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George J. Brooke and Renate Smithuis (eds.), *Jewish Education from Antiquity to the Middle Ages: Studies in Honour of Philip S. Alexander*, *Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* 100 (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

The fifteen essays in this volume, written by experts from a predominantly British context, celebrate Philip Alexander's manifold contributions to the study of Judaism, both in the UK and abroad. Rather than issuing an open call for contributions, the editors of this *Festschrift* have set a specific theme for the volume: all essays revolve around the topic of Jewish education. This is a commendable move: the theme of education is specific enough to lend an overall unity to this volume, and yet broad enough for the volume to testify to Alexander's own breadth of knowledge—which is reflected in the array of sources, ranging from the Qumran Dead Sea Scrolls to a 14th century manuscript from the Provence, covered in the book.

In their introduction, Brooke and Smithuis offer a brief sketch of the contents of the volume and Alexander's life and academic career. In the first essay of this volume, "Aspects of Education in the Sectarian Scrolls from the Qumran Caves," George Brooke analyses aspects of education in the Qumran scrolls, including educational terminology, the issue of literacy and writing, the training of scribes, and the larger question whether Qumran was a school. Brooke concludes that "[m]uch happened at Qumran, but at least part of what took place there ... was as educational as the general activities of the sectarian movement" (38).

In his "Could Jesus Really Read? Literacy in Roman Galilee," Seán Freyne offers a thorough discussion of the types of literacy current in the Galilee in the Roman period. Freyne rejects the suggestion that the Q tradition was the product of Galilean village scribes, writing that "there would appear to be a lack of evidence for a network of village scribes in Galilee whose literary skills and disaffection ... would have provided the suitable seed bed for the Q community/gospel in Galilee" (54). Freyne's argument that scribal literacy was less wide-spread in Roman Galilee than has sometimes been assumed leads him to the conclusion that Jesus "had ... at most the literacy of the craftsman, not that of the scribe" (59).

In "*Paideia* in the Fourth Book of Maccabees," Tessa Rajak demonstrates that "a high-minded conception of teaching permeates [4 Macc]" (69). She contextualises this importance of *paideia* by showing how 4 Macc "reflects the atmosphere and taste of the Greek 'Second Sophistic' in the cities of the eastern Roman Empire" (71) — more specifically, in Antioch.

Martin Goodman's "The Shaping of Memory: Josephus on Agrippa II in Jerusalem" approaches education as a means of memory-making. Pointing out

that Agrippa II, as custodian of the Jerusalem temple, must have held a heavy responsibility for the events in 66–70 CE that led to the outbreak of Jewish revolt, Goodman wonders “why ... Agrippa II [is] not recalled either as a villain or as dangerously incompetent in later Jewish tradition” (90). It is argued that the favourable portrait Josephus paints of Agrippa II in his *Jewish War* set the stage for later Jewish memories of Agrippa. Josephus’ account reflects Roman politics: “when Josephus was writing his account ... and showing it to Titus and Agrippa ... for approval, there was every possibility that Agrippa might be the brother-in-law of the next emperor” (92).

William Horbury assembles evidence for primary teaching and educators in the period between the Qumran scrolls and the Mishnah in his “Pedagogues and Primary Teachers, from Paul to the Mishnah.” Horbury argues on the basis of pre-Mishnaic references to non-parental education that Jewish teaching in the Second Temple period “was not restricted to what parents could offer” (113). Paul’s letters, which are only seldom included in debate over pre-Mishnaic Jewish education, confirm this picture: Paul was familiar with pedagogues and other non-parental educators and so “forms ... a further Jewish witness to education in which parents used the services of pedagogues and teachers of children” (121).

Robert Hayward’s “The Aramaic Targum and its Ancient Jewish Scholarly Environment” discusses the origins of the Targumim in the Jewish school. To illuminate the scholarly background of the Targumim Hayward points to parallels between Targumim to the Pentateuch and the Mishnah. As the Mishnah is clearly the product of the Bet Midrash, parallels between it and targumic traditions strengthen the association of the Targumim with the school.

In “Educational Features in Ancient Jewish Literature: An Overview of Unknowns,” Alexander Samely observes that “the link of ancient Jewish sources to education ... is often left quite undefined” (147). To overcome this problem Samely offers a list of literary features that, in his estimation, are most likely to reflect the educational goals of particular writings. Samely also briefly addresses the question of a Jewish “map of knowledge,” concluding that “Jewish texts from antiquity do not appear to locate themselves on a purely thematic ‘map’ of knowledge,” even if “there was nevertheless an organising principle for knowledge: *earlier texts*” (191–92).

