

SAGES, STORIES, AUTHORS AND EDITORS IN RABBINIC BABYLONIA. By Richard Kalmin. Brown Judaic Studies, 300. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1994. Pp. xvi + 340. \$59.95.

A collection of five articles that have appeared in assorted journals since 1988 with four new chapters on related themes. The unifying argument that runs through all these studies is that the Babylonia Talmud (BT) displays unmistakable signs of having been assembled from diverse sources. While this observation might appear obvious to many students of rabbinic literature, it has been vocally challenged of late, and set against a perception of BT as a pseudepigraphic work whose authors invented or substantially rewrote traditions ascribed to earlier sages. By analyzing a heterogeneous sampling of source-types, Kalmin demonstrates how BT preserves certain inconsistencies of treatment and attitude (towards issues, individuals and generations) that attest to the diverse origins of its components. This valuable work combines impressive erudition in rabbinic studies with an aptitude for posing productive methodological questions.

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