vention they allow in favor of individuals, they both share an "optimistic" faith in a
cosmic order and in its justice, which Frede sees as their distinguishing mark from the
intimate bargaining with higher powers offered by the soon emerging Christianity.

The literary context of philosophical writing gets much deserved attention in Br
wood's paper. He aims at rehabilitating Seneca's *Natural Questions* by showing the the
cal preoccupation behind its meteorological discussion – a form chosen by Seneca, acc
to Inwood, as a rhetorical challenge. In what is also a contribution to the debate ident
the intellectual sources of Lucretius, Michael Erler makes a literary connection betwe
famous "deus ille fuit, deus" in the proem to the fifth book of *De rerum natura* wi
opening of Plato's *Laws* ("It is a god, stranger, a god"). This intertextual allusion,
suggests, engages the larger – if varied – intellectual context of homoiosis theoi as the
zation of the mortal part of the soul.

Reading Philodemus, Dirk Obbink finds further evidence for the strong formulat
Long and Sedley's argument regarding the Epicurean gods as merely the thought-cons
of human beings rather than discrete entities. In another important re-reading of an a
text by one of its most qualified specialists, Emidio Spinelli examines the *Against Astro*
of Sextus Empiricus in the contexts of earlier philosophical literature criticizing ast
and Sextus' own epistemological interest in correct empirical observation. Two other di
philosophers of Roman Imperial times also receive detailed attention. John Dillon s
amends his earlier interpretation of the dualistic theology of Plutarch, and locates th
losophical context of the unequal supremacy of Plutarch's impassive primal deity in co
porary Alexandrian Platonism. In David Runia's paper, Philo emerges as one of the
philosophers to mark "the end of Hellenistic theology", which Runia characterizes as th
of a direct philosophical connection between god's existence (which Philo believes in
the possibility of knowledge about his true nature (which he denies).

From the perspective of the history of ancient religions, the value of setting any
boundary, and indeed of studying Hellenistic theology, of course depends on its capac
help us better understand the complex religious processes of these times. In the field of
ion talking about an "age of anxiety" or a straightforward association of the language o
with poetry may be more contentious than in this volume; but these studies also ha
enormous amount of information, just to mention a few examples, about the standardiz
of theological questions and the emphasis on the interpretation of philosophical traditi
this period, which we need to engage more in religious studies.

Petsas, Ph.M., M.B. Hatzopoulos, L. Gounaropoulou & P. Paschidis, *Inscriptions du
tuaire de la Mère des Dieux Autochtone de Leukopétra (Macédoine)* (*Meletemat*
Athens, 2000). 260 pp., 104 pl. , 1 map
Reviewed by Gil Renberg, Duke University

This corpus of inscriptions from the sanctuary of the Meter Theon Autochthon in the
tory of Beroia represents an important and welcome contribution to the study of religi
Imperial-period Macedonia. The sanctuary, on the slopes of Mt. Bermion near the mo
village of Leukopetra, was discovered accidentally in 1965 during highway constructio
rescue excavation conducted under the supervision of Ph. Petsas produced not only th
mains of a tetrastyle temple, but also numerous coins, statue fragments, terracotta pi
and inscribed objects, the majority of which have remained unedited for decades. The le
of time between excavation and publication is partly attributable to the usual unavoid
delays, but it is also clear that Petsas and his colleagues prepared the volume meticulousl

The 194 inscriptions found at the goddess's sanctuary distinguish it as the richest so
of cult-related inscriptions in Macedonia; indeed, few sanctuaries anywhere in the an

the redactors or compilers of the Torah. It is probable that this historiographic myth began already in first millennium Mesopotamia, when a re-reading of diverse rituals (such as the sacred marriage) was fashioned in an environment that left almost no room for sexuality in the realm of the sacred.[30]

The volume ends with three contributions focused on affinities between Anatolia and Greece. Franca Pecchioli Daddi summarizes the theogonic narratives from the library of Hattusa and the *topos* of the divine struggle to obtain hegemony over the other gods (pp. 403–411). Anna Maria Polvani addresses the question of the god that disappears, "il dio scomparso, la divinità che scompare", centered on the Old Hittite myth of Telipinu (pp. 413–420). Closing the volume, Mauro Giorgieri studies the magic and religious aspects of oaths among the Greeks and the Hittites (pp. 421–440).

