

Notes on the Second Sophistic in Palestine¹

JOSEPH GEIGER

The Second Sophistic has got its fair share of attention in the last twenty-five years or so.² The present paper aims at reporting its impact on a part of the Empire removed from the centres of the movement. Furthermore, it is hoped that incidentally this will shed some light on a question of important cultural implications not normally associated with the Second Sophistic.

I

The travels of the sophists are a well-known subject, effortlessly noticed even by the most inattentive reader of Philostratus. While much of this action took place in the central domains of the movement, it is only to be expected that the peripheral lands had their due share. In fact, we possess some evidence for visits of important sophists in Palestine.

Most notable is the visit of Aelius Aristides to Palestine. It is correctly connected with his sojourn in Egypt 141–42, on his way there or back:

I heard it myself at Scythopolis, the city of Palaestina-Syria, that in the place which brings forth the famous dates and the juice [i.e. of balsam], there is a lake which indicates whenever the Nile rises. That was said by my hosts, who maintained that it happened during the increase of the lake.³

Unfortunately, we do not know who Aelius Aristides' hosts were, nor do we possess any further information regarding their conversations; even less are we able to tell whether the great orator's visit passed without some display of his art. However, we get a glimpse of the sort of people Aelius Aristides' hosts may have been from an accidental detail regarding a contemporary

¹ An earlier, and very different version of this paper was delivered at the 21st Annual Meeting of the Israel Society for Classical Studies, Jerusalem, 29 May 1992. The Hebrew text of that lecture was published in *Cathedra* 66 (1993) 47–56. I was privileged to give the paper in its present form while enjoying the hospitality of the German Archaeological Institute in Rome.

² Regrettably, G. Anderson, *The Second Sophistic: A Cultural Phenomenon in the Roman Empire* (London 1993) was not yet available to me.

³ Ael. Ar. 36 (*Aeg.*): 82; cf. M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism II* (Jerusalem 1980) 217 ff.

citizen of the town; the Stoic Basilides, the teacher of Marcus Aurelius, hailed from Scythopolis.⁴ With such hosts and such learned conversations it is difficult to imagine that no rhetorical fireworks were displayed in a city which took great pride in its Hellenic character.⁵

Another visit of a famous sophist may be less well known, doubly buried, as it were, in the learned obscurity of an ancient Hebrew text and a modern Hebrew article.⁶ In a famous story concerning a leading Palestinian sage we are told (*mAZ* 3. 4, transl. Danby):

Proklos the son of Philosophos asked Rabban Gamaliel in Acre while he was bathing in the Bath of Aphrodite, and said to him, "It is written in your Law, *And there shall cleave nought of the devoted thing to thine hand.* Why [then] dost thou bathe in the Bath of Aphrodite?" He answered, "One may not make answer in the bath." And when he came out he said, "I came not within her limits: she came within mine! They do not say, 'Let us make a bath for Aphrodite,' but 'Let us make an Aphrodite as an adornment for the bath.'" etc.

Abraham Wasserstein has argued, convincingly to my mind, that the text has to be emended to "Proklos the Philosophos" and that the persons in question were the famous sophist Proclus of Naucratis and Rabban Gamaliel (III), the son of the Patriarch R. Judah, who lived in the first half of the third century, rather than Rabban Gamaliel (II), commonly referred to as "of Yabneh," more than a century earlier.

His suggestion may be supported by some circumstantial evidence. Proclus of Naucratis, a teacher of Philostratus himself (*VS* 2. 21, pp. 602, 604), came from an important centre of the movement: We know of five sophists from Naucratis in the age of Commodus.⁷ Akko-Ptolemais was certainly an appropriate venue for him. Flavius Boethus,⁸ the only consular of Palestinian provenance known to us, was a native of the city; he was interested in medicine and in Peripatetic philosophy. Hadrian of Tyre—about whom more anon—was the teacher of Proclus and the guest of Flavius Boethus in Rome. It will perhaps be not too far-fetched to associate these connexions with Proclus' visit to Akko.

