of the six-plus centuries between 2 Chronicles (the last book of the Tanakh) and the Mishnah (the oldest part of the Talmud), the rabbis invoked oral tradition. The *torah* ("teaching") that Moses did not write down he spoke to Joshua, who in turn passed it to the elders, who gave it to the prophets, who then gave it to the sages. The terminus of this oral Torah, said the rabbis, was themselves.

As now, so then: most Jews were not rabbinic Jews. But unlike their kinsmen in other Jewish subcultures, the rabbis articulated their social and religious vision through a huge, compelling, and coordinated body of writing that became a vital literary legacy. Eventually the movement formed academies whose students disseminated rabbinic learning and practice widely. By the High Middle Ages, rabbinic Judaism was Judaism *tout court*. The patrimony of Hellenistic Judaism, in the rabbinic view, had been hijacked by the Gentiles, now embodied in the hostile church, who had based their Old Testament on the Septuagint. (A late tradition in the Talmud recounts that on the day the Bible was translated into Greek the angels wept: heaven had foreseen this disaster.) The medium of "authentic" tradition, then, was Hebrew. Thus the rabbinic Jewish community, which might most naturally have been expected to preserve something of the social and religious legacy of its Greek-speaking sibling, for all practical purposes erased it.

The third reason for the virtual invisibility of the Jews of the ancient western diaspora is the overwhelming impact that they had on all of subsequent European culture. What impact, and how? Since they were Jews, they had the Bible. When they migrated West, and their vernacular shifted to Greek, their scriptures shifted with them. By about the year 200 B.C.E., Jews in Alexandria had completed the translation of their sacred texts: the

You Made Me Read You And I Didn't Want To Do It

At first the page was only a furnished room.
You were the one who furnished it.
A red couch gaudy as a party mask.
Crooked shelving.

And then, after a bit,
weather came into the room.
The clouds "skittering,"
you wrote, "like suds."

And so we pronounced your novel
akin to an ancient travel guide
with its fussy certainty about fares,
adequate hotels, local cisterns.

How can't the book
be shy before our eyes?
It's our fault, not the book's.
It was so embarrassed for us.

Lee Upton

Tanakh had become the Septuagint. Thus the idiosyncratic revelations of the Jews—of a God who created the entire universe; who refused to be worshiped through images; who linked social ethics, religious ritual, jurisprudence, sexual and alimentary prescriptions, time-keeping, torts, and taxes in his commandments; who chose Israel and who promised redemption to his people and indeed to the whole world—came to be broadcast in the international linguistic frequency. The God of Israel, through the Septuagint, conquered the West. No Greek-speaking diaspora, no Septuagint. No Septuagint, no Christianity. No Christianity, no Western civilization. This Hellenistic Jewish community has been invisible to all but historical cognoscenti in part as a consequence of its cultural success.

SO WE RETURN to our question: who were these people? And what were they doing so far from home?

Ancient warfare, as Gruen points out, regularly involved deportation and displacement. Conquered peoples could suffer forced resettlement elsewhere; slave traders routinely accompanied armies; war produced refugees. Jews, like other peoples in an age of empire, migrated because they were compelled to migrate, because they were deported. But, again like other peoples, Jews also migrated because they wanted to migrate. They were enticed by the wider horizons and the increased opportunities for trade that empire also brought.

One post-Alexandrian king moved two thousand Jewish families from Mesopotamia to garrison colonies in Asia Minor. They relocated voluntarily, with inducements, as supporters of the regime. Active service in foreign militaries, as mercenaries or as enlisted men, also aided Jewish resettlement. Opportunities in business and agriculture beckoned, and Jews—like others—responded. And in Rome, the Jewish population there by choice was increased when Jewish slaves, brought West in the wake of Roman victories in Judaea, were eventually manumitted and took their place in the city as freedmen. 1 Maccabees, a Jewish text composed in the late second century B.C.E., mentions substantial western Jewish populations in Egypt, Syria, the cities and the principalities of Asia Minor (roughly, modern Turkey), the Aegean islands, Greece proper, Crete, Cyprus, Cyrene. The Acts of the Apostles, a late first-century C.E. text in the New Testament, claims that Jews came on pilgrimage to Jerusalem from all corners of the world: "Parthians, Medes,

Elamites . . . men of Cappadocia, of Pontus and Asia, of Phrygia and Pamphylia." Strabo, the ancient historian and geographer and the elder contemporary of Jesus of Nazareth, noted that "this people has made its way into every city, and it is not easy to find any place in the habitable world which has not received [them]."

