

Flavius Josephus

Interpretation and History

Edited by

JACK PASTOR, PNINA STERN

AND MENAHEM MOR

BRILL

Flavius Josephus

Supplements
to the
Journal for the Study
of Judaism

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ABBREVIATIONS

We have adopted the abbreviation of the *SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies*, Ed. Patrick H. Alexander et al., Peabody 1999. Additional abbreviations are as follows:

- IGRR Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanas pertinentes, I. Edited by
 R. Cagnat et al.
SCI Scripta Classica Israelica

INTRODUCTION

Regarding Josephus Flavius one might paraphrase Churchill and say: "Never in the history of history has so much been written by so many about so few". As cynical as that statement might appear at first, it has more than just a kernel of truth. Josephus supports an entire world of research which encompasses Biblical studies, Jewish history, Hellenistic and Roman history, New Testament studies, Jewish Thought and Philosophy, Land of Israel studies, Classical languages, and of course the study of Josephus himself as both historian and public man. In this volume alone of twenty four articles we have found the following topics: Jewish ritual, art, bible, political history, autobiography, textual studies, economic history, Jewish sects, magic and medicine, archaeology, and the history of the Jewish Diaspora. Hopefully the volume we present before you is another, worthwhile, contribution to the world of study that Josephus provides.

This volume was born of an international conference entitled "Making History: Josephus and Historical Method" held at the University of Haifa from 2–6 July, 2006. The conference brought together scholars from eleven countries, many languages, disciplines, and affiliations. In all, twenty eight lectures were presented of which twenty four are included in this volume.

The conference included guided visits to the archaeological excavations of Sepphoris and Yodefat led by archaeologists actually excavating these sites which are so important to the writings of Josephus. The conference organizers are grateful to Zeev Weiss and Mordechai Aviam for guiding us through the antiquities of Sepphoris and the remains of the battle of Yodefat. The conference also included a guided tour of the valuable and interesting collection of the Hecht Museum at the University of Haifa. We also wish to extend our thanks to the museum curator Ofra Rimon for her hospitality and generosity in sharing her knowledge of the museum's rich assortment of artifacts and displays.

We begin this collection of articles with Kenneth Atkinson who presents a new analysis of how Josephus used his historical sources to create his version of Hasmonean history from the time of John Hyrcanus I to Aristobulus II. Atkinson examines the history in Josephus comparing

it to papyri, inscriptions, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and other literature to reconstruct the chronology of the latter Hasmonean period.

Mordechai Aviam, the excavator of Yodefat, uses the archaeological discoveries found at that unfortunate city and material found in other Galilean sites to reach a new appraisal of the socio-economic structure of the Galilee up to the time of the First Jewish Revolt. His careful reading of Josephus in light of the archaeology contradicts the common idea of a society schematically divided between rich urban dwellers and poor rural villagers.

Analyzing Josephus' systematic presentation of the temple sacrifices Christophe Batsch finds indications of how the "sacrificial systems" were able to evolve into a "non-sacrificial system" after the destruction of the temple, thereby enabling Judaism to survive without them.

Miriam Ben Zeev reexamines the controversy regarding Josephus' account of the burning of the Jerusalem temple. Rather than simply restating and supporting either Josephus' version or the contradictory account of Sulpicius Severus, Ben Zeev scrutinizes the concerns underlying Josephus' version.

Continuing with the question of Josephus' concerns after the war, John Curran places him within the context of the Jews in Rome, and their relationship with the Roman society and government there.

Niclas Förster takes a look at the Patristic sources and discovers that they have as yet not been fully employed as a basis of comparison to the writings of Josephus on the Fourth Philosophy and the Zealots.

The Exodus traditions as presented by Josephus in the *Jewish Antiquities* are examined by Giovanni Frulla. He finds tracks of the religious expectations of the Hellenistic and pre-Christian Judaism. Moreover his examination reveals aspects of the oral traditions current in first century CE Judaism.

Dov Gera discusses the unifying chronology of the *Antiquities*, pointing out that Josephus did not divide the book into biblical and post-biblical halves, but rather modern scholars have done so. He suggests that a detailed inspection of the chronological system used by Josephus might explain some of the oddities in the narrative.

The striking parallels between the careers, situations, and writing of Josephus and Polybius are considered by Erich Gruen. He brings attention to a little known aspect of their writings: a subversive sub-stratum that criticizes the discreditable actions and behavior of the Roman Empire. This censure of Rome, suggests Gruen, may increase our understanding of both these historians and their anticipated audience.

Discussing Josephus' claim that in his time there were those who dismissed the antiquity of the Jewish nation Gunnar Haaland concludes that this claim was not a literary convention used to justify the writing of *Contra Apionem*. He suggests that these claims were a reflection of a historical reality and were a causal factor for the composition of this work.

Gohei Hata confronts current and past suggestions for the location of the temple of Onias in Egypt that Josephus described. He suggests a possible answer based on the archaeological work recently done in that country and comes to the conclusion that Tell el Yehudiyeh, the present favorite cannot be right. He suggests that the place named Bubastis (the present Tell Basta) is the site of Onias IV's temple.

Tessel Jonquière revisits the cave in which Josephus hid after the fall of Yodefath. She points out that the scene as related by Josephus is unique to *War* in that it contains the longest prayer quoted in that work and the only time he explicitly claims to be a prophet. Jonquière suggests that a reexamination of this story might shed light on Josephus' way of writing.

The contribution of Aryeh Kasher highlights the crucial importance of the Parthian invasion of the eastern Roman Empire as the basis for Herod's rise to royalty. Kasher explains that the confluence of the invasion, the Parthian support for Herod's rivals, and the political situation in Rome made the crowning of Herod almost inevitable.

Josephus' wide-range of interests brings us to Samuel S. Kottek, a physician as well as an historian, who relates the importance and diversity of magic cures and poisons in Josephus' writings and in his contemporaneous society. Kottek also discusses the influence of these practices and beliefs on medieval magic and medicine.

Etienne Nodet considers that Josephus' sloppiness as well as his biases are not the only explanation for his strange statements or inconsistencies. Nodet suggests that these can be explained by his attempt to preserve all the data that was available to him. His paper presents a sample of such cases, which may provide a glimpse into Josephus' biblical sources or allow a reassessment of the historical details in his works.

Post-modern history can be applied to Josephus' writings as demonstrated by Eyal Regev. He uses Josephus' attacks on the Zealot party as an instrument to reconstruct the Zealot arguments against the so-called moderates. In so doing, Regev provides a case-study of the applicability of post-modern theory to historical research on Josephus and his writings.

An understanding of the archaeology of the ancient synagogue through the use of Josephus' works is the contribution of Samuel Rocca. He expands on the role of the synagogue not only as a place of prayer, but as a multipurpose public building used for assemblies and courts of justice. He compares the synagogue and its uses to the situation of similar buildings in non-Jewish localities.

Gottfried Schimanowski discusses the importance of the temple in Jerusalem as a symbol, and as collection of symbolic artifacts and how these in turn correspond to the philosophies of the Gentiles.

Book 7 of Josephus' *War* is the subject of Daniel R. Schwartz's contribution to this volume. He concludes that it was finished before the reign of Domitian, however it was reworked as a result of the transformation of Josephus from a Jew with Judean values into a Diasporan Jew.

Yuval Shahar rescues Josephus' topographical descriptions from the criticisms leveled at them by historians and archaeologists. He demonstrates that in fact Josephus' descriptions are accurate, and explains the ostensible differences between the description and the physical reality. Shahar's conclusions can be useful in assessing the physical descriptions for other locations such as Yodfat, Tarichaeae, Gamla, and Jerusalem.

The real reasons for the composition of the *Life* by Josephus are taken to task by Pnina Stern. She finds that only chapter 65 in *Life* is a rebuttal of the attacks by Justus of Tiberius, but that the rest of the composition was written for reasons having nothing to do with Justus.

Michael Tuval points out that in Rome after the destruction Josephus attached great importance to his status as a priest although he was far from Jerusalem and the temple no longer existed. He suggests that the priestly status was significant to him because of its high status in the eyes of Diaspora Jews and pagans.

Starting with the New Testament narrative of the murder of the innocents Jan Willem van Henten compares the divergent descriptions of Herod as a tyrant found in Josephus' *War* and *Antiquities*. He assesses the accuracy of these descriptions and their usefulness as *topoi* about tyrants in general.

József Zsengellér examines Josephus' interpretation and version of the fall of the Kingdom of Israel and the origin of the Samaritans. Josephus was the first who interpreted the passage of 2 Kings 17 which relates these events. Josephus connected the Samaritan problem of his

own time to the explanation of this story on the exile and repopulation of Samaria/Northern Israel. Zsengellér attempts to determine what factors lead to Josephus' conception of this event.

In closing we gratefully acknowledge the assistance and hard work provided by Tami Laviel and Pninit Tal of the University of Haifa. We also wish to acknowledge the contribution of the University of Haifa, Faculty of Humanities and the Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Center for the Study of Eretz-Israel for their support of the conference. We also wish to express our thanks to Tim Langille for his suggestions. Finally, we wish to express our gratitude to Oranim, the Academic College of Education for its support in bringing this volume to publication.

The Editors

THE HISTORICAL CHRONOLOGY OF THE HASMONEAN PERIOD IN THE WAR AND *ANTIQUITIES* OF FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS: SEPARATING FACT FROM FICTION

Kenneth Atkinson

I. *Introduction*

The writings of Flavius Josephus are among the most important texts for students of the Hasmonean period. Although Flavius Josephus wrote his books nearly a century after the end of Hasmonean rule, he had access to many lost historical works that documented this time. Unfortunately, a comparison of events, battle narratives, and geographical locations in Josephus' books and other works, such as 1–2 Maccabees, that also recount the Hasmonean period reveal many differences. It is difficult to determine which, if any, of these or other texts have preserved a reliable historical chronology for the major events of the Hasmonean era. This article addresses this issue by exploring Josephus' alteration of history to reshape his presentations of the Hasmonean rulers from John Hyrcanus I to Aristobulus II. In the process, it will offer a new chronology for some events of this time that differs substantially from the sequence presented in Josephus' works.

This study focuses on how Josephus has creatively shaped his depictions of the Hasmonean rulers from John Hyrcanus I to Aristobulus II. Because most of Josephus' sources are no longer extant, I will not engage the large body of scholarship on the nature or identity of these lost works. Rather, I will highlight some neglected texts and archaeological evidence that help us to understand how Josephus has crafted his accounts of the Hasmonean period. For each Hasmonean ruler, I will begin with a section simply titled *fiction*, which merely summarizes Josephus' accounts. This is followed by a *fact* section that will attempt to offer a historically accurate account of what actually occurred. The conclusion offers a few observations regarding the importance of Josephus' social location in Rome for understanding why he chose to revise his portrayals of the Hasmonean rulers to produce books that are, to a great extent, works of historical fiction.

II. *John Hyrcanus*

1. *Fiction*

John Hyrcanus is clearly the hero of the Hasmonean period in Josephus' books.¹ According to the *Antiquities*, Hyrcanus was a pious "youth" (*Ant.* 13.228) when he became high priest after the assassination of his father Simon by Ptolemy. He delayed his attack upon Ptolemy's stronghold in order to offer sacrifices in the temple as high priest. Hyrcanus was forced to abandon his siege due to the arrival of the Sabbatical year. According to Josephus, he had no choice in the matter since Jews were not permitted to fight at this time.

Upon returning to Jerusalem, Hyrcanus was immediately attacked by Antiochus VII Sidetes. In *War's* brief account, Hyrcanus had no option but to plunder David's tomb to pay off Antiochus. He then hired a mercenary force to protect Judea. However, in the *Antiquities* Hyrcanus mounted a spirited defense. During Antiochus' siege of Jerusalem, Hyrcanus expelled the non-combatants from the city to conserve his diminishing supplies. Although Antiochus did not help these innocent civilians, it is Hyrcanus who comes across as the villain of Josephus' narrative because he too allowed them to starve. Once again, the arrival of a religious holiday—the Feast of Tabernacles—ended Hyrcanus' plight. Antiochus agreed to respect this festival and provide the necessary sacrifices as well as make peace with Hyrcanus. Because of his piety, Antiochus purportedly earned the sobriquet "Eusebes" (*Ant.* 13.244).

Josephus' *War* and *Antiquities* disagree as to what happened next. In the *War* (1.62), Hyrcanus invaded Syria while Antiochus fought the Parthians. Hyrcanus managed to annex several cities and destroyed Samaria.² However, in the *Antiquities*, Hyrcanus was obligated to render military assistance to the Seleucids and accompany Antiochus on his Parthian campaign (*Ant.* 13.249–53). According to Josephus, Hyrcanus was saved for the third time by the arrival of a religious holiday. After defeating the Parthians in battle, Antiochus had to leave Hyrcanus and his troops behind so that they could celebrate Pentecost

¹ 1 Macc. 16:18–25; *Ant.* 13.230–300; *War* 1.54–69.

² Josephus lists the following cities: Madaba, Samaga/Samoga, Shechem, Mt. Gerizim where the Cutheans lived, and the Idumean cities of Adora and Marisa (*War* 1.63; *Ant.* 13.255–257).

and the Sabbath: times during which Jews were supposedly not permitted to fight. According to the *Antiquities*, Antiochus was killed in a subsequent engagement with the Parthians and much of his army was destroyed. Hyrcanus then took advantage of Antiochus' death and invaded Syria.

The *Antiquities* places Hyrcanus' Syrian invasion following Antiochus' death (*Ant.* 13.254). This took place while Hyrcanus was taking part in his Parthian campaign, which is omitted in the *War* (1.1.62). It continues with his destruction of the schismatic Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim and his renewal of his family's treaties with Rome (*Ant.* 13.259–66). The Seleucids were so weak at this time that Hyrcanus declared his independence (*Ant.* 268–84).³ His sons Judah Aristobulus and Antigonus then besieged Samaria. God informed Hyrcanus of their victory while he burned incense in the temple (*Ant.* 13.275–83). This is followed by a description of the favorable position of the Jews in Egypt under Cleopatra III (*Ant.* 13.285–87). Next, the Pharisees, acting out of envy, challenged Hyrcanus' legitimacy to hold the high priesthood. Consequently, Hyrcanus had no choice but to join the Sadducees since the Pharisees now clearly represented the masses and the potential for mob rule (*Ant.* 13.288–98. Cf. *War* 1.67). Josephus concluded both works with a eulogy, which stated that God had bestowed only upon Hyrcanus the three highest privileges: secular rule, the high priesthood, and the gift of prophecy (*Ant.* 13.299–319; *War* 1.68–9). In his *War* Josephus commented that Hyrcanus had even predicted the downfall of Judah Aristobulus and Antigonus, as well as the rise of Alexander Jannaeus (*War* 1.69; Cf. *Ant.* 13.322–23).

2. *Fact*

Josephus' account of Antiochus' one-year siege of Jerusalem and its abrupt end to celebrate a religious festival sounds rather implausible. However, there may be some truth to this seemingly improbable story. Josephus and Porphyry offer different dates for this siege, a differentiation which may be the result of later scribal errors. However, it cannot

³ In *War* 1.65 Josephus mistakenly refers to Antiochus VIII Grypus by the surname Aspendus. He corrects this error in *Ant.* 13.276. For this issue, see further Sievers 2005, 35. For Hyrcanus' coinage as a sign of his independence, see further Schürer 1973, 1: 210–11; Rooke 2000, 305; VanderKam 2004, 307–8. For the problems in Seleucia at this time, see further Bevan 1902, 247–68; Schürer, 1973, 1: 207–9.

be ruled out that the conflicting dates they offer for this siege reflect different calendars (Macedonian verses Attic) used in the sources they consulted. The siege clearly lasted over a year since Josephus mentioned that it began during the setting of the Pleiades, which occurs in November, and was still in progress when the Feast of Tabernacles arrived in October.⁴ The siege most likely took place in the first year of Hyrcanus' reign (135/4 BCE). After besieging Jerusalem for over a year, Antiochus abruptly abandoned the siege and allowed Hyrcanus to celebrate Tabernacles.

Tessa Rajak has suggested that Josephus' senatorial decrees, which mention an unspecified "Antiochus," date to this time.⁵ If so, they offer a plausible explanation for Antiochus' perplexing behavior. The Romans likely intervened diplomatically on Hyrcanus' behalf in order to check Antiochus' territorial ambitions. Although the Romans likely saved Hyrcanus, his future was uncertain. Therefore, he became a reluctant Seleucid ally. However, Hyrcanus used a clever stratagem to defeat Antiochus when he claimed that Jews could not fight during religious festivals.⁶ Rather than piety, it was Hyrcanus' astute diplo-

⁴ Arrival of Tabernacles (*Ant.* 13.241); Date of the Pleiades (Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 2.47.125; *Ant.* 13.237). It is impossible to reconcile the regnal years with the references of the Olympiad given by Josephus (*Ant.* 13.236). For detailed discussions of this issue, and the historical sources, see further, Sievers 1990, 136; Schürer 1973, 1:202–03 n. 5; VanderKam 2004, 288.

⁵ Rajak 1981, 65–81. Josephus, *Ant.* 13.260–64; 14.249–50. For additional evidence that supports this thesis, see Kashner 1990, 116–19; Schürer 1973, 1:204–6; Sievers 1990, 138–40. For the problems in reconciling Josephus' different accounts of the Hasmonean missions to Rome with Roman records, see further the sources cited in Gruen 1984, 748–51.

⁶ Several authors have noted that no such prohibition exists in the Bible or rabbinic literature. Sievers 1990, 135–6; VanderKam 2004, 288; Werner 1877, 25. Josephus and other writers mention a number of incidents when Gentiles used the Jewish restriction against fighting on the Sabbath to their military advantage. See, for example, *Ant.* 12.4–6; 13.14, 252, 337; 18.314–19, 322–24, 354; 1 Macc. 2:29–37, 41; 2 Macc. 5:24–26, 6:11; Jub. 50:12. Cf. Frontinus, *Strategemata*, 2.1.17. For this issue, see further the evidence cited in Johns, 1963: 482–86; Weiss 1998: 363–90. By the time of the Maccabean period, Jews regularly fought on the Sabbath. Mattathias' decree permitting Sabbath fighting is recorded in 1 Macc. 2:41. Moreover, there is some evidence that the Pharisees, as a result of the Maccabean crisis, came to accept fighting on the Sabbath whereas the Sadducees did not. See further, Regev 1997, 276–89. Given this evidence, Hyrcanus' reluctance to fight on the Sabbath may—in addition to serving as a ruse to avoid fighting and undermine Antiochus—have been based on Sadducean *halakah*. For evidence that Sadducean *halakah* was more stringent than Pharisaic interpretation of the Law, see Sussmann 1994, 179–200.

macy and cleverness—as well as good luck, or perhaps we should say *fortuna*—that saved Judea.

The *Antiquities* and *War* differ as to when Hyrcanus began his wars of expansion. In the *War* they occurred while Antiochus fought the Parthians (*War* 1.62–3) whereas in the *Antiquities* they began after the death of Antiochus (*Ant.* 13.273). The archaeological evidence suggests another scenario. There is a gap in the numismatic and occupational records for a variety of cities beginning from 112/111 BCE onward. These include such strategic sites as Marisa, Beer Sheba, Mount Gerizim, Schechem, as well as Samaria. The destruction layers, and occupational gaps, from these and other cities appear to correlate with Josephus' lists of Hyrcanus' conquests.⁷ This evidence indicates that Hyrcanus had actually postponed his wars of expansion until after the Seleucid civil wars, a period of approximately twenty-three years after he had taken the throne. Rather than the formidable warrior of Josephus' *Antiquities* who openly defied and challenged the might of the Seleucid Empire, Hyrcanus waited until the Seleucid threat had vanished before he began his wars of conquest.

III. Judah Aristobulus

1. Fiction

Josephus' account of Judah Aristobulus is relatively short and contains little historical information.⁸ Consequently, I will make only a few brief comments on his reign. Upon succeeding his father, Judah proclaimed himself king and high priest, imprisoned his brothers—with the exception of Antigonus—and killed his mother. His reign quickly disintegrated due to rumors spread by “unscrupulous men” who plotted against him and Antigonus (*Ant.* 13.305; *War* 1.74). In his *Antiquities*, Josephus partially revised his earlier account to heighten the tragedy of Judah's brief reign. In this book, Judah was tricked by a group of conspirators, including his wife, into killing Antigonus. In

⁷ Barag 1992–1993: 1–12. See further, Hengel 1974, 1: 62, 2: 44–5 n. 32; Sievers 1990, 141–44; Schwartz 2001, 36–8.

⁸ *War* 1.70–84; *Ant.* 13.301–19.

both books, Josephus wrote that Judah's physical and mental health quickly decayed before his death.

2. *Fact*

The only historical information pertaining to Judah's reign is a small tribute in the *Antiquities*, citing the testimony of Strabo (via Timagenes), that Judah had campaigned against the Ituraeans (*Ant.* 13.318–19) and had forced them to be circumcised and live in accordance with Jewish law. However, Josephus also mentioned an unspecified victorious campaign that had been undertaken by Antigonus (*Ant.* 13.304, *War* 1.73). Given Judah's illness, which may have lasted for much of his reign, it is very likely that Antigonus actually commanded the Iturean campaign.⁹ If so, then there was likely some truth to the rumors that Antigonus planned to take power since he controlled the army during his brother's prolonged illness. By highlighting Judah Aristobulus' murder of his brother Antigonus, Josephus' account also enhances John Hyrcanus' reputation. God, after all, had warned Hyrcanus that Jannaeus, and not Judah or Antigonus, would be his true heir (*Ant.* 13.322). Given this prophecy, Judah's reign could have only ended in tragedy regardless of his character.

IV. *Alexander Jannaeus*

1. *Fiction*

Josephus presents a rather schematic portrayal of Alexander Jannaeus' deeds that is highly misleading.¹⁰ He grouped Jannaeus' foreign campaigns into six major sections. Josephus interspersed between these wars accounts of two invasions—one by the Egyptian Lathyrus the other by the Seleucid Dionysius—and two reports of civil wars between the Ptolemies and the Seleucids. In addition, Jannaeus faced two inter-

⁹ For the difficulties in unraveling Josephus' chronology, as well as his use of sources for Judah's reign, see further Kasher 1990, 132–3; VanderKam 2004, 315. It is uncertain whether Josephus refers to two campaigns or a single expedition against the Itureans that was led by Antigonus. The resolution of this issue does not affect the substance of Josephus' narrative, which clearly states that Antigonus was in command of the army during his brother's illness.

¹⁰ Varneda 1986, 135–39. *War* 1.85–106; *Ant.* 13.320–406.

nal revolts.¹¹ At the conclusion of all these blocks of material, Jannaeus somehow emerged the better since he had survived and went on to fight additional wars of expansion and annexed new territories to his realm. Despite his numerous setbacks, Josephus consistently portrayed Jannaeus as a formidable warrior, who completed his father's wars of conquest.

Josephus presented Jannaeus' reign as a tragedy. Like his brother Judah Aristobulus, Jannaeus was a violent and unstable man. However, Josephus partially exonerated him for his faults. He implied that many of his cruel actions were understandable given his difficult circumstances.¹² By explaining away Jannaeus' shortcomings, and highlighting his military conquests, Josephus' account also praises Hyrcanus. According to Josephus, God had told Hyrcanus of his unborn son Jannaeus' successes (*Ant.* 13.322). By completing Hyrcanus' expansion of Judea, Jannaeus' military successes confirmed both his father's greatness and prophetic gifts

2. *Fact*

Archaeological evidence and textual sources from Jannaeus' reign call into question Josephus' narrative. This is especially true for the "War of Scepters" (103–101 BCE)—a conflict for which Josephus supplied no absolute dates.¹³ According to his narrative, Jannaeus' attack upon Ptolemais essentially precipitated this international conflict. The inhabitants of this city called upon Ptolemy Lathyrus (Ptolemy IX Soter II) in Cyprus for help. After losing in battle against Lathyrus, Jannaeus sued for peace. At the same time, he secretly contacted Lathyrus' mother Cleopatra III and asked that she provide him with military assistance. Once Lathyrus learned of Jannaeus' treachery, he attacked Judea. Cleopatra then sent her other son Ptolemy Alexander (Ptolemy X

¹¹ Both books follow this basic sequence, although only the *Antiquities* contains detailed accounts of the two invasions. *Antiquities*: Campaign (*Ant.* 13.324–29); Invasion of Lathyrus (*Ant.* 13.330–55); Seleucid Civil Wars (*Ant.* 13.365–71); Revolt (*Ant.* 13.372–73); Campaign (*Ant.* 13.374–78); Revolt (*Ant.* 13.379–83); Seleucid Civil Wars (*Ant.* 13.384–86); Invasion of Dionysus and Aretas (*Ant.* 13.387–92); Campaign (*Ant.* 13.393–404). *War*: Invasion of Lathyrus (*War* 1.86); Campaign (*War* 1.87); Revolt (*War* 1.88); Campaign (*War* 1.89–90); Revolt (*War* 1.91–98); Campaign (*War* 1.99–106).

¹² Mason 1991, 247–8.

¹³ The name of this conflict is taken from line 12 of the Cairo INV. 9205 (Van't Dack, et al., 1989, 84–5), which reads: "when a war of scepters came to Syria."

Alexander I) with a fleet to Phoenicia while she traveled by land to Ptolemais.¹⁴ After capturing the city, her forces chased Lathyrus to Gaza where he wintered before he returned to Cyprus (*Ant.* 13.348–51).

Egyptian records suggest that Josephus has greatly simplified the events of this conflict to enhance Jananeus' role. Jannaues' attack upon Ptolemais took place at the latest in the early spring of 103 BCE. An Egyptian papyrus from Pathyris, south of Thebes, dated to June 29 of that year indicates that Cleopatra III had already mobilized troops and moved them from their usual garrisons.¹⁵ This action was undertaken in reaction to Lathyrus' intervention. Presumably, Lathyrus had arrived at Ptolemais by this date and had forced Jannaues to end his siege. According to Josephus, Jannaues had feigned overtures of peace with Lathyrus while he was engaged in secret negotiations with Cleopatra III. Upon learning of this betrayal, Lathyrus besieged Ptolemais. He then left his generals behind in charge of this campaign and defeated Jannaues' army at Asophon/Asaphon. Lathyrus then proceeded to ravage Galilee (*Ant.* 13.336–46).

