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VOLUME THREE
THE EARLY
ROMAN PERIOD

EDITED BY
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This is the third volume of a widely valued history of Judaism in the ancient world. The focus is on the early Roman period of Jewish history from Pompey to Vespasian, but studies of important themes extend to the third century CE. There is full coverage of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Jewish schools of thought and the rise of Christianity. Surveys of archaeological findings and inscriptions throughout the Roman world highlight the significance of newly discovered material for the study of ancient Judaism.

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PREFACE

This volume introduces themes and material of importance for the study of Judaism in the early Roman period of Jewish history. Special attention is given to Jewish institutions and schools of thought, and to the consideration of archaeological finds and inscriptions from the homeland and the diaspora. The main focus is on the years from Pompey's intervention in Judaea (63 BCE) to Vespasian's principate (CE 69–79), but attention is given throughout to antecedents and to later developments. The time-span of the volume includes the end of Jewish independence in Judaea and the last years of the Hasmonaean kingdom, the Herodian age and the rise of Christianity, Jewish war with Rome and the fall of Jerusalem, Jewish presence throughout the Roman empire, and developing rabbinic influence at home which would lead, beyond the scope of this volume, to the compilation of the Mishnah and associated rabbinic writings from the beginning of the third century onwards, and eventually to the formation of the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds. The contributions to this volume collectively reflect continuity and innovation in ancient Judaism from the Hasmonaean age to the second century CE.

An outline of political and economic history (chapters 5–6) in the homeland (E. Gabba) and the diaspora (E. Mary Smallwood) covers the years from Pompey's Judaeian campaign (63 BCE) and the end of the Hasmonaean monarchy (37 BCE), through the period of the Augustan empire and the Herodian dynasty, to the accession of Vespasian (CE 69) and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (CE 70). Aspects of the second century CE are treated in chapters 29–30, on the rabbi in the context of Jewish society in the homeland (S. J. D. Cohen), and on the archaeological evidence for the Hellenistic–Roman diaspora (L. I. Levine). A number of other chapters present their themes with reference to times well before Pompey or after Vespasian, and throw light on the continuous development of Judaism in the Greek and Roman periods. Many literary and non-literary sources for the study of ancient Judaism are surveyed. In the sphere of literature, chapters are devoted to apocalypses, the Qumran texts, Philo, and Josephus; but readers are referred elsewhere for systematic introduction to apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, the New

Testament, the Mishnah and other early rabbinic literature, and the Targums and other ancient versions of the Hebrew Bible.

Special notice, however, is given to newly-discovered material, which is known from finds in the modern period rather than from the continuous literary tradition of the Jewish and the Christian communities, and is therefore rather less readily accessible through works of general introduction and evaluation. This aspect of the volume is met especially in the chapters on archaeology (1, 3, 30), epigraphy (4), the temple and the synagogue (2, 9–12), the Qumran texts (24–6), and gnosticism and magic (32). Although the constantly increasing body of newly-found inscribed and written documents and archaeological material requires constant re-assessment, especially as regards its relation to the existing literary sources for ancient Judaism, it is hoped that surveys such as are presented here will open avenues into the study of Judaism through archaeology and epigraphy.

The four opening surveys of this kind cover Palestinian archaeological evidence (M. Broshi and D. Bahat), the achievements and goals of recent Palestinian archaeology (E. M. Meyers), and the contribution of Jewish inscriptions, from the diaspora as well as the homeland, to the study of Judaism (Margaret Williams). After the two chapters of historical outline which were noted above, the consideration of subjects and themes in Judaism proceeds in this volume from Jewish-gentile relations and the accompanying ideology (chapters 7–8), to the temple and the synagogue (chapters 9–12; see also chapters 1–4 and 29–31), and then (in chapters 13–22) to various schools of thought – Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, baptist sects, the ‘fourth philosophy’ and similar groups, Samaritans, and the Christian movement. Then the chapters on literature (23–8) are followed by those on the rabbi in second-century society and on the archaeology of the Roman diaspora (29–30). Finally, Judaism is discussed in connection with Egyptian religion and with gnostic and magical traditions (chapters 31–2).

This arrangement of the chapters brings with it a progression from the life, thought, and institutions of the Jewish community as a whole (chapters 7–12) to the particular emphases of various schools and movements (chapters 13–22). Unity and diversity in Judaism are therefore both represented. This feature of the volume may recall Josephus’s presentation of the Jews as one community embracing various schools of thought, as well as modern discussion of unity and diversity in ancient Judaism (reflected here especially in chapters 4, 10, 17, 19, 23, and 25).

The Judaism of the whole community is evoked here first of all through presentation of problems surrounding ethnicity and identity (chapters 7–8). Morton Smith considers the part played in national life by people of

non-Jewish descent, and he indicates diversities of origin and background, together with inclusive and expansive tendencies, in the Jewish community and the Judaism of Judaea before the outbreak of war with Rome.¹ His study is complemented by Raphael Loewe's survey of views on gentiles from the period after this war, with special reference to rabbinic and liturgical sources which have been abidingly influential in Judaism.

These chapters lead to a group of studies of the synagogue and the temple (chapters 9–12). The history, archaeology, and disposition of the Herodian temple buildings were surveyed by D. Bahat in chapter 2. The complex question of the relationship of temple and synagogue in ancient Jewish opinion and custom is now discussed in chapter 10. S. J. D. Cohen judges that the synagogue was deemed inferior to the temple, even though prayer and Torah study were often taken to be the equivalent of the sacrifices, and perhaps even superior to them. The extensive yet often patchy literary and archaeological evidence for synagogue origins, constitutions, buildings, furnishings and functions is summarized in chapter 9 by H. Bloedhorn and G. Hüttenmeister. Early rabbinic evidence on the synagogue is also discussed by S. J. D. Cohen (chapter 29); relevant inscriptions are considered further in chapters 4 and 12, Palestinian synagogue archaeology is discussed by M. Broshi in chapter 1 and by E. M. Meyers in chapter 3, archaeological evidence for diaspora synagogues is presented with special fulness by L. I. Levine (chapter 30), and the role of Egypt in synagogue origins is discussed by J. G. Griffiths (chapter 31). The widely-debated early history of public Torah-reading and prayer is reviewed not only in chapter 9 but also and especially by S. C. Reif on 'The Early Liturgy of the Synagogue' (chapter 11); it receives further discussion in chapter 12, on 'Women in the Synagogue', with special reference to the participation of women in prayer, and in D. Falk's study of 'Prayer in the Qumran Texts' (chapter 26), with regard to a fund of early source-material. Women's place in the synagogue is considered not only in chapter 12, with regard to sabbath and festal assemblies and synagogue office, but also, again in connection with office-holding, by Margaret Williams in chapter 4. These chapters on the temple and the synagogue together draw attention to customs which are of central importance for the study of ancient Judaism: communal sacrifice, Torah-reading, and prayer.

¹ To set this chapter and chapter 17 against the background of Smith's general approach to ancient Judaism, see the work by Smith reprinted in M. Smith, ed. S. J. D. Cohen, *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh* (2 vols., Leiden, 1996), with S. J. D. Cohen's concluding assessment 'In Memoriam Morton Smith'.