Ancient cities were religious institutions. The workings of government, the process of education, the public experience of art and culture in various theatrical, musical, and athletic competitions: all these activities, which we think of as secular and thus religiously neutral, were in fact embedded in traditional worship. The gods looked after the city; and the citizens, to ensure the city's well-being, looked after the gods. Processions, hymns, libations, blood sacrifices, communal drinking and eating: all these were thought to contribute directly to the well-being of the commonwealth. (In our terms, these activities were authorized in the defense budget.) These forms of worship expressed and created the bonds that bound citizens together, and established the necessary relations with powerful patrons both celestial and imperial, since rulers, too, were deities. Public piety was the index of patriotism.

Living in foreign cities thus put Jews in a potentially awkward position. Like everyone else, Jews had their own ancestral god; but unlike anyone else, Jews were in principle restricted to worshiping only that god. Some pagan observers commented irritably on this fact, com-

plaining of Jewish disloyalty, or at least of Jewish discourtesy. But ancient religiousness was much more flexible than its modern avatars. Respect for ancestral tradition was the bedrock of Mediterranean religious, political, and legal culture, both pagan and Jewish. Thus ancient pagans were prepared to respect Jewish religious difference, and even to make social and legal allowances for it, precisely because of Judaism's antiquity and ethnicity. And ancient Jews, though they were as convinced as the next ethnic group of the intrinsic superiority of their own customs and rites, respected pagan religious difference, too. Contact—even fairly intimate contact, such as worshiping and eating together—did not lead to missionary efforts to convert the heathen, who were, after all, the vast majority of humankind.

HOW DID JEWS and pagans “worship” together? Participation in civic culture was itself a kind of worship—though, as Gruen illuminatingly points out, Jews had many choices between the extremes of isolationist purity or outright apostasy. Individual Jews became members of the city councils where they lived, despite the protocols of pagan worship that were attached to such service: they negotiated exemptions and found ways to serve both their city and the traditions of their *phylos* (tribe) or *genos* (race, nation). Eventually, once Rome oversaw the entire Mediterranean, such exemptions were written into imperial law.

Jewish adolescents received good Greek educations in their cities' *gymnasia* and joined the ranks of *ephebes*, young adolescent males whose municipal duties included participation in the competitions offered to traditional gods. Their training in *paideia*—high cultural learning—emphasized rhetoric, music, and philosophy as well as athletics; and here Jews participated, as contestants and as spectators, in the contests that displayed excellence in all parts of this curriculum. (Again, given the religious nature of these events, the modern analogy is less to the Super Bowl or to Carnegie Hall than to High Mass.) Wealthy Jews sponsored games, such as the Olympics, that were dedicated to Greek gods. Jews served Gentile rulers as advisers and generals. And while Jews did not join actively in the ruler cults native to Hellenistic and, later, Roman political culture, they dedicated their synagogues to their pagan rulers, and prayed not to them but for them.

Two institutions, one proximate, one distant, served to express and to inculcate Jewish identity within these far-flung Gentile communities while providing yet another context for shared social and religious activity. The proximate institu-

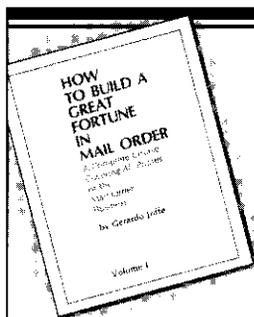
tion was the synagogue. In a particularly rich chapter, Gruen surveys the varied evidence—literary, epigraphical, archaeological—attesting to the ubiquity and the vitality of this peculiarly Jewish organization. Remnants of these foundations have been recovered in settlements stretching from Italy to Syria, from the Black Sea to North Africa.

Synagoge might designate the assembly of the local Jewish community itself, while another term, *proseuche* (“prayer house”), specifically implies a building. Synagogues shunned standardization, as Gruen observes: no uniform pattern of organization can be teased from the historical record such as it is. Yet certain common activities seem clearly attested. Synagogues served as a type of ethnic reading-house, where Jews could assemble one day out of seven to hear instruction in their ancestral laws. Rulers granted to synagogues the status of serving as places of asylum. Synagogues sponsored communal fasts, feasts, and celebrations, and they served as an archive for community records and as collecting points for funds to be sent to the Temple in Jerusalem. They settled issues of community interest—announcing the calendar of festivals, negotiating access to appropriate foodstuffs, adjudicating disputes—and served, as did local pagan temples, as places to enact and

to record the manumission of slaves. They housed schools, political assemblies, and tribunals. They had officers (women as well as men), administrators, and steering committees. They sponsored fund drives, and they honored conspicuous philanthropy with public inscriptions.