Josephus' chronology is rather imprecise. He stated that Lathyrus attacked Ptolemais before he pursued Jannaues, but he does not describe the actual siege (*Ant.* 13.324–37). Fortunately, Egyptian evidence allows us to refine Josephus' chronology for this period. The autobiographical inscription of the Egyptian general Petimuthes mentioned that Cleopatra captured Ptolemais, which confirms Josephus' account that she took this city (*Ant.* 13.348–51).¹⁶ However, a letter written in Ptolemais before its capture, dated September 27, 103 BCE, mentions that Cleopatra's son Ptolemy Alexander had left Damascus—an event not recorded by Josephus—and had stationed a company of men there.¹⁷ A demotic Serapeum stele from Memphis places Ptolemy Alexander and his army at Pelusium in either Feb-

¹⁴ There is some confusion as to the numbering of the Ptolemaic rulers, especially Ptolemy VII Euergetes as Ptolemy VIII Euergetes. For this issue, see further the numbering and discussions in Hölbl 2001, 204–13; Sievers 2005, 34–5 n. 6; Whitehorne 1994, 103–48, 203–9. See also, Samuel 1962, 147–55.

¹⁵ *P. Grenf.* I 30 + *P. Amh.* II 39 (Van't Dack, et al., 1989, 39–49). All papyri and inscriptions cited in this article are from this critical edition. For the events of this Ptolemaic civil war that involved Jannaues, see further Hölbl 2001, 201–15.

¹⁶ Turin, Museo Egizio cat. 3062 + Karnak, Karakol n° 258 (Van't Dack, et al., 1989, 88–108). Josephus does not explicitly state, but strongly implies, that Lathyrus had previously captured Ptolemais (*Ant.* 336–7). See further Schürer 1979, 2:124.

¹⁷ P. dem. BM inv. 69008 + P. dem. Berl. Inv. 13381 (Van't Dack, et al., 1989, 50–61).

ruary or June of 102 BCE¹⁸ Ptolemy Alexander must have traveled to Pelusium to prevent Lathyrus, who was then wintering in nearby Gaza, from invading Egypt (*Ant.* 13.348). However, the dates of the Egyptian correspondence indicate that Ptolemaic troops were still at Ptolemais on September 25, 102 BCE, long after Lathyrus had returned to Cyprus.¹⁹

The Egyptian evidence shows that Josephus has omitted many details concerning the early events of Jannaeus' reign to enhance his military reputation and to conceal his weaknesses. Josephus merely recorded that Cleopatra sent her son Ptolemy Alexander to Phoenicia. However, the Egyptian evidence shows that she had sent him to Damascus for reasons that are not specified in the extant documentation. It is likely that Cleopatra sent Ptolemy Alexander to help Antiochus VIII Grypus take the city from Antiochus IX Cyzicenus.²⁰ Although the exact reason for Ptolemy Alexander's trip is uncertain, there is good circumstantial evidence that his mother sent him there as part of a planned annexation of Seleucia and Judea. It is clear that if Cleopatra had captured Damascus and Ptolemais, as well as southern Phoenicia, she would have controlled most of Coele-Syria. With this geographical base, she would have been in the perfect position to annex Judea and incorporate much of the Middle East into the Ptolemaic Empire. From the Egyptian evidence, we know that Ptolemy Alexander traveled from Damascus to Gaza in pursuit of Lathyrus, which means that he had transited through Jannaeus' territory. This fact unmentioned by Josephus, shows that Jannaeus was merely a minor player in the events of this time. He had no recourse but to try to pacify the Egyptians in the hope that they would not annex Judea or continue to fight

¹⁸ Serapeum Stele, Louvre, INV. 3709 (Van't Dack, et al., 1989, 83–4). The reading of the month is uncertain.

¹⁹ *P. Grenf.* I 35 (Van't Dack, et al., 1989, 75–77). Another document suggests that demobilization of Egyptian troops had not been completed by January 13, 101 BCE. See *P. Gr. Louvre* inv. 10593 (Van't Dack, et al., 1989, 77–81). Lathyrus spent the winter of 103/2 BCE in Gaza and then returned to Cyprus. Hölbl 2001, 209.

²⁰ Lathyrus had aided Cyzicenus in his battle against John Hyrcanus over Samaria. He did so despite the objections of his mother Cleopatra III (*Ant.* 13.278). Grypus was an ally of Ptolemy Alexander (Justin, 39.4.4; text in Van't Dack, et al., 1989, 15–18, 27–9). The coin evidence from Damascus shows that it constantly changed hands between Cyzicenus and Grypus. For this reason, it is difficult to determine exactly which leader controlled the city at this time. For evidence in support of the following historical reconstruction, see further Hölbl 2001, 207–9; Van't Dack, et al., 1989, 121–24; Whitehorne 1994, 138–41.

their dynastic wars on his land. It is likely that the War of Scepters would have taken place regardless of whether Jannaeus had attacked Ptolemais.

Josephus gives the Jews a major role in Cleopatra's campaign against her wayward son Lathyrus. However, the Egyptian records make it clear that Ptolemy Alexander, not the Jewish general Chelkias, commanded the Egyptian troops. Moreover, the autobiographical inscription of the Egyptian general Petimuthes states that he was with Cleopatra when she captured Ptolemais. The evidence shows that Cleopatra's expedition was a major undertaking in which her son Ptolemy Alexander and her highest-ranking Egyptian officers had participated. Jannaeus played no major role in this conflict.²¹ Cleopatra likely came not to help Judea, but to annex Coele-Syria and likely Jannaeus' kingdom as well. It is unlikely that Cleopatra's Jewish generals had anything to do with Judea's survival. Jannaeus most likely made a treaty with Cleopatra as a vassal in order to maintain his throne.

According to Josephus, after the conclusion of this conflict in 101 BCE, Jannaeus immediately campaigned in Coele-Syria and beyond the Jordan (*Ant.* 13.356). After Lathyrus departed Gaza for Cyprus, Jannaeus attacked and captured Gaza following a one-year siege (*Ant.* 13.358–64). Because Lathyrus wintered in Gaza in either 103/102 BCE and returned to Cyprus shortly thereafter, according to Josephus' chronology Jannaeus' siege took place at this time. However, Egyptian documents for the next seven months, from April 17, 102 BCE until September 25, 102 BCE, show that Cleopatra stationed forces along the Judean border.²² The presence of Ptolemaic troops in Pelusium at such a late date after the departure of Lathyrus suggests the Egyptians did not trust Jannaeus. It is unlikely that Jannaeus would have attacked Gaza when potentially hostile Egyptian forces were nearby. Based on the Egyptian evidence, it is clear that Jannaeus did not attack Gaza immediately following the conclusion of the War of Scepters.

Elsewhere in his *Antiquities*, Josephus provides another chronological reference that contradicts his placement of Jannaeus' siege of Gaza following the conclusion of the War of Scepters. In his narrative of Syrian civil wars, Josephus mentions that Jannaeus' siege of

²¹ See further, Van't Dack, et al., 1989, 124–36.

²² *P. Grenf.* Inv. 628 (Van't Dack, et al., 1989, 61–2); *P. Grenf.* I 35 (Van't Dack, et al., 1989, 75–7); *P. Grenf.* I 32 (Van't Dack, et al., 1989, 61–5).

Gaza coincided with the murder of Grypus in 96 BCE. (*Ant.* 13.365).²³ This is a more reasonable date for Jannaeus' campaign against Gaza since it is unlikely that he would have attacked the city earlier in 102 BCE when Ptolemy Alexander had troops nearby. In light of Egyptian documentation, it appears that Jannaeus, like his father Hyrcanus, was a cautious leader who waited until after the superpowers of his day had weakened themselves through civil war before he began his wars of conquest.

V. *Salome Alexandra*

1. *Fiction*

Josephus' account of Salome Alexandra is quite brief.²⁴ He devoted as much space to her nine-years in office as he did to the one-year rule of Judah Aristobulus. He recorded four major events during Salome Alexandra's reign; three military campaigns and two attempted insurrections led by her son Aristobulus II.²⁵ Only her first military expedition at Ragaba was successful. However, it was not her victory, but her husband's. She merely followed Jananeus' orders and kept his death a secret until the fortress had been taken.

According to Josephus, Judea quickly fell apart once Salome Alexandra assumed power. She immediately faced an insurrection led by her son Aristobulus II. After pacifying Aristobulus II, she sent him to Damascus to oppose the strongman Ptolemy Mennaeus. According to Josephus, this expedition failed to accomplish "anything noteworthy" (*Ant.* 13.418; cf. *War* 1.115). About the same time, Tigranes of Armenia invaded Syria and besieged Ptolemais. Salome Alexandra approached him with gifts to convince him to abandon his plan to invade Judea. Josephus implied that Judea was saved only through luck. Just after he had captured Ptolemais, Tigranes learned that the

²³ For a different reconstruction and understanding of this passage, see Kasher 1990, 145–50. See also Schürer 1979, 2:101.

²⁴ *War* 1.107–19; *Ant.* 13.407–32.

²⁵ *Antiquities*: Capture of Ragaba (*Ant.* 13.405); attempted insurrection (*Ant.* 13.406–418); campaign against Damascus (*Ant.* 13.418); campaign against Tigranes (*Ant.* 13.419–21); attempted insurrection (*Ant.* 13.422–29). *War*: Insurrection (*War* 1.110–14); campaign against Damascus (*War* 1.115); campaign against Tigranes (*War* 1.116); attempted insurrection (*War* 1.117–19).

Roman consul Lucullus had invaded his homeland. Consequently, he had to abandon his newly acquired territories and return to Armenia.²⁶ In her final days, Salome Alexandra faced a *coup* led by her son Aristobulus II. Before her death, she appointed Hyrcanus II as her successor, leaving him a kingdom in disarray.²⁷ Shortly after she died, Aristobulus removed his brother Hyrcanus from power. Hyrcanus later rekindled their civil war. As a result of this conflict, the Romans annexed Judea and ended Hasmonean rule only four years after Salome Alexandra's death.²⁸

2. *Fact*

Josephus' *Antiquities* follows the basic structure of the *War*. However, he has largely restructured and expanded the *Antiquities* to emphasize the instability of Salome Alexandra's reign. Josephus accomplishes this through the addition of several chronological phrases at key places in his narrative to imply that her political troubles and military campaigns followed one another in rapid succession.²⁹ In reality, these events were separated by lengthy periods of time. In order to understand the extent to which Josephus has tarnished Salome Alexandra's memory, we must briefly look at two incidents that took place during her husband's reign. None of these are documented in Josephus' books. Both pertain to the Nabateans.

The invasion of Antiochus XII Dionysus is the perhaps the most puzzling section of Josephus' history of Jannaeus' reign. Josephus' account is clearly selective and incomplete and does not adequately explain Jannaeus' Nabatean policy. According to his *War* Dionysus attempted to transit Judea to invade the Nabatean Arabs. Jannaeus

²⁶ Tigranes invaded Syria in 83 BCE and expelled the Seleucid kings from northern Syria and lowland Cilicia. For fourteen years (83 BCE–69 BCE) he ruled the Seleucid kingdom until he was defeated by the Roman general Lucullus for the final time in 68 BCE. For Tigranes, and the events of this time, see further Sherwin-White 1994, 262–65.

²⁷ According to Josephus, Hyrcanus II reigned for three months (*Ant.* 15.180) after his mother's death. However, it is likely that he actually governed as king for a short time before Salome Alexandra's death (*War* 1.120). For this possibility, see further VanderKam 2004, 337–39.

²⁸ For these events in the *Psalms of Solomon*, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and classical texts, see further Atkinson 2004, 113–27.

²⁹ “not long afterward” (*Ant.* 13.418); “about this time” (*Ant.* 13.419); “some time after this” (*Ant.* 13.422).

erected a fortified wall and trench to prevent him from reaching Nabatea. Dionysus easily destroyed these fortifications, preceded to Nabatea, and subsequently died in battle (*War* 1.99–102). In the *Antiquities*, Josephus situated these events against the backdrop of the Seleucid civil war between Dionysus and his brother Philip. After Dionysus had captured Damascus from Philip, he had his encounter with Jannaeus (*Ant.* 13.387–91).³⁰ In neither account does Josephus explain Dionysus' unusual circuitous route to the Judean coast rather than directly towards Nabatea. Moreover, it is unclear why Jannaeus would have prevented Dionysus from traveling to Nabatea. This is especially perplexing since an engagement between these two enemies of Jannaeus would have only weakened them and helped to secure Judea's safety. By risking a direct confrontation with Dionysus, Jannaeus put his kingdom in jeopardy.

The Byzantine chronographer George Synkellos supplements Josephus' account of this period with information that he obtained from an unspecified source. He mentioned that Jannaeus had been victorious in a war that he had launched against Dionysus.³¹ Because Dionysus died during his campaign against the Nabateans, after he had destroyed Jannaeus' wall and fortifications, the conflict documented by Synkellos must have preceded Josephus' account. In light of this earlier conflict, it is clear that the campaign of Dionysus recorded by Josephus was actually against both Nabatea and Judea. The location of Jannaeus' wall at the southern coast of Judea shows that Dionysus did not merely intend to transit Judea. Rather, he clearly meant to annex its port cities as retribution for Jannaeus' prior attack. Jannaeus' fortifications described by Josephus were designed not to keep Dionysus from reaching Nabatea, but to keep him from capturing Judea's coastal region.

After the Nabateans killed Dionysus in battle, their king Aretas III took control of Damascus around 85 BCE³² For reasons unstated by Josephus, the people of Damascus had encouraged the Nabateans to invade and remove the Iturean Ptolemy Mennaeus from power. Like Jannaeus, Ptolemy wanted to control the Mediterranean ports as well as Seleucia and Nabatea. Shortly after Aretas had captured Damascus,

³⁰ For this period and the last Seleucid rulers, see further Bevan 1902, 247–68.

³¹ Dindorf 1829, 559.

³² Shatzman 1991, 120–1; Schürer 1973, Appendix II, 578–9.

he used it as a base to invade Judea and defeated Jannaeus at Adida in 85 BCE (*Ant.* 13.392; *War* 1.103). This invasion apparently coincided with the internal Jewish revolt against Jannaeus' reign that took more than six years to suppress.³³ Josephus tells us little about the aftermath of Aretas' invasion, other than that Jannaeus made a treaty with him. Jannaeus then, according to Josephus' account, engaged in two series of wars, with a short interval between them, for the last six years of his life (ca. 82–76 BCE). Josephus precedes his account of Jannaeus' death with an extensive list of his final conquests in Transjordan and the territories that he held in Syria, Idumaea, and Phoenicia (*Ant.* 13.393–97; *War* 1.1036).

Synkellos records additional information that helps to clarify the events of Jannaeus' final years. According to Synkellos, when Jannaeus had besieged Tyre, he was attacked by a combined force led by the Nabateans and the Ituraeans.³⁴ In his *Antiquities*, Josephus briefly mentioned that Jannaeus had been forced to relinquish to Aretas territories and fortresses he had conquered in Moab and Galaaditis (*Ant.* 13.382). Although Josephus does not name these territories, if they are identical with his list of the cities Jannaeus conquered in these regions, then they were quite extensive. In light of this territorial loss, Jannaeus likely undertook his final military campaign against Ragaba, which was completed by Salome Alexandra, as revenge against the Nabateans for their previous attack upon him in Tyre and their annexation of his territory.³⁵

The Nabateans mysteriously disappear from Josephus' account during Salome Alexandra's reign. It is clear from Josephus' books that Ptolemy Mennaeus had expelled the Nabateans from Damascus when Salome Alexandra was in power. Her mysterious campaign to Damascus was likely undertaken to restore Aretas to power. The Qumran text 4QHistorical Text D (4Q332), which mentions Salome Alexandra by name, may actually refer to this incident. The first line of this text reads: "[to] give him honor among the Arab[s]."³⁶ Because this calendar lists events in chronological order, the passage involving

³³ This revolt likely began shortly after his defeat by the Nabatean ruler Obodas I and spanned the years 92–86 or 89–83 BCE. See further Kasher 1990, 159–60; Shatzman 1991, 117, 121.

³⁴ Dindorf 1829, 559.

³⁵ See further, Shatzman 1991, 89–92; Kasher 1990, 153–60.

³⁶ For support of this translation, see further Fitzmyer 2000, 283; Wise 1994, 206.

the “Arabs” took place during Salome Alexandra’s reign before Hyrcanus II rebelled against his brother, an act which is mentioned in line 6. The first line of 4QHistorical Text D (4Q332) could possibly refer to Salome Alexandra’s campaign against Ptolemy Mennaeus, who had somehow regained Damascus from Aretas (*Ant.* 13.418; *War* 1.115). Salome Alexandra had apparently made a treaty with the Nabatean Arabs and undertook this campaign to restore Aretas to the throne of Damascus, which may actually be alluded to by Josephus (*Ant.* 13.409).³⁷ 4QHistorical Text D likely reflects the events of this time, when Salome Alexandra sent Aristobulus to restore Damascus to her Nabatean ally, and may help to clarify some of the confusion in Josephus’ accounts of the period. It is clear that Josephus’ deliberate omission of important events has not only resulted in a rather bewildering historical sequence for Salome Alexandra’s reign, but actually diminishes her accomplishments.³⁸ An alliance between Salome Alexandra and the Nabateans may also explain the circumstances behind Josephus’ puzzling story of her supplication before Tigranes.

Josephus juxtaposed Aristobulus’ campaign against Ptolemy Mennaeus in Damascus with Tigranes’ invasion of Seleucia (*Ant.* 13.418–2; *War* 1. 115–16). By placing these events alongside one another without any commentary as to why Salome Alexandra sent her son to Damascus, the reader is left to conclude that Tigranes’ unexpected appearance had frustrated her expansionist agenda. She supposedly had to retreat from Damascus upon hearing of Tigranes’ arrival and then approach him as a supplicant to save her kingdom. Aristobulus’ campaign is usually dated to 72 BCE, which is the same year that Tigranes invaded Seleucia. This date is largely based on the numismatic evidence from Damascus. Aretas minted coins there between 84 BCE and 74 BCE, which demonstrates that he held the city during this time. Tigranes invaded Coele-Syria in 72/1 BCE, and took Damascus and

³⁷ Such an alliance between the Hasmoneans and the Nabateans at this time would also explain the puzzling incident that took place after Salome Alexandra’s death when Aretas fought alongside Hyrcanus II against Aristobulus II. Aretas was apparently still bound by this treaty to lend military assistance to Salome Alexandra’s designated successor, Hyrcanus II (*Ant.* 14.19; *War* 1.126). This military assistance provides additional evidence for the existence of a treaty between the Hasmoneans and the Nabateans, following the death of Alexander Jannaeus, that was not mentioned in Josephus’ books.

³⁸ For this issue, see further the discussion of Josephus’ portrayal of the Hasmoneans and Salome Alexandra in Baltrusch 2001, 163–79.

minted coins there between 72/1–70/69 BCE.³⁹ Aristobulus' campaign to Damascus certainly preceded Tigranes' advance, a time-line which suggests that the Nabateans had possibly evacuated the city several years earlier. Whether it was due to incursions from Ptolemy Menaeus or the threat of an Armenian invasion is uncertain.

Is significant is that Aristobulus' campaign to Damascus would have taken place, based on the coin evidence, in 72 BCE after Salome Alexandra had been in power for four years. Josephus implies that Tigranes' advance thwarted her effort to capture Damascus and compelled her son Aristobulus to return home; a campaign that Josephus commented accomplished nothing noteworthy (*War* 1.115; *Ant.* 13.418). However, Salome Alexandra may have known of Tigranes' invasion quite early and sent Aristobulus to Damascus. This event would have potentially threatened Tigranes as he moved towards Ptolemais. Salome Alexandra could have possibly attacked him on the coast, which would have deprived him of an escape route. If these were her intentions, then this campaign achieved its intended goal. By the time Salome approached Tigranes, he likely realized that he had overextended his reach. He was besieging Cleopatra Selene in Ptolemais and now faced a possible threat from Salome Alexandra and her Nabatean allies.⁴⁰ Moreover, Josephus even mentioned that Salome Alexandra had increased the size of her army during the previous four years, added a new contingent of mercenaries, and forced the surrounding nations to make peace and send her hostages (*Ant.* 13.409). With her vast army—according to Josephus' estimation more powerful than her husband's—Salome Alexandra likely approached Tigranes as an equal and forced him to make a treaty with her. By focusing upon her domestic troubles, Josephus' narrative greatly obscures Salome Alexandra's military and diplomatic skills and the fact that her reign was likely the most peaceful and prosperous period of Hasmonean history.⁴¹

³⁹ He likely held the city as early as 72/1 BCE. For this numismatic evidence, see further Shatzman 1991, 122–23; Schürer 1973, 1:134–5, 564–5, 578–9.

⁴⁰ Tigranes captured Damascus in 69 BCE and took Cleopatra Selene captive. She was deported to Seleucia-on-the-Tigris and later executed. See further Strabo, *Geographica* 16.749; Bevan 1902, 266; Chahin 1987, 225–41; Macurdy 1932, 170–2; Whitehorn 1994, 164–73.

⁴¹ Atkinson 2003: 37–56. For Josephus' possible reshaping of his sources to diminish Salome Alexandra's achievements, see further Ilan 2006, 56–60.

VI. *Historiography*

Josephus was a skilled historian. He clearly used sources to write engaging accounts of the events of his own day and the past. Yet, he was not a mere compiler, but an author who impressed his own personality upon his works. Through alterations, additions, deletions, and omissions, Josephus created what may be termed *crafted texts* that often tell us as much about the Hasmoneans as they do about Josephus.⁴²

I believe that Josephus crafted his accounts of the Hasmonean period in light of the First Jewish Revolt. Consequently, his books are not mere descriptive reports, but largely reinterpretations of the past in light of his social-location in Rome as a proud descendant of the Hasmoneans who—whether a willing or a reluctant accomplice is still a subject of intense debate—helped to destroy the independent state his ancestors had created.⁴³ Let me briefly summarize how Josephus' social location has influenced his accounts of the Hasmoneans I have examined in this study.

John Hyrcanus

A look at Josephus' social-location and his *Life* may offer some reasons as to why he has altered his chronology to magnify Hyrcanus' achievements. Josephus liked to point out his Hasmonean lineage and his own gifts as a warrior, leader, priest, and prophet (*War* 3.351–3; *Life*, 1–9). He even named his first-born son Hyrcanus (*Life*, 5). Both Josephus and John Hyrcanus were reluctant allies in foolish military ventures against stronger foreign adversaries. Yet, God delivered both men from the hands of their enemies. Like Hyrcanus, Josephus also achieved great success at a young age and provoked the envy of less gifted people. Both had to fend off malicious accusations and were great warriors. For both men, the Pharisees and the masses caused dissension. Hyrcanus had the foresight to see that this rabble would eventually bring down the Hasmonean dynasty.⁴⁴ Likewise, Josephus

⁴² Metaphor of *crafted text* from McLaren 1998, 45. For the importance of Josephus' social location for understanding his works, see McLaren 2004, 90–108. For survey of scholarship on Josephus and his sources, see Mason 1991, 45–53.

⁴³ For this issue and trends in Josephus research, see further the discussions and bibliography in Bilde 1998, esp. 123–206.

⁴⁴ For the influence of the Pharisees and the mobs in Josephus' writings, see further the discussions in Mason 1991, 213–45; *ibid.*, 2001, 66–67; Thoma 1994, 134–5.

predicted that religious dissension and mob rule would bring about the end of Judean independence. If the Judeans had listened to Hyrcanus, Hasmonean rule would have likely continued. Failing to learn this lesson, the Judeans once again failed to heed a prophet in their midst and listen to Josephus. In this instance, the result was catastrophic, for the Romans were forced to end Judean independence for all time. Through a creative manipulation of the facts, Josephus presented both Hyrcanus and himself as tragic figures. Both were pious priests, formidable warriors, and prophets who were misunderstood by their own people.

Judah Aristobulus

Josephus' portrayal of Judah Aristobulus serves as a warning. It shows how rumors can bring down good men. Judah was basically a good king whose reign was destroyed by his love for his brother and treachery. Such was also the true of Josephus, who—at least according to his own testimony throughout his *Life*—was also a good man who faced treachery, rumors, and circumstances beyond his control. This association may explain Josephus' rather inappropriate eulogy in his *Antiquities* on Aristobulus' greatness. Josephus apparently felt a kinship with this with tragic figure and chose to add a short tribute to him in his later book to counter his misfortunate portrayal of Judah's reign.⁴⁵ Although praising him, this tribute also serves to emphasize the tragic elements of Judah's brief year in power. God had, after all, forewarned Hyrcanus that Judah would never prove to be his equal and that Alexander Jannaeus would become his true heir.

Alexander Jannaeus

Josephus highlights Jannaeus' military conquests largely to emphasize John Hyrcanus' greatness. God had told Hyrcanus the prophet in a dream that his unborn son Jannaeus would become heir of all his possessions. By expanding Judea, Jannaeus' conquests testify to the magnitude of Hyrcanus' prophetic gifts. However, Josephus has presented

⁴⁵ Josephus partly revised his earlier account in his *Antiquities* to heighten the tragedy of the story by focusing upon how the conspirators, including his wife, had tricked him into killing Antigonus. See further, Mason 1991, 255–6. See also, Kasher 1990, 133–34.

his readers with a very select account of Jannaeus' reign that often glossed over his military failures that nearly brought about the end of Judean independence. As for Jannaeus' cruelty, Josephus commented that we should not look too harshly upon him. His actions are somewhat justifiable in light of his terrible circumstances. Jannaeus merely tried the best he could to hold his nation together through civil wars, rumors, and foreign invasions. Once again, this description aptly fits Josephus, who in equally trying circumstances did the best he could to preserve his nation.