The cultural implications of the anecdote are not without interest. From the Jewish point of view it is not the retort of the sage that need concern us, but rather the tacit assumption that there was nothing wrong with a leading

⁴ Jerome, *Chron.* p. 203 Helm, a. Abr. 2163 (*PL* XXVII 263); Sync. I 663 Dindorf; H. von Arnim, *RE* III (1897) 46, no. 8.

⁵ For Scythopolis priding itself on its Hellenic character, see G. Foerster and Y. Tsafir, "Nysa-Scythopolis: A New Inscription and the Titles of the City on its Coins," *Isr. Num. J.* 9 (1986-87) 53-58.

⁶ A. Wasserstein, "Rabban Gamaliel and Proclus the Philosopher (Mishna Aboda Zara 3,4)," *Zion* 45 (1980) 257-67 (in Hebrew).

⁷ Cf. G. W. Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford 1969) 20.

⁸ *PIR*² F 229; cf. Bowersock (previous note) 62 f.; all our evidence comes from Galen. For Galen's visit to Palestine, see Stern (above, note 3) nos. 382, 384, 385, 390.

Jewish sage to bathe—presumably in the nude—together with gentiles. As far as the sophist is concerned, it is just possible that not only was his visit remembered, but perhaps also some discussions or displays of his craft (these perforce with a slant only to be expected in a Jewish source).

Pupils touring the centres of learning where the great sophists taught were a natural counterpart to the travels of the sophists themselves. Thus we hear incidentally of Phoenicians among the pupils of Scopelian (Philostr. *VS* 1. 21, p. 518): As we shall presently see, elsewhere in Philostratus "Phoenician" may designate a rhetor from Gadara in Palestine (*VS* 2. 33, p. 628, on Apsines).

II

One did not have to rely exclusively on the visits of sophists from Asia or Egypt, since famous representatives of the movement were natives of Palestine or of its immediate vicinity. A well-known luminary, Hadrian of Tyre,⁹ was the teacher of Proclus of Naucratis, a friend of Flavius Boethus and an acquaintance of Galen. He taught in Ephesus, then held the chair of rhetoric at Athens.¹⁰ After some two years he was appointed to the "upper" chair, Rome. From Marcus Aurelius, with whose son-in-law he had close relations, he received the privilege of tax immunity and in the event he was appointed on his death-bed *ab epistulis Graecis* by Commodus. We know nothing of his education in his town of birth, though the famous opening of his inaugural speech in Athens—*πάλιν ἐκ Φοινίκης γράμματα*—is testimony to his local patriotism and to the education he must have received at Tyre. His compatriot was Paul of Tyre, who acquired the title of metropolis for his city from Hadrian.¹¹ In the *Acts of the Pagan Martyrs* Paul appears arguing a case against the Jews.¹²

Gadara, to the south-east of Lake Gennesareth, was an important cultural centre and the home of a number of notable Greek intellectuals,¹³ among them two eminent figures in the history of rhetoric under the Empire. Theodorus, the teacher of Tiberius, was head of one of the two schools of

⁹ *VS* 2. 10, pp. 585–90; *PIR*² H 4; cf. Bowersock (above, note 7) 55, 83 f., 91 f.

¹⁰ I. Avotins, "The Holders of the Chairs of Rhetoric at Athens," *HSCP* 79 (1975) 313–24 thinks that at this time there was an Imperial chair of rhetoric with a stipend of HS 40,000 and one of the city with a stipend of HS 24,000, and that Hadrian held the first.

¹¹ W. Stegemann, *RE* XVIII.2 (1949) 2373, no. 17.

¹² *CPJ* II 157 (*acta Hermaisci*) line 9, and see comm. ad loc.