An intriguing number of these big donors were not Jews at all. They were pagans. Given the capacious character of the ancient Mediterranean society, this makes sense. The ethnic and religious distinctiveness of the synagogue entailed no social isolation, and the religious temperament and practice of majority culture were famously catholic. Interested pagans involved themselves in synagogue activities, including listening to the stories and the psalms of Jewish tradition, which were, after all, delivered in Greek. While Jews might have scruples about worshiping pagan gods, no such scruples inhibited Gentile worship of Israel's God. Local politics—as well as the presumptions native to this culture in its pagan and its Jewish modes, namely, that gods traveled in the blood, and so each people naturally had its own gods—explains why diaspora Jews would welcome such participation, and why they would impose no demand of exclusive worship (given to them alone by their God) on interested Gentiles.

Pagan benefactions to the Jewish



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community met with grateful public acknowledgment. One especially striking inscription, from Acmonia in Phrygia, recalls the earlier generosity of a first-century Roman noblewoman named Julia Severa. This distinguished lady, a high priestess of the imperial cult (thus publicly responsible for the worship accorded the Julian emperors), had evidently erected the synagogue building itself. When later Jewish benefactors restored the building, they were honored in their turn in good Greek fashion with a decree and a gilded shield. As Gruen notes, "the conventions were Greco-Roman; the objectives were Jewish."

The institution distant from these diaspora communities—which nonetheless served to focus local Jewish identity and to inspire the admiration and the participation of interested Gentiles—was the Temple in Jerusalem. The Jewish military colony in Elephantine in Egypt had had a temple there, perhaps as far back as the sixth century B.C.E.; four centuries later, Jerusalem priests disaffected from the Maccabean enterprise founded another temple, modeled on Solomon's, also in Egypt, in Leontopolis. And Josephus, the Jewish historian contemporary with the evangelists, alludes to perhaps another extraterritorial temple in Transjordan. No matter. Jerusalem was the holy place that commanded the loyalty and the pride of the far-flung nation. It was to Jerusalem that Jews journeyed to celebrate the pilgrimage holidays, and it was to Jerusalem that communities everywhere voluntarily paid an annual contribution to defray the operating costs of the Temple.

The sheer volume of different types of evidence concerning this tax and the enormous amounts of money (through individually tiny donations) that it annually raised is perhaps the best index of the widespread loyalty to the Temple. Jews throughout the Mediterranean sought legal protection to guarantee their right to collect and to send this donation: their cities of residence, tempted by the quantities of cash thus collected, occasionally attempted to appropriate the funds for more local use. But pagan rulers honored Jewish ancestral custom, and as a result of these voluntary donations, Jerusalem ran in the black for as long as the Temple stood.

Under Herod, who was king of Judea from 37 to 4 B.C.E., the Temple reached its acme of splendor. He expanded the area around the sanctuary to some thirty-five acres, enclosed by a magnificent wall running nine-tenths of a mile along the perimeter. The internal organization of sacred space—concentric courtyards of various sizes—articulated the social realities of Mediterranean public worship. The

empty innermost sanctum was given over to the people's God; and next, for his service, stood the altar in the court of his priests. Circumscribing the priests was the court for Jewish males; and just outside that, the women's court. But the whole was surrounded by the vast and beautiful stone tundra of the Gentiles' Court, or Court of the Nations.

As in diaspora synagogues, so in the Temple in Jerusalem: pagans as pagans had a place to worship Israel's God—in Jerusalem, in the largest court of all. The priests meanwhile made offerings at God's altar on behalf of the imperial family and the Empire. Traditional piety, national pride, international politics, tourism, public pomp: it all came together in Herod's extraordinary building. The synagogue, then, was neither a substitute for nor a competitor to the Temple. Both institutions served to strengthen, coordinate, inculcate, and express Jewish identity in all its multiplicity, and in its unanimity.