Salome Alexandra

Salome Alexandra is the ruler Josephus despised most of all. He intended her reign to serve as a warning of the consequences that ensue when men fail to fulfill their duties and assume power. She allowed the Pharisees and the masses unprecedented control over state affairs.⁴⁶ Josephus' *Life* testifies to the danger of such alliances and the consequences of what happens when mobs rule and people are not led by the appropriate leaders.⁴⁷ By obscuring her military achievements, Josephus largely blamed her for the tragic reigns of her sons as well as the Roman conquest.

Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II

Salome Alexandra's sons Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II are also tragic figures. According to Josephus, Salome Alexandra's misguided policies doomed their reigns before they began. In his *Antiquities*, Josephus even omitted his earlier praise of Salome Alexandra to state that her policies had brought about the end of Hasmonean rule (*Ant.* 13.430–32). Josephus clearly sided with Aristobulus and the leading citizens against Salome Alexandra and her Pharisaic sponsors.⁴⁸ In Josephus' books, the disastrous civil war between Hyrcanus and Aristobulus weakened the nation and provided the Romans with an opportunity to easily

⁴⁶ For this theme, see further Mason 1991, 82–115, 246–59. For other distortions of Salome Alexandra's reign in Josephus' books in light of later rabbinic accounts, see further Ilan 2006, 35–60.

⁴⁷ For this theme, as well as Josephus' use of rhetoric to justify his own actions, see further Josephus' *Life* and the comments on these topics in Mason 2001, xiii–lii.

⁴⁸ Mason 1991, 253–56.

conquer Judea. This conflict mirrored the civil war of Josephus' own day, which likewise destroyed Judea and made it easy prey for Vespasian's legions. Josephus intended his readers to reflect upon this struggle, as well as the tumultuous events of the Hasmonean period, and conclude that only people like Josephus were qualified to lead the Jews.

VII. Conclusion

It is important to take into consideration Josephus' social location when reading his accounts of Hasmonean history. Rather than factual chronological historical narratives, Josephus' *War* and *Antiquities* are largely historically inspired works of fiction. We should exercise extreme caution in using Josephus' books to write a history of the Hasmonean period. They tell us as much about the Judea of the first century BCE. as they do about the Judea of Josephus' day.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC HIERARCHY AND ITS ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS IN FIRST CENTURY GALILEE: THE EVIDENCE FROM YODEFAT AND GAMLA

Mordechai Aviam

Introduction

The most common approach to the study of the socio-economic structure in the Galilee at the time of Jesus and the First Jewish Revolt was developed through the research of the New Testament and the works of Josephus Flavius, and one can summarize the common picture as “wealthy cities” and “poor villages”.¹ According to the New Testament, Jesus visited mainly the rural parts of Galilee and avoided the cities, although in *Matthew* 4:25 people from the Decapolis appeal for help from Jesus. Bethsaida is mentioned a few times as having been visited by Jesus, although it is unclear if Bethsaida was a city or a polis? Hence, as a reflection of the narratives of the New Testament, the common view of Galilee became “the land of peasants”.² Outside of the few references to “the lands (the territories) of Caesarea Philippi” and the “lands (the territories) of Tyre and Sidon” Jesus did not visit cities. He did not frequent Tiberias, Sepphoris, Hippos, Scythopolis or Ptolemais. Were the Galilean villagers poor, or were the city men rich? When one reads Josephus carefully, the scene looks slightly different. The only time that the terms “poor” or “destitute”, regarding people in the Galilee, are mentioned, is when Josephus is writing about the political party of “the sailors and destitute class” in Tiberias (*Life*, 66). Although no social identification was assigned to Simon and Andrew or Zebedee and his sons (*Matthew* 4:18,21), it might be that sailors and fishermen around the Sea of Galilee were at the bottom of the social pyramid. On the other hand we have some references to rich and wealthy homes in Galilean villages such as the statement about

¹ As clearly reflected in the works of both scholars: Freyne 1980: 155–208. Horsley 1995, 1996.

² Horsley 1996.

Chabulon, “He admired its beauty with its houses built in the style of those at Tyre, Sidon and Berytus” (*War* 2.504). Chabulon, or Kabul, was a small village on the western outskirts of Galilee, and according to Josephus it had wonderfully rich houses. The site is usually identified with the modern Arab village of Kabul that has never been excavated extensively. A second-third century CE tomb was excavated there with stone and clay ossuaries. Another location that could be identified as Chabulon was a site north of the Arab village at Kh. Beza.³ In another case, Josephus speaks about the rich, fortified house of Jesus, a local leader at Gabara (*Life* 246). If so, the impression from Josephus’ narrative is that more “poor” people lived in the cities than in the villages.

The Evidence from Yodefāt and Gamla

The archaeological excavations at both first century northern towns of Yodefāt and Gamla, show that most of their inhabitants lived their lives between levels of prosperity and simplicity, but not poverty. The different types of finds do not suggest the existence of an impoverished population, but rather a population of medium and high social ranks. The houses that were uncovered, in both sites, but especially at Gamla, are nicely built, some of which probably belonged to very rich families. There were some families who lived in luxurious mansions that were decorated with frescoes and stucco. At Gamla, chunks of plaster with fresco and stucco were discovered for the most part in what was called by the excavators as the “wealthy quarter”. In this area two workshops were identified, the first is an oil press built inside a well-built, arched roofed building, with a *miqve* cut into the northern rock-wall.⁴ The second is a flour-mill with a few large grinding stones that could produce a large quantity of flour. The proximity of these two workshops to the private houses, of which some were decorated with fresco and stucco, can hint that the owners of the workshops probably lived nearby and that they were of a high socio-economical class. At Yodefāt an olive-press was discovered in a cave on the eastern-upper slope very close to the private houses on the eastern edge of the town in area XI. The easiest accessible way to the oil-press was from these

³ Aviam 2005: 15, 32.

⁴ *Miqve* is the halachically mandated ritual bath.

houses. This proximity suggests that the owners of the olive-press lived there. These houses are not as fancy as those at Gamla and neither is the oil press itself. Nevertheless, each of these two houses has its own *miqve* which not every house in the town had. Cutting, building and plastering and maintaining a *miqve* with a special water proof plaster was not a simple and cheap task. It is very common now to associate *miqvaot* with food production, and especially with liquids such as oil and wine that can easily absorb impurity. Immersing into a *miqve* before and during the production process was the way to produce pure oil or wine that could be sold to different groups that kept purity laws very strictly or even directly to the Temple in Jerusalem. In contrast to the simple building in Area XI, the north-east quarter of Yodefat was built in a much more delicate way. The houses were built along three strong and solid terraces with wide walls, well-cut stones and raised up to two or three stories high. The excavation in one of the buildings yielded an unusual find. In one of the rooms beautifully frescoed walls were discovered preserved to a height of 1.5 m. They are in the "masonry style" of the Second Pompeian style, in red and ochre tables separated by black, white and green stripes, and frames of marble imitation. A bigger surprise was that the floor itself is decorated with frescoes of red and black pavers. This is a rare find that was discovered in Israel only in the Herodian theater's orchestra at Caesarea, and also at Leptis Magna in the 1st century CE orchestra. Retrieved among the many pieces of frescoed plaster, were also some nicely shaped pieces of stucco. According to Silvia Rosenberg of the Israel Museum, they can be dated to the third quarter of the 1st century BCE—the Herodian period. There is little doubt that mosaic floors during this time as were found in the Herodian palaces and in the rich mansions at the Western hill in Jerusalem in pre-70 CE, or in private mansions at Caesarea and Dor, were even more expensive than frescoed floors; but fresco work was very expensive as well. The houses and palaces with their fresco walls and mosaic floors represent the highest class of the socio-economic pyramid. It is possible that rich houses in both Galilean capitals—Sepphoris and Tiberias, had similar mansions. The house at Yodefat represents a lower class, compared to Masada, Herodium, Jerusalem, and Caesarea, but is still very high in the social stratification. As mentioned, only a small portion of the mansion was excavated and one can believe that there is much more information about this house in Yodefat, of the Galilee and on 1st century life that is lying there under less than 2 m. of debris, waiting

to be uncovered. There are also two small finds that were discovered in this “wealthy quarter”. The first is a multi-nozzle gray oil lamp which is a unique find, and only a few were reported from archaeological excavations. In the final report of Masada, discussing three nozzles of this type found at the site, Barag and Hershkowitz suggest: “it... seems to be the only specimens of type XIII from a controlled excavation in Palestine—Trans-Jordan. This type is rather rare”.⁵ The best parallels are to be found in private collection. The oil lamp from Yodefāt is probably the most complete one of this type originating in a scientific excavation, and was doubtless a luxurious artifact. The second find is a fragment of a stone table, one of very few known in the Galilee. As Gutman already suggested for Gamla, it seems as if these towns were heavily sacked by the conquering Roman troops, as very few luxurious artifacts were found in the debris. At Yodefāt, a few small scale-plates were found, probably used for measuring precious metals, powders or perfumes, three gems, a few rings and worked bone fragments were also found in different excavating fields, and very few silver coins. A small hoard that included some bronze coins and seven *tetradrachms* from the time of Emperor Nero, of which the latest is from the year 64 CE was found in the underground shelter under the western town wall. This hoard is probably a small hint of the money that was in the houses before they were sacked by the Romans. At Gamla, a hoard of twenty Tyrian *sheqels* and seven *tetradrachms* from the time of Nero were found in the street, and were probably lost by one of the refugees, or by one of the Roman soldiers.

An important part of the reconstruction and understanding of the social hierarchy within the Galilean Jewish communities is the research and analysis of the economy of the Galilee in general, and of Yodefāt in particular.

The common view about the Galilean economy was based on assumptions and some evidence from the texts, as well as on some archaeological evidence from later periods. According to them all, olive oil was the most important product of Galilee. Josephus’ story about John of Gischala and his profiteering in olive oil probably indicates the wealth of Galilee in olive oil (*War* 2.591–592; *Life* 74–75). The finds in both surveys and excavations at Yodefāt and Gamla yielded only 1 or 2 olive presses per town. This is not the magnitude of olive-presses that

⁵ Barag and Hershkowitz 1994: 24–58.

would enable the exporting of large amounts of oil from the region. In his book Gutman ascribed part of the importance of Gamla to its geographical position, and connected it with its olive oil production and export.⁶ It should be admitted that the main problem in studying the 1st century Galilean economy is the lack of actual evidence, i.e., the small quantity of clean 1st century archaeological loci. In any case, the finds from Yodefat and Gamla impel us to prune down our confidence in the importance and role of olive oil production in Galilee, at least in the Lower Galilean economy. The situation in Upper Galilee might be different, based on the story about John of Gischala. The only complete oil-press found at Yodefat is the one in the cave, it has only one squeezing installation in contrast to the one at Gamla and Mishmar HaEmeq that each used two, thereby yielding twice the production at any given time. Oil production was an important product in the Galilean economy, it was a highly profitable product, though not as important as was thought before by researchers.⁷

We should look at other archaeological evidence to learn what the main means of production of the Galileans were. Doubtless, archaeology will not be able to reveal all the means of production because some of them do not leave any archaeological trace, nevertheless some do. As part of the study of Yodefat's economy, I conducted a ground survey of the entire possible agricultural territory of the town, directed to locating and identifying agricultural remains. One of the surprising results was finding only 2 wine presses, (while in other areas in the Galilee there are hundreds)⁸ one of those was dated according to its plaster to the Byzantine period. It does make sense that the inhabitants of Yodefat grew grapes and produced wine, but according to the surface find it was a very marginal product. The entire potential agricultural territory of Yodefat is about 15 sq. km. of which about 40% was probably cultivated and terraced for farming. The rest, mostly stony and rocky soil, was mainly grazing land. More than 25 cisterns were

⁶ Gutman 1994.

⁷ We should try and learn from Judea as well. Three or Four First Century CE sites were recently excavated in Judea: Qiryat Sepher, Kh. Etri, Modiin, and Kh. Burnat and in each one of them not more than 1–2 olive presses were found. This situation is completely different from what we know about sites from the Late Roman and Byzantine periods in Galilee, Golan, Samaria and Judea (Frankel 1999, Ben David 1998, Aviam 2004: 170–180).

⁸ Frankel 1999, Frankel and Gezov 1997, Aviam 2004, 170–80, Aviam and Shalem forthcoming.

identified in the surveyed area (not including the cisterns in the town) which is much higher percentage of cisterns for an area this size than is found in any other surveyed and published Galilean region.⁹

This information was combined with the osteological evidence from the dig, which was analyzed by Carol Cope. According to her report, out of the 3075 identified animal bones, 80% belonged to cattle, sheep and goats, 6.8% to chickens, 2.9% to partridges, 2% to pigs (most of which were found in the Hellenistic levels), and the rest to various other animals. Of the 80%, 48% belonged to sheep and goats and from the bones that can be distinguished between goats and sheep, 80.4% belonged to sheep, a much higher percentage than in the regular breakdown of osteological finds from the Hellenistic to Byzantine periods, in which the percentage of goats is little higher. All sheep bones belong to adult animals, which indicates that they were not grown mainly for meat, but rather for wool and milk. It is likely that this conclusion matches the evidence from the land survey around the town which suggested that about half of the land was unsuitable for farming, and thus was used for grazing. The more than 25 cisterns that were found in the area probably to supplied the drinking water for the herds.

In addition, during the dig more than 250 kiln-fired, clay loom-weights were retrieved, the highest number ever found in Early-Roman period Palestine (only at Marisa is the number larger, but most of those were not fired and are dated to the Hellenistic period). At Gamla, where the excavated area is twice as large, only about 60 loom weights were found. Taking all these in consideration, it is suggested that grazing sheep and goats, and especially sheep, was one of the most important economic underpinnings of the inhabitants of Yodefah, while weaving wool fabrics was one of their main export products.

Surprisingly, at the southern margin of the town, we discovered four pottery kilns. It seems as if this part of the town was mostly occupied by potters' workshops and can be named "the potter's quarter". According to the wasters collected around the kilns, the Yodefah potters produced cooking pots of the same type as Adan-Bayewitz suggested we call "Kfar Hananya Ware".¹⁰ They look the same, and their color is the same, yet they differ from the "Golan Ware" identified by

⁹ Hanita map: Frankel and Gezov 1997 and Amqa map: Frankel and Gezov forthcoming.

¹⁰ Adan-Bayewitz 1993.

Adan-Bayewitz, as similar in shape to Kfar Hananya ware, however different in clay composition and color. Without chemical analysis it is impossible to determine whether the Yodefath cooking pots are local production or an import from Kfar Hananya, or perhaps from another Galilean village that produced the same type of vessels. However, the existence of wasters prove that at least those were locally made.

The Yodefath potters also produced a type of storage jar which is well attested in First Century CE Galilean sites,¹¹ and although we identified this production center at Yodefath, there is no reason to name them "Yodefath jars". Names should be given according to the shape of the vessels rather than the place of production, as identical types of pottery were produced in different places. To identify that type of jar it is preferable to use the term "ribbed-neck jar". The local potters also produced other vessels such as bowls, stands, and probably the loom weights. This is the first time that a pottery production center was identified on a top of a high hill, away from the source of raw material. All other kilns identified in the Galilee, from different periods, are located near the valleys.

It is well known in the study of the pottery industry that pottery production is one of the solutions for groups of people who suffer from a lack of farm land. This was also the situation at Yodefath. Together with evidence of wool weaving it seems that in a creative way, Jews in mountainous Galilee adapted themselves to the geographical conditions of rocky terrain and lack of arable land. As their agricultural land was poor, they developed wool and textile industry along with pottery production. It is clear that the potters of Yodefath had an advantage over those of Kfar Hananya because they were much closer to the main markets at Sepphoris.

Finally, the bones of dozens of human beings, men, women and children were found at Yodefath, gathered and buried in cisterns and caves, and buried under the collapse of houses and fill. There is no chance of a mistake in dating them to the First Century CE, as the latest finds in the fill belong to this period. Some of the bones carry marks of violence that prove that they were all the victims of the war. According to the study of these bones they could represent more than 2500 human beings and maybe more, slaughtered in the 67 CE war. Among the victims were citizens of the town and refugees from nearby

¹¹ Fernandez 1983: 187.

villages. Therefore, this large collection of human remains represents a population not only from one town, but also from a larger area in Lower Western Galilee. If this is so, it provides us with a larger view of the health and economic conditions in the mid-First Century CE Galilee. Anthropological research¹² proved that they were all in good health, fed under conditions of normal nutrition, did not suffer from any starvation or malnutrition; they were in an environment of normal sanitation and did not suffer from any severe diseases before they died.

Summary

All this evidence shows that the socio-economical hierarchy in 1st century Galilee was not as simple as “poor peasants” and “wealthy townsmen” as is usually discussed. There was social hierarchy in cities, towns and villages. From the beginning of their settlement in the Galilee during the Hasmonaean reign, the Galileans developed their economy cleverly and wisely, adopting every chance that the land and environment could offer. Under the Hasmoneans, the economic foundations were built.¹³ Under Antipas, the Galilee grew rapidly after years of neglect in the reign of Herod the Great. Evidence for this can be seen at Yodefat which grew from a small, fortified village/stronghold on the top of the hill, to become a prosperous town on the Eastern and Southern slopes, and on the Southern plateau as well. A similar development was followed at Gamla. The Hasmonaean village/stronghold was built on the North-Eastern corner of the hill and was abandoned during part of the end of the first century BCE, maybe as a result of the Herodian campaign in 38 BCE. From the end of that century to the time of its destruction the town grew very fast under Phillip, Herod’s son.

According to finds from Gamla and Yodefat, the character of the houses, frescoes and stucco, luxurious pottery and small finds, different means of production and human remains, it is possible to attempt to reconstruct part of the socio-economic strata.

¹² The study was conducted differently by V. Eshed and C. Cope.

¹³ Aviam 2004: 41–58.

At the bottom, one can find, as was suggested by Freyne,¹⁴ who did not base his view on any archaeological remains, the day-workers, shepherds and beggars. Other groups in the lower classes were potters, spinners, weavers and probably simple farmers who worked for others or had only small plots of land, if any land at all. From different studies we do know that pottery production was not considered a source of great wealth (Arnold 1985). Above them there were the owners of the small industries or workshops: olive oil and flour producers, blacksmiths, carpenters and others. The olive oil was, as today, an expensive product, but as the hard work of picking and pressing lasts only about two to three months a year, it is possible that these families took part in the wool production as well. It seems as if the wool craft was widely spread at Yodefat and probably in other Galilean mountainous towns, and could have been not only a source of income by itself, but also supported other kinds of economic activities. At the top of the pyramid, there were probably the merchants, important dealers in produce, oligarchic families, tax collectors, and high officials as reflected by the rich mansion at Yodefat and the story of Phillip son of Jacimus, a high officer in Agrippa's army who lived, or part of his family lived at Gamla (*War* 4.81–82; *Life* 46, 179).

The results of modern, scientific excavations at Gamla and Yodefat offer the first opportunity to discuss some of the most important socio-economic questions of 1st century Galilee from the ground up. The historical evidence by itself from Josephus and the New Testament are not sufficient, they should be clarified and supported by archaeological finds.

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¹⁴ Freyne 1980: 194–200.

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LE SYSTÈME SACRIFICIEL DE FLAVIUS JOSÈPHE AU LIVRE III DES ANTIQUITÉS JUIVES (ANT. 3.224–236)

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Dans la Bible hébraïque, le code sacerdotal débute par un long exposé des lois et des normes réglementant la pratique des sacrifices (Lev 1–7), et nombre de prescriptions supplémentaires relatives aux sacrifices figurent encore dans d'autres passages du Lévitique. La diversité, le grand nombre et la variété de ces sacrifices à accomplir au Temple de Jérusalem sont impressionnants. Cependant, en dépit de sa longueur et de son caractère détaillé, cette liste ne constitue pas un *système* : on est certes en présence d'une classification, mais d'une classification qui en demeure au stade de l'énumération, de la juxtaposition de cas, et qui ne cherche pas à dégager les principes d'un classement systématique.¹

Naturellement, au sein de cette longue énumération, certains sacrifices précis sont plus spécialement assignés à telle ou telle date du calendrier rituel : le calendrier, dans ce cas, exprime bien un système, des fêtes et des cérémonies calendaires, prenant en compte la succession cyclique des jours, des semaines et des saisons. En revanche il est à peu près impossible de dégager un système analogue, s'agissant de la définition et de la pratique des sacrifices en dehors des fêtes religieuses. Il faut l'admettre : le Lévitique n'établit pas de système sacrificiel ; il se borne à l'énumération, détaillée sinon exhaustive, des occasions requérants tel ou tel type de sacrifice. Au demeurant si un tel système dissimulait sa structure au sein de cette énumération, personne encore n'a su le mettre à jour : on ne trouvera pas, chez les meilleurs spécialistes contemporains de la Bible hébraïque, deux décomptes identiques du nombre de sacrifices accomplis au Temple de Jérusalem. Les uns identifient quatre, les autres six, huit, neuf *catégories* de sacrifices, ou plus encore, dans le judaïsme ancien.

¹ De la même façon que le "code d'Hammourabi" rassemble une liste de cas faisant jurisprudence mais ne constitue pas un code de lois. Vid. Bottéro 1987, 191–223.

Un élément du problème réside dans le vocabulaire biblique du sacrifice, qui n'exprime pas des catégories homogènes. Ainsi, dans la liste publiée en annexe de cet article, certains termes incluent plusieurs types de sacrifices : par exemple le mot קָרְבָּן (*qorban*, traduit en grec par δῶρον) désigne l'ensemble des offrandes sacrificielles, sanglantes et/ou végétales ; c'est un terme générique recouvrant l'ensemble des sacrifices juifs. De même la plupart des termes désignant une catégorie de sacrifice, en définissant un mode rituel particulier d'offrande, recouvrent en fait une grande diversité des pratiques sacrificielles dont chacune correspond à des circonstances précises. C'est par exemple le cas des mots חַטָּאת (*hattat*, offert en expiation d'une erreur), מִנְחָה (*minhah*, offrande végétale) ou des עֹלָה (holocaustes, offrandes entièrement consumées sur l'autel).² Figure par exemple en Lev 4:13–21 la description précise d'un *hattat* à offrir en cas de faute ou de péché collectif. L'exemple est intéressant car illustré : c'est le sacrifice que Judas Maccabée envoie accomplir à Jérusalem, lorsqu'il découvre qu'une partie de ses troupes s'est souillée en pillant un temple païen à Jamnia (2 Mac 12:39–45).³

Les auteurs juifs de la fin de l'époque du deuxième Temple, lorsqu'ils voulaient traiter des sacrifices, avaient donc le choix entre deux solutions. La première consistait à suivre, plus ou moins servilement, le modèle énumératif proposé par le code sacerdotal ; c'est à peu près ce que fait Philon dans son grand commentaire sur les sacrifices au livre I du *De specialibus legibus*.⁴ La seconde exigeait une nouvelle opération classificatoire, consistant à définir des critères susceptibles, à la fois, de prendre en compte la diversité des sacrifices du Lévitique, et de n'en laisser aucun à l'écart. C'est, me semble-t-il, ce à quoi Josèphe s'est efforcé de parvenir avec un certain succès.

² Sur le vocabulaire hébreu et grec des sacrifices juifs, vid. Dorival 2005, 309–15. Ma liste du vocabulaire des sacrifices reprend en grande partie son tableau de la p. 311.

³ Cet épisode mériterait un long développement sur la théorie de la contamination d'une communauté par la faute de quelques-uns de ses membres, mais ce n'est pas ici le lieu.

⁴ Quoique Philon établisse en *Spec.* I 168 une distinction *a minima* entre les sacrifices pour les fêtes calendaires et les sacrifices offerts selon les circonstances.

Compétence de Josèphe en matière de sacrifices

On sait que Josèphe avait projeté la rédaction d'un ouvrage sur le judaïsme en quatre livres, intitulé *Des coutumes et des causes* (περὶ ἔθων καὶ αἰτιῶν, *Ant.* 4.198), auquel il semble avoir finalement renoncé ; cet ouvrage aurait contenu des sections plus particulièrement consacrées aux rites sacrificiels (περὶ θυσιῶν, *Ant.* 3.205) et aux lois juives (περὶ τῶν νόμων, *Ant.* 3.223). Il se trouve que ces deux sections sont mentionnées par Josèphe au début de sa notice du livre III sur les sacrifices, et chaque fois pour souligner qu'il compte remettre à plus tard son exposé sur les sacrifices juifs – alors précisément que cet exposé figure à cet endroit.⁵ Cette contradiction (*inter al.*) a depuis longtemps conduit les spécialistes du texte à juger que Josèphe avait délibérément intégré un matériau, dans un premier temps destiné à l'ouvrage annoncé, dans la rédaction finale de ses *Antiquités* : le long passage consacré aux sacrifices en *Ant.* 3.224–286 apparaissant comme l'exemple type de ces expansions éditoriales.⁶

Cela signifie que cette notice sacrificielle est le produit d'une longue réflexion de Josèphe. Il faut y insister pour réfuter à nouveau l'absurde théorie d'une supposée "incompétence" de Josèphe, en matière rituelle et halakhique, laquelle a pu se répandre durant l'entre-deux-guerres.⁷ Josèphe avait une parfaite connaissance des lois rituelles du judaïsme, non seulement en raison de son éducation sacerdotale mais parce qu'il y avait prêté une particulière attention en vue de la rédaction de ses ouvrages – parus ou restés inédits.

La compétence de Josèphe continue pourtant d'être mise en cause, aujourd'hui encore, dès qu'on en vient à la question des sacrifices. D'une certaine façon, c'est même ce malaise des éditeurs et traducteurs contemporains les plus éminents, devant les catégories et les définitions sacrificielles de Josèphe, qui attire l'attention sur ce passage. En particulier lorsque Josèphe distingue entre différentes catégories de sacrifices, par exemple en *Ant.* 3.230 : Θύουσι δὲ καὶ ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν

⁵ *Ant.* 3.205 : "Je vais parler de ces cérémonies religieuses quand j'en serai aux sacrifices du rituel : j'y indiquerai alors les victimes que la Loi ordonne de brûler entièrement et celles dont elle permet de prélever de quoi manger." *Ant.* 3.223 : "Mais je m'arrête là, car j'ai décidé de composer un traité spécial au sujet des lois." (trad. Nodet 1992).