¹³ Strabo 16. 758 enumerates Menippus, Meleager, Philodemus and Theodorus. Oenomaus and Apsines are known from later evidence. To this often repeated list one should add the mathematician Philo, who, according to Eutocius of Ascalon (see Archimedes III 258, ed. Heiberg), calculated the circumference of the circle—viz., the value of π —with greater accuracy than Sporus of Nicaea; for the possible dates, see F. Kliem, *RE* III A (1929) 1883 s.v. "Sporos"; T. L. Heath, *A History of Greek Mathematics* I (Oxford 1921) 226.

rhetoric in his time.¹⁴ He may have been not devoid of a healthy dose of local patriotism.¹⁵ The other, Apsines,¹⁶ dubbed "the Phoenician" by Philostratus (*VS* 2. 33, p. 628), is despite some chronological difficulties apparently identical with the Athenian rhetor of that name, whose son Onasimus and grandson Apsines were also rhetors: Apsines the Younger was active under Constantine.¹⁷ Apsines is the author of our last extant *techne* (L. Spengel, *Rhetores Graeci* I 329 ff.) and of some fragments. Though we do not possess evidence for rhetorical activity in Gadara in the two hundred years between our two celebrities, it is difficult to imagine that the city gave birth twice to important teachers of rhetoric in a professional void. Moreover, though most of the career of both Theodorus and Apsines seems to have taken its course far from Gadara, it is hardly conceivable that they never declaimed or had pupils in the town and that their success did not encourage talented youth to follow in their wake.

Such are the meagre facts about the Second Sophistic within the time limits of Philostratus in a province far from his concern and notoriously poor in epigraphic finds. However, there exists ample circumstantial evidence to suggest that we are inadequately served by our sources. I propose to draw attention to two sets of sources: first, very briefly, to the relatively abundant evidence for sophists in adjacent areas, for which we have little reason to suppose radically different conditions from Palestine, and, second, to the large number of sophists and rhetors from Palestine known to us from the period subsequent to Philostratus. Indeed, the period of Julian and his successors has been rightly dubbed¹⁸ a second blossoming of the Second Sophistic.

III

It will not be inopportune, nor unnecessarily repetitive of material easily accessible elsewhere, briefly to survey the sophists from an area adjacent to Palestine: The recently published Greek part of the archive of Babatha and

¹⁴ G. Kennedy, *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World 300 B.C.–A.D. 300* (Princeton 1972) 340–41 and see index s.vv. "Theodoreans" and "Theodorus of Gadara." Note that the *Suda* s.v. asserts that his son Antonius was a συγκλητικός under Hadrian; cf. Bowersock (above, note 7) 28 n. 6 on consular sons of sophists.

¹⁵ He wrote a work on Coele Syria: *Suda* s.v. = *FGrH* 850 T 1.

¹⁶ *PIR*² A 978; *PLRE* I, no. 1 is sceptical about the identification; see also Bowersock (above, note 7) 5 f.; *Kl. Pauly* s.v.

¹⁷ Cf. also I. Avotins, "Prosopographical and Chronological Notes on some Greek Sophists of the Empire," *CSCA* 4 (1971) 67 ff.; B. Baldwin, "Nero and his Mother's Corpse," *Mnem.* 32 (1979) 380–81; under Maximinus Thrax he received the consular insignia (*Suda* s.v.); cf. also F. Millar, "P. Herennius Dexippus and the Third-Century Invasions," *JRS* 59 (1969) 16, with more bibliography on the family. See also the suggestion by R. J. Penella, *Greek Philosophers and Sophists in the Fourth Century A.D.: Studies in Eunapius of Sardis*, ARCA Classical and Medieval Texts, Papers and Monographs 28 (Leeds 1990) 95, that a grandson of the Arabian Diophantus—on whom see below—may have been named after him.

¹⁸ K. Gerth, *RE Suppl.* VIII (1956) 731, speaks of "Blütenzeiten" and "Glanzzzeit."

other documents from the shores of the Dead Sea demonstrate clearly the nearness of Judaea/Palaestina and Arabia in more than the strictly geographical sense.¹⁹

It is impossible to ascertain the exact provenance of Heliodorus of Arabia, the famous sophist of Severan times: He may have been from Palmyra.²⁰ However, two sophistic centres in Arabia are not difficult to identify. Petra seems to have given birth to two rival sophistic dynasties, whose controversies were eventually fought out in Athens. Genethlius, the son of Genethlius, was active in Athens in the third century. Conceivably he is the author of an extant *Διαίρεσις τῶν ἐπιδεικτικῶν*.²¹ There existed a notorious rivalry between him and Callinicus of Petra, whose father, Gaius, was also a sophist.²² Though we have no clear indication of the fact in our meagre sources, one is tempted to set the origin of their competition in their native city.²³