GRUEN PRESENTS HIS trenchant analysis of four centuries of diaspora Jewish experience in two cycles. The first, "Jewish Life in the Diaspora," surveys discrete communities—Jews in Rome, in Alexandria, and in Asia Minor—concluding with a chapter analyzing civic and sacral institutions, and how Jews participated in or maintained these. His storytelling is as gripping as his interpretation. Jewish life in each of these locales was hardly untroubled. In Rome, elusive evidence indicates various expulsions and actions against the community in the period between 139 B.C.E. and 49 C.E. In Alexandria, anti-Jewish violence convulsed the city in 38 C.E. and again, some thirty years later, in the wake of the revolt against Rome. Cities in Asia Minor occasionally impounded Jewish funds or suspended or abridged privileges that their Jewish residents had long ago negotiated. The universe was not friction-free. But Gruen puts these incidents into their overarching Greco-Roman context, and so he understands them in ways that contrast sharply with earlier traditions of academic writing on Jewish life in this period.

Where other writers have seen vaguely systemic, readily identifiable ancient "anti-Semitism," Gruen sees various local sporadic episodes, variously motivated. Much of the Roman evidence, regarded from the angle of senatorial politics, seems more like posturing for reasons of state than concerted and specifically anti-Jewish activity. The Roman government, he concludes, engaged in no systematic persecution of Jews—nor indeed any persecution at all; and Roman salon culture was not so much anti-Jewish but anti-"foreign." Life in Rome, for Rome's Jewish

citizens, was stable and secure.

In Alexandria, a particularly toxic configuration of Greek anti-Roman resentment and Egyptian nativist agitation targeted Jewish residents when the political fortunes of the Roman governor fluctuated wildly in the transfer of power from Tiberius to Caligula. All hell broke loose. Order was restored only eventually, under Claudius, and only after some heads (including the governor's) had rolled. The violence was unprecedented, but its sources were over-determined. Some pagan Alexandrians complained, reasonably enough, that Jewish Alexandrians failed to worship Alexandria's gods and therefore were not entitled to full citizenship. Claudius evidently concurred, re-affirming the Jews' established rights and urging them not to push for more. Gruen's scrupulous review of the imperfect evidence enhances his conclusion: "Anti-Semitism [was] not the issue here."

So, too, with the situation in communities in Asia Minor. Set within the larger context of political relations between the capital city and the provinces—especially in periods when Roman strongmen battled each other for power in the seesaw of civil war—what has been presented as ancient pagan anti-Semitism seems more plausibly construed as local happenstance. "The Jews of Asia rarely required defense against the Greeks," Gruen observes. "And the Romans had bigger fish to fry." In his summary chapter on civic and sacral institutions in the diaspora—gymnasia and synagogues, town councils and temples, baths, ephebes, amphitheaters—Gruen concludes with an overview of social life, and of the ways Jews and pagans interacted, intimately and irenically, not always but mostly, in the cities whose life they shared.

THE SECOND CYCLE of Gruen's study explores "Jewish Constructs of Diaspora Life," that is, the ways that Greek-speaking Jews used the conventions of Hellenistic culture to describe that culture and their place in it. His review begins with an investigation of Jewish humor in two modes: historical fictions (Esther, Tobit, Judith, Susanna, 2 Maccabees) and biblical recreations (Testament of Abraham, Testament of Job, works by Artapanus). Few things kill a joke as fast as analyzing it; and the recreation of tone from a written text, as all readers of e-mail know, can be a tricky business. Yet the parade of characters populating these tales—stunningly beautiful Jewish alpha females, overworked angels, deeply stupid Gentile potentates, deeply stupid Gentile generals, lascivious Jewish elders, smart young Jewish lawyers, herds of drunken elephants (no

kidding)—eventually make Gruen's point for him. Nor is this the "smiling through tears" genre of humor: Jewish foibles are held up to scorn as often as Gentile abuses of power are mocked, and as often as desperate circumstances are dramatically and often comically overcome. "The authors felt free to expose the blemishes of the Jewish leaders and populace," Gruen writes, "while lampooning the flaws of their enemies." The implication of Gruen's analysis is that insecure people would have laughed at themselves less.

Gruen's discussion of Jewish constructs of Greeks and Hellenism, the chapter that follows, could have been titled simply "Chutzpah." How did Greek Jews regard pagan Greek culture? The theme emerges again and again: what the Greeks got right (mainly philosophy), they got from the Jews. How so? Here other fictions proliferate. Plato, the Jews believed, studied Torah under Jeremiah in Egypt. From what text? A lost Greek translation of the Bible made prior to the Septuagint. One Jewish writer has Abraham as the bringer of culture to the Egyptians—another argument for superior antiquity, in a culture where older was better. Hellenistic Jews forged pagan prophecies, wherein ancient sybils hymned the superiority of Jewish culture in proper Homeric hexameters. Others presented "histories" according to which the Septuagint was translated at Ptolemy's request: he wanted this renowned book of Jewish wisdom to grace his library in Alexandria. In one account, the young Moses receives instruction from the wisest teachers among both the Egyptians and the Greeks, but of course outstrips them all; in another account, Moses teaches music to Orpheus. Brazenly, ingeniously, Jews turned out Judaizing verses ascribed to Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and other heroes of the classical curriculum; and centuries later these show up, piously repeated, in the writings of the church fathers. In brief, Jews neither rejected nor adopted Hellenism. Rather, they appropriated what they thought was best in Greek culture, and made it Jewish.