⁶ Voir en dernier lieu l'analyse de Altshuler 1979, 226–32.

⁷ *Vid.* Tomson 2002, 189–220.

καὶ ὁμοίως τῷ προειρημένῳ τῷ περὶ τῶν χαριστηρίων τῆς ἱεουργίας τρόπον γίνεται. “On sacrifie aussi pour les péchés et les cérémonies (*hiérurgies*) qui se déroulent dans des formes (*tropes*) identiques à ce que j’ai mentionné au sujet des sacrifices d’action de grâce (*charistères*).” Julien Weill, dans la grande traduction Reinach, observait ainsi que “Josèphe, dans sa brève notice, mélange beaucoup de textes du *Lévitique*.” Et il concluait sur l’ensemble de la notice sacrificielle : “Josèphe est ici trop bref pour être exact.”⁸ Plus récemment Étienne Nodet a parlé également de “l’exposé très sommaire” de Josèphe, en ajoutant que la distinction du *Lévitique* entre les deux types de sacrifices pour le péché ne lui paraissait “pas claire.”⁹ Louis Feldman enfin, dans sa grande traduction commentée, inflige une sorte de “leçon de rite” à Josèphe : “*Despite Josephus’ statement that these two types of sacrifice are performed in a similar manner, the only feature in common between thank-offerings and sin-offerings is the burning of fats upon the altar.*”¹⁰ Le commentaire souligne ensuite, dans une longue note, toutes les différences qu’il aurait fallu noter entre les deux rites. Ces interrogations sont fondées : car Josèphe semble bien confondre en une seule catégorie, deux types de sacrifices juifs aux rites parfaitement distincts : le תִּזְבַּח תּוֹדָה, *zebah todah* ou sacrifice d’actions de grâce, et les deux formes de sacrifices pour le péché, חַטָּאת, *hattat* et אֲשָׁם, *asham*. L’erreur serait en effet grossière mais je ne crois pas que Josèphe la commette ici.

Que désignent en effet ces termes de *trope*, *hiérurgie* et *charistère* (τρόποι, ἱεουργία et χαριστήριον), dont l’emploi par Josèphe soulève tant de difficultés ? Leur bonne compréhension exige de prendre en considération la logique à l’œuvre dans l’ensemble de la notice sacrificielle (*Ant.* 3.224–236) et même de remonter un peu plus haut dans le texte. On découvre alors que la “brièveté” de l’exposé sacrificiel tient moins à une hypothétique confusion qu’à la volonté de construire un système cohérent de connaissance et de représentation des sacrifices juifs.

⁸ *Ant.* 3.230 (Reinach), 196 n. 30. Dans l’édition classique de Loeb en 1930, St. J. Thackeray se réfère explicitement aux commentaires de J. Weill et y renvoie.

⁹ *Flavius Josèphe. Les Antiquités Juives. Livres I à III.* (ed. É. Nodet, Paris: Le Cerf, 1992), 188, n. 8.

¹⁰ *Josephus. Judean Antiquities 1–4.* (transl. L. H. Feldman, Leiden: Brill, 2000), 294, n. 616.

La catégorie des “charistères” chez Josèphe

Commençons par les *charistères* (χαριστήριοι) : en raison de la signification implicite du terme et à partir de la racine χαρις, tous les traducteurs de Josèphe ont spontanément compris qu'ils désignaient des sacrifices “d'actions de grâce.”¹¹ Ce choix des traducteurs et l'interprétation sous-jacente qu'il implique ne vont pas sans conséquence dans la mesure où il existe, dans la longue liste des sacrifices juifs mentionnés dans le Lévitique, une catégorie spécifique de “sacrifices d'actions de grâce”, זָבַח תּוֹדָה. Or il est clair que ce n'est pas là le sens que Josèphe entendait donner à sa propre catégorie des *charistères*. D'abord parce qu'il s'est donné la peine ici de forger un terme propre, inconnu des versions grecques de la LXX : χαριστήριός n'appartient pas au vocabulaire des sacrifices de la Bible grecque.¹² Quant au זָבַח תּוֹדָה, le “sacrifice d'actions de grâce”, il y est généralement traduit par le grec ἀνέσις ou bien, en une occasion, par χαρμοσύνη. Ensuite, Josèphe précise en *Ant.* 3.229 que la viande de ces *charistères* peut être consommée durant les *deux jours* qui suivent le sacrifice.¹³ Mais il se trouve que les sacrifices d'action de grâce (זָבַח תּוֹדָה) sont précisément exclus, par le code sacerdotal, de cette loi générale ; Lev 7:15 ordonne en effet qu'ils soient consommés dans les *vingt-quatre heures* qui suivent la cérémonie.¹⁴ On doit donc exclure que le χαριστήριός de Josèphe désigne le זָבַח תּוֹדָה lévitique : le *charistère* n'est pas un sacrifice d'actions de grâce. Mieux vaut donc, sans s'attacher d'avantage à des étymologies hypothétiques, s'en remettre à la définition qu'en donne lui-même Josèphe en *Ant.* 3.225 : ἡ δὲ χαριστήριός τέ ἐστι καὶ κατ' εὐωχίαν δρᾶται τῶν τεθυκότων “Il y a aussi le *charistère*, dont l'offrande est accompagnée du banquet de ceux qui ont offert le sacrifice.” Il est clair que la catégorie des χαριστήριοι désigne chez Josèphe les sacrifices de partage, ou de commensalité, c'est-à-dire tous

¹¹ En français “sacrifices d'actions de grâce” pour J. Weill et É. Nodet ; en anglais “for thanksgiving” pour St. J. Thackeray et L. Feldman.

¹² Pour être précis le mot χαριστήριός, au sens de זָבַח תּוֹדָה, apparaît *une fois* dans la LXX, dans une interpolation chrétienne en 2 Mac 12:45. Sur cette interpolation vid. Lévi 1994, 97–114.

¹³ “Pendant deux jours on mange ce qui reste des viandes ; s'il y a du surplus, il est entièrement brûlé.” *Ant.* 3.229.

¹⁴ “La viande du sacrifice d'actions de grâce (זָבַח תּוֹדָה) offert pour son salut sera mangée le jour de son offrande ; on n'en laissera pas de côté jusqu'au lendemain.” Lev 7:15.

les sacrifices dont la loi prévoit qu'une partie seulement est brûlée sur l'autel, tandis que le reste est consommé par l'offrant et ses proches. Le terme hébreu le plus proche serait donc probablement שְׁלַמִּים (*she-lamîm*). Pourtant la catégorie des *charistères* ne recouvre pas celle des *shelamîm* ; du moins, pas seulement.

Définition d'un système

C'est précisément dans ces deux phrases placées au début de la notice sacrificielle, en *Ant.* 3.224–225, que Josèphe définit ce que j'ai nommé son "système sacrificiel" : δύο μὲν γὰρ εἰσιν ἱερουργίαι, τούτων δ' ἡ μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν ἰδιωτῶν ἑτέρα δ' ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου συντελούμεναι κατὰ δύο γίνονται τρόπους· τῆς μὲν ὀλοκαυτεῖται πᾶν τὸ θυόμενον καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τὴν προσηγορίαν τοιαύτην ἔλαβεν, ἡ δὲ χαριστήριός τέ ἐστι καὶ κατὰ εὐωχίαν δρᾶται τῶν τεθυκότων. "Or il existe deux types de cérémonies sacrificielles (*hiérurgies*), dont les unes sont accomplies au profit des particuliers, les autres au profit du peuple et elles opèrent selon deux modes (*tropes*) ; selon l'un toute l'offrande est brûlée en holocauste, ce pourquoi on leur a donné ce nom ; les autres sont des *charistères* dont l'offrande est accompagnée du banquet de ceux qui ont offert le sacrifice."

On voit que Josèphe définit ici deux catégories d'oppositions qu'il nomme respectivement "*hiérurgie*" (type de cérémonie sacrificielle) et "*trope*" (modalités de l'offrande du sacrifice). Le premier axe est défini par l'opposition entre cérémonies de caractère communautaire ou collectif (δῆμος), et cérémonies à l'initiative d'un particulier (ἴδιος). Le second par l'opposition entre deux *modus operandi* : sacrifices entièrement brûlés sur l'autel et consacrés à la divinité (qu'il nomme holocaustes)¹⁵ *versus* sacrifices dont une partie est consommée par l'offrant ou sacrifices de commensalité (qu'il nomme *charistères*). Le croisement de ces deux critères fondés sur une opposition, bâtit un

¹⁵ Les commentateurs ont depuis longtemps relevé que de la définition jospéenne de l'holocauste correspondait au vocabulaire grec du sacrifice (ὀλόκαυτος, ὀλοκαυτῶμα) mais non à l'hébreu, dans lequel הָיָה signifie "monter". Cela est connu depuis la LXX et n'a guère de conséquence – sauf lorsqu'on désigne l'autel du Temple comme "l'autel des holocaustes", paraissant ainsi le réserver à cette catégorie particulière de sacrifices, alors qu'il faut lire "l'autel de la montée", sur lequel sont consumés toutes les offrandes qui "montent" vers les narines divines.

système classificatoire qui dispense ensuite Josèphe d'entrer dans une énumération détaillée de la diversité des sacrifices juifs.

Deux raisons justifient qu'on parle ici de "système sacrificiel".

1) La première est qu'avec ces deux critères, Josèphe introduit un ordre et une classification là où le code sacerdotal se contentait d'une énumération, mais ne formulait aucun principe général gouvernant la pratique sacrificiel. Plus exactement on admettra que le Lévitique énonce (en Lev 17:11) la théorie essentielle que "la vie est dans le sang". Cette assertion constitue indiscutablement le principe au fondement de *tous* les sacrifices juifs sanglants et, de ce fait même, ne peut pas offrir un principe d'organisation. À l'inverse, dès l'instant que l'on introduit dans cette énumération du Lévitique un quelconque critère d'opposition, on réorganise la liste des sacrifices en les classant selon ce critère : on en trouve de nombreux exemples dans la littérature rabbinique, en particulier dans le Seder *Qodashim*. Les Sages ont par exemple des discussions concernant les rites d'aspersion du sang sur l'autel (*b. Zebahim* 44), ou sur la part de graisse de la victime qu'on doit brûler sur l'autel (*b. Hullin* 117) : dans ces deux passages, l'introduction d'un critère spécifique (l'aspersion du sang ou la graisse de l'animal) conduit à une réorganisation des sacrifices du Lévitique conforme à ce critère et, par conséquent, mieux adaptée aux débats en cours.

Cependant ces nouvelles classifications, si elle sont nécessaires à l'émergence d'un système, ne sont pas suffisantes pour l'établir.

2) La seconde exigence requise pour que l'on puisse parler d'un système, est que chaque sacrifice du Lévitique sans aucune exception puisse y trouver sa place. Avec ses deux axes classificatoires, Josèphe bâtit une sorte de matrice à quatre entrées. La question est ici de déterminer dans quelle mesure ces quatre entrées couvrent la totalité des sacrifices juifs ; et dans quelle mesure aussi elles rendent un compte exact de la diversité et de la complexité des pratiques sacrificielles décrites par le code sacerdotal. Un exemple précis permettra d'établir la pertinence du modèle de Josèphe en la matière.

La matrice sacrificielle de Josèphe

τρόπος (modalité) → ἱερουργία (cérémonie) ↓ communautaire ou collectif particulier	en holocauste	en charistère
	(tout est consommé)	(partage et festin)

Le *hattat* du grand prêtre est-il un holocauste ?

Revenons à cette affirmation de *Ant.* 3.230 qui causa tant de difficultés aux lecteurs savants de Josèphe : “On sacrifie aussi pour les péchés et les cérémonies (*hiérurgies*) se déroulent dans des formes (*tropes*) identiques à ce que j’ai mentionné au sujet des *charistères*.” Replacé dans la “matrice sacrificielle” de Josèphe (ci-dessus), on doit comprendre que *tous les hattat* et *tous les asham* (les sacrifices “pour les péchés”) sont des sacrifices de partage figurant dans la colonne des *charistères* : ce sont de ces sacrifices dont une partie seulement est offerte à la divinité, par opposition aux holocaustes. *Hattat* et *asham* sont en effet des offrandes partiellement consommées sur l’autel et il en existe concernant les particuliers comme la communauté.

Une difficulté surgit à ce propos : lorsque le grand prêtre, par exemple à l’occasion des rites du *yom ha-kippurim*, offre un sacrifice *hattat* pour les péchés de toute la nation d’Israël, ou bien pour lui-même et sa maison, rien de ces deux offrandes ne doit être consommé, mais l’une comme l’autre sont entièrement détruites (Lev 16:6, 11, 15, 25, 27). Dès lors ne surprend-on pas ici Josèphe en flagrante erreur ? Ces deux sacrifices “pour le péché” ne devraient-ils pas relever de la colonne des holocaustes et non de celle des *charistères* ?

Nullement. Cet exemple illustre au contraire la parfaite connaissance que possède Josèphe de la logique rituelle des sacrifices au Temple de Jérusalem.

Dans l’accomplissement d’un sacrifice de *hattat* pour les péchés, le partage de l’offrande concerne exclusivement la divinité et les prêtres : l’offrant, qui est aussi le pécheur, en est exclu. Il serait en effet à la fois incohérent et choquant que le pécheur put, en quelque sorte, tirer un bénéfice personnel de son péché en se nourrissant, lui et les siens, d’une partie de son offrande de rachat. Dans ces circonstances, seuls les prêtres participent donc au banquet sacrificiel. Mais dès lors que le grand prêtre se trouve lui-même inclus dans le péché que le sacrifice vise à purger, soit personnellement, soit comme chef de famille, soit comme principal dirigeant de la nation, il est naturellement exclu qu’il puisse prendre part au banquet – ni lui ni aucun autre prêtre. Il faut donc que l’offrande sacrificielle soit entièrement brûlée. Mais cette consommation complète n’en fait pas pour autant un holocauste car elle n’est pas sacrificielle. Selon les termes, très précis sur ce point, du code sacerdotal (Lev 4:10–12), la portion de l’animal ordinairement réservée à la divinité dans un sacrifice *hattat* est, comme à l’ordinaire, brûlée sur l’autel : ceci constitue le sacrifice proprement dit. Tout ce qui reste de l’animal, y compris la portion ordinairement consommée par les prêtres, est ensuite emporté

et brûlé à l'écart, "hors du camps", dans le "lieu pur" (מָקוֹם טָהוֹר) consacré à la collecte des cendres et des déchets sacrificiels : cette destruction des restes de l'animal ne peut en aucune manière être assimilée à un sacrifice. En dépit du fait que la victime sacrificielle est entièrement détruite, le *hattat* du grand prêtre (comme celui de toute la nation) ne s'est pas transformé en holocauste, mais demeure fondamentalement un *charistère*. Josèphe, sur ce point, se révèle un meilleur connaisseur des sacrifices juifs que ses modernes critiques.

Systèmes sacrificiels et fin des sacrifices

À quoi vise l'élaboration d'une telle représentation systématique des sacrifices juifs du temple de Jérusalem ? On est spontanément tenté d'imaginer ici une sorte d'*interpretatio* des rites sacrificiels juifs à destination d'un public grec et romain. Sa présentation systématique dispenserait ainsi Josèphe de la longue et fastidieuse énumération des sacrifices prévus dans telle ou telle circonstance, telle qu'elle figure dans le Lévitique. Les deux oppositions qui fondent le système, entre holocaustes et sacrifices de partage, et entre sacrifices communautaires ou collectifs et sacrifices au profit d'un particulier, pouvaient apparaître familières et compréhensibles à un lecteur non-juif – infiniment plus familières et plus compréhensibles en tout état de cause que les subtilités conceptuelles du *kipper*, ou les nuances qui séparaient le *hattat* du *asham*.

Sur le même sujet Philon d'Alexandrie nous offrirait l'exemple d'une attitude inverse quand il rédige, également en grec et à peu près à la même époque, son long développement consacré aux sacrifices de Jérusalem dans le *De specialibus legibus* : à la différence de Josèphe il n'éprouve pas le besoin de bâtir un système des sacrifices juifs, mais s'en tient assez rigoureusement à la présentation du code sacerdotal.

La volonté de se faire comprendre d'un public non-juif, à supposer qu'elle fût établie, n'offre donc pas une réponse entièrement satisfaisante. Il paraît beaucoup plus pertinent de replacer l'effort de systématisation des sacrifices accompli par Josèphe dans le contexte des débats qui traversaient le judaïsme de la fin de l'époque du deuxième temple et au début de la période michnaïque.¹⁶ Ce fut un temps où se multiplièrent,

¹⁶ Lors du colloque international de Haïfa, Étienne Nodet fit observer à ce propos tout l'intérêt heuristique de l'hypothèse que Josèphe s'adressât *d'abord* à ses lecteurs juifs. Je le suis entièrement sur ce point.

dans le contexte tragique de l'affrontement avec Rome, les réflexions juives sur la nature et la définition du judaïsme ; et plus précisément, dans le domaine qui nous occupe ici, les efforts visant à donner une représentation systématique des sacrifices juifs accomplis au temple.

Je laisserai de côté, pour des raisons de temps, les débats rabbiniques que j'ai déjà rapidement évoqués, concernant divers aspects du sacrifice et qui aboutirent également, selon qu'un critère classificatoire ou un autre était retenu, à ébaucher des représentations systématiques inédites. Pour m'en tenir aux écrits juifs antérieurs à la destruction du temple, j'évoquerai ici deux exemples de systématisation des sacrifices ayant précédé celle de Josèphe. Pour autant qu'on puisse atteindre à leur logique, ces deux systèmes diffèrent entre eux et diffèrent tous deux de celui de Josèphe.

Le premier figure dans le texte du Testament de Lévi, un écrit juif apocryphe daté, selon toute probabilité, de la fin du II^e siècle avant notre ère. Ce texte reflète une tradition plus ancienne selon laquelle Lévi, et non Aaron, fut le premier grand prêtre de l'histoire juive. Dans ce passage, Lévi transmet à ses descendants les rites et les lois cérémonielles concernant les sacrifices que les prêtres doivent accomplir. Lui-même les a reçus de son grand-père Isaac, lequel les tenaient d'Abraham, qui avait recueilli les enseignements transmis depuis Hénoc et Noé. C'est ainsi que Lévi avait eu connaissance de la Loi avant même que la Torah fût donnée à Moïse – mais ceci est un autre débat. Nous importe ici la façon dont le texte classe et définit les sacrifices juifs. Lévi évoque l'enseignement d'Isaac (T. Lev. 9:7–8) : καὶ ἐδίδασκέ με νόμον ἱερωσύνης θυσιῶν ὀλοκαυτωμάτων ἀπαρχῶν ἐκουσίων σωτηρίων. “Et il m'enseigna les lois du sacerdoce et des sacrifices, des sacrifices en holocaustes, des prémices, des sacrifices volontaires et des sacrifices pour le salut.” Les sacrifices juifs sont donc classés et résumés par ces cinq catégories : les θυσίαι, ἀπαρχαί, ὀλοκαυτωματοί, ἐκουσίοι et σωτηρίοι. Ce classement, quoique moins rigoureux que celui de Josèphe, organise déjà un système des sacrifices juifs, que l'on peut décrypter en s'aidant du vocabulaire grec des LXX :

- θυσίαι renvoie à tous les sacrifices sanglants et aux offrandes de céréales qui les accompagnent (en hébreu זָבַח, *zabah* et מִנְחָה, *minhah*);
- ἀπαρχαί désigne l'offrande des prémices et des premiers-nés;
- ὀλοκαυτωματοί sont les holocaustes;
- ἐκουσίοι désigne les sacrifices offerts pour accomplir un vœu (en hébreu נִדְבָה, *nedabah*);

- enfin σωτηρίοι se réfère à tous les autres sacrifices de partage (en hébreu שְׁלָמִים, *shelamîm*) qui n'ont pas été explicitement mentionnés.

On doit prendre en considération que le premier terme n'est pas classificatoire : il englobe les quatre catégories de sacrifices énumérées à sa suite. De ce classement quadripartite, se dégage une représentation globale du système sacrificiel juif d'après laquelle, d'une part, il n'est pas établi de distinction tranchée entre sacrifices sanglants et offrandes végétales;¹⁷ et qui, d'autre part et surtout, revendique de faire entrer la totalité des sacrifices juifs dans ces quatre catégories: prémices, holocaustes, sacrifices votifs et sacrifices de partage. À la différence de Josèphe, l'auteur du *Testament de Lévi* n'a donc pas jugé bon de préciser, dans son système, la place particulière des sacrifices liés à la faute ou au péché. Ce texte n'en présente pas moins la plus ancienne tentative juive connue de présenter les sacrifices sous une forme systématique.

Quelque chose d'analogue figure dans la littérature communautaire de Qoumrân. Je n'en donnerai ici qu'un exemple tiré de la *Règle de la Communauté*. Il s'agit d'instructions liturgiques concernant les sacrifices et la prière (1QS IX 4) : לַכֹּפֶר עַל אֲשַׁמַּת פֶּשַׁע וּמַעַל חֲטָאָת וּלְרִצּוֹן : לְאָרֶץ מִבְּשָׂר עוֹלוֹת וּמַחֲלָבֵי זֶבַח et l'infidélité du péché, pour la bienveillance (divine) sur le pays: par la chair des holocaustes et par la graisse du sacrifice-de-partage.”

De ce passage difficile et très discuté, je donne ici une traduction largement inspirée du commentaire, déjà ancien, de Jean Carmignac et de sa conviction, que je partage, que la communauté de Qoumrân n'a jamais renoncé à poursuivre (ou à reprendre dès que cela serait possible) la pratique des sacrifices sanglants.¹⁸ Mais, au demeurant, même à admettre que cette phrase ait eu un sens négatif (“pas par la chair” etc.), l'opération classificatoire des sacrifices subsisterait. Les auteurs de la *Règle* définissent ici les deux axes selon lesquels ils classent et organisent l'ensemble des sacrifices juifs. Le premier, comme chez Josèphe, est l'opposition entre holocaustes (עוֹלוֹת) et sacrifices de partage (זֶבַח). Le second est propre à Qoumrân, dont il exprime l'une des préoccupations théologiques: il s'agit de l'intention, ou de l'objectif recherché par l'offrant. La *Règle* oppose, dans ce domaine, la purgation-expiation (כֹּפֶר) de la faute d'une part, à la quête de l'appui

¹⁷ Sur la question des offrandes végétales dans le judaïsme ancien vid. Marx 1994.

¹⁸ Carmignac 1956, 524–32.

divin (רצון) d'autre part. Cette opposition reflète l'importance accordée par la communauté de Qoumrân aux lois de pureté, ainsi que l'équivalence qu'elle établissait entre faute et impureté: les deux formes de pratiques sacrificielles se complètent ainsi nécessairement, dans la mesure où il était inenvisageable de rechercher la protection divine sans être auparavant purgé-purifié de toute faute et péché.

Ici aussi on peut donc, comme chez Josèphe, repérer la volonté de bâtir un système, capable de rendre compte et de formuler implicitement une théorie de l'ensemble des sacrifices pratiqués au temple.

Si diverses qu'elles puissent apparaître, ces tentatives spécifiquement juives de la fin de l'époque du deuxième temple convergent dans la volonté de donner un caractère systématique aux ordonnances sacrificielles du code sacerdotal. Compte tenu du déroulement des événements historiques et de la brusque interruption de la pratique sacrificielle, on est en droit de se demander dans quelle mesure ces efforts de systématisation ont pu contribuer à faciliter l'évolution du judaïsme vers une pratique religieuse devenue, par force, non-sacrificielle.

Vocabulaire des sacrifices bibliques dans la Torah¹⁹

hébreu	occurrences dans le TM	grec	occurrences dans la LXX	sens
אָזְכֶּרָה	1	ἀνάμνησις	1	se souvenir
אָשָׂה	57	θυσία, κάρπωμα, ὀλοκαυτωμα	9, 37, 10	consumé
אָשָׂם	25	πλημμέλεια	20	pour la faute
זָבַח	70	θυσία	64	égorgement
חֲטָאת	100	ἁμαρτία, ἁμάρτημα		pour l'erreur
כֶּלֶל	3	ὀλόκαυτος, πᾶς	1, 2	complet
לֶחֶם	7	δῶρα, δόμα	6, 1	pain
מִנְחָה	107	θυσία, δῶρα	85, 10	offrande végétale
נְדָבָה	13	ἐκούσιον		volontaire
נִדָּר	7	εὐχή		votif
עֹלָה	146	ὀλοκαύτωμα, ὀλοκαύτωσις	95, 25	holocauste
קָרְבָּן	75	δῶρον	73	offrande
שְׁלָמִים	54	σωτηρίον	50	partagés, consommés
תּוֹדָה	5	αἰνέσις, χαρμοσύνη	4, 1	louange, remerciement

¹⁹ Apud Dorival, "L'originalité de la Bible grecque des Septante en matière de sacrifice," 311.

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BETWEEN FACT AND FICTION: JOSEPHUS' ACCOUNT OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE*

Miriam Pucci Ben Zeev

Titus' decision concerning the Jerusalem temple: Josephus' and Sulpicius' versions on the background of Roman policy

According to Josephus, the Jerusalem Temple was destroyed “against the wishes of Titus” (*War* 6. 266). While dealing with the final confrontation between the Jews and the Romans in the area of the Jerusalem Temple, Josephus states that Titus “called together his generals and brought forward for debate the subject of the Temple. Some were of the opinion that the law of war should be enforced, since the Jews would never cease from rebellion while the Temple remained as the focus for concourse from every quarter. Others advised that if the Jews abandoned it should be saved, but that if they mounted it for purposes of warfare, it should be burnt. As for Titus, Josephus states that he “declared that even were the Jews to mount it (the Temple) and fight there from, he would not wreak vengeance on inanimate objects instead of men, nor under any circumstances burn down so magnificent a work; for the loss would affect the Romans, inasmuch as it would be an ornament to the empire if it stood” (*War* 6. 241).