It is not quite clear how many sophists are concealed under the name of Epiphanius.²⁴ Epiphanius, the famous sophist who was judged worthy to be a rival of the brilliant Prohaeresius in Athens, and to whom Libanius failed to attach himself when he arrived to study there, was according to the *Suda* the son of Ulpius²⁵ and a native of Petra, and he taught in that city and at Athens; according to Eunapius he was a Syrian. He died long before the arrival in Athens of Eunapius in 362. Nothing is left of his many rhetorical writings listed in the *Suda*.²⁶ Penella in his recent study of Eunapius²⁷ has proposed either to reject the identification of the person in the *Suda* and the one in Eunapius, or to assume an error in the *Suda*'s contention that Epiphanius was a Petran (he deems an interlude at Petra admissible) or to

¹⁹ See N. Lewis, Y. Yadin and J. C. Greenfield, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Greek Papyri* (Jerusalem 1989), and the forthcoming Aramaic and Nabataean texts from the same archive; H. Cotton, "The Guardianship of Jesus Son of Babatha: Roman and Local Law in the Province of Arabia," *JRS* 83 (1993) 94–108; for a Greek ostrakon on Masada referring to a Nabataean woman, see H. Cotton, J. Geiger and E. Netzer, "A Greek Ostrakon from Masada," *IEJ* (forthcoming); see also H. Cotton, "A Cancelled Marriage Contract from the Judean Desert (*XHew/Se Gr. 2*)," *JRS* (forthcoming).

²⁰ K. Münscher, *RE* VIII (1913) 19–20, no. 14; mentioned by G. W. Bowersock, *Roman Arabia* (Cambridge, MA 1983) 135 in the sole paragraph devoted to Arabian sophists in that book. F. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World* (London 1977) 232, 234, puts the story of Heliodorus' appearance before Caracalla in its historical context.

²¹ W. Schmid, *RE* VII (1910) 1134–35, no. 2; *PLRE* I, s.v.; D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson, *Menander Rhetor* (Oxford 1981) xxxvi f., 226.

²² F. Jacoby, *RE* X (1917) 1649–50, no. 1; A. Stein, "Kallinikos von Petrai," *Hermes* 58 (1923) 448–56.

²³ On rivalries of the sophists, see Bowersock (above, note 7) 100.

²⁴ W. Schmid, *RE* VI (1907) 195–96, no. 8; J. Brzoska, *RE* VI 196, no. 10; T. Thalheim, *RE* VI 195, no. 7; *PLRE* I, no. 1. One suspects that the confusion is due in part, at least, to the allocation of entries in the *RE*.

²⁵ Penella (above, note 17) 95: "the sophist who taught Prohaeresius at Antioch?" (alluding to the remark at Eunapius, *VS* 487). With Ulpius the uncertainty and confusion are even greater than with Epiphanius; see *PLRE* I, nos. 1, 4.

²⁶ A hymn to Bacchus is mentioned at *Soz.* 6. 25. 9–10.

²⁷ Penella (above, note 17) 95 f.

assume a conflation in the *Suda* of "Epiphanius and the Arabian Diophantus, assigning what we would infer to be the latter's native city to the former." This last proposal obviously derives from Penella's own conflation of the *Suda* and Eunapius, since only the latter mentions together the two sophists. Nor is Penella's unconditional faith in every detail of Eunapius easy to adopt with regard to a man not personally known to the author. Occam's Razor should be applied to the proposal to relate the entries in the *Suda* and in Eunapius to two different persons. The question of the *patria* of Epiphanius may be left open, though perhaps in this case the much more detailed article in the *Suda* deserves more credence than is usually accorded that source. Nor is it clear whether our sophist is identical with the author of the long extant fragment on *staseis* or with the Epiphanius mentioned in the commentaries on Demosthenes, *Or.* 8 and 18. It would be convenient, but perhaps not prudent, to assume that all our information concerns one man, active in the mid-fourth century.