This beautifully produced, profusely illustrated, and intellectually exciting volume would have benefitted from final indexes of subjects, personal and geographic names, and quoted passages. In spite of the erudition and intellectual depth of most of the contributions, one is still left with some of the shortcomings and pitfalls this kind of endeavor has to face: how to distinguish between mere (phenotypic) similarities and real (genotypic) relations; how to articulate mechanisms of transmission (perhaps mostly oral); and the increasing need for collaborative undertakings, since very few scholars can truly feel at home in all the fields involved in this research. The contributions to this volume come overwhelmingly from Classicists, in contrast with analogous publications dominated mostly by Ancient Near Eastern scholars, such as the remarkable series of Melammu symposia.[31] Nonetheless, possible disagreements aside, this book is truly a pleasure to read and a must for any scholar interested in Greek religion, the Ancient Near East, or the Ancient Mediterranean world.

Review: Erich S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002). ix 386 Pp.
Reviewed by Ra'anan Abusch, Princeton University

Historians of the Greek and Roman world have long played a salutary role in correcting the often off-kilter narratives of Jewish history produced by those who specialize in the political, social, and cultural life of this one barbarian people. The efforts of such scholars as E. Bickerman and A. Momigliano have taught us that Jewish life under Hellenistic and Roman rule did not function according to historical laws that were any different than those that shaped the fates of the other newly subjugated nations of the ancient Near East.

Erich Gruen's recent work does this tradition proud. His latest book expands upon the project he inaugurated in *Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Tradition*[32]. In this first volume, Gruen described with great sensitivity and precision the highly productive strategies of "cultural improvisation" through which the Jews of the Greco-Roman world successfully re-imagined, and thereby reinvigorated, the traditional patterns of biblical narrative and religion to which they were heirs. Rather than seeing the encounter between Greek and Jew as a "zero-sum contest in which every gain for Hellenism was a loss for Juda-

[30] See Rubio, *Gerión* 17 (1999): 129–148; *id.*, *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 91 (2001): 408–411.

[31] S. Aro and R. M. Whiting (eds.), *The heirs of Assyria* (Melammu symposia, 1. Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2000); and R. M. Whiting (ed.), *Mythology and mythologies* (Melammu symposia, 1. Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2001).

[32] Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

ism and vice-versa" (xiv), Gruen convincingly demonstrated that Greek modes of thought and expression provided a new and powerful idiom for Jewish self-expression.

While *Diaspora* starts from this same premise, Gruen's more limited emphasis on Jewish life outside the boundaries of their native homeland prompts him to reformulate his earlier thesis subtly: "Maintenance of a Jewish identity and accommodation to the circumstances of diaspora were joint objectives" (6). In Gruen's view, diaspora Jews did not perceive dispersion to be synonymous with Exile or the consequence of divine retribution, nor did they believe it to be a condition in need of remedy. In fact, Gruen finds no evidence at all that Jews in the period stretching from the consolidation of the Hellenistic kingdom's in the late fourth century B.C.E. until the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans in 70 C.E. ever constructed a coherent theory of Diaspora. Instead, Gruen concludes that the unequivocal reverence diaspora Jews felt for the Holy Land "stood in full harmony with (their) commitment to local community and allegiance to Gentile governance" (252).

The book is arranged as a diptych. The first half offers a careful analysis of the sociopolitical and institutional history of three representative diaspora communities (Rome, Alexandria, and Asia Minor), while the second explores Jewish perceptions of and attitude towards their place in diaspora society. This dual structure is intended to capture both the empirical "reality" of diaspora Jewish life as well as the Jews' own subjective representations of this experience.