Since the nineteenth century, scholars have wondered whether we should believe this account in view of the fact that it is contradicted by the later testimony of Cassius Dio, who gives Titus a leading role in precipitating the destruction¹ and by that of Sulpicius Severus, who in the early fifth century states that in the council of war which preceded the final assault Titus himself opted for destruction: “Titus...expressed the opinion that the Temple should be destroyed without delay, in order that the religion of the Jews and Christians should be more completely

* My best thanks to Professor Ben Zion Rosenfeld for his helpful suggestions. I wish to dedicate this paper to Erich Gruen, on the occasion of his retirement, and to the blessed memory of his wonderful and beloved wife Joan.

¹ “...The entrance to the Temple was now laid open to the Romans. Nevertheless, the soldiers because of their superstition did not immediately rush in; but at last, under compulsion from Titus, they made their way inside (*Historia Romana*, 66, 6, 2).

exterminated. For those religions, though opposed to one another, derive from the same founders; the Christians stemmed from the Jews and the extirpation of the root would easily cause the offspring to perish".² In spite of different details, Orosius, too, gives a similar account.³

Until the 1990's, the majority of scholarly works tend to reject Josephus' account since the opposite testimony of Sulpicius seems better grounded in the Roman policy.⁴ Romans usually respected foreign religions, cults and temples, but only as long as there were no rebellions under the mask of religion. A striking example is Vespasian's dealings with the temple of Onias in Egypt a few years later. After the fall of Masada, a group of *sicarii* had reached Alexandria, trying to stir up resistance to Rome. Fearing the Roman reactions, the local Jews "rushed furiously upon the *sicarii* to seize them" and delivered them to the Roman authorities. In spite of this act of loyalty, and in spite of the fact that, as far as we know, this temple had played no role at all in the war in Judea nor in the present disturbances at Alexandria (in fact, the legitimacy itself of this temple and of its cult remains an open question in scholarship),⁵ Vespasian ordered Lupus, the prefect of Egypt, "to demolish the Jewish temple in the so-called district of Onias".⁶ The reason that Vespasian made this decision was suspicion: "viewing with suspicion the irrepressible tendency of the Jews to rebel, and fearing that they might all collect together in force and get others

² *At contra alii et Titus ipse evertendum in primis templum censebant: Chron.* 2, 30, 6-7 = Stern 1980, II, 64-67, (no. 282).

³ According to Orosius, Titus long considered whether to burn the Temple or whether to conserve it as testimony of his victory, "*sed Ecclesia Dei iam per totum Orbem uberrime germinante, hoc tamquam effetum ac vacuum nullique usui bono commodum arbitrio Dei auferendum fuit. Itaque Titus...templum in Hierosolymis incendit ac diruit*" (*Historiarum adversus paganos libri VII*, 9, 5-6). See Parente 2000, 17-21.

⁴ The numerous works (by Bernays, Mommsen, Von Gutschmid, Valetton, Weber, Garzetti, Thackeray, Streeter, Momigliano, Alon, Weiler, Lewy, Urbach, Gry, Schalit, Brandon, Montefiore, Schürer, De Martino, Yavetz, Barnes, Fornaro, Vidal Naquet, Gabba, Feldman, Jones, Moehring, Franchet d'Espèrey, Goodman, Price, Barclay, Levick, Spilsbury, Schäfer, and Rives) dealing with the subject are quoted by Leoni 2007, 3-6, n. 3-13.

⁵ See Wasserstein 1993, 119-29; Gruen 1997, 47-70; Schwartz 1997, 5-22; Taylor 1998, 207-321.

⁶ Josephus tells us that "Lupus...having carried off some of the votive offerings, shut up the building. Lupus dying soon after, Paulinus, his successor in office, completely stripped the place of its treasures, threatening the priests with severe penalties if they failed to produce them all, prohibited would-be worshippers from approaching the precincts, and, closing the gates, debarred all access, as to leave henceforth no vestige of divine worship on the spot" (*War* 7. 433-435).

to join them..." (War 7. 420). According to Rives, this decision to close the Onias temple and end its cult indicates that Vespasian wished to take no chances of allowing a revived Jewish temple cult.⁷

As for the Jerusalem Temple, Rives observes that the decision to destroy it would have attained many and good results: wipe out Jewish religion, gain control of the wealth stockpiled in the Temple and transform the Temple tax into a lasting source of income, demonstrate the absolute victory of the Roman god Jupiter, and thereby obtain legitimacy for the new dynasty. Rives suggests that Roman authorities had long been aware that the cult of the Jews was a potential source of practical problems: the great crowds that filled Jerusalem at the major festivals were well known to be volatile and liable to unrest, and the Jewish Temple was "the symbol of Jewish resistance" and "the theological centre of Jewish opposition". In other words, the destruction would have been necessary both to bring the revolt to an end and to prevent any future revolts. More than that, in abolishing the cult, Titus may have not simply taken a precaution against further revolts in Judea, but may have hoped to eliminate the anomalous cult organization that made the Jews throughout the Roman world into a people with an alternative focus of loyalty and national identity.⁸

In this context, Josephus' stress on the fact that the Temple was destroyed "against the wishes of Titus" is somewhat odd: that is why scholars siding with Josephus' version are not numerous.⁹

Is Sulpicius' Account Reliable?

Leoni's Critique

The necessity to re-examine the issue comes from two articles written by an Italian and talented scholar, Tommaso Leoni, who challenges this common view, suggesting that we should rather rehabilitate

⁷ Rives 2005, 154.

⁸ See Rives 2005, 154–66.

⁹ See the works of Weynand, Juster, Ricciotti, Fortina, Vitucci, Homo, and Abel: bibliographical details are cited in Leoni 2007, 7, n. 18. Rajak, too, observes that "as long as it cannot be convincingly impugned, Josephus' story, the best we have, is the one that should stand": Rajak 1983, 206–11.

Josephus' account since the testimony of Sulpicius Severus is very difficult to believe, being "an inextricable tangle of inconsistencies and distortions", where the Jews are only a pretext to mention the Christians and where the notion that Titus' desire to destroy the Temple was motivated by the resolve of "uprooting the plant of Christianity" is obviously not tenable.

Leoni is surely correct. He is correct also in pointing out that the passage where Josephus has Titus order "the whole town and the Temple to be razed to the ground" (*War* 7. 1) does not attest any responsibility on the part of Titus since it refers to a later stage, one month after the burning of the Temple.¹⁰ On the other hand, other arguments are less convincing since they are not directly relevant to the question of Titus' responsibility. Such is the account of moving stages brought along in the triumph in Rome, made up of massive painted panels, one of which represented "temples set on fire" (*War* 7. 144), and the very fact that the soldier who started the fire in the Temple (*War* 6. 252) was not punished, which would in any case be obvious in view of the general chaotic situation obtaining in the city at the time. Of course, it would be easier to assess the value of Sulpicius' testimony if we knew on which sources it relied.

Sulpicius' Possible Sources

Scholars have identified Sulpicius' sources with the work of Marcus Antonius Julianus—a suggestion impossible to substantiate in view of the fact that his work is not extant—or with the lost part of Tacitus' *Historiae*. This possibility, too, cannot be verified, but most scholars seem to accept it in view of the fact that at least in two other instances¹¹ Sulpicius did use the work of Tacitus.¹² It seems, however, that Sulpicius made use also of Josephus or the tradition of Josephus,¹³ so that one cannot rule out also the possibility that Sulpicius depends here on

¹⁰ Leoni 2007, 460; idem 2002 (8).

¹¹ On these passages, see Stern 1980, 66.

¹² The suggestion put forward by Bernays in 1861 that this passage of Sulpicius depends on Tacitus, has been widely followed. See bibliographical details in Stern 1980, 64–67; in more recent time, see also Barnes 1977, 224–31; Barnes 2005, 133–35 and the works of van Andel, and Laupot quoted by Rives 2005, 147, n 3.

¹³ The number of Jews killed during the siege of Jerusalem given by Sulpicius, for example, is 1.100.000, which agrees with the figure of Josephus (*War* 6, 420) but not with that of Tacitus (*Historiae* 5, 13).

Josephus' version.¹⁴ In fact, the two accounts of the council of war in Josephus' and in Sulpicius' works are extremely similar: that of Sulpicius is remarkably shorter, lacking many of the details which appear in Josephus, while it does not offer any additional item; as for the reasons adduced by the parties, they are basically the same, the only meaningful difference being the position of Titus himself.¹⁵ So, along with the other possibilities, one may also allow that Sulpicius may be relying here on Josephus' very passage, changing it according to his own purposes.

All in all, it remains impossible to reach a definite conclusion regarding the source used by Sulpicius and therefore concerning his ultimate reliability, so that we may agree with Leoni: Sulpicius' testimony does not constitute in itself a valid reason to cast doubt on Josephus' account. However, some details in the same account of Josephus make us doubt that the Temple was really destroyed "against the wishes of Titus".

¹⁴ I wish to thank Tessa Rajak who suggested this possibility to me.

¹⁵ "On the next day, Titus...called together his generals. Six of his chief staff-officers were assembled, namely, Tiberius Alexander, the prefect of all the forces, Sextus Cerealius, Larcus Lepidus, and Titus Phrygius, the respective commanders of the fifth, tenth, and fifteenth legions; Fronto Haterius, prefect of the two legions from Alexandria, and Marcus Antonius Julianus, procurator of Judaea; and the procurators and tribunes being next collected, Titus brought forward for debate the subject of the Temple. Some were of opinion that the law of war should be enforced, since the Jews would never cease from rebellion while the Temple remained as the focus for concourse from every quarter. Others advised that if the Jews abandoned it and placed no weapons whatever upon it, it should be saved, but if they mounted it for purposes of warfare, it should be burnt; as it would then be no longer a Temple, but a fortress, and thenceforward the impiety would be chargeable, not to the Romans but to those who forced them to take such measures. Titus, however, declared that even were the Jews to mount it and fight therefrom, he would not wreak vengeance on inanimate objects instead of men, nor under any circumstances burn down so magnificent a work; for the loss would affect the Romans, inasmuch as it would be an ornament to the empire if it stood. Fortified by this pronouncement, Fronto, Alexander and Cerealius now came over to his view. He then dissolved the council..." (*War* 6. 236-243). As for the account of Sulpicius, it reads as follows: "It is said that Titus summoned his council, and before taking action consulted it whether he should overthrow a sanctuary of such workmanship, since it seemed to many that a sacred building, one more remarkable than any other work, should not be destroyed. For if preserved it would testify to the moderation of the Romans, while if demolished it would be a perpetual sign of cruelty. On the other hand, others, and Titus himself, expressed their opinion that the Temple should be destroyed without delay, in order that the religion of the Jews and Christians should be more completely exterminated. For those religions, though opposed to one another, derive from the same founders; the Christians stemmed from the Jews and the extirpation of the root would easily cause the offspring to perish" (*Chron.* 2, 30, 6-7 = Stern 1980, II, 64-67, (no. 282).

*Josephus' Version**The Fire*

Josephus tells us that the fire was purely accidental. In absence of Titus, who was resting in his tent (*War* 6. 254), "one of the soldiers, awaiting no orders and with no horror of so dread a deed, but moved by some supernatural impulse, snatched a brand from the burning timber and, hoisted up by one of the comrades, flung the fiery missile through a low golden door, which gave access on the north side to the chambers surrounding the sanctuary" (*War* 6. 252).

Josephus portrays this act as the very beginning of the end, adding that "as the flame shot up, a cry, as poignant as the tragedy, arose from the Jews, who flocked to the rescue, lost to all thought of self-preservation, all husbanding of strength, now that the object of all their past vigilance was vanishing" (*War* 6. 253).

Was this really the case? Hardly, since this fire was not the only one which broke out on that terrible day. In the following hours, six more fires were lit by the Roman soldiers, in different points of the Temple area, and this while Titus himself was on present on the spot. "As they (the legionaries) drew nearer to the sanctuary...they shouted to those in front of them to throw in the firebrands" (*War* 6. 258); "the end was precipitated by one of those who had entered the building, and who...thrust a firebrand, in the darkness, into the hinges of the gate. At once, a flame shot up from the interior...and there was none to prevent those outside from kindling a blaze" (*War* 6. 265–266); "The Romans...set them (the surrounding buildings) all alight, both the remnants of the porticoes and the gates... They further burnt the treasury-chambers... They then proceeded to one of the remaining portico of the outer court...(and) set fire to the portico from below" (*War* 6. 281–284).

In the meantime, the fight continued. "On all sides was carnage and flight", "the victors plundered everything that fell in their way and slaughtered wholesale all who were caught" (*War* 6. 271); "you would indeed have thought that the temple-hill was boiling over from its base, being everywhere one mass of flame, but yet that the stream of blood as more copious than the flames and the slain more numerous than the slayers" (*War* 6. 275).

In this context, it is hard to believe that all these fires were, like the first one, accidental, and, moreover, that they were all lit “against the wishes of Titus” as Josephus would like us to believe, when he writes: “he (Titus) ran to the Temple to arrest the conflagration” (*War* 6. 254); “Caesar, both by voice and hand, signaled to the combatants to extinguish the fire” (*War* 6. 256); “Titus... rushed out and by personal appeals endeavoured to induce the soldiers to quench the fire” (*War* 6. 262). These statements are somewhat puzzling, and the picture of a commander “finding himself unable to restrain the impetuosity of his frenzied soldiers and the fire gaining the mastery” (*War* 6. 260) is difficult to take at face value. Similarly problematic is the question of the spoils.

The Spoils

Josephus tells us that the spoils of the Temple were brought along during the triumph celebrated in Rome: “the spoils in general were borne in promiscuous heaps; but conspicuous above all stood out those captured in the Temple of Jerusalem. These consisted of the golden table of the shewbread and the golden seven-branched candelabrum (*War* 7. 148).”

Parente is the first to ask, how did it happen that these objects were not destroyed in the fire during the final conflagration?¹⁶ Certainly the question deserves our attention.

From the account that Josephus provides us, we get the impression that there was no deliberate, premeditated and programmed pillage of the Temple. Nowhere does Josephus tell us that Titus ordered the holy vessels of the Temple carried away. On the contrary, after describing the beginning of the fire, he states that the holy vessels were still in their place (“Caesar... passed with his generals within the building and beheld the holy place of the sanctuary and all that it contained”: *War* 6. 260). Josephus seems to put the blame on “frenzied” Roman soldiers who were overpowered by their rage and their hatred of the Jews and motivated by the prospect of plunder. The Romans “plundered everything that fell in their way” (*War* 6. 260, 271), but Josephus does not say that these soldiers delivered the sacred objects to Titus.

¹⁶ Parente 2005, 63–66.

He states instead that, after the eventual Roman victory, the sacred vessels had been delivered to the Romans by the Jews themselves:

one of the priests...after obtaining a sworn pledge of protection from Ceasar, on condition of his delivering up some of the sacred treasures, came out and handed over from the wall of the sanctuary two lamp stands similar to those deposited in the sanctuary, along with them tables, bowls, and platters, all of solid gold and very massive; he further delivered up the veils (τὰ καταπετάσματα), the high priests' vestments, including the precious stones, and many other articles used in public worship. Furthermore, the treasurer of the Temple...being taken prisoner, disclosed the tunics and girdles worn by the priests, an abundance of purple and scarlet kept for necessary repairs to the veil of the Temple, along with a mass of cinnamon and cassia and a multitude of other spices, which they mixed and burnt daily as incense to God. Many other treasures also were delivered up by him, with numerous sacred ornaments (*War* 6. 387–391).

However, some details of this account are difficult to take at face value. How could the priests have had so many objects in hand? Moreover, how could a single priest have handed out, from a wall, heavy objects such as the table, which was “of solid gold and very massive”?¹⁷

Similarly problematic, as Parente points out in a recent essay,¹⁸ is the case of the veils of the Temple, mentioned by Josephus in his list of objects “handed over from the wall of the sanctuary” by one of the priests (*War* 6. 389), and again recorded among the spoils carried to Rome which were deposited in the palace: “...but their Law (namely, the scroll of the Law) and the purple veils (τὰ πορφυρᾶ τοῦ σηκοῦ καταπετάσματα) of the sanctuary he (Titus) ordered to be deposited and kept in the palace”.¹⁹

There were thirteen veils in the temple,²⁰ two of which are described by Josephus: the one that adorned the external door of the *ulam*,²¹ and

¹⁷ As for the table's size, we have the traditions preserved by two Rabbis living in the middle of the second century CE: according to Rabbi Judah, the golden table measured 10 × 5 handbreadth (about 100 × 50 cm.), while according to Rabbi Meir it was 12 × 6 handbreadth (which would mean about 120 × 60 cm.) (*m. Menachot* 11:5).

¹⁸ Parente 2005, 66–68.

¹⁹ *War* 7. 161–62.

²⁰ *b. Yoma* 54a; *b. Ketubbot* 106a.

²¹ “The gate opening into the building was...completely overlaid with gold...; and it had golden doors fifty-five cubits high and sixteen broad. Before these (doors) hung a veil (καταπέτασμα) of equal length, of Babylonian tapestry, with embroidery of blue and fine linen, if scarlet also and purple, wrought with marvelous skill. Nor was this

the one that divided the holy place from the Holy of Holies.²² One of these last ones was that (or among those) carried to Rome: a tradition preserved in the Jerusalem Talmud states that a Rabbi living in the middle of the second century, while staying in Rome, had the opportunity of seeing the veil, which was kept in a repository and had “many spots of blood” on it, which may be identified with the blood of the sacrifices held on the Day of Atonement.²³

These veils had to be very heavy: they measured 40×20 cubits (estimating the cubit to be about 50 cm., that would give us about 20×10 meters), and their thickness was one handbreadth, or about 10 cm.²⁴ Their considerable weight is vividly portrayed by the Mishnah, which states that three hundred priests had to carry these veils when they had to immerse them for purification.²⁵ Surely one single priest could not have handed them down from a wall. The question, then, is how and when they got into Roman hands. Most probably, not during the final fight which took place in the temple. Josephus tells us that:

While the temple blazed, the victors plundered everything that fell in their way and slaughtered all who were caught. No pity was shown for age, no reverence for rank; children and greybeards, laity and priests, alike were massacred.... the roar of the flames streaming far and wide mingled with the groans of the falling victims; and, owing to the height of the hill and the mass of the burning pile, one would have thought that the whole city was ablaze.... There were the war-cries of the Roman legions sweeping onward in mass, the howls of the rebels encircled by fire and sword, the rush of the people who, cut off above, fled panic-stricken only to fall into the arms of the foe, and their shrieks as they met their fate. But yet more awful than the uproar were the sufferings. You would indeed have thought that the temple-hill was boiling over from its base, being everywhere one mass of flame, but yet that the stream of blood was more copious than the flames and the slain more numerous than the slayers.... The Romans, thinking it useless, now that the temple

mixture of materials without its mystic meaning; it typified the universe. For the scarlet seemed emblematic of fire, the fine linen of the earth, the blue the air, and the purple of the sea; the comparison in two cases being suggested by their color, and in that of the fine linen and purple by their origin, as the one is produced by the earth and the other by the sea. On this tapestry was portrayed a panorama of the heavens, the signs of the Zodiac excepted (*War* 5. 210–214).

²² “The innermost recess measured twenty cubits, and was screened in like manner from the outer portion by a veil (δείργето ὁμοίως καταπετάσμι πρὸς τὸ ἕξωθεν)” (*War* 5. 219).

²³ *y. Yoma* V 3, 42d; the same appears also in *b. Yoma* 57a and in *b. Me'ilah* 17b.

²⁴ *m. Shekalim* 8:5. See also *t. Shekalim* 3:13.

²⁵ *m. Shekalim* 8:5.

was on fire, to spare the surrounding buildings, set them all alight... They then proceeded to the one remaining portico of the outer court, on which the poor women and children of the populace and a mixed multitude had taken refuge... the soldiers, carried away by rage, set fire to the portico from below; with the result that some were killed plunging out of the flames, others perished amidst them, and out of all that multitude not a soul escaped (*War* 6. 271–285).

In these tragic moments, it seems highly improbable that anybody, Roman soldiers or generals, or the Jews themselves, might have been interested in saving the veils. In this case, they may have been taken down after the final victory if they survived the fire. This, however, is not the only possibility. According to a tradition preserved by Rabbi Judah, who lived in the second century, every year, before the Day of Atonement, the veil separating the holy place from the Holy of the Holies was replaced by a new one, and the one which was not needed any longer was kept in the “*aliya*”, namely, an upper chamber.²⁶ It is therefore possible that it was from there that the Romans carried it off to Rome.

The same may apply also to other vessels: Josephus himself tells us that the lamp stands delivered to the Romans were “lamp stands similar to those deposited in the sanctuary” (*War* 6. 388), implying that they were not in use by the temple cult, and we may believe him, since from the Mishnah we know that a second and a third set of the vessels existed in the Temple, to be used as replacements in case of pollution (*m.Hag.* 3:8).

It is therefore possible that the sacred vessels brought to Rome, or some of them, were not those in use in the Temple cult at the time, but had been taken from the Temple repositories. Most probably, it was after the final victory that Titus gave orders to find out the hidden treasures and pack them, to be carried to Rome.

Conclusion

It is the account of Josephus itself that gives us some reason to believe that things did not happen exactly as Josephus would like us to believe. One would rather think that the decision to destroy the Temple had

²⁶ *t. Shekalim* 3:14.

been taken before the final confrontation. Then the fires were lighted in order to hasten the final victory, which was followed by the pillage, and then, later, Titus ordered “the whole town and the Temple to be razed to the ground” (*War* 7. 1). The pillage and the final demolition suggest that Titus was interested in not leaving anything on the spot which would allow a later rebuilding of the Temple and a revival of its cult. In this context, it is very difficult to believe that the Temple was destroyed “against the wishes of Titus”, as Josephus stresses.

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FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS IN ROME

John Curran

Introduction

Of all the writers of Greek to have made a home in the city of Rome, few can have brought with them as controversial a personal biography as Flavius Josephus. As is notorious, Josephus' accounts of critical events vary between his several works; the scope and ambition of his literary projects also show bewildering diversity; and his *Life* specifically is anything but an autobiography, raising for generations of scholars many more questions than it answers. Taken together, this biography and the condition of Josephus' *opera* have earned for him in the eyes of many influential historians the lowest status as a recorder of historical data from his own times. In a review of Shaye Cohen's *Josephus in Galilee and Rome* (1979), Horst Moehring, wrote: "It has become fashionable in some circles, for patriotic or ecclesiastical reasons to return to the naïve view that historians of the Graeco-Roman age can be made to yield information that would allow us to reconstruct the 'historical facts' of Hellenistic Judaism or the early church. Cohen seems to believe that it is actually possible to separate 'fact' from 'fiction'. He fails to realize that every single sentence of Josephus is determined and coloured by his aims and tendencies. The raw historical data that can be isolated are usually without much interest."¹ Tessa Rajak's *Josephus* was notable in places for tackling the alleged 'inconsistencies' between the works of the historian and with regard to his *Life* she credited Josephus himself with "not a little charm, intelligence and even honesty".² But she in turn drew criticism from Lester Grabbe that she had been "rather credulous" in reconstructing his biography.³ Morton Smith in the authoritative *Cambridge History of Judaism* (1999) offered a stark assessment of the calibre of Josephus: "For the history of the country, the revolt and its immediate consequences we are... dependent

¹ Quoted in Grabbe 1992, 10–11.

² Rajak 1973, 358.

³ Grabbe 1992, 11.

on Josephus whose sources for most of this century were chiefly hearsay, his notes, and his memories—none of them reliable. Besides, he distorted them all to suit various motives...and his *War* was thoroughly edited (and many passages, especially the speeches, were written) by secretaries assigned to him by Titus.”⁴

Discussions of Josephus’ work and opinions have therefore been much-influenced historically by readers’ responses to the self-reported circumstances of his life. But these responses have also, however, influenced (and limited) the ambitions of scholarship on Josephus. He is a man and a writer who is frequently placed by scholars on the margins of his world. As Mary Beard has recently pointed out, Josephus, the author of works written in Greek that occupy 13 volumes in the Loeb Classical Library is overwhelmingly ignored in discussions of classical literature.⁵ He is clearly regarded as being (disconcertingly) ‘Jewish’ (and therefore the responsibility of another scholarly community). Historians of religion, and those of Judaism and Christianity in particular, by contrast, have continued to plunder him, frequently without being particularly interested in the complexities of Josephus’ life-story and context(s). For many of these scholars Josephus is a productive oddity; an eccentric loner who occasionally illuminates something much more interesting in their own areas of interest. One of the most powerful messages to emerge from the most recent international colloquium on Josephus “*Between Jerusalem And Rome*” was the imperative importance of taking Josephus seriously as an author “and not simply as a quarry that may be used as a source of information about the various subject matters that he treated”.⁶

Recent work, however, has begun to shed light on the Flavian Rome that was Josephus’ home, prompting some interesting research on Josephus’ position *in* that world.⁷ In other words, it is becoming possible to put Josephus into some kind of cultural *context*, an endeavour that historians have been slow to undertake because they understandably were so detained by the condition of his *texts*. But when the attempt is made, there follows what I believe to be some very interesting and challenging conclusions.

⁴ Smith 1999, 501–02.

⁵ Beard 2003, 544–45.

⁶ Sievers and Lembi 2005, x.

⁷ Sievers and Lembi 2005; Edmondson, Mason and Rives 2005; Boyle and Dominik 2003.

