Preface

The opening publication of volume three of the *Journal of Ancient Judaism* provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the establishment of the journal and its ongoing progress.

This issue of the journal includes articles on agricultural images in biblical depictions of catastrophe; transpositional hermeneutics in the Derveni papyrus, the fragments of Aristobulus of Alexandria, and *Pesher Habakkuk*; and a gender reading of the story of Judith, the wife of R. Hiyya, in two passages from the Babylonian Talmud. With these articles we continue an established pattern of including in each issue of the journal (to the greatest extent possible) examples of scholarship in biblical studies, Second Temple period, and rabbinics, as well as an appeal to comparative scholarship and, where possible, an attention to material culture. This issue also reflects our ongoing commitment to publish the sort of lengthy scholarly work (longer than a traditional journal article, but not quite a monograph) that might not find a home in other publications.

This issue also marks the first publication of a promised occasional feature: the long-form book review. As a supplement to the regular short book reviews that appear in each issue of the journal, the long-form review will address the contributions of a book that reflects a notable development in the field or a point of particular concern among contemporary scholars. We have titled this category of reviews “Critical Research in Focus.” It is fitting that our first long-form review should address the topic of classical rabbinic Judaism in a Persian setting – a topic that is at the forefront of current scholarship in Rabbinics.

Administrative changes at the journal include the implementation of an online system for article submission, accessible at http://www.v-r.de/de/Journal-of-Ancient-Judaism/z/500060/. A dedicated *Journal of Ancient Judaism* stylesheet is also in the course of development.

As we enter out third year of publication, we are especially pleased to welcome Alex Jassen as a new co-editor. We three look forward to working together on future issues of the journal.

Maxine Grossman, Alex Jassen, and Armin Lange
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