Following a lucid and engaging introduction (1-11) that underscores the important fact that most diaspora Jews chose to settle in their adoptive homelands *voluntarily* and *not through coercion*, Chapter 1 traces the history of the Jewish community of Rome from its earliest beginnings through a series of disturbances and expulsions that shook the community (e.g., in 139 B.C.E. and in 19 C.E. under Tiberius). Gruen's portrait, however, is decidedly not one of unrelenting conflict. Rather, he characterizes these periodic flare-ups as relatively confined ruptures in an otherwise stable existence and discerns no malignant pattern of anti-Jewish sentiment or policy in these events. In each case, he argues, the Jewish community was neither the sole, nor even primary target of what were in fact wide-ranging repressive measures. Instead, such policies reflect the Roman penchant for scapegoating foreign groups at times of internal instability and crisis (16–36). According to Gruen, even when Claudius did officially curtail public gatherings of Jews (in 41 C.E.), he was not taking aim at the Jewish religion *as such*, but merely trying to neutralize the potential disruptions that might be generated by the public assembly of resident aliens. Jews continued to be free to practice their traditional ways in private (36–41). Thus, although Judaism was clearly distasteful to many Roman elites, the Jews did not merit greater *animus* than any other conspicuous foreign population (41–53).

In chapter 3, Gruen applies this contextual method to the history of the Alexandrian Jewish community. Focusing his attention on the "pogroms" of 38 C.E. that rocked the Jewish community of Alexandria, Gruen maintains that riots marred what was otherwise the peaceful and untroubled history of this materially secure and culturally vibrant Jewish enclave. Neither the Emperor Gaius nor his local representative Flaccus harbored an inveterate hatred for the Jews, as the Alexandrian Jewish philosopher Philo suggests. Instead, Gruen argues that the Jews were inadvertently drawn into the conflict between the city's Greek elite and the Roman prefect Flaccus, which had resulted from Flaccus' failure to find the proper balance between the competing interests in the multi-ethnic population he governed (57–62). In Gruen's account, it is the native Egyptians, and not the Greek elites, who harbored pent-up resentment towards the Jews and who were the primary actors in this drama of inter-ethnic violence (65). Despite its severity, the violence of 38 C.E. was to have no lasting impact on the Jewish community of Alexandria or the wider Greco-Roman world (79–83).

Chapter 3 similarly focuses on the vagaries of Jewish life in the Roman province of Asia. Although Gruen accepts the authenticity of a dossier of letters, decrees, and edicts preserved by Josephus in his *Jewish Antiquities* that bears witness to a history of conflict (84–86), he not surprisingly finds in these documents little evidence for a systematic campaign of repression. Whatever curtailment of Jewish religious life or political rights was more often than not a by-product of the repeated attempts by Roman officials to promote stability in the territory under their administrative control or to deflect unwelcome criticism of their conduct (86–93). Instead, he describes a group of pro-active Jewish communities fully capable of vying vigorously for the various advantages (*beneficia*) that the Roman government conferred on its subject populations (93–99). Gruen does acknowledge that "the triangle relationship among Greeks, Jews, and Romans in Asia Minor" intensified the competition for resources between Greek and Jew (102), but, as in the previous chapter, he downplays the potentially novel conceptual ramifications of the new Roman political order.

Chapter four analyzes the primary institutions, both civic and religious, both Jewish and Greek, that shaped Jewish life in the Diaspora. Its thesis is clear and unequivocal: "Jews strove to engender circumstances that would enable them to maintain their ancient heritage while engaging comfortably and productively in the lands of the classical world wherein they dwelled" (105). The synagogue was the most central and widespread of these institutions (105–113). Gruen challenges the emerging scholarly consensus that the synagogue only functioned as a locus of instruction and assembly, and not as place of prayer (116–117). At the same time, he is careful to emphasize that the synagogue was in no way intended to replace the Jerusalem Temple, but merely to complement the services the central shrine provided (113–123). Yet, while the organization of Jewish communal life around the synagogue served to anchor local Jewish communities in all their facets, there existed few barriers to Jewish participation in the cultural and institutional life of the Greco-Roman city. Jews partook of both the intellectual and athletic offerings of the gymnasia, frequented the theater, and held public and military office under Gentile auspices (123–131).