Josephus' Roman Contacts

The biography of Josephus as reported makes some famous and impressive claims concerning his access to the highest circles in Rome. As is well known, Josephus states that he had served on an embassy c. CE 64 to secure the release of some priests detained by the Roman authorities; that he had befriended a Jewish actor and favourite of Nero ('Aliturus') and through the latter got to know Poppaea, wife of Nero. He dramatically came to know Vespasian, who freed him, made him a citizen, gave him women to marry, and actually accommodated him in his own house in Rome. He accompanied Titus at the siege and fall of Jerusalem; acted as an interpreter for the Romans and also interceded for a number of friends and relatives caught up in the destruction of the city. Josephus wrote and formally presented his *Jewish War* to the emperors Vespasian and Titus and the latter (who had actually destroyed Jerusalem) authenticated it formally and ordered it deposited in the libraries of Rome (*Life* 65, 363). Agrippa II (the great-grandson of Herod the Great) admired the work, Josephus writes, and wrote some sixty-two letters to the author on points of detail (two are reproduced in the *Vita*). The emperor Domitian is reported with some satisfaction by Josephus to have punished his Jewish accusers and exempted his property in Judaea from taxation. "Moreover, Domitia, Caesar's [Domitian's] wife, never ceased conferring favours upon me (*Life* 76, 429)."⁸

In other words, Josephus tells us that he was a major figure at the court of the Flavians and that his *Jewish War* had the strongest backing from them. These claims continue to be a challenge for scholars. Hannah Cotton and Werner Eck are among the most recent to be provoked: "Josephus surely would have stressed, if not exaggerated, his closeness to the imperial family, had such closeness existed. But in fact he has surprisingly little to say about it."⁹ Unpicking Josephus' claims, they point out that Josephus' accommodation in Rome was not in the imperial palace but in Vespasian's *former* residence, on the Quirinal (in *regio* VI) and that while Josephus did indeed receive citizenship

⁸ All translations, unless otherwise indicated, from the LCL.

⁹ Cotton and Eck 2005, 38. For a similar down-playing of the actual closeness of Josephus and the Flavians see also Mason 1998, 74.

so did many others.¹⁰ And though he claims to have sent copies of his *War* to “many” who had taken part in the campaign (*Life* 362; *Apion* 1. 51), he tellingly names none of them. Where *are* his powerful contacts? Cotton and Eck believe that Josephus was in fact the beneficiary of quite *routine* imperial patronage. He was one of many faceless clients; he just happened to be a (rather undistinguished but copious) writer. They draw attention to the fact that while the *Jewish War* was seemingly connected to Flavian interest and patronage, Josephus’ other works (*Antiquities of the Jews*; *Life* and *Against Apion*) had a different dedicatee: one Epaphroditus. But who was he?

Josephus gives an enthusiastic but inconclusive description: “...a man devoted to every form of learning, but specially interested in the experiences of history, conversant as he himself has been with large affairs and varying turns of fortune, through all of which he has displayed a wonderful force of character and an attachment to virtue that nothing could deflect (*Antiquities* 1. 8)”. Historians have naturally been drawn towards the identity of this person. There are two main candidates: The first is Nero’s freedman *a libellis* who had played a role in detecting conspiracy against the emperor in CE 64 and was subsequently richly rewarded by the emperor for his loyalty. But his high status did not persist. Suetonius claims that Domitian first relegated Epaphroditus (seemingly *c.* CE 90) and then executed him *c.* CE 94–5, perhaps so that he could seize his property.¹¹ The publication dates of *Antiquities*, *Life* and *Against Apion* however seem all to be around CE 93–94 when this Epaphroditus was seemingly already out of favour, making it most unlikely that Josephus would do anything as unwise as dedicate some works to him.

A second plausible Epaphroditus is mentioned by the late and not always reliable 10th century *Suda* (*s.v.* ‘Epaphroditus’; d. 96–8). Reference is made there to a freedman *grammaticus* of this period who kept two apartments in Rome housing some 30,000 scrolls. But according to Cotton and Eck, if this man is Josephus’ patron for his later works then it shows how distant Josephus was from real power in Rome. They conclude: “[Josephus] was in all likelihood extremely lonely and

¹⁰ Cotton and Eck 2005, 40. For topographical information on the site of Vespaasian’s house see *LTUR* 2. 104: ‘*Domus*: T. Flavius Vespasianus’.

¹¹ Suetonius, *Domitian* 14; Dio 67. 14. 4. See Mason 2003a, 172 n. 1780; Schürer 1973, 48 n. 9. Among those still open to the possibility of Josephus’ ‘Epaphroditus’ as Nero’s freedman, see Mason 2003b, 564; Haaland 2005, 316; Berber 1997, 65–6.

isolated at Rome... it throws the total isolation of the Jewish historian in Rome into deep relief.”¹²

The conclusions of Cotton and Eck place them in that tradition of scholars who locate Josephus on the margins of worlds, a tradition that is built upon the technique of scrutinizing specific propositions made by Josephus about himself or about history and culture as he reported it. The limitation of this approach, however, is that it does not pay sufficient attention to Josephus’ context where there may be useful information to be considered. Or, to put it another way, it does not show sufficient interest in the reasons for the *existence* of Josephus’ works. This prompts some consideration of the condition of Judaism in Rome.

Judaism at Rome

As is well known, a number of incidents are reported to us concerning Jewish matters in Flavian (and Josephan) Rome. It has been suggested by some scholars that non-Jews in the city (and particularly during the reign of Domitian) were actually *attracted* to Judaism.¹³ The evidence consists of several famous pieces of testimony. Suetonius’ *Domitian* gave an account of a rigorous investigation into the payment of the Jewish tax in Rome: “Domitian’s agents collected the tax on Jews with a peculiar lack of mercy; and took proceedings not only against those who kept their Jewish origins a secret in order to avoid the tax, but against those who lived as Jews without professing Judaism. As a boy, I remember once attending a crowded court where the imperial agent had a ninety-year-old man inspected to establish whether or not he had been circumcised (*Domitian* 12. 2).”¹⁴

Dio Cassius (*via* Xiphilinus’ *epitome*) gives an account of the well known episode in CE 95 when Domitian’s cousin, Titus Flavius Clemens, and his wife Flavia Domitilla were charged with ‘*atheotes*’ (not a charge in Roman law; possibly ‘*superstitio*’): “And the same year Domitian slew, along with many others, Flavius Clemens the consul, although he was a cousin and had to wife Flavia Domitilla, who was

¹² Cotton and Eck 2005, 52.

¹³ Feldman 1993, 100, 332; Schäfer 1997, 115–16.

¹⁴ Translated by Robert Graves.

also a relative of the emperor's. The charge brought against them both was that of atheism, a charge on which *many others* [italics mine] who drifted into Jewish ways were condemned (Dio 67. 14. 1–2)."

Commenting on the early actions of Domitian's successor Nerva, Dio writes: "Nerva also released all who were on trial for *asebia* ['atheism'—again, not a crime in Roman law] and restored the exiles; moreover, he put to death all the slaves and the freedmen who had conspired against their masters and allowed that class of persons to lodge no complaint whatever against their masters; and no persons were permitted to accuse anybody of *asebia* or of a Jewish mode of life (Dio 68. 1. 2)."

Finally, coins issued by Nerva, shortly after coming to power bore the legend: "Fisci Iudaici Calumnia Sublata" meaning "the malicious accusation of the treasury for the Jewish tax has been removed" and indicating seemingly that some controversial aspect of the working of the Jewish treasury and perhaps of the Jewish tax itself had been resolved.¹⁵

Traditionally, the study of these episodes has been undertaken with a view to determining the degree to which Judaism was a proselytising religion. And so Martin Goodman has turned his attention to what he regards as this limited evidence, suggesting that there is rather less here than meets the eye. He points out that of the four items cited above, only two (the case of Flavius Clemens and Domitilla and the passage concerning Nerva banning charges of adopting a Jewish mode of life) actually refer to people taking up a Jewish way of living. There was no such crime as 'atheism' in Roman law and not many of the alleged offenders are *named*. According to Goodman, their so-called 'Judaizing' might in fact be a cover for *political* dissent.¹⁶ And the passage concerning Domitian could just be about Jews who were seeking to avoid paying the tax on them, not about new converts. Nerva's action recorded on coins may have been an expression of the attempt to put some distance between himself and his Flavian predecessors; he may even have abolished the special treasury into which Jews were supposed to pay the former Temple-tax.¹⁷

For Goodman, the anti-Jewish ethos of the Flavian dynasty was deeply imprinted on the landscape of Rome itself (the great Flavian

¹⁵ RIC 2. 227 no. 58; 228 no. 82. The translation that of Goodman 2005, 168–9.

¹⁶ Goodman 2005, 174–5.

¹⁷ Goodman 2005, 176.

amphitheatre of the city was funded by the spoils of war; the Temple of Peace had within it looted treasures from the Temple in Jerusalem; the 'arch of Titus' referred to the victory—although dedicated by Domitian as late as CE 85).¹⁸ It is inconceivable to Goodman that any kind of genuine enthusiasm for Judaism could have flourished in this environment. As he puts it: "By constant reminders Roman Jews found their religion denigrated and themselves marginalized in their own city... Most Jews in Flavian Rome... lived as a small, cowed minority, poverty-stricken and insecure."¹⁹

But *did* they? According to Goodman: "Josephus' brave defence of his people's history and customs in his *Antiquities*, composed between 81 and 93 CE, was produced in direct contradiction to the alleged anti-Jewish ethos of the Flavian regime, but he asserts quite clearly the exceptional favour showered upon him by all three Flavian emperors."²⁰ But if Cotton and Eck are right, along with the many believers in Josephus as a lonely old man in Rome, Josephus' project would have been a highly hazardous undertaking. So what is it that Josephus says?

My privileged position excited envy and thereby exposed me to danger. A certain Jew, named Jonathan, who had promoted an insurrection in Cyrene, occasioning the destruction of two thousand of the natives, whom he had induced to join him, on being sent in chains by the governor of the district to the emperor, asserted that I had provided him with arms and money. Undeceived by this mendacious statement, Vespasian condemned him to death, and he was delivered over to execution. Subsequently, numerous accusations against me were fabricated by persons who envied me my good fortune... On Vespasian's decease Titus, who succeeded to the empire, showed the same esteem for me as did his father, and never credited the accusations to which I was constantly subjected. Domitian succeeded Titus... he punished my Jewish accusers... (*Vita* 76, 425; 428–9).

¹⁸ Goodman 2005, 170. See Millar 2005, 117–18, and Alföldi 1995 on the emphasis on Flavian Amphitheatre as a project explicitly funded "ex manubis".

¹⁹ Goodman 2005, 173.

²⁰ Goodman 2005, 172–73 citing *Vita* 425, 428–29. Cf. 175, "...it is worth noting the extraordinary obtuseness (or bravery) of Josephus in writing so enthusiastically about converts to Judaism in Adiabene and elsewhere precisely at the time of greatest hostility to the idea in Rome (*Antiquities* 20. 17–93; 135). To accuse someone of Judaizing was to accuse them of disloyalty to the regime." See also Goodman 1994, 337–8; Barclay 2005, 29: "To write Judaeon history in Rome at the end of the first century CE was, for a Judaeon, a fraught procedure"; McLaren 2005, 292; Mason 2003b, 661: "Post-war Rome... was presumably not a pleasant environment for most expatriate Judaeans."

What Josephus is actually suggesting here is that he was persistently endangered by accusations from *fellow Jews*, accusers who had no difficulty approaching the authorities to try and get Josephus into trouble. But these are the very people whom the conventional explanations suggest had the strongest interest in avoiding the attention of emperors. So how dangerous a place for Jews *was* Flavian Rome?

A range of evidence presents itself, much of it under-appreciated by recent studies of Jews in the imperial capital. Among the most intriguing is the fact that Titus, conqueror of Jerusalem, had a relationship lasting several years with the (Herodian) Jewish princess Berenike. She came to Rome in 75 and lived on the Palatine with him for several years. The great Quintilian (first occupant of a Flavian-endowed chair of rhetoric at Rome) acted for her in litigation. Unsurprisingly, the satirists exploited the scandal.²¹ And Dio writes: "Berenice was at the height of her power and consequently came to Rome along with her brother Agrippa. The latter was given the rank of praetor, while she dwelt in the palace, cohabiting with Titus. She expected to marry him and was already behaving in every respect as if she were his wife; but when he perceived that the Romans were displeased with the situation, he sent her away (Dio 66 (65). 15. 3–4)."²² After the death of Vespasian, she even *returned* to Rome but Titus notoriously ignored her, being now weighed down by the burdens of his position as emperor. She was dismissed finally in CE 79.²³

Although Berenike has been harshly judged by ancient satirists, historians and modern treatments ("as bigoted as she was dissolute" according to Schürer), she was clearly a person with a serious interest in Jewish affairs.²⁴ Josephus reports that she had taken a so-called 'Nazirite vow'.²⁵ She and Agrippa are recorded by *Acts* as interviewing Paul of Tarsus about his ideas. Paul called Agrippa "an expert in matters of custom and controversy among the Jews" and Berenike was clearly present throughout the interviews.²⁶ Agrippa is also reported by

²¹ See Juvenal *Satires* 6. 156–60; Tacitus *Histories* 2. 2.

²² See also Suetonius, *Titus* 7. 1; Aurelius Victor *Epit.* 10. 4; 10. 7 for apparent promises to marry.

²³ Dio 66. 18. 1; Suetonius, *Titus* 7. 2 where he is reported unwillingly to have sent her away. Mason 2005, 93.

²⁴ Schürer vol. 1 1973, 475.

²⁵ *War* 2. 313, like queen Helena of Adiabene. See Schürer vol. 3 1986, 163 with refs.

²⁶ *Acts* 25. 22 ff.

Josephus to have had a dining room added to the eastern side of his accommodation in the Upper City (the Hasmonaeon palace) in order to observe the priests of the Temple at their duties. Although the subsequent complaints of the Temple priesthood were upheld in Rome, Agrippa's intentions were further illustration of a committed interest in Judaism and its institutions.²⁷ And when James the brother of Jesus was stoned to death: "Those of the inhabitants of the city who were considered the most fair-minded and who were strict in the observance of the Law... (*Ant.* 20. 201–2)" approached Agrippa in the first instance.²⁸ The latter deposed the High Priest Ananus on account of his objectionable behaviour. Reviewing this evidence, it is clear that Agrippa's interest in Jewish institutions was quite real and Agrippa continued to pursue it when beyond the province, as the letters of Agrippa to Josephus in Rome prove.

But it is clear that Josephus' labours in Rome were not undertaken in literary isolation. There were in fact other works in circulation in the city on the subject of the Jews and Judaism. Steve Mason's translation of the opening lines of the *War* preserves the sense of *on-going* activity:

Whereas, with respect to the war of Judaeans against Romans...those who did not happen to be at the events, but *are collecting* random and incoherent tales through hearsay, *are writing them up* sophist-like, while others who were there are *misrepresenting the events*, either through flattery toward the Romans or through hatred towards the Judaeans—their compositions comprise denunciation in some cases and encomium in others, but nowhere the precision of history—I, Josephus...have set myself the task of providing a narrative in the Greek language... (*War* 1. 1–3).²⁹

Two groups then, at least, in Rome: those who were not eye-witnesses collecting incoherent stories and those who were but who were determined to misrepresent.

²⁷ *Ant.* 20. 189–95.

²⁸ It is, I think, unwarranted to reason as Mason does, 1998, 99, that these incidents are best viewed as evidence that Agrippa "continually violated Jewish law and custom". What is significant is that Agrippa took a very real interest in what he considered the proper conduct of Jewish life.

²⁹ An idea of some of the hostile ideas in circulation: Tacitus, *Histories* 5. 1–13; Philostratus, *Apollonius* 5. 33; Celsus in Origen, *Contra Celsum* 5. 41; Minucius Felix, *Octavius* 10. 33 (Jews as rebellious and misanthropic).

More specifically, the Christian writer Minucius Felix (early 3rd century AD) knew of a work *de Judeis* by one Antonius Julianus, pretty clearly Marcus Antonius Julianus, named by Josephus as the procurator of Judaea during the war.³⁰ Fausto Parente has recently suggested that this man may have been responsible for the ‘official’ chronicle of the war of the Flavians in Judaea, a work which was based (like Josephus’ *War*) on the *commentarii* of the victorious generals.³¹

And Josephus’ *Life*, appended to his *Antiquities of the Jews*, was seemingly in significant part a response to a work written by Justus of Tiberias (in Galilee), a contemporary of Josephus and fellow-combatant in the war who had worked for Agrippa II in more recent times.³² In his book, Justus had clearly had things to say about Josephus’ own activities during the war with Rome, prompting Josephus to defend himself. But Justus of Tiberias’ work had been rather more than an attack on Josephus. Photius (9th century AD) had seen it and claimed that it had included an excursus on the kings of the Jews.³³ Parente concluded that this work was “without a shadow of a doubt written for Jews”.³⁴

And rabbinic tradition (found in at least three separate tracts) has the most prominent rabbi of the age (Schürer called him “the most celebrated scholar of the turn of the century”), Gamaliel II *visiting* Rome with leading rabbis under Domitian or shortly after, reportedly in response to a proposal from “a Caesar who hated the Jews” that they ought to be exterminated.³⁵ Rabbinic works name a Roman official spoken to by Rabbi Johanan (or in some versions Rabbi Gamaliel II). He is variously identified but as Mary Smallwood long ago noticed, a number of his assigned names seem to begin with ‘ANT-’. The last procurator of the province was as we saw M. Antonius Julianus, the author of a work on the Jews.³⁶

³⁰ *Octavius* 33. 4; *War* 6. 238. See Schürer vol. 1 1973, 33–4.

³¹ Parente 2005, 47.

³² See the careful discussion in Mason 2003a, xxvii–xxxiv; Rajak 1973 and 1987.

³³ The passage usefully cited and discussed in Rajak 1973, 358–65.

³⁴ Parente 2005, 49.

³⁵ Schürer vol. 2 1986, 375. Noted with acuity by Smallwood 1956, 10.

³⁶ Smallwood 1981, 350 n. 75. See especially *mErubin* 4, 1–2; *mMaaser Sheni* 5, 9; *mShabbah* 16, 8. As Parente points out (2005, 68 n. 48), a number of scholars (including Weber and Weinreich) think that one of the most famous incidents of reported supernatural occurrences (god(s) leaving the Temple, reproduced in Josephus, Tacitus and Suetonius) is likely to have come from the account of Antonius Julianus.

This evidence taken together suggests, I think, a rather more complicated picture of Judaism at Rome under the Flavian emperors than has been understood. In fact, one of the most important consequences of the Flavian military triumph in Judaea, a triumph that had culminated in the destruction of the Temple itself, was the stimulation it provided to discourse both about but also *within* Judaism; a reflection upon what being Jewish actually meant in a world without a functioning Temple in Jerusalem. Mason has suggested that *Antiquities* was written for a group of Gentiles in Rome who were attracted to Jewish culture.³⁷ The interest of such a group is certainly demonstrable, as is Josephus' formulaic praise of their enthusiasm in his opening remarks (*Ant.* 1. 4; 8–9). For Mason, Josephus' presentation of the historic Jewish constitutions (*politeia*) was an attempt to persuade these interested Gentiles. And in that constitution there was a place of exceptional importance for a priestly *aristokrateia* as well as a priestly 'senate'.³⁸ But it is worth reflecting upon what these statements implied for Josephus himself and other priests in the postwar situation. They made the strongest claim for their authority as participants in the discourse over what kind of institutions could best now express the piety of the Jews to their God. Part of that discourse took place unimpeded in Flavian Rome and his surviving works demonstrate that one of the most voluminous contributors to it was Flavius Josephus. In fact, John Barclay has recently identified Josephus as a classic manifestation of the postcolonial phenomenon of 'autohistory', an enterprise designed to outline the history of a people in the idiom of the majority culture but with primary reference to its own institutions and on its own terms.³⁹

Jonathan Price has looked at Josephus as "the provincial historian in Rome".⁴⁰ He considers who is likely actually to have read Josephus' works. Like Cotton and Eck, Price notes the apparent absence of evidence of Josephan participation in the highest literary circles of Rome. He rightly observes that just as Josephus is likely never to have lost his 'foreign' accent, so he never shed his 'foreign' (and to Roman eyes

³⁷ Mason 1998, 79–80.

³⁸ *Antiquities* 3. 159–87 (High Priest's clothing); 3. 214 (gems on the High Priest's robes); 4. 304 (laws given for safe-keeping to the priests) as well as a priestly 'senate' (*gerousia*): *Antiquities* 5. 15; 55 where the Biblical narrative is modified to make it look as if Moses consulted a priestly 'senate'.

³⁹ Barclay 2005, 35.

⁴⁰ Price 2005, 101.

eccentric) outlook on the purpose of history.⁴¹ For all the mannered Thucydidean and Polybian phrases, the intrusion of an all-too-Jewish apologetic aim was obvious right from the opening words of the *War*.⁴² This was a consequence of his setting himself the task of addressing so many different audiences at the same time: veterans and participants in the war; 'Greeks' and interested speakers of Latin.⁴³ But of all the ideas in the *War* that might have struck readers in Rome as strange none is more challenging than that of the Romans themselves serving as an instrument in the grand history of the Jewish god's plan for his people. In fact, Josephus' own reported speech to those besieged in Jerusalem is a long meditation on precisely this theme.⁴⁴ And as Price acutely notes, no reader of the *book of Daniel* could fail to see the deeply Jewish case being made.⁴⁵ Price, however, having gone some way to identifying usefully the distinctively Jewish outlook of Josephus, is still to a certain extent influenced by the traditional agenda of studies on the historian in Rome, concluding again that the author was "isolated at Rome for the last thirty years of his life."⁴⁶

By contrast, Steve Mason has suggested that 'publication' of Josephus' works placed him at the centre of a network of individuals and a readership within the city of Rome itself. He goes on to argue that the *War* was aimed at a readership which he describes as "a sophisticated Roman audience... one that was fully at home in elite discourse about politics and constitutions, and that had a taste for fine writing".⁴⁷ These listeners and readers explain why Josephus' presentation of Roman history in the *War* is so abbreviated and familiar.⁴⁸ But Mason encounters what he takes to be a problem. Whereas Josephus' "Polybian-style table of contents" (*War* 1. 17–30) "conspicuously reaches out to a Roman audience", what actually *follows* in the substance of his account

⁴¹ Accent: *Ant.* 20. 263.

⁴² Price 2005, 109–18.

⁴³ Though cf. Paul of Tarsus' *Rom* 1. 14 where 'Greeks' clearly refers to those inhabiting the Hellenic world and includes speakers of Latin. See Meeks (2003, 50) who points out that Paul is capable of conceiving of a 'Greek'/'barbarian' distinction but also of a 'Jew'/'Greek'—very much like Josephus.

⁴⁴ *War* 5. 362–419.

⁴⁵ Price 2005, 117.

⁴⁶ Price 2005, 118.

⁴⁷ Mason 2005, 99. See also Mason (1998, 68): "All these works [*War*, *Antiquities*, *Life*, *Against Apion*] are aimed at Gentiles".

⁴⁸ Mason 2005, 91–95.

is rather more than what is promised.⁴⁹ There are in particular considerable details on figures such as John of Gischala, Simon bar Giora and Eleazar son of Yair. As Mason puts it, "...this outline does not in fact match the content of the book. It seems rather carefully crafted to hook the audience in—a Roman audience—while reserving detailed reinterpretation of the war for the appropriate time".⁵⁰ But what Mason may have overlooked is the possibility that interested *Jewish* listeners in Rome may have been among Josephus' audience. With regard to the *War*, a roll-call of those to whom Josephus says that he passed on copies makes interesting reading (*Life* 65, 361–2; *Against Apion* 1. 51–2). The latter passage names as recipients alongside the emperors Vespasian and Titus "a large number of my own people" (in the *Against Apion* Josephus says that he sold the work to them, whereas in the *Vita* he says he passed on copies), including King Agrippa (II), his brother-in-law Julius Archelaus and a person identified only as "the most dignified Herod".⁵¹ Mason has rightly pointed out the ongoing and personal contact which Josephus is likely to have enjoyed with Agrippa II (whom Josephus claims had written him 62 letters on points of detail raised by the historian's work).⁵² Mason concentrated on Josephus' assertion that each of these recipients was familiar with Greek and as such were fitting recipients of a work designed for just such a readership (*Vita* 65, 359; *C. Ap.* 1. 52).⁵³ But there is another possibility. As long ago as the prologue to the *War* (1. 22) Josephus had written: "I shall give a precise description of the sufferings of the prisoners taken in the several towns, from my own observation or personal share in them. For I shall conceal nothing even of my own misfortunes, as I shall be addressing persons who are well aware of them." The passage is I think an indication that Josephus from his earliest writings in Greek knew himself to be addressing *Jewish* listeners and readers.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Mason 2005, 95.

⁵⁰ Mason 2005, 96.

⁵¹ Kokkinos 1998, 197 identifies the latter as Herod VII (the last bearer of the name), son of Aristobulus III (son of Herod of Chalcis). He was a cousin of Agrippa II.

⁵² *Vita* 364–366 with Mason 2005, 85.

⁵³ Mason 2005, 86.

⁵⁴ See Mason 1998, 73 on the importance of *War* 1. 1–3; 6–16, where the self-conscious aim of challenging pro-Roman and anti-Jewish histories is established. By contrast, Sterling 1992, 297–308 sees *Antiquities* as addressed simultaneously to readerships in Greek Diaspora communities, Roman authorities and a Judean readership. Mason 2003b, 565 n. 27 points out the tendency of Josephus to explain Roman customs

In fact, with the increasing sophistication of modern scholarly readers of Josephus, we are moving now to a position where it is possible to recover from his works some of the major issues for his Jewish readership. A digression on the Roman army in the *War* is justified by the statement: "If I have dwelt at some length on this topic my intention was not so much to extol the Romans as to console those whom they have vanquished and to deter others who may be tempted to revolt (3. 108)." It is not difficult to accept that news of the war is indeed likely to have prompted the deepest despair and grief among pious Jews of Diaspora communities, Rome included. More significantly, the events raised issues for groups and individuals about what precisely had happened but also about the implications for the future.

