

of Solomon. As an introduction and an exegetical tool, this book is indispensable for study of the ancient literature and especially of the fragmentary material. It provides us with an innovative perspective on Jewish religion, theology, and culture in the Greco-Roman period.

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THE CREATION OF MAN: PHILO AND THE HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION. By Thomas H. Tobin. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series*, 14. Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association, 1983. Pp. viii + 199. Paper, \$6.00.

This important monograph, a revision of Tobin's doctoral dissertation (Harvard, 1980, under John Strugnell), reviews the Philonic accounts of the creation of the first human being. The discrepancies and varying presuppositions of those accounts have troubled students of Philo, who have often tried in vain to harmonize them into a single systematic theory. Tobin carefully sorts out these different portrayals and shows the relation of each to Greek philosophical theories and to Jewish apologetic concerns. What emerges is a picture of Philo as standing within an exegetical tradition and attempting to preserve it. His own contribution is then identified as the psychological allegorization of the creation accounts. Tobin's study thus usefully confirms and extends much recent work on Philo and makes a significant contribution to understanding the relationship of Alexandrian Judaism to Hellenistic culture.

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BEN SIRA AND DEMOTIC WISDOM. By Jack T. Sanders. *Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series*, 28. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983. Pp. x + 123. Cloth, \$29.50; paper, \$19.50.

This study analyzes in a cursory fashion Ben Sira's relation to the biblical wisdom tradition (affirmed), and to Hellenic tradition (Sirach open to Greek thought, especially to Theognis, "as long as it can be Judaized" [58]). Chapter three argues that the influence of *Papyrus Insinger* (*Phibis*) upon Sirach was greater even than Theognis. The likelihood is that Sirach read *Phibis* and took over individual proverbs as well as the format (105). He would have read a hypothetical Aramaic translation "which someone showed to Ben Sira when he travelled in Egypt" (100). The usefulness of the volume is secured by a select bibliography and indexes to biblical and ancient authors as well as modern authors.

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THE STUDY OF ANCIENT JUDAISM. Vol. 1, *Mishnah, Midrash, Siddur*. Vol. 2, *The Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds*. Edited by Jacob Neusner. New York: KTAV, 1981. Pp. xv + 194; xiv + 199. \$29.50 each.

A collection of previously published essays, some now revised or updated, by Neusner and his former students on the academic study of the literary corpora of early rabbinic Judaism. Covered are Mishnah (Neusner and Joel H. Zaiman, with a bibliography), Midrash (Gary G. Porton, with a bibliography by Lee Haas), Siddur (Richard S. Sarason), Palestinian Talmud (Baruch M. Bokser), and Babylonian Talmud (David Goodblatt). Both volumes are usefully indexed. Neusner's introduction defines the common purpose of these essays as that of describing and justifying the historical and literary methods appropriate to the critical exegesis of these documents. He acknowledges that the title is somewhat overambi-

tious: nonrabbinic varieties of Judaism and their literary products fall outside the purview of the volumes. Neusner's essay describes the methods employed by him and his students in their exegesis of the Mishnah as a historical (i.e., temporally and socially located) document. Porton's thoughtful, but not always convincing, piece focuses on the issue of "defining midrash" but neglects other (and to my mind more important) methodological issues raised by recent work in this field. The essays by Sarason, Bokser, and Goodblatt are particularly commendable for their comprehensive coverage of the resources and methods appropriate to the critical study of Jewish liturgy and the two Talmuds. Ironically, all three essays indicate that current scholarship increasingly views these documents as the products, in significant measure, of post-amoraic (i.e., post-500 CE) Judaism. These volumes serve for the generalist as introductions to, and for the specialist as reviews of, current work on ancient documents whose critical study, herein exemplified, is still in its infancy.

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THE SHIUR QOMAH: LITURGY AND THEURGY IN PRE-KABBALISTIC JEWISH MYSTICISM. By Martin Samuel Cohen. Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1983. Pp. 292. Cloth, \$21.75; paper, \$11.75.

This doctoral dissertation (Jewish Theological Seminary of America) provides a translation and commentary of the *Sefer Haqqomah*, an odd composition possibly of post-Talmudic Babylonian Jewish origin (sometime between the seventh and ninth centuries). The document presents a sustained account of the dimensions of God's body—the distance measuring God's height, then, in detail, the parasangs of the soles of the feet, ankles, and so on upward. Why this is "mystical" is not entirely clear, since Cohen's claim to provide a statement of what he calls "exegetical mysticism" explains little. The strengths of the work characterize its genre: enormous learning, encyclopedic gathering and arranging of everything relevant to the topic and much not relevant. The survey of recent scholarship, recensions of the text, provenance and nature of the text, studies in the text (name, attribution, hymnody, use of biblical verses, commentaries, various other topics) fill out the book. The translation of the text itself (some thirteen longish paragraphs) then bears the burden of yet more information. The only thing lacking from the conventional program is a decent index. Otherwise, we have a masterpiece of erudition. Unfortunately, the book also is disorganized, poorly written, and not aimed at making conceptual points or proving a case. The document is read out of all context but its own, so how it relates to "mysticism," whether Judaic, Christian, or Iranian, is unclear. Cohen does not seem to be talking to anyone about anything in particular, but he has certainly succeeded in providing a definitive account of the text at hand, so, on balance, it is a substantial piece of work and the result of great learning and industry.

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History of Judaism: Medieval

TAXATION, COMMUNITY AND STATE: THE JEWS AND THE FISCAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE EARLY MODERN PAPAL STATE. By Kenneth R. Stow. *Papste und Papsttum*, 19. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1982. Pp. x + 187. DM 120.00.

This meticulously researched and documented volume considers papal-Jewish relations from the relatively neglected per-