Loveday Alexander retraces the use of anecdotal sayings in Greek textual culture and education in her “Anecdotal Evidence: Memory, Tradition and Text in Early Christianity and the Hellenistic Schools.” Anecdotal sayings commonly derive from a memory of a particular figure or event, and they were transmitted orally before being written down. As a result, these anecdotal sayings provide a useful

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“framework to explore the dynamic relationships between memory, tradition, and text thrown up by early Christian texts” (205). In her study of these dynamic relationships, Alexander discusses topics such as the connection between orality and writing, the formation of identity, and the development of social memory in Early Christianity.

In “God as the Educator of Humanity: Some Voices from the Syriac Tradition,” Sebastian Brock demonstrates how various Syriac authors from the 4th to 6th centuries portray God as an educator. By so doing, these authors attribute the possibility to gain knowledge of God to God’s initiative to educate human beings.

Stefan Reif’s “Liturgy as Educational Process in Talmudic and Medieval Judaism” treats several developments in Jewish liturgical texts and explains the educational background of these changes. Reif concludes that “it was not only purely liturgical considerations that provided the impetus for additions to the rabbinic liturgy.... [T]here was undoubtedly a major drive to educate the observant Jewish public through its use of the prayer-book” (265–66).

Geoffrey Khan’s essay “Learning to Read Biblical Hebrew in the Middle Ages: The Transition from Oral Standard to Written Standard” provides a detailed exposé of the development of different vocalisation systems in the Middle Ages and the ultimate triumph of the Tiberian system. Khan shows how this triumph “had its roots primarily in [the] association [of the Tiberian tradition] with the Palestinian *yeshivah* ‘academy,’ the central body of Jewish communal authority in Palestine” (276).

In her “Glossary of Difficult Words in the Babylonian Talmud (Seder Mo’ed) on a Rotulus,” Judith Olszowy-Schlanger presents a preliminary publication of a glossographical text dealing with the Talmud, which has been preserved in three fragments from the Cambridge Genizah collection and the Bodleian Library in Oxford. Olszowy-Schlanger shows that the manuscript served “a personal and silent reading rather than ... a collective study” (317). Its contents can be defined as an “exegetical glossary,” which combines “lexicography and the methods used in exegesis” (314) and was copied “in [the] milieu of Babylonian Jews in Egypt” (319).

Gideon Bohak’s “A Jewish Charm for Memory and Understanding” traces the development of a Jewish charm in three manuscripts from the 11th to the 15th century. Bohak shows “how each copy is different, and how these differences reflect the very manner by which such recipes were transmitted.... Clearly, the copyists and users of these recipes tried to copy their recipes accurately ..., but also felt the need to update, correct, and modify the texts before them” (335–36).

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Renate Smithuis, in her “Preaching to his Daughter: Jacob Anatoli’s *Goad for Students* (*Malmad ha-talmidim*),” studies the preface of and two sermons in Anatoli’s *Goad for Students*. Smithuis shows how Anatoli’s *Goad* is not merely a collection of sermons, but an educational work, written “for those wanting to enrich their private Torah study” (343). Smithuis discusses Anatoli’s practice of giving both exoteric and esoteric explanations in his sermons, and the ways in which education functions as a theme in the *Goad*. On the basis of Anatoli’s sermon on the life of Sarah, which he wrote for the occasion of his daughter’s marriage, Smithuis addresses the topic of women and education in Anatoli’s times. Smithuis shows that Anatoli, in spite of his sometimes harsh remarks on women (by our modern standards), was not “a straightforward misogynist.... [H]is philosophical position on the question of whether or not women possess an innate capacity for intellectual growth was probably more subtle than has been assumed so far” (374).

Colette Sirat’s “Entering the Field of Philosophy: Provence, Mid-Fourteenth Century” analyses a 14th century manuscript used for personal study. The manuscript is a compilation of various pieces, including abridged texts and excerpts from “particular works relating to philosophy and science, aimed at the beginning student” (401). Sirat discusses the contents of the manuscript and shows how, “in the absence of formalised education, learning philosophy depended on chance opportunities as well as encounters with books” (404).

Jewish Education from Antiquity to the Middle Ages is a rich volume. Even if not all essays address its central topic to the same extent, the volume combines thought-provoking discussions of Jewish educational views and practices with a detailed attention to educational texts and how these express their didactic purposes. The volume stimulates new ways of thinking about Jewish education and, by so doing, constitutes a fitting tribute to the educator it honours.

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