Yet, however attractive this portrait of full social integration, I could not help feeling that it was unnecessarily one-sided. Most notably, Gruen leaves out of his account the palpable anxieties that were generated by the complicated task of negotiating competing identities. Allen Kerkeslager's compelling analysis of the anti-Jewish humor that was bandied around the gymnasium[33] – a source and article that Gruen fails to cite – reveals that the active participation of Jews in public life was not without its palpable strains. Indeed, Gruen's revisionist approach to diaspora life seems overly averse to contemplating the ironic juxtaposition of vitality and crisis that peppers these local histories.

Gruen's desire to render a uniform portrait of diaspora Jewish life is perhaps most problematic in his treatment of the riots in Alexandria (Chapter 2). Gruen fails to mention the formative alliance that the Egyptians Jews forged with Julius Caesar during his conquest of Egypt in 48/47 B.C.E, an event which I think should be seen as the beginning of a process that was ultimately to distinguish Jew from both Greek and native Egyptian. As the Roman authorities began to perceive the indispensable role that a recognizable community of Greek elites would play in the governance of the Empire, they set about establishing criteria for delimiting ethnic identity[34]. Where before boundaries had been blurry, because less consequential, new identities were now emerging, and with them a new discourse of ethnicity. The peculiar (and largely chance) convergence of a local Egyptian antipathy to Judaism and the universalizing thrust of Greek culture, which Peter Schäfer has identified as a formative

[33] "Maintaining Jewish Identity in the Greek Gymnasium: A Jewish 'Load' in *CPJ* 3.519", *Jewish Studies Journal* 28 (1997): 12–33.

[34] See especially Joseph Mélèze Modrzejewski, *The Jews of Egypt: From Ramses II to Emperor Hadrian* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 161–83.

moment in the creation of Western anti-Semitism[35], assumed concrete form in the destructive alliance of Greek elite with Egyptian subaltern. Claudius' letter of 41 C.E.[36], which demanded that the Greeks and the Jews assume their proper places within the civic order, did not return matters to their peaceful and productive *status quo ante*, as Gruen would have it (79–83). If anything, this document should be read as an important moment in the crystallization of a regime in which Jews were considered categorically distinct from their neighbors.

The book's second half leaves behind the empirical sphere of social history and turns to consider what Gruen calls "diaspora mentality" (135). Chapters 5 and 6 offer a series of highly provocative and original interpretations of well-known literary works, which were either produced in the diaspora or address the diaspora experience. Gruen sensibly divides these works into the categories of "Historical Fiction" (Esther, Tobit, Judith, Susanna, and II Maccabees) and the appropriately witty double-entendre "Biblical Recreations" (Testament of Abraham, Testament of Job, Artapanus). Gruen's treatment provides a welcome antidote to a tradition of overly earnest scholarship that consistently fails to appreciate the playful and often farcical tone of these texts. He argues that these works, far from encoding a morbid humor forged in crisis and intended as compensation for disappointment, express the self-assurance of writers who were confident enough to poke fun simultaneously at the self and the other. He finds gentle irony and mirth where others have primarily seen a brooding bitterness.

Gruen wisely does not insist that his reading of these sources exhausts their meaning completely, but acknowledges that humor is a notoriously slippery and multivalent phenomenon (136–137). Yet, while Gruen's interpretations succeed in offering fresh perspective on the familiar, one nevertheless gets the impression that he is not content merely to add one more interpretative option to an already rich exegetical tradition. Indeed, it is absolutely essential for Gruen's larger argument that the Jew's seemingly unquenchable thirst for tales of barely averted national disaster be seen as an affirmation of the proposition that "Jews can be active and engaged participants in Gentile society, while simultaneously maintaining adherence to their own community" (145). This assessment is surely more than a bit lopsided and, within the context of the book's thesis, somewhat predictable. If the ancient authors who produced these works were really so self-assured about their place in the world, why did they find genocidal scenarios so compelling? Although perhaps not solely a literature of despair, I think only wishful thinking can fully purge these texts of their tragic element.