With regard specifically to the Temple, for example, it is clear that its loss was a catastrophe for a significant number of Jews in Rome. How had the God of the Jews *allowed* the destruction of the Temple to take place? In a famous passage of the *War*, Josephus depicts himself addressing the rebels at Roman bidding and saying: "...the Deity has fled from the holy places and taken His stand on the side of those with whom you are at war (*War* 5. 412)." Elsewhere, Josephus writes explicitly of the god of the Jews "co-operating" with the Romans (*War* 6. 38 [Titus speaking]). And notoriously the soldier who set the Temple on fire was reported by Josephus to have been acting "moved by some divine impulse" (*War* 6. 252).⁵⁵ At *War* 6. 299: "...the priests on entering the inner court of the Temple by night [on the day of Pentecost (*Shabuot*)], as was their custom in the discharge of their ministrations, reported that they were conscious, first of a commotion and a din, and after, that of a voice as of a host, 'We are departing hence'".⁵⁶ As

in a work published in Rome (see e.g. *Ant.* 18. 195; 19. 24) and rightly denies this as evidence against a Roman audience but overlooks the variegation of that audience.

⁵⁵ Parente argues 2005, 66–67 that the depiction of this scene in particular was an effective way of showing that the Romans and Titus in particular were actually impotent and unable to control the fury of their soldiers (itself therefore an instrument of the Jewish God).

⁵⁶ A version of what is pretty clearly the same story in Tac. *Histories* 13. 1 and Suet. *Vespasian* 4. 5 (see Stern's comments in 1980, nos. 281, 312. See also Josephus, *War* 6. 109–10: "Who knows not the records of the ancient prophets and that oracle which threatens this poor city and is even now coming true? For they foretold that it would be taken whensoever one should begin to slaughter his own countrymen. And is not the city, aye and the whole Temple, filled with your corpses? God it is then, God himself who with the Romans is bringing the fire to purge His Temple and exterminating a city so laden with pollutions." Parente 2005, 68 n. 49 observes (*contra* Thackeray's

Parente has recently suggested, Josephus' aim here was to demonstrate to *Jews* that the destruction of the Temple could not have been avoided and that its destruction was God's will.⁵⁷ There was therefore no reason to seek *revenge*. It is clear then that there were other interpretations of the destruction in circulation, in particular a version that passed on into rabbinic circles and subsequent notoriety that the wicked Titus had deliberately destroyed the Temple and desecrated it in vile ways.⁵⁸

With regard to the rebels, one of Josephus' most famously and energetically pursued themes is his depiction of them as fanatics and irresponsible villains, noting especially the suggestion that they had repeatedly behaved in a depraved or sacrilegious fashion.⁵⁹ As Price has pointed out, Josephus is to be considered as acutely unreliable over some of these details but what is important here is that he felt it important to put his views into circulation with a Jewish audience and listeners.⁶⁰ There were clearly other interpretations abroad.

More ambitiously, a quite separate project in both *War* and (much more extensively) *Antiquities* was no less than a paraphrase of the Bible, an undertaking which Spilsbury has recently described as "central to his construction of identity both for himself and for his entire community."⁶¹ But in both works the project is rather more than a paraphrase as has of course long been known; it is highly worked and edited in significant ways.⁶² In *War* for example, Abraham becomes, in Spilsbury's words "a pious pacifist".⁶³ Moving to the *Antiquities*, Spilsbury and others have noted the absence in Josephus' work of the Covenant between the Jewish people and their God with regard to a land to live in. Betsy Amaru has interpreted the absence as a quite deliberate editing designed to exclude the kind of land theology that seemed to inspire some of the rebels in the war with Rome.⁶⁴ Judaism itself on

original note *ad loc.*) that the prophecy in question cannot have been Sibylline. See too Parente 2000, 37 n. 55.

⁵⁷ Parente 2005, 67. Cf. too Josephus' David, made to say at *Antiquities* 7. 373: "[I]t is not such a terrible thing to serve even a foreign master, if God so wills."

⁵⁸ See especially *b. Gittin* 56b; *Lev. Rab.* 22, 3; *Abot de Rabbi Natan* (B) 20. Parente 2005, 69 n. 50 thought that these stories derived from a single source.

⁵⁹ Parente 2005, 52–57. Good analysis too in Price 1992, 144–59.

⁶⁰ Price 1992, 150 with regard to allegations of torture in *War* 5. 433–5.

⁶¹ Spilsbury 2005, 211.

⁶² See especially Feldman 1998a and 1998b.

⁶³ Spilsbury 2005, 213. Cf. *Gen* 14. 14 and *War* 5. 380–82.

⁶⁴ Amaru 1980–81.

this view no longer had land at its heart. It had necessarily become centred on the Torah, see particularly Moses' farewell message to his people: "I am leaving you myself, rejoicing in your happiness, committing you to the sober guidance of the laws, to the ordered scheme of the constitution (*politeia*) and to the virtues of those chiefs (*strategoi*) who will take thought for your interests (*Antiquities* 4. 184)."⁶⁵

Spilsbury detected what he thought was the influence of Roman social conventions in Josephus' re-casting of the relationship between God and the Jews, especially in the presentation of God and the Jews as patron and client.⁶⁶ But this should not detract from the overwhelming self-conscious 'Jewishness' of the fundamental ideas. By contrast, elsewhere Josephus mentions a number of Jewish institutions and does not soften their impact on Roman sensibilities. This is especially the case with circumcision as a distinctive sign of Jewish identity.⁶⁷ According to Spilsbury: "it would seem that Josephus gave up explicit references to a covenant in order to make space on the margins of Roman discourse for an affirmation of God's commitment to the Jews."⁶⁸ While Spilsbury is certainly right to locate the subject of such a debate on the 'margins' of *Roman* intellectual life, it was *central* to many of the Jews of Rome.

And as for Josephus' meditations on the *politeia* of the Jews, learned Gentiles were indeed interested in the question, but its importance for post-war Temple-less Jews in Rome was of an altogether different order. The suggestion made by Morton Smith that Josephus was an advocate for the interests or rabbinism at Yavneh has rightly been set aside;⁶⁹ but in reflecting upon Josephus and his Roman context, I suggest that Josephus with some sophistication took the opportunity provided by a humane patron to speak to a number of different audiences in the empire's capital. His interested Jewish listeners

⁶⁵ And cf. *Antiquities* 1. 14 for a strong statement on the danger to those who depart from well-founded and framed laws: "...the main thing to be learned from this history by any who care to peruse it is that men who conform to the will of God, and do not venture to transgress laws that have been excellently laid down, prosper in all things beyond belief, and for their reward are offered by God felicity; whereas in proportion as they depart from the strict observance of these laws, things (else) practicable become impracticable, and whatever imaginary good thing they strive to do ends in irretrievable disasters."

⁶⁶ Spilsbury 2005, 218.

⁶⁷ *Antiquities* 8. 262. Cf. *Apion* 1. 171.

⁶⁸ Spilsbury (2005, 221).

⁶⁹ Smith 1956 and Cohen 1987.

were people confronting issues of the deepest significance for their identity, values and destiny. To these people Josephus offered a future based upon a distinctive interpretation of the past. The ideal government of the Jews was to be provided by a credible and pious Jewish *aristokrateia*, as it had been in the most successful periods of Jewish history.⁷⁰ A future, in other words, under the guidance and supervision of people like Josephus himself.

There is clear evidence, furthermore, that some interested Gentiles noticed this discourse within Roman Judaism. Two pieces of evidence in particular are noteworthy: Fergus Millar in examining the relationship between Epictetus and the imperial court duly reported the expulsion of the philosopher from Rome along with other individuals in probably 92–3.⁷¹ Epictetus went as far as Nicopolis in Epirus, but Millar was struck by how prominent meditations and memories on life in Rome were in his discourses during this period.⁷² Interestingly enough, Epictetus' master during his life in Rome was one Epaphroditus, a character depicted so unflatteringly differently from Josephus' patron that many do not believe them to have been the same man, although it is at the very least a striking coincidence.⁷³ In Arrian's version of one of Epictetus' lectures, he had the philosopher ask:

Why, then, do you call yourself a Stoic, why do you deceive the multitude, why do you act the part of a Jew, when you are a Greek? Do you not see in what sense men are severally called Jew, Syrian, or Egyptian? For example, whenever we see a man halting between two faiths (*epamfoterizonta*), we are in the habit of saying "He is not a Jew, he is only acting the part." But when he adopts the attitude of mind of the man who has been baptised and has made his choice, then he is both a Jew in fact and is also called one. So we also are counterfeit "baptists", ostensibly Jews, but in reality something else, not in sympathy with our own reason, far from applying the principles which we profess, yet priding ourselves upon them as being men who know them (*Epict. Diss. 2. 9. 19–21*).

To some older readers of the passage above, Epictetus was confusing Judaism with Christianity. But as Menahem Stern pointed out,

⁷⁰ See especially, Mason 2003b, 577–81.

⁷¹ Millar 1965, 142.

⁷² Millar 1965, 142: "Even Stoics are human and one cannot but note how often Epictetus' mind turned to Rome and Roman life which he had left some fifteen years before."

⁷³ Jones 2005, 206–07.

immersion is indeed talked about in rabbinic materials as one of the indications of interest in Judaism (the others being circumcision and sacrifice).⁷⁴ Epictetus was not confused. I believe that he had seen with his own eyes people in Rome who called themselves Jews but expressed their Judaism in different ways. (Famously of course, so had Paul of Tarsus as early as the 50s CE, his *Letter to the Romans* 2. 25–9, reflecting on the relative significance of the physical *signs* of Judaism compared to adherence to the Law).

But another person who noticed this discourse about and within Judaism was the emperor Domitian. As we have seen, he construed in some of the activities of persons interested in the subject of Judaism a threat to himself, convenient or otherwise. There has been a frequent tendency as we have seen to interpret the deaths of Clemens and Domitilla as a radical solution to a political problem, all masked behind a defence of Roman *religio*. Eusebius of Caesarea wrote up most of these enquiries into Judaism as early forays into Christianity. But not all. In his *Ecclesiastical History* he preserved a fragment of the earlier writer Hegesippus (*fl.* 100–180, author of acts of the church of some kind):

The...emperor [Domitian] ordered the execution of all who were of David's line, and there is an old and firm tradition that a group of heretics accused the family of Jude—the brother, humanly speaking, of the Saviour—on the ground that they were of David's line and related to Christ Himself. This is stated by Hegesippus in so many words: "And there still survived of the Lord's family the grandsons of Jude, who was said to be his brother, humanly speaking. These were informed against as being of David's line, and brought by the *evocatus* before Domitian Caesar, who was as afraid of the advent of Christ as Herod had been. Domitian asked them whether they were descended from David, and they admitted it. Then he asked them what property they owned and what funds they had at their disposal. They replied that they had only 9,000 *denarii* between them, half belonging to each; this, they said, was not available in cash but was the estimate value of only twenty-five acres of land from which they raised the money to pay their taxes and the wherewithal to support themselves by their own toil." [Eusebius continues] Then...they showed him their hands, putting forward as proof of their toil the hardness of their bodies and the calluses impressed on their hands by incessant labour. When asked about Christ and His Kingdom—what it was like, and where and when it would appear—they explained that it was not of

⁷⁴ Stern 1976, 543–44 n. 254.

this world or anywhere on earth but angelic and in heaven, and would be established at the end of the world, when He would come in glory to judge the quick and the dead and give every man payment according to his conduct. On hearing this, Domitian found no fault with them but despising them as beneath his notice let them go free and issued orders terminating the persecution of the Church (*HE* 3. 19. 1–20. 5).⁷⁵

Beneath the all-too-clear Christian apology is clearly an imperial enquiry into Jewish kingship or messianism, or leadership, or all three together as a consequence of detectable discourse *within the Jewish community*, a discourse demonstrably visible in the career and writings of Josephus himself.

It may be time even to revisit one last and frequently forgotten passage: Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3. 9. 2: “[Josephus] was the most famous Jew of that time, not only among his fellow countrymen but also among the Romans, so that he was honoured by the erection of a statue in the city of Rome, and the inclusion of works composed by him in its library.” Cotton and Eck noted the reference but remained resolutely sceptical: “It is difficult to know whether [Eusebius]’ testimony is to be taken seriously, intriguing though it is to wonder who would have been responsible for such a statue, had one really been erected.”⁷⁶ Having reviewed some of the most significant evidence for Josephus in Rome we might be able to provide an answer. Josephus was indeed a famous Jew in Rome. Above all, his fame was located where Eusebius locates it: among his fellow Jews. Given what we have examined, it seems not impossible that some of these admirers and interlocutors might indeed have honoured with a statue a man whom they thought had contributed for fully a generation a most committed voice to the specifically Jewish Roman exploration of the implications of the destruction of the Temple.

⁷⁵ Barnes 1968, 35. He conceded here that there was no evidence any anti-Christian legislation but I am suggesting an intervention by the emperor on quite separate grounds. See also Barnes 1971, 105 on the evidence as a ‘fiction’ but its details not as implausible as suggested. The question of authenticity of the report still ‘open’ according to Lane Fox 1986, 433 and accepted as recently as Sartre 2005, 423 n. 130.

⁷⁶ Cotton and Eck 2005, 38 n. 4. Mason 1998, 77 also sceptical.

Conclusions

Many historians have concentrated so closely on the personality, biography and condition of texts emanating from Flavius Josephus that they have overlooked valuable information on the world in which he lived after the Jewish War.

The destruction of the temple and the deportation and displacement of thousands of former combatants stimulated a discourse within Judaism on the character and mission of Jews in the world. Some of this thinking took place openly in Rome. It drew in individual and influential Jews of the highest standing and authority and it may even have attracted thoughtful and reflective members of the upper class of the city. The works of Josephus are not, therefore, an irrelevant monument to literary self-indulgence but a surviving part of this historic exploration of the significance of the war and its aftermath for Judaism. And rather than speculating (or fantasising) about whether Josephus was a lonely old man at Rome or not, it is time we realised that he was not *alone* in looking at these questions.

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BEMERKUNGEN ZUM AUFSTAND DES JUDAS GALILAEUS SOWIE ZUM BIBLISCHEN BILDERVERBOT BEI JOSEPHUS, HIPPOLYT UND PSEUDO-HIERONYMUS

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Einleitung

Die Ereignisse des ersten jüdischen Kriegs gegen die römische Herrschaft sind ein tiefer Einschnitt in der Geschichte des jüdischen Volks. Die Folgen wie z.B. die Zerstörung des Tempels in Jerusalem beeinflussen in gewisser Weise bis in die Gegenwart die Entwicklung des Judentums und auch des Christentums. Unsere wichtigste Informationsquelle über Ursachen, Verlauf und Nachwirkungen dieses Aufstands sind die Werke des jüdischen Historikers Flavius Josephus. Vor allem in seinem Geschichtswerk *Der Jüdische Krieg* aber auch in seinem zweiten Hauptwerk, den *Jüdischen Altertümern*, hat er sich zu diesem Thema geäußert. In beiden Werken geht er auf die jüdische Widerstandsbewegung gegen die römische Herrschaft ein und schildert ausführlich die lange Vorgeschichte, die zum Ausbruch des verheerenden Kriegs im Jahr 68 n. Chr. führte.¹

Ein wichtiger Wendepunkt in dieser Entwicklung, die sich über Jahrzehnte anbahnte, war in den Augen des Josephus der Aufstand des Judas Galilaeus, auf den er in seinen Erörterungen in beiden historischen Werken eingeht und den er explizit als die Wurzel alles kommenden Unheils bezeichnet.²

¹ Zu Judas Galilaeus und seinem Aufstand gegen die römische Herrschaft s. M. Black 1974, 45–54; M. Hengel 1976, 79–149.

² Josephus hebt in *Ant.* 18.6 ausdrücklich hervor, daß es “kein Übel gebe, das nicht aus diesen Männern erwuchs” (Text: L. H. Feldman 1965, 6): “κακόν τε οὐκ ἔστιν, οὐ μὴ φυνέντος ἐκ τῶνδε τῶν ἀνδρῶν”, d.h. aus Judas und seinem Verbündeten Saddok dem Pharisäer.

Judas Galilaeus bei Josephus

Die blutigen Auseinandersetzungen mit den Römern nahmen ihren Anfang, als Archelaos, ein Sohn des Königs Herodes, im Jahr 6 n. Chr. als Ethnarch abgesetzt wurde und die Landesteile Judäa und Samaria in eine römische Provinz umgewandelt wurden. Bedeutsam ist in diesem Zusammenhang, daß auf Veranlassung des Statthalters Quirinius ein Zensus als Grundlage der Steuerveranlagung durch die Römer durchgeführt wurde.³ Dabei wurde das Land vermessen, und Einwohnerlisten für die Steuereinnahmer erstellt. Dies waren die Voraussetzungen für die Erhebung von Grund- und Kopfsteuern, wie sowohl Josephus als auch die Angaben im *Neuen Testament* bestätigen (Apg 5:37).⁴ Gegen diese Vorbereitungen der Römer zur Steuererhebung richtete sich der jüdische Widerstand unter Führung von Judas dem sog. Galiläer. Über die Motive des Judas macht Josephus nur wenige Angaben. Er teilt lediglich mit, Judas habe die Juden gegen die Römer aufgehetzt: "...indem er es für einen Frevel erklärte, wenn sie bei der Steuerzahlung an die Römer bleiben und nach Gott irgendwelche sterblichen Gebieter auf sich nehmen würden".⁵ Diese Bemerkung zeigt, daß das Akzeptieren jeglicher menschlichen Regierung, und das bedeutete insbesondere die Unterwerfung unter die römische Herrschaft (ὅτι Ῥωμαίοις ὑπετάσσοντο μετὰ τὸν θεόν, *War* 2.433), nach Ansicht des Judas ein Verstoß gegen die Fundamente der jüdischen Religion war. Denselben Gedanken wiederholte Josephus in seinem Parallelbericht in den *Jüdischen Altertümern*, in dem er erneut auf Judas zu sprechen kommt. Außerdem teilt er mit, daß Judas im Bündnis mit Sadduk, einem Anhänger der Pharisäer, gehandelt habe und die Meinung vertrat: "die Schätzung bringe nichts anderes als offenbare Knechtschaft mit sich".⁶ Darum habe er seine Landsleute aufgerufen, ihre Freiheit zu verteidigen. Gott sollte demnach als einziger Souverän des jüdischen Volks betrachtet werden. Jede Form der Anerkennung

³ Material zu diesem Initialzensus findet sich gesammelt bei P. Schrömbges 1987, 31–32; ferner Pastor 1997, 138.

⁴ Lukas schreibt an diesen Stellen von "ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς ἀπογραφῆς" und datiert den Aufstand des Judas damit in die Zeit der Zensusregistrierung, d.h. "τῆς ἀπογραφῆς"; dazu G. Schneider 1980, 401; R. Pesch 1995, 219 vgl. überdies Lk 2:15.

⁵ *War* 2.118 (Text und Übersetzung: O. Michel, O. Bauernfeind 1962, 204–05): "...κακίζων, εἰ φόρον τε Ῥωμαίοις τελεῖν ὑπομενοῦσιν καὶ μετὰ τὸν θεὸν ὀισοῦσι θνητοὺς δεσπότας," vgl. *War* 2.433.

⁶ *Ant.* 18.4 (Text: L. H. Feldman 1965, 4–6): "τὴν τε ἀποτίμησιν οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἢ ἄντικρυς δουλείαν".

menschlicher Herrscher müsse strikt, notfalls unter dem Einsatz von Gewalt, abgewehrt werden. Wir dürfen daher annehmen, daß Judas die Unterwerfung unter menschliche Herrscher als Verstoß gegen das erste Gebot des Dekalogs betrachtete. Aus diesem Grund waren er und seine Anhänger bereit, sich gegen die Steuerzahlungen an den römischen Staat zu wehren, durch die der römische Kaiser als legitim akzeptiert wurde. Wer sich jedoch im Rahmen des Zensus durch die römischen Behörden registrieren und sein Vermögen einschätzen liess, der unterstellte sich in den Augen des Judas durch diesen Rechtsakt der römischen Herrschaft, war dadurch als Nicht-Jude zu betrachten und konnte seines Eigentums beraubt werden, was Josephus an anderer Stelle fast beiläufig erwähnt.⁷ Entscheidend ist hierbei die Wortwahl des Josephus: Demzufolge kam es Judas darauf an, den Unterschied (διαφέρειν)⁸ zwischen Juden und Heiden klar zu markieren, den der römische Zensus geradezu einebne und das Gebiet des Archelaos zu einem Teil des römischen Reichs mache.⁹ Diese Sichtweise legitimierte für Judas die Gewaltanwendung gegen seine jüdischen Landsleute. Das Anzünden ihrer Häuser¹⁰ war aus diesem Grund nach seiner Überzeugung vollkommen gerechtfertigt, weil sie sich aktiv an der Aufhebung dieser Trennung beteiligten und mithalfen, die Unterschiede zwischen Juden und Nicht-Juden zu verwischen.

Diese religiösen Hintergründe des Aufstands werden von Josephus also nicht verschwiegen. Er rückte sie aber bewußt nicht in das Zentrum seiner Darstellung, sondern beschränkte sich auf einige kurze Notizen, die die religiösen Motive des Judas und seiner Gruppe in ihrer fundamentalen Bedeutung eher herunterspielten. Für diese Form der Verschleierung der wirklichen Sachverhalte war höchstwahrscheinlich sein apologetisches Interesse leitend. Josephus wollte wohl das durch den jüdischen Krieg ohnehin gespannte Verhältnis zu den Römern nicht zusätzlich dadurch belasten, daß er die jüdische Religion als Grund der blutigen Auseinandersetzungen herausstellte.¹¹

⁷ War 7.255 (Text: O. Michel, O. Bauernfeind 1969, 120): "...οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀλλοφύλων αὐτοὺς ἔφασκον διαφέρειν...". Josephus berichtet in diesem Zusammenhang über Eleazar, der an der Spitze der Sikarier die Festung Massada gegen die Römer verteidigte und ein Nachkomme des Judas war. Dabei erzählt er in einem kurzen, exkursartigen Rückblick über Judas und dessen Aufstand gegen die römische Herrschaft.

⁸ War 7.255 (Text: O. Michel, O. Bauernfeind 1969, 120).

⁹ Nikiprowetzky 1989, 226.

¹⁰ War 7.255 (Text: O. Michel, O. Bauernfeind 1969, 120) "ταῖς δ' οἰκήσεσιν αὐτῶν πῦρ ἐνιέντες"; s. dazu Baumbach 1985, 100.

¹¹ Drexler 1925, 287; Hengel 1976, 76; Mader 2000, 13.

Daher teilte er die religiösen Beweggründe der Aufständischen nur dann mit, wenn ihre Erwähnung für den Fortgang seiner Darstellung unerlässlich war. Zugleich betonte er jedoch, daß die Anhängerschaft des Judas "den anderen Juden in nichts glich".¹² Somit konnte er einem heidnischen Leserkreis Judas als Außenseiter, der sich außerhalb der jüdischen Tradition bewegte, hinstellen und seine jüdischen Landsleute auf diese Weise gegen Vorurteile und Unterstellungen in Schutz nehmen. Geschickt erweckte er ebenfalls den Eindruck, daß nur eine kleine Minderheit in Opposition zu den Römern stand, die mit den religiösen Überzeugungen der jüdischen Mehrheit nichts gemein habe. Außerdem stellt Josephus in seinen *Jüdischen Altertümern* ausführlich klar, daß Judas und seine Anhänger für alle weiteren Unruhen, Morde und letztlich auch für die Zerstörung des Tempels verantwortlich waren (*Ant.* 18.6–8). Hierbei unterstreicht er, daß Judas und Saddok eine "bisher unbekannte Philosophie"¹³ verbreiteten. Dies geschah nicht zufällig, denn es hebt eine Trennung zum übrigen Judentum hervor. An anderer Stelle widerspricht er allerdings seiner Einschätzung, wenn er Judas eine in allen übrigen Punkten mit den Pharisäern gemeinsame Lehre unterstellt.¹⁴ Zu diesem diffusen Bild, das durch apologetische Rücksichtsnahmen verzerrt ist, paßt auch, daß Josephus die Unterdrückung des durch Judas angestachelten Aufstands übergeht. Er überliefert lediglich, daß der Hohepriester die Mehrheit der Juden überzeugte, sich dem römischen Zensus zu unterziehen. Daneben hebt er die bürgerkriegsähnlichen Unruhen, Morde und Übergriffe hervor, bei denen Juden "ganz in der Weise, als seien sie Feinde" (πάντα τρόπον ὡς πολεμίοις),¹⁵ behandelt wurden, was Josephus nur als Vorboten künftigen Unheils interpretierte (*Ant.* 18.7). Im Blick auf das Ende des Aufstands des Judas oder die Reaktion des römischen Staates gibt Josephus in diesem Zusammenhang keine Auskunft. Nur Lukas überliefert uns in der *Apostelgeschichte*, daß Judas getötet und

¹² *War* 2.118 (Text und Übersetzung: O. Michel, O. Bauernfeind 1962, 204–05): "οὐδὲν τοῖς ἄλλοις προσεοικώς"; vgl. Rasp 1924, 33; Weiß 1979, 422, 425; Nikiprowetzky 1989, 226; Mason 1991, 121; Schwartz 1992, 130; Fairchild 1999, 523; Mader 2000, 12.

¹³ *Ant.* 18.9 (Text: L. H. Feldman 1965, 8): "τῷ ἀσυνήθει πρότερον φιλοσοφίας".

¹⁴ *Ant.* 18.23 (Text: L. H. Feldman 1965, 20): "τὰ μὲν λοιπὰ πάντα γνώμη τῶν Φαρισαίων ὁμολογοῦσι".

