Jews appear in Christian polemic as rhetorical constructions, dangerous figures that threaten the advances of the gospel, a phenomenon that has been relatively well studied. Less explored is their role in “Hellene” polemic. In *The Specter of the Jews*, Ari Finkelstein attempts to correct this by examining the appearance of Jews in Julian’s sacrificial reforms. Finkelstein argues that Jews are not simply counter-examples to Christian claims but central to Julian’s Hellenizing program. While Finkelstein is thorough in his examination of Julian’s writings, he focuses on the writings from early 363, namely, *Against the Galileans*, the *Letter to Theodorus*, the *Fragment of a Letter to a Priest*, and the *Letter to the Community of the Jews*. The transmission of each of these sources presents interpretive difficulties, which the author addresses. Presenting the greatest difficulty is the *Letter to the Community of the Jews*, whose attribution to Julian has been challenged. Finkelstein devotes an appendix to this issue, where he asserts that the core of the letter reflects the use of Jews elsewhere in Julian’s writings and thus likely comes from Julian himself.

Chapter 1 addresses the contours of Julian’s Hellenizing program. The emperor positions himself as the only person with access to the divine knowledge necessary to bring salvation to the Roman oikoumenē, which depends on the observance of theurgic sacrifices performed by each ethos according to their own customs. To persuade his audience, Julian redraws the empire’s ethnic map, reducing it to three ethnē: Hellenes, Jews, and Christians—and in reality, only two, as he considers Christians a false ethos. Here, Finkelstein is careful to recognize that ethnic groups are imagined communities formed through discourse. Chapter 2 explores Julian’s interaction with the social milieu of fourth-century Antioch, focusing on the fluidity of the borders between “Jewish” and “Christian.” Chapter 3 turns to Julian’s ethnic construction of Jews, beginning with a discussion on the complicated textual history of Julian’s *On the Galileans*. A reconstruction of the text shows that Julian’s primary concern in *Galileans* is “defining Hellenic practice” (48). To do this, Julian engages earlier Neoplatonic and Christian discourse about Jews to assert their Chaldean ancestry and preservation of Platonic wisdom. Contemporary Jews may be mistaken in understanding their god, but their access to theurgic principles, preserved in “the hidden meanings” of scripture (57), marks them as a model for restoring the Hellenic ethos.
The subsequent three chapters explore the components of this program: sacrifice (chapter 4), priesthood (chapter 5), and ethnic god (chapter 6). Julian develops Porphyry’s and Iamblichus’s view that sacrifice, accompanied by theurgic prayer, is a healing and expiatory act, not only for individuals but for the entire oikoumenē. To ensure the renewed sacrificial system’s efficacy, Julian engages in a “major marketing initiative” (89) to instruct his priests regarding proper behavior. In both cases, Jews provide instruction in their continued performance of theurgic sacrifices (albeit in private) and the types of bodily disciplines proper to the philosopher-priest. Not only does Jewish preservation of ancestral custom negate Christian claims about the defunct state of Jewish cult, but it demonstrates that the renewal of the Hellenic sacrificial system is possible. The final component of Julian’s program involves establishing the Judaean god’s position within the divine cosmos. Julian variably characterizes this god as an ethnarchic deity under the Demiurge (Galileans) and as the Demiurge and Most High God (The Letter the Community of the Jews). This formulation allows flexibility for eliciting Jewish support for his program. Chapter 6 is perhaps the central chapter of the book, as Finkelstein makes clear that Julian’s attempt to rebuild Jerusalem’s temple was not simply a tactic to displace Christians. Rather, it was crucial for transforming “Jews” into “Judaens,” a fully functioning ethnicity with traditions, a god, and a sacrificial cult.

Chapter 7 examines Julian’s reordering of Antioch’s physical space into a “hyperpurified landscape” (116) parallel to Jerusalem. Finkelstein argues that Julian’s targets here are Christians interested in following Jewish practices, a group to whom Julian appeals by subverting Eusebian claims and by exploiting the cult of the Maccabean Martyrs to redefine martyrdom as the protection of ancestral laws. Finkelstein concludes his study by considering the lasting impact of Julian’s rhetoric. He focuses particularly on John Chrysostom’s anti-Jewish vitriol, which he sees as a byproduct of his efforts to undermine the continuing influence of Julian’s ethnologic discourse. In this regard, Julian may have been inadvertently responsible for the resurgence of anti-Jewish rhetoric during the later fourth century.

While offering solid contributions, Finkelstein’s work presents a number of issues. Most significant is his use of the unwieldy phrase “Jews qua Judaens” (for example, 2, 10, 57) to communicate Julian’s rhetorical use of Jews. What Finkelstein indicates with this phrase is Julian’s use of “real” persons to construct an ethnic category. The clearest exposition of this phrase’s intent appears in the preface (x), but the distinctions between the categories “Jew” and “Judaean” are never fully articulated. It eventually becomes clear that the former is primarily a religious category (despite expressed hesitation about this in the preface), compared to the latter’s function as an ethnic category. More careful elaboration of these distinctions would be beneficial.
Finally, Finkelstein makes assertions about Antiochene practices, which are perhaps more tenuous than he admits. For example, he relies on the *Didascalia Apostolorum* and the *Apostolic Constitutions* for evidence of Antiochene Christians interested in Jewish laws. I am hesitant in assigning these texts to Antioch specifically, even if they speak to the concerns of individuals in the city. Finkelstein also makes conjectures about Jewish practice (particularly private sacrifice); unfortunately, the evidence supporting these conjectures seems rather weak.

Quibbles aside, Finkelstein’s study offers valuable contributions, not only for approaching Julian’s activities but also for understanding rhetorical presentations of Jews. Finkelstein’s focus on the local context of Julian’s constructions helps us to think about the way rhetoric transforms real people into polemical tools, as well as the lasting impact of such rhetoric locally and regionally. Ultimately, Jews remain spectral images, but Finkelstein moves the discussion of rhetoric about Jews from being a tool internal to Christian polemic to one that was more multilayered and versatile.

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*Chromatius of Aquileia and the Making of a Christian City*. By
$155.00 cloth.

*Chromatius of Aquileia and the Making of a Christian City* offers the English-speaking world an introduction to two underappreciated areas of study: Aquileia, the third largest city in Italy in late antiquity, and its bishop Chromatius, whose life and works have only reemerged in the 1960s with the happy discovery of sermons and tractates that could be firmly attributed to him. Previous scholarship on the city and its bishop has largely focused on Chromatius’s efforts at Christianizing Aquileia and the surrounding areas. McEachnie’s book builds on these earlier studies but focuses on how Chromatius “conveyed to a broad audience his attempt to shape Christian and Roman identity in Aquileia” (10). McEachnie relies mostly on Chromatius’s *Sermons* because, as he rightly observes, these were delivered on regular occasions and in a style that would be suitable for a general audience. Chromatius’s success, judged in part by the expanding number of churches in the city, and his particular interpretation of Christianity for his