This brings us to Diophantus the Arabian,²⁸ pupil of Julian and teacher of the coerced student Libanius. Eunapius had little regard for him and quoted from his funeral oration for Prohaeresius only in order to honour the latter. There is no knowing his exact *patria* in Arabia. Again from Petra hailed the iatrosophist Gessius, active in the fifth century. He was a pupil of the Jew Domnus, and perhaps a descendant of the Gessius who was a pupil and correspondent of Libanius and active in Egypt.²⁹ Gaudentius from Nabataea is known to us from his metrical epitaph, which describes him as a rhetor.³⁰ If the inscription indeed dates from the second century, he cannot be identical with the Gaudentius mentioned by Libanius,³¹ though the latter may have been a descendant. In this connexion one may refer to an inscription from Gerasa dated 447 mentioning a σχολαστικός and ἔκδικος Flavius Gaudentius, perhaps also a descendant.³² Stephanus of Byzantium, s.v. "Gerasa," lists three orators from the city: the rhetor Ariston, the rhetor νομικός Plato³³ and the sophist Cerycus. The appreciation of Ariston as ἀστειός is attributed to (Herennius) Philo, and it seems highly probable that

²⁸ W. Schmid, *RE* V (1903) 1051, no. 16; *PLRE* I, no. 1; Penella (above, note 17) 94 ff.

²⁹ W. Schmid, *RE* VII (1910) 1324 s.v. "Gessios"; O. Seeck, *RE* VII 1325 s.v. "Gessius," nos. 2, 3; *PLRE* II, no. 3. B. Baldwin, "Beyond the House Call: Doctors in Early Byzantine History and Politics," in J. Scarborough (ed.), *Symposium on Byzantine Medicine* (= *DOP* 38 [1984]) 16 draws attention to the rarity of iatrosophists. On Gessius mocking his baptism (parody of *Od.* 4. 509, 511) see *ibid.* 18 and K. Holm, *Theodosian Empresses* (Berkeley 1982) 175 n. 1.

³⁰ W. H. Waddington, *IGLS* (Paris 1870) 2031; W. Kaibel, *Epigr. gr. ex lapidibus collecta* (Berlin 1878) 442; *IGRR* 1217.

³¹ Cf. O. Seeck, *RE* VII (1910) 859, no. 2; *PLRE* I, no. 2.

³² C. H. Kraeling, *Gerasa, City of the Decapolis* (New Haven 1938) p. 469, no. 275.

³³ W. Kunkel, *Herkunft und soziale Stellung der römischen Juristen* (Weimar 1952) 263 ff., lists those jurists attested only in inscriptions and papyri; some listing for persons like Plato would be in order.

the entire item is derived from him;³⁴ if so the terminus ante quem for these orators would be Hadrianic—well within the period of Philostratus.

This short detour to a neighbouring province may have been worth while for its own sake. Certainly the study of the more outlying regions of Hellenism enables us the better to appreciate the confines and the depth of the expansion of the great cultural movements of the time.

IV

The fourth, fifth and sixth centuries are infinitely richer in source material about Palestinian Hellenism than the entire preceding period starting with the conquest of Alexander. One may be reminded of the School of Gaza,³⁵ or of the wealth of extant Greek texts—it might be appropriate to single out the Gazaeans Aeneas, Procopius, Choricus and John as well as Procopius of Caesarea and the mathematician Eutocius of Ascalon, whose commentaries were a major factor in the survival of the writings of Archimedes—and, of course, this is not taking into account the abundance of ecclesiastical literature ensuing from this country. As is well known, the subject of rhetoric is especially well served in the fourth century, above all with the material provided by Eunapius and Libanius. As a sample of the sophistic and rhetorical activity, I shall single out two cities, one renowned as the political and cultural capital of the province and a rather more humble one. I shall start with the latter.

As so often, we are at the mercy of the accidental survival of our evidence. It is only by chance that we possess knowledge about two rhetors of some consequence from Neapolis. The *Suda* (A no. 2185 = I 197 Adler) tells us about Andromachus son of Zonas or Sabinus from Neapolis in Syria, who taught in Nicomedia under Diocletian. He is no doubt identical with the Syrian rhetor of that name mentioned by Eunapius (*VS* 457) as a contemporary of Porphyry and, along with Paul of Lycopolis, the most distinguished rhetor of his day.³⁶ The *Suda* (Σ no. 475 = IV 365 Adler)³⁷ also mentions a sophist Siricius from Palestine, a pupil of Andromachus, who taught in Athens and composed *meletai* and *progymnasmata*. We may

³⁴ E. Honigman, *RE* III A (1929) 2382 ff., no. 12.

³⁵ See, e.g., K. B. Stark, *Gaza und die philistäische Küste* (Jena 1852) 631 ff.; K. Seitz, *Die Schule von Gaza* (diss. Heidelberg 1892); G. Downey, *Gaza in the Early Sixth Century* (Norman, OK 1963).

³⁶ L. Cohn, *RE* I (1894) 2154, no. 20; *PLRE* I, no. 2; he is missing from Gerth's useful list in *RE Suppl.* VIII (1956) 737.

³⁷ Cf. M. Fluss, *RE* III A (1927) 309; K. Gerth, *RE Suppl.* VIII (1956) 767–68, no. 249; *PLRE* I, s.v.

assume that the association took place at Neapolis,³⁸ thus presumably the venue of considerable rhetorical activity.³⁹

Finally, we shall direct our attention to a well-known centre of Greek culture, and inspect it from the point of view of rhetorical studies. Caesarea, refounded by Herod on the site of Strato's Tower, could boast of a Latin orator at the end of the first century.⁴⁰ To what use were his rhetorical accomplishments put? Was it to impress the governor, whose seat was in Caesarea, or else did the city think it due to its status of *colonia* to send Latin-speaking ambassadors to Rome?⁴¹ But obviously the bulk of our evidence for Caesarean rhetors dates from the fourth century and issues from Libanius. He envisions (*Or.* 31. 42 = III 144 Foerster) Caesarea as a rival of Antioch, which could attract from it a famous sophist. I reserve a thorough discussion of intellectual life in Caesarea for a later occasion, and shall content myself with listing the better known personalities.

Acacius of Caesarea⁴² taught in Phoenicia, at Antioch and in Palestine, presumably in Caesarea, about 361–65. In addition to his rhetorical activity he composed epic poetry and an *Okypous*—not clear whether the one preserved in the Lucianic corpus. His relations and rivalry with Libanius are well known from the latter's correspondence; his adherence to the old religion did not interfere with his career under Constantius II. Both his sons and his son-in-law studied under Libanius, and his nephew Eutropius is in my opinion certainly identical with the historian.⁴³ It seems safe to identify Acacius as the unnamed rival of Libanius.⁴⁴ The rhetor Thespesius taught at Caesarea Gregory Nazianzen and Euzoios, future bishop of the town.⁴⁵ A

³⁸ See *PLRE* I, s.v. "Siricius" and O. Schissel, "La définition de la στάσις par Σιρίκιος," *Byzantion* 3 (1926) 205–07.

³⁹ The best-known celebrities from the town are Justin Martyr in the second and the Neoplatonic Marinus in the fifth centuries. The suggestion of J. Rougé (ed.), *Expositio totius mundi et gentium*, Sources chrétiennes 124 (Paris 1966) 27 ff., to make the anonymous author of the *Descriptio totius mundi et gentium* a resident of the city is rather fanciful.

⁴⁰ *CIL* III 12082 = *ILS* 7206: M. Flavius Agrippam pontif. Iviral. Col. I Fl. Aug. Caesareae oratorem, ex dec. dec. pec. publ. I would find it difficult to believe that the Latin inscription was set up in order to honour a Greek orator. N.b. the suggestion that he may have been a renegade son of the historian Josephus: K. Zangemeister, "Inscription der Vespasianischen Colonie Caesarea in Palästina," *ZDPV* 13 (1890) 25–30. K. G. Holm et al., *King Herod's Dream: Caesarea on the Sea* (New York and London 1988) 118 think it "a good guess that the family of Marcus Flavius Agrippa numbered among the Romanized Jewish or Greek families that made the grade when Vespasian and Titus first founded the Roman colony of Caesarea"; see *ibid.* 115 for a good photo of the squeeze of the inscription.

⁴¹ On the topic of Latin in Palestine, see J. Geiger, "How Much Latin in Greek Palestine?" in *Acts of the VII Colloquium on Latin Linguistics* (forthcoming).

⁴² O. Seeck, *RE* I (1894) 1140–41, no. 3; K. Gerth, *RE Suppl.* VIII (1956) 734, no. 8; *PLRE* I, no. 6.

⁴³ I argue the point in my forthcoming paper (above, note 41) at n. 75.

⁴⁴ See the convincing arguments of P. Wolf, *Vom Schulwesen der Spätantike: Studien zu Libanius* (Baden-Baden 1952) 93–94, Beilage I: "Der Konkurrent des Libanius: Acacius oder Eubulus?"

⁴⁵ Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 113; W. Stegemann, *RE* VI A (1936) 60, no. 1; *PLRE* I, no. 2 removes him to Cappadocian Caesarea, although Jerome expressly speaks of the library of Origen and Pamphilus in the town. See also G. Downey, "Caesarea and the Christian Church," in C. T.

younger contemporary sophist of importance was Priscio.⁴⁶ Panegyrius,⁴⁷ a sophist attested in 390, is with great probability assigned to Caesarea, since he was the rival of Priscio. The important fifth-century *grammaticus* and rhetor Orion,⁴⁸ the author of an extant *Etymologicon*, was born in Thebes and taught in Alexandria and later Constantinople, where he lectured before the empress Eudocia, the wife of Theodosius II. In the event he settled in Caesarea: The controversy whether this was the Cappadocian or Palestinian city will have to be settled elsewhere.

Some visitors attest to the prominence of the city as a sophistic centre. Procopius of Gaza was tempted to settle in the city, but in the event returned to Gaza.⁴⁹ Gregory Nazianzen's studies have been referred to above. It is hoped that this far from comprehensive list⁵⁰ will give an idea of the opulence of one facet at least of the Greek culture of one city in Palestine—a city with a mixed population.⁵¹

V

The encounter of Judaism with classical civilization is one of the great topics of the ancient world still in need of a careful evaluation. Hitherto all too often the question has been asked from the point of view of Judaism: What are the classical influences, patent or hidden, that can be discerned in the great bodies of Jewish texts transmitted from antiquity? (In parentheses, the investigation is, of course twofold: The texts of so-called Hellenistic Judaism cease with the generation of Josephus and the destruction of the

Fritsch (ed.), *The Joint Expedition to Caesarea Maritima I: Studies in the History of Caesarea Maritima*, BASOR Suppl. 19 (1975) 32.

⁴⁶ *PLRE* I, s.v.; W. Enßlin, *RE* XXIII (1957) 2–3; K. Gerth, *RE Suppl.* VIII (1956) 765, no. 225. On the question of whether he is to be identified with the unnamed sophist who preferred Caesarea to Antioch (Lib. *Or.* 31. 42 = III 144 Foerster), see Wolf (above, note 44) 94–96, Beilage II: "Zur Datierung von or. 31," with discussion of earlier opinions.

⁴⁷ W. Enßlin, *RE* XVIII.3 (1949) 581; K. Gerth, *RE Suppl.* VIII (1956) 764, no. 201; *PLRE* I, s.v.

⁴⁸ C. Wendel, *RE* XVIII.1 (1939) 1083–87, no. 3; *PLRE* II, no. 1. See also Christ-Stählin II.2 (1924) 1081; F. Schemmel, "Die Schule von Caesarea in Palästina," *Phil. Wochschr.* (1925) 1277–80; G. Downey, "The Christian Schools of Palestine: A Chapter in Literary History," *Harv. Libr. Bull.* 12 (1958) 301–02; L. I. Levine, *Caesarea under Roman Rule* (Leiden 1975) 59.

⁴⁹ Schemmel (previous note) 1279–80; Downey (previous note) 310; Levine (previous note) 59.

⁵⁰ Mention could be made of the rhetor Euangelus, *Procop. Arc.* 30. 18–20; *PLRE* III, s.v. Heliadius (O. Seeck, *RE* VIII [1913] 208, no. 4; K. Gerth, *RE Suppl.* VIII [1956] 754, no. 119; *PLRE* I, no. 3) is attested in Palestine, but not expressly connected with Caesarea. By far the most complicated question pertaining to Caesarean rhetors is the authorship of an anonymous commentary on Hermogenes. B. Keil, "Pro Hermogene," *GGN* (1907) 176–221 postulated as author John of Caesarea, c. 450, pupil of Paul ó πάvυ (c. 420), who was head of a Hermogenean school in Caesarea; for later opinions see W. Stegemann, *RE* XVIII.4 (1949) 2374–76, no. 20; G. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (Princeton 1983) 116.

⁵¹ Note *jDemai* 2. 1 folio 22c, according to which Jews and Gentiles together could form a majority against the Samaritans in the city; on the different communities see Levine (above, note 48) 57 ff.

Temple, while the Hebrew and Aramaic texts of Rabbinic Judaism start more or less with the termination of the former, and yield far less easily the indications of Greco-Roman influence. It is with these last that we are here mainly concerned.) The efforts here have been most intense—though by necessity not entirely satisfactory—on the linguistic plane, while the traces of Greek philosophy and science have been investigated to a much lesser degree. However, even here the point of departure seems to be always the Rabbinic texts and the Greco-Roman vestige in them. A diametrically opposed procedure should be advocated. What was the Greco-Roman cultural background against which the Rabbis studied and taught? It is not fifth-century Athens, but rather first- to fourth-century C.E.⁵² Caesarea, that provides the Greco-Roman source from which they drew for their oeuvre.⁵³ It is in this light that the specific significance of some of the information presented here should be seen. The sophistic movement, and the work of the sophists, could never exist in a void. Without an audience—and, need one say, a fairly appreciative audience—their fanfares would lack the indispensable echo. Admittedly, many of the finer points may have been lost on parts of the audience—as they are on parts of most audiences; but a large portion must have, at the very least, understood fluent literary Greek. We know that often sophists declaimed in the theatres,⁵⁴ though of course we are ignorant of the composition of their public; in a mixed city like Caesarea, where apparently none of the sections of the population could command a majority (see above, note 51), inevitably Jews would provide their share of the audience.⁵⁵ This, then, is part of the backdrop one should keep in sight in any discussion of the relations between the Rabbinic and the gentile world.⁵⁶

The Hebrew University, Jerusalem

⁵² The Palestinian Talmud was redacted towards the end of the fourth century; for Midrash literature the entire period down to the Muslim conquest is relevant.

⁵³ N.b. that an important part of the Palestinian Talmud was redacted in Caesarea: see S. Lieberman, *The Talmud of Caesarea: Jerushalmi Tractate Nezikin, Tarbiz Suppl.* II.4 (1931) (in Hebrew).

⁵⁴ See, e.g., Philostr. *VS* 2. 5, pp. 571–72.

⁵⁵ In fact, we happen to possess evidence that Jews in Caesarea did visit the theatre for performances much less harmless—from the Jewish point of view—than rhetorical presentations. See *JTaanith* 1. 4 folio 64b, with S. Lieberman, *Greek in Jewish Palestine* (New York 1942) 32 f. and *Lamentations Rabba*, prol. 17, ed. Buber 7b, with L. I. Levine, *Roman Caesarea: An Archaeological-Topographical Study*, Qedem 2 (Jerusalem 1975) 24 f.; idem (above, note 48) 69.

⁵⁶ Two inevitable questions will be briefly dealt with: (1) Do we possess evidence for Jewish sophists? Most NT commentators seem to assume that the rhetor Tertullus, who represented Paul's accusers in Caesarea (Acts 24. 1 ff.), was a Jew. Sopatros of Antiochia, who defended the Jews before Trajan, may have been one; see *CPJ* II 157 line 15 and comm. ad loc. (2) What is the evidence for sophists in Talmudic sources? No sophists are mentioned by name, but the word "sophist" occurs a fair number of times in a variety of transcriptions. One instance may be singled out to demonstrate the standing of the sophists as reflected in the view of the sages. At *jShebiit* 9. 2 folio 38d, in a discussion with the people of Paneas, a "sophist" is represented as advising Diocletian; on the status of the sophists see E. L. Bowie, "The Importance of the Sophists," *YCS* 27 (1982) 29 ff.