The final two chapters of the book are, in my view, its most original and important. Chapter 7 traces a series of distinct, though not mutually exclusive, strategies through which Jews related to their Greek neighbors and to the phenomenon of Hellenism itself. Using these strategies as a window onto Jewish self-conception, Gruen first explores the way "Jewish compositions constructed the Hellenes as foils, as aliens, as the 'Other,' thereby the better to set off the virtues and qualities of their own nation" (219). Hellenized Jewish authors, such as Philo and Josephus, often applied to Jewish figures the conventional Greek ideals of wisdom and a cultivated self-discipline, while turning the tables on the Greeks by deriding them as foolish, materialistic, and licentious barbarians (214–219). At the same time, Gruen notes that a strong streak of admiration for Greek civilization runs through the work of many of these same authors (219–221). Cautioning against facile attempts at paving over this discrepancy, Gruen argues that there is in fact a certain coherence to this seemingly contradictory evidence. "Jewish writers opted less for antagonism or admiration than for appropriation" (221). Here, Gruen returns to his now familiar trope of Jewish cultural renewal through the medium of Greek culture. He himself must concede, however, that, even when they acknowledged their profound indebtedness to Greek concepts and idioms, Jewish authors drew on a tradition of competitive historiography that was primarily aimed at asserting the superiority of their own traditions and their own national heroes (227–230). Gruen's description of a Hellenistic Jewish culture vibrant enough to adapt Hellenic culture for its own uses succeeds in deconstructing the traditional dichotomous view of Jewish attitudes towards Greek civilization. Nevertheless, Paul's famous yearning to bridge the antinomy between Jew and Greek (Galatians 3:28) reminds us that differences not only persisted but grew more robust, and problematic, with time.

Chapter 8 takes up the fascinating question of how "diaspora Jews of the Second Temple Period conceived of their association with Jerusalem" (233). Gruen argues that the grim memories of the Babylonian exile and the destruction of the First Temple were confined to their view of biblical times and did not color their perception of their contemporary situation (235-239). Indeed, he observes a positive complementarity between center and periphery. The strong ideological and emotional attachment to the Holy Land that diaspora Jews, expressed through pilgrimage and monetary donation, in no way undermined their commitment to the local communities in which they made their lives (239–252), but rather strengthened their sense of communal solidarity and their sense of security in their adoptive homelands. This compelling "both-and" analysis wisely presents the capacity of diaspora Jewish culture to bridge and even to cultivate its apparent contradictions as a testament to its vitality. I only wished that in the book's first half Gruen had similarly allowed crisis to co-exist with stability, as it so naturally does, rather than trying systematically to shoehorn every "anomalous" moment of conflict into a dominant narrative of cultural and spiritual strength.

[35] Peter Schäfer, *Judeophobia: Attitudes towards the Jews in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 136–179

[36] *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum* 2.153.

D. Frede, A. Laks (eds.), *Traditions of Theology. Studies in Hellenistic Theology, its Background and Aftermath.* Papers presented at the 8th Symposium Hellenisticum, Villeneuve-d'Ascq, France 1998. Philosophia Antiqua, 89 (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill 2001). xiv, 343 pp.

Reviewed by Zsuzsanna Várhelyi, Boston University

This latest volume of the *Symposium Hellenisticum* is without doubt the single most important collection of studies on Hellenistic theology to appear in recent years. The nine studies, originally presented in France in the summer of 1998 and now nicely presented with ample indices, cover concepts of gods, divine providence, human assimilation to and knowledge of god from a principally philosophical perspective, but their findings are quite relevant to even less philosophically minded readers with an interest in Hellenistic and Roman Imperial religion.

A creative engagement with the philosophical tradition is at issue in the first three papers. Robert Sharples traces the question of divine providence, never systematically treated by Aristotle, in the Peripatetic tradition, from an already modified concept restricted to the heavenly region in the second century BCE, to the position of Alexander of Aphrodisias, in which divine providence took an interest in the species, if not the individuals, of the sublunary world. Readings of Plato in the late fourth-century Platonic Academy is where David Sedley seeks the origins of the Stoic concept of god. Based on a reevaluation of the reliability of Antiochus of Ascalon, Sedley suggests that Polemon was responsible for a radical reinterpretation of the Timaeus, in which god was now equated with necessity, a necessary part of the Stoic system, that his pupil Zeno later advanced. Connections between the Platonic and Stoic concepts of divine providence as represented in the *Laws* and in Cicero are at the center of Dorothea Frede's paper. While the two notions may differ in how much divine inter-