GRUEN CONCLUDES HIS book with a lucid and powerful consideration of the place occupied by the idea of diaspora both in Jewish consciousness and in scholarly treatments of Jewish history. The persistent images of insecurity, marginality, and powerlessness that haunt Jewish history and set the tone of the lachrymose tradition simply distort our understanding of the Hellenistic and early Roman period. We lose sight of the real lives of Greeks, Romans, and Jews when anachronistic explanations of Jewish experience, such as anti-

Semitism, or religious tolerance or intolerance, provide the plumline of historical interpretation.

One fundamental aspect of ancient religion, for example, is its tie to ethnicity. All ancient peoples had their own gods. These gods dwelled in various locales—Olympus, Jerusalem, Delos—on earth and in heaven; and they were passed within ethnic groups from one generation to the next. For this reason, to translate *ioudaios* as "Jew" already risks distortion. "Judean" might work better. Their aniconism and their exclusiveness of worship set Jews apart; but their allegiance to particular dietary and ritual traditions, to revealed calendars, to their God's Temple and his holy city—all designated, with brain-numbing tone-deafness, as "nationalism" by many students of the New Testament—just makes them ancient people.

If individual peoples had their particular gods, moreover, then successful empire meant that many gods by definition existed within a single political boundary. Ancient culture, in other words, did not practice "religious tolerance." It presupposed religious difference. To see violence between ethnic groups as outbreaks of religious "intolerance" is to misdescribe the phenomenon, to bring it tendentiously into line with modern phenomena. It obscures the novelty and the anomaly of principled religious persecution when it does come, long centuries after this period.

Finally, the focus on Jewish resettlement as displacement masks the prior migration that caused it and indeed made it possible: the Greek diaspora that brought the Jewish one in tow. Alexander the Great's conquests contributed to the wholesale resettlements of Greek veterans, merchants, and travelers in his new territories. Like a magnet, they drew new immigrants with them, among them ancient Jews. For these Jews, Greek culture became their own, despite those aspects of it that, in their view, the pagans had gotten wrong. Loyalty to the homeland, devotion to the ancestral temple—these commitments were normal among all immigrant groups—co-existed with loyalty to their cities of residence. Jerusalem, said the first-century Jewish philosopher Philo, was the Jews' *metropolis*; but Alexandria, for him and his immediate community, was their *patris*, their "patrimony" and home.

The concept of diaspora as an insecure, doleful, and punitive mode of existence was the creation of a later time, and of two later religious cultures: second-century Gentile Christianity and late second-century rabbinic Judaism. Some Gentile Christians, defining themselves and their new communities over and against the

synagogue, read their sacred text, the Septuagint, in increasingly anti-Jewish ways. Current events seemed to confirm their view: why would God have let Rome destroy the Temple (in 70 C.E.) or Jerusalem itself (in 135) unless he, too, condemned the Jews? And why did he condemn the Jews, if not for their refusal to become, in effect, Gentile Christians? Rome, they said, as Babylon earlier, had been the agent of God's will: Israel was now in exile forever for having refused Christ. The rabbis, meanwhile, also had to make sense of a world where Hadrian's pagan Aelia sat on top of what had once been Jerusalem. They, too, turned to their religious tradition for answers. And they, too, saw in the central biblical event of the Babylonian Captivity a spiritual model for present reality. Israel's sin had driven God, once again, to punish Israel: once again—until he sent a redeemer, the messiah, to gather them up—God had driven his people into exile. The world became captivity, *galut*.

Hellenistic Jews, as Gruen importantly argues, would not have recognized their own existence from these later descriptions. Rather, they thrived in the centuries that preceded these events—and they thrived for centuries afterward, until targeted by the late Roman imperial church. For these Jews, the difference between their ancestral homeland and their current homeland was neither a dichotomy nor a contradiction. It was a fact of their existence that they embraced. ■

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