Philo’s Perception of Women

Sly, Dorothy

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APPENDIX A

DO THE SPECIAL LAWS REFLECT ACTUAL LEGAL PRACTICE?

The hypothesis Goodenough attempts to prove in his book, *The Jurisprudence of the Jewish Courts in Egypt*, is that "the laws as he [Philo] expounds them are the laws he daily administered in his hated duties." Continual to argue from the point of view that Philo is describing legal administration as it actually occurred, Goodenough concludes from Philo’s frequent calls for the death penalty either that Roman authorities acquiesced in Jewish decisions calling for capital punishment, or that they "winked at Jews’ lynching of Jews."2

Colson, Baron, Heinemann and Tcherikover are among those who disagree with Goodenough, and they do so mainly on the grounds that Goodenough misunderstands Philo’s purpose: "... he was not a jurist in the same sense that he was a philosopher."3 "His interests were so overwhelmingly philosophic and ethical that even in a treatise dealing with 'special laws' he lacked legal clarity and precision."4 "It would be safe to assume that a scrupulous examination of *De specialibus legibus*, ... would leave little evidence to

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1 P.10.

2 Ibid., p. 25 et al.


4 Baron, *History*, p.386, n.45.
suggest that Philo's laws were drawn up according to the laws and regulations of the Jewish tribunals of Alexandria."\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{5} Tcherikover, \textit{Corpus}, p.32, n.84.