¹⁵ *War* 7.254; vgl. Price 1992, 20. Bei dem Widerstand des Judas handelte es sich aus diesem Grund sicherlich nicht um gewaltlose Aktionen gegen die römische Regierung, anders Horsley 1987, 89.

seine Anhänger zerstreut wurden.¹⁶ Interessant ist aber, daß Josephus betont, die von Judas und dem Pharisäer Saddok gegründete Gruppe habe mit ihrer strikten Lebensweise als eine eigenständige Bewegung fortbestanden und sich keineswegs nach einiger Zeit wieder von selbst aufgelöst. Allerdings gibt Josephus dieser Gruppierung keinen Namen, sondern nennt sie "ἰδίᾱς αἰρέσεως" (*War* 2.118) oder "τετάρτη τῶν φιλοσοφιῶν" (*Ant.* 18.23). Nur einmal bezeichnet er ihre Anhänger als "Sikarier" (*War* 2.254). Wichtig für unsere Erörterungen ist jedoch, daß Josephus für Judas häufig den Beinamen "der Galiläer" verwendete,¹⁷ obwohl er wußte, daß er aus Gamla in der Gaulanitis stammte (*Ant.* 18.4) und seiner Herkunft nach gar kein Galiläer war. Offensichtlich hatte er diesen Beinamen wegen seines bevorzugten Wirkungskreises in diesem Landesteil erhalten.¹⁸

Das jüdische Bilderverbot in christlich-patristischen Quellen

Die folgende Untersuchung soll die Darlegungen des Josephus durch bisher wenig beachtetes Quellenmaterial ergänzen und die religiösen Beweggründe der Aufständischen stärker ins Licht rücken. Dafür werden in einem ersten Schritt Notizen christlicher Autoren herangezogen, die in der bisherigen Forschung wenig beachtet und von vielen Forschern sogar ganz übergangen wurden. Gerade diese bisher kaum erforschten Texte können aber das von Josephus gezeichnete Bild wesentlich erweitern und zur Klärung der religiösen Hintergründe des von Judas entfachten Widerstands beitragen. Dafür infrage kommen in erster Linie zwei Quellen, die für die religiösen Implikationen des jüdischen Widerstands aufschlußreich sind.

Es handelt sich um einen Abschnitt aus dem antihäretischen Werk des Hippolyt, der zeitweise Bischof von Rom war und sein Kompendium wohl in den Jahren nach 222 n. Chr. verfaßte.¹⁹ Sein hauptsächliches Ziel war die Widerlegung bestimmter christlicher Gruppen wie der Gnostiker, wofür er zahlreiches Quellenmaterial heranzog.

¹⁶ Apg 5:37: "ἀπόλετο καὶ πάντες ὅσοι ἐπέιθοντο αὐτῷ διεσκορπίσθησαν".

¹⁷ So z.B. in *Ant* 18.6; 20.102.

¹⁸ Anders: Smith 1971, 15.

¹⁹ Zur Datierung des großen antignostischen Werks des Hippolyt sowie zur Person des Kirchenvaters und dem Schisma mit Pontianus, der sich ebenfalls als Bischof von Rom betrachtete, vgl. Drobner 1994, 100–01; Suchla 1999, 298.

Dazu kommt als zweiter patristischer Text das Traktat eines anonymen, spätantiken Autors des beginnenden 5. Jahrhunderts, der ein sehr kurz gefaßtes Opus über die Häretiker schrieb und darin u.a. Nachrichten über mehrere jüdische Gruppen aufnahm. Diese kleine Schrift mit dem Titel *Indiculus de haeresibus* wurde später in das umfangreiche Œuvre des Hieronymus eingeordnet, ist aber sicherlich nicht von diesem berühmten Theologen verfaßt worden. Sie war allerdings schon Augustin bekannt, der in seinem 428/429 entstandenen Buch *De haeresibus ad Quodvultdeum* daraus zitiert, ohne nach eigenem Bekunden den Verfasser zu kennen.²⁰ Der *Indiculus de haeresibus* selbst enthält knapp gehaltene Mitteilungen über diverse häretische Gruppen. Für unser Thema ist besonders interessant, daß diesem Buch als eine Art Einleitung ein kleines Kapitel über jüdische Gruppen vorangestellt ist, das in modernen Editionen wenige Druckzeilen umfaßt. Auch scheint es in der handschriftlichen Überlieferung von den nachfolgenden Passagen mit der Darstellung christlicher häretischer Gruppen durch eine eigene Überschrift deutlich abgegrenzt gewesen zu sein,²¹ was ich im Rahmen einer noch ausstehenden Neu-edition dieses Textes untersuchen werde.²²

Die Ausführungen über jüdische Gruppen im *Indiculus de haeresibus* lassen sich m.E. auf christliche Theologen des 2. Jh. n. Chr. zurückführen, die mit der politischen Situation und den religiösen Verhältnissen in Palästina bekannt waren und als vertrauenswürdige Zeitzeugen zu erachten sind. Es überrascht daher nicht, daß sie über das Judentum ihrer Zeit und seine diversen Strömungen bis hin zu den religiösen Hintergründen der Aufstände gegen die Römer gut unterrichtet waren. Ihre Texte dürfte Pseudo-Hieronymus im *Indiculus de haeresibus* als Vorlage benutzt haben. Er hat sie jedoch stark verkürzt und in so wenigen Worten referiert, daß man im Hinblick auf seine Ausführungen fast von einer Art Telegrammstil sprechen könnte.

In einem zweiten Schritt werde ich die Mitteilungen von Hippolyt und Pseudo-Hieronymus mit Nachrichten rabbinischer Quellen vergleichen, die die Überlieferungen dieser Autoren bestätigen.

²⁰ Augustin zitiert die Passage im Kontext seiner Ausführungen über die Gruppe der Luciferianer, die nur der Autor des *Indiculus* unter die Häretiker gezählt habe: "Apud quemdam tamen, cuius nomen in eodem eius opusculo non inveni, in haereticis Luciferianos positos legi per haec verba...", PL 42, 1841, 45.

²¹ Die Überschrift in der handschriftlichen Überlieferung lautete: "S. Hieronymi De haeresibus Iudaeorum" vgl. die Erstedition von C. Menard bei Öhler 1856, 283.

²² Diese Edition ist in Vorbereitung. Sie wird Teil meiner Studie über Jesus und die Steuerfrage sein, die in Kürze publiziert werden wird.

Auch einige kurze Anmerkungen des Josephus über das Bilderverbot bekräftigen ihre Zuverlässigkeit. Zugleich werden seine Bemerkungen in ihrer ganzen Tragweite durch diese patristischen Nachrichten verständlich, denn sie erhellen die vom jüdischen Geschichtsschreiber übergangenen, aber zum vollen Verständnis unverzichtbaren, religiösen Hintergründe des jüdischen Widerstands gegen die Römer. Dazu kommt, daß das einschlägige rabbinische Material ebenfalls durch die patristischen Notizen in einem anderen Licht erscheint, weil sie uns ermöglichen, die implizite Auseinandersetzung rabbinischer Gelehrter mit den spezifischen Überzeugungen und den Torainterpretationen der romfeindlichen Aufrührer zu verstehen, die im Kontext rabbinischer Debatten offenbar vorausgesetzt bzw. berücksichtigt wurden, ohne aber immer explizit als die Positionen dieser politisch gefährlichen Gruppen gekennzeichnet zu sein.

Hippolyts Refutatio omnium haeresium

Hippolyt hat in seinem Werk *Refutatio omnium haeresium* einen langen Abschnitt über die Juden aufgenommen, der zu einem großen Teil ein fast wörtliches Exzerpt einschlägiger Josephustexte darstellt und auf dessen Essenerkapitel fußt. An einigen Stellen ergänzte er seine Vorlage um weitere Informationen, die u.a. die Zeloten betrafen und anderen Quellen entnommen sind.²³

In diesem Zusammenhang sei darauf hingewiesen, daß man auf diesen Hippolyttext in der Josephusforschung gelegentlich schon hingewiesen hat und der Konnex zu den Zeloten ebenfalls bereits bemerkt wurde; den genauen Quellenzusammenhängen, den weiteren Parallelen in der christlichen Literatur und dem rabbinischen Vergleichsmaterial wurde jedoch bisher noch nie gründlich nachgegangen.²⁴ Dies ist umso erstaunlicher, als sich relativ eindeutig nachweisen läßt, daß Hippolyts Darlegungen in dieser Passage nicht mit den Essenern in Zusammenhang gebracht werden können. In seinen Exzerpten weist er sogar an einer Stelle expressis verbis auf die Zeloten oder Sikarier als Vertreter der von ihm referierten Überzeugungen hin.²⁵

²³ *Haer.* IX 26, 1–3.

²⁴ Vgl. vor allem die Studien von Black 1956, 174; Smith 1958, 282–83; Burchard 1977, 2–4, 21–22; Fairchild 1999, 524–26.

²⁵ *Haer.* IX 26, 2 (Text: Marcovich 1986, 371, 11–12): “Ζηλωταὶ καλούμενοι, ὑπὸ τινῶν δὲ Σικάριοι”.

Diesen Wechsel im Rahmen seiner Ausführungen hat Hippolyt allerdings für seine Leser in keiner Weise kenntlich gemacht. Möglicherweise hatte er beim Ordnen seiner Exzerpte nicht beachtet, daß er Informationen verarbeitete, die den Essenern gar nicht zuzuordnen waren. Darum fügte er die betreffende Textpassage in einen Zusammenhang ein, den er mehr oder minder wörtlich von Josephus übernommen hatte. Im Verlauf dieses Exkurses über die Essener, den Hippolyt als seine Quelle verwendete, teilt Josephus mit, daß sich die essenische Gruppe in mehrere Fraktionen gespalten habe und bemerkt dazu: "Sie sind ja nach der Dauer ihrer frommen Übung in vier Stände geteilt".²⁶ Wahrscheinlich meinte Josephus damit die Reinheitsunterschiede zwischen den früher und später eingetretenen Gruppenmitgliedern, die die früher Hinzugekommenen zu rituellen Waschungen veranlaßten, wenn sie von den zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt Beigetretenen berührt wurden.²⁷ Diese Angaben verstand Hippolyt als Hinweis auf eine Spaltung der Essener in vier verschiedene Fraktionen, die sich in ihrer Lebensweise unterschieden, wobei er die zeitliche Differenzierung, die Josephus erwähnt (κατὰ χρόνον τῆς ἀσκήσεως) nicht als Abstufungen innerhalb der Essener begriff, sondern als fundamentale Differenzen (οὐχ ὁμοίως τὴν ἄσκησιν φύλαττουσιν)²⁸ zwischen unterschiedlichen jüdischen Parteien auffaßte, wobei die später entstandenen in ihrer Rigorosität von den früheren abwichen, die nur einen niederen Grad erreicht hätten (οἱ μετέπειτα ἐλάττους τῇ ἀσκήσει γεγένη<ν>ται).²⁹ Um diese Divergenzen zu illustrieren, die "die Alten" (τοῖς ἀρχαίοις)³⁰ von später Entstandenen trennten, setzte Hippolyt Material aus anderen Quellen hinzu, das jüdische Gruppen wie u.a. die Zeloten betraf. Wie der Kirchenvater einleitend versichert, berichtete er von Juden, die "über das nötige Maß" (τὰ ὑπὲρ τὸ δέον (ἀ)σκοῦσιν)³¹ religiöse Regeln einhalten. Die Nahtstellen, an denen Hippolyt die einzelnen, von ihm exzerpierten Quellenstücke zusammenfügte, überdeckte er auf schriftstellerisch recht mechanische Weise, indem er jeweils von

²⁶ War 2.150: (Text und Übersetzung: O. Michel, O. Bauernfeind 1962, 210): "Διήρηνται δὲ κατὰ χρόνον τῆς ἀσκήσεως εἰς μοῖρας τέσσαρας...".

²⁷ War 2.150 (Text und Übersetzung: O. Michel, O. Bauernfeind 1962, 210): "οἱ μεταγενέστεροι τῶν προγενεστέρων ἐλαττοῦνται, ὥστ' εἰ ψαύσειαν αὐτῶν, ἐκείνους ἀπολούεσθαι...". O. Michel und O. Bauernfeind verweisen als Beleg für eine Trennung verschiedener Stufen von Mitgliedern in der Qumrangruppe auf 1QS 5,13–20.

²⁸ Haer. IX 26, 1 (Marcovich 1986, 371, 1–2).

²⁹ Haer. IX 26, 3 (Marcovich 1986, 371, 13–14); vgl. dazu Burchard 1977, 30.

³⁰ Haer. IX 26, 3 (Marcovich 1986, 371, 14).

³¹ Haer. IX 26, 1 (Marcovich 1986, 371, 3).

“Anderen” (ἑτεροί) sprach,³² die Vertreter der von ihm mitgeteilten religiösen Praxis seien. Die auf diese Weise entstandene, recht konfuse Exzerptensammlung, die der Kirchenvater aus unterschiedlichen Quellen zusammengetragen hatte, läßt sich jedoch entwirren und auf ihre Ursprünge zurückführen, wenn man alle Angaben Hippolyts als Nachrichten über eine jüdische Opposition gegen die römische Herrschaft betrachtet, zu der auch die Zeloten und Sikarier zählten.

Für unsere Fragestellung ist dabei von Wichtigkeit, daß Hippolyt gleich am Anfang seiner Zusätze zum Josephustext die Ablehnung römischer Münzen wegen der auf ihnen aufgeprägten Herrscherbilder erwähnt.³³ Dann kommt er auf das Verbot zu sprechen, das es einigen Juden unmöglich mache, durch Stadttore, auf denen schmückende Bildwerke aufgestellt waren, hindurchzugehen.³⁴ Bei beiden Angaben ist derselbe biblische Hintergrund, d.h. das alttestamentliche Bilderverbot,³⁵ anzunehmen. Ferner finden sich in diesem Abschnitt noch Mitteilungen über die Zwangsbeschneidung von Heiden, die sich öffentlich mit der Tora beschäftigten und die von Zeloten, “die von einigen aber Sikarier genannt werden”³⁶ mit dem Tod bedroht wurden, wenn sie sich nicht beschneiden ließen.³⁷ Abschließend erwähnt Hippolyt, daß sich diese jüdische Oppositionsbewegung geweigert habe, den römischen Kaiser ihren Herrn zu nennen (οὐδένα κύριον ὀνομάζουσι πλὴν τὸν θεόν), was im Kern der oben behandelten Josephuspassage über die Anhänger des Judas Galilaeus entspricht.³⁸

Hippolyts Angaben über das Bilderverbot

Da es in dieser Studie zu weit führen würde, den gesamten, inhaltlich sehr aufschlußreichen Hippolyttext zu analysieren, werde ich nun die Nachricht über den Boykott römischer Münzen und die Weigerung durch mit Statuen geschmückte Tore hindurchzugehen, diskutieren.

³² *Haer.* IX 26, 1–3 (Marcovich 1986, 371, 2.6.12).

³³ *Haer.* IX 26, 1 (Marcovich 1986, 371, 2–4).

³⁴ *Haer.* IX 26, 1 (Marcovich 1986, 371, 4–6).

³⁵ Vgl. Ex 20:3–5.23; Dtr 4:15–19.23.25–26; 5:6–9; 27:15.

³⁶ *Haer.* IX 26, 2 (Marcovich 1986, 371, 11).

³⁷ *Haer.* IX 26, 2 (Marcovich 1986, 371, 6–11).

³⁸ *Ant.* 18.24 (Text: Feldman 1965, 20–22): “... τοῦ μηδένα ἄνθρωπον προσαγορεύειν δεσπότην...”. Hippolyt formuliert allerdings ganz anders: “οὐδένα κύριον ὀνομάζουσι πλὴν τὸν θεόν...”, was möglicherweise mit einer anderen Vorlage erklärt werden kann.

Hierzu vermerkt Hippolyt:³⁹ “Die einen überschreiten die Vorschriften in dem Maße, daß sie nicht einmal eine Münze anrühren mit der Begründung, man dürfe ein Bild weder tragen noch ansehen noch verfertigen. Sie gehen auch in keine Stadt, auf daß keiner durch ein Tor schreite, auf dem Bildsäulen ständen, denn sie halten es für gegen das Gesetz, unter Bildwerken durchzugehen”. Diese Passage zeigt, daß es dem Kirchenvater um eine bestimmte jüdische Gruppierung ging, die nach seiner Ansicht über das “nötige Maß”⁴⁰ hinausging, wobei er an eine radikale Lebenspraxis dachte. Man kann davon ausgehen, daß er das biblische Bilderverbot im Auge hatte. Offensichtlich leiteten die von Hippolyt in den Blick genommenen Juden aus den entsprechenden biblischen Weisungen in einer besonders strikten Interpretation die Überzeugung ab, römisches Geld überhaupt nicht verwenden zu dürfen. Entscheidend für ihre Weigerung waren die auf den Münzen aufgeprägten Bilder des regierenden Kaisers und andere bildliche Darstellungen. Solche Bilder dürfe man laut Hippolyt weder “tragen” (φέρειν) noch “ansehen” (ὄρν) noch “verfertigen” (ποιεῖν). Auch das Hindurchgehen unter Statuen lehnten die Anhänger dieser nach Hippolyt übertriebenen Toradeutung als Bruch des jüdischen Gesetzes ab (ἁθέμιστον). Dabei betrachteten sie das Gehen durch ein Tor mit Bildwerken—also das bloße Hindurchschreiten (διὰ πύλης εἰσέλθῃ)—schon als Verstoß gegen biblische Gebote.

Der Indiculus de haeresibus des Pseudo-Hieronymus

Es ist nun weiter zu fragen, aus welcher Quelle Hippolyt sein Wissen bezogen hat und ob es sich um zuverlässige Informationen handelte. Bei der Beantwortung dieser Frage kann uns der *Indiculus de haeresibus* des Pseudo-Hieronymus aus dem 5. Jh. n. Chr. weiterhelfen.⁴¹ Im Eingang dieser späten Schrift finden sich nämlich einige Anmerkungen über die Essener, Galiläer, Masbothäer, Pharisäer, Sadduzäer, Geni-

³⁹ *Haer.* IX 26, 1 (Marcovich 1986, 371, 2–6): “ἄλλοι γὰρ αὐτῶν τὰ ὑπὲρ τὸ δέον ἀσκοῦσιν, ὥς μὴδὲ νόμισμα βαστάζειν. λέγοντες μὴ δεῖν εἰκόνα ἢ φέρειν ἢ ὄρν ἢ ποιεῖν· διὸ οὐδὲ εἰς πόλιν τις αὐτῶν εἰσπορεύεται, ἵνα μὴ διὰ πύλης εἰσέλθῃ, ἐφ’ ἧ ἀνδριάντες ἔπεισιν, ἁθέμιτον τοῦτο ἡγούμενος τὸ ὑπὸ εἰκόνας παρελθεῖν”.

⁴⁰ *Haer* IX 26, 1: “ὑπὲρ τὸ δέον”.

⁴¹ Ich folge der Edition von Öhler 1856, die nur einen verbesserten Nachdruck der 1616 in Paris erschienenen Ausgabe von Menard darstellt. Dieser Druck ist bis heute die einzige Edition dieses Werkes.

sten, Meristen, Samaritaner, Herodianer und Hemerobaptisten,⁴² die vermutlich eine Epitome mehrerer viel ausführlicherer Vorlagen darstellt. Für unseren Zusammenhang ist vor allem die Gruppe der sog. Galiläer von Bedeutung. Im bezug auf diese Gruppe stellt der Autor zweifelsohne klar, daß es sich hierbei um Juden und keineswegs um Christen handelte. Dazu führt er aus: "Die Galiläer sagen, der Messias sei gekommen und habe sie gelehrt, den Kaiser nicht Herrn zu nennen und sein Geld nicht zu benutzen".⁴³ Bemerkenswert ist ferner, daß er für jede beschriebene Gruppe ihr Verhältnis zum Messias angibt. So lesen wir z.B., daß die Essener, Galiläer und Masbothäer davon ausgingen, daß der Messias schon gekommen sei, während die Pharisäer noch auf ihn warten würden. Diese Angaben passen gut zu den spärlichen Mitteilungen in der *Kirchengeschichte* des Eusebius über die sog. "ὑπομνήματα"⁴⁴ des christlichen Theologen Hegesipp. Dieser Kirchenvater, der in der zweiten Hälfte des 2. Jh. n. Chr. lebte, stammte aus dem Osten des römischen Reichs und war möglicherweise, wie Eusebius anzunehmen scheint, jüdischer Herkunft.⁴⁵ Er sprach vielleicht sogar, wie Eusebius andeutet, Aramäisch⁴⁶ und besuchte christliche Gemeinden u.a. in Korinth und Rom. Hegesipp kannte überdies Traditionen aus Palästina, das er höchstwahrscheinlich ebenfalls bereist hatte.⁴⁷ Fragt man nach der Zuverlässigkeit der von Hegesipp herrührenden Nachrichten, so ist der Kirchenvater als Gewährsmann durchaus vertrauenswürdig, denn er kannte die religiösen und politischen Verhältnisse Palästinas und konnte vielleicht sogar als Augenzeuge zu ihrer Erhellung beitragen. Über seine Reisen verfaßte er wohl um 180 n. Chr. eine Art Bericht.⁴⁸ Darin war ein Abschnitt über die zeitgenössischen, jüdischen Gruppen enthalten, in dem Hegesipp nachzuweisen suchte, daß die christlichen Häretiker nur durch die verschiedenen Spaltungen im Judentum hervorgebracht worden seien. Im Blick auf diese jüdischen Gemeinschaften und ihren Einfluß auf die christliche

⁴² Ps.-Hieronymus, *Indiculus* ed. Öhler 1856, 283.

⁴³ Ps. Hieronymus, *Indiculus* ed. Öhler 1856, 283: "Galilaei dicunt Christum venisse et docuisse eos ne dicerent dominum Caesarem, neve eius monetis uterentur".

⁴⁴ Diese Bezeichnung verwendet Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* IV 22, 1 (Text: E. Schwartz 1908, 136, 18–19).

⁴⁵ Zur Person Hegesipps vgl. Durst 1999, 278.

⁴⁶ *Hist. eccl.* IV 22, 8 (Text: E. Schwartz 1908, 158, 14–15): "ἐκ τῆς Ἑβραϊδοῦ διαλέκτου τινὰ τίθησιν"; vgl. dazu W. Telfer 1960, 143.

⁴⁷ *Hist. eccl.* IV 22, 2 (Text: E. Schwartz 1908, 156, 25–26).

⁴⁸ Gustafsson 1961, 227.

Kirchengeschichte bemerkt Hegesipp: "Da die Kirche noch nicht durch eitle Lehren befleckt war, wurde sie als Jungfrau bezeichnet. Thebutis machte, da er nicht Bischof geworden war, den Anfang damit, sie zu beschmutzen. Er gehörte den sieben Sekten im Volk an".⁴⁹ Thebutis wird hierbei als Anfang der christlichen Häresien hingestellt, wobei ihn sein persönlicher Mißerfolg bei der Bischofswahl zum Abfall veranlaßt habe. Zugleich aber verbindet Hegesipp ihn mit den "sieben Sekten im Volk". Mit diesen "ἐπτὰ αἱρέσεων" waren jüdische Gruppen gemeint.⁵⁰ Leider ist die von Hegesipp verfaßte Schrift heute verloren, und wir besitzen nur Zitate späterer Autoren vor allem von Eusebius. Dieser Kirchenvater überliefert uns, daß Hegesipp "verschiedene Anschauungen in der Beschneidung" (γνώμαι διάφοροι ἐν τῇ περιτομῇ)⁵¹ in seinem Buch ausführlich behandelt habe, die er nach ihrem Verhältnis zum Messias ordnete. Hegesipp schrieb nach Eusebius: "Es gab in der Beschneidung, unter den Söhnen der Israeliten, verschiedene Anschauungen gegenüber dem Stamme Juda und gegenüber Christus, nämlich die Essener, Galiläer, Hemerobaptisten, Masbothäer, Samaritaner, Sadduzäer und Pharisäer".⁵² Dieses Interesse Hegesipps an den Messiasvorstellungen der jüdischen Gruppen (κατὰ... τοῦ Χριστοῦ) rührt von seinem antihäretischen Argumentationsziel her, denn er versuchte die christlichen Kirchenspaltungen, insbesondere durch die verschiedenen Gnostiker wie Simon den Magier, Menander oder Valentin,⁵³ auf jüdischen Gruppen zurückzuführen, von denen letztlich "die falschen Christusse, die falschen Propheten und die falschen Apostel, welche die Einheit der Kirche durch verderbliche Lehren über Gott und seinen Gesalbten zerstört haben" gekommen seien.⁵⁴ Aus diesem Grund

⁴⁹ *Hist. eccl.* IV 22, 5 (Text: E. Schwartz 1908, 157, 13–14 / Übersetzung: Gärtner 1989, 221): "διὰ τοῦτο ἐκάλουν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν παρθένον, οὐπω γὰρ ἔφθαρτο ἀκοαῖς ματαίαις. ἄρχεται δὲ ὁ Θεβουθις διὰ τὸ μὴ γενέσθαι αὐτὸν ἐπίσκοπον ὑποφθείρειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐπτὰ αἱρέσεων, ὧν καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν, ἐν τῷ λαῷ,..."

⁵⁰ Zu der Vorstellung von sieben jüdischen Sekten vgl. auch Telfer 1960, 149–150; Simon 1964, 85–86; Rudolph 1981, 4, 9; 28 Anm. 10.

⁵¹ *Hist. eccl.* IV 22, 7 (Text: E. Schwartz 1908, 157, 9).

⁵² *Hist. eccl.* IV 22, 7 (Text: E. Schwartz 1908, 157, 9–11 / Übersetzung: Gärtner 1989, 221): "ἦσαν δὲ γνώμαι διάφοροι ἐν τῇ περιτομῇ ἐν υἱοῖς Ἰσραηλιτῶν κατὰ τῆς φυλῆς Ἰουδα καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐται." Εσσαιοὶ Γαλιλαῖοι Ἡμεροβαπτισταὶ Μασσβαῖοι Σαμαρεῖται Σαδδουκαῖοι Φαρισαῖοι".

⁵³ *Hist. eccl.* IV 55, 5 (Text: E. Schwartz 1908, 157, 15–19).

⁵⁴ *Hist. eccl.* IV 22, 6 (Text: E. Schwartz 1908, 157, 4–6 / Übersetzung: Gärtner 1989, 221): "... ἀπὸ τούτων ψευδόχριστοι, ψευδοπροφῆται, ψευδαπόστολοι, οἵτινες ἐμέρισαν τὴν ἑνωσιν τῆς ἐκκλησίας φθοριμαίοις λόγοις κατὰ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ κατὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ".

scheint er sich eingehend mit den Messiasvorstellungen verschiedener jüdischer Richtungen auseinