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Harvey, Graham . *The True Israel: Uses of the Names Jew, Hebrew, and Israel in Ancient Jewish and Early Christian Literature*

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John M. G. Barclay
University of Glasgow
Glasgow, Scotland G12 8QQ

In studying ancient Jewish identity--a topic of increasing scholarly interest--some attention will naturally fall on Jewish self-designation, on the hypothesis that names can bear multiple and subtle connotations. Moreover, in noting the variety of names employed, it is natural to enquire into the pattern of their usage and to ask if each carries different freight. Given the range and complexity of ancient Jewish literature, such might be a large enough task in itself, but in this monograph (based on a Ph.D. from the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England) Graham Harvey also seeks to survey the habits of early Christian literature, where one might expect the painful process of separation from Judaism to affect the use of these appellations in significant ways. The result is a highly ambitious project, valuable in its goals, its range, and its collection of data, but analytically superficial and disappointing in its tendency to force on the evidence somewhat over-generalized conclusions.

Harvey breaks from previous scholarship in several important and laudable respects. Focusing on the three key names of the subtitle, he rightly bypasses philological debates on their origins, and shows how little their purported etymologies have to do with their actual usage (except in Philo's allegories). Eschewing hypothetical reconstructions of the development of the Hebrew Bible, he takes all its evidence together in synchronic fashion and rightly insists that what determines the meaning of a name are its present context and collocations, rather than its linguistic roots. He also shows that in later Jewish literature "Hebrew" is not necessarily, or even frequently, connected to the use of the Hebrew (or Aramaic) language, and he more or less successfully scotches a common misperception that "Israel" was a name used by insiders, while "Jew" was used by outsiders. By trawling through the evidence for the usage of each term (taken individually, with helpful summaries at every stage), Harvey presents a case that each had distinct nuances: broadly, "Jew" often had geographical associations and was open to varied evaluation, "Hebrew" had a positive sense, associated with tradition, while "Israel" is the people *coram Deo*, whether or not they listen to God's address (pp. 267-73).

Unfortunately, this project is likely to impress more for its courage in conception than for its skill in execution. Since it is structured around the three chosen names, rather than by author or literary corpus, we are taken through the use of these names one after the other and are not able to see their mutual relations within their literary and theological contexts. Harvey makes some attempt to meet this problem by anticipating later conclusions at earlier points, but the structure requires us to visit, for instance, Josephus, Philo, Paul, and Luke three times, inhibiting the necessary appreciation of context. What is more, the three main sections are not evenly matched in their coverage of sources. While the Hebrew Bible, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Josephus, Philo, the NT, and the Mishnah feature in each section, other Jewish literature is only patchily and inconsistently represented, inscriptions are noted in some contexts but not in others (they are sadly absent from the section on "Jew"), and the category "early Christian literature" is variable in its extent outside the NT. No doubt choices needed to be made, but it is a shame that they are here neither declared nor justified, and anyone using this book thinking it contains all the relevant data will be seriously misled.

Moreover, Harvey's analysis of the collected data is often less than satisfactory. The vast range of material leads at times to a catalogue-type presentation: large amounts of data, presented in atomistic fashion and given scanty comment. But even at those places where Harvey stops to assess his material more fully, he has interacted surprisingly little with standard scholarship on the sources he discusses. Time after time, a sensitive reader will find crucial topics broached but inadequately debated. How do the ethnic- geographic and religious meanings of *Iouda=ios* relate? What is implied by the verb "to judaize"? What did Paul mean by "the Israel of God" (Gal 6.16)? How does John use the term *Iouda=ios*? How does Luke view the church in relation to "the Jews" and "Israel"? One will find answers here but hardly judgments, for the latter require careful interaction with a range of fellow scholars. Innumerable errors in the Greek and poor punctuation only add to the impression that the project as a whole is somewhat half-digested.

In driving towards generalizable conclusions, the variations which Harvey himself has noted tend to get lost in the final summaries. Moreover, these seem to be based on the assumption that the names here discussed function as labels, that is, that they consistently (at least within any one corpus) carry a certain freight, which may be categorized as "positive," "negative," or "neutral." It might have been useful to draw on sociological analysis of "labeling," not least in order to consider under what conditions a name becomes a label with a stereotypical meaning. A good case could be made that "Jew" has become so in the Gospel of John, but even there, and certainly elsewhere, the usage of these terms does not easily fit the broad categorizations of Harvey's conclusions. Perhaps in most cases these terms have no evaluative weighting of their own, but carry different shades of meaning according to their context, with complex variation even within the works of one author (one thinks of Paul's varied uses of "Israel"). Taking all the literature here surveyed as "more or less polemical" (p. 271), Harvey finally slips into the

assumption that his chosen terms carry some stable polemical force. The result is a flattening of contours and inadequate attention to the subtlety of nuance in texts, which had been better studied in greater depth, even if that necessitated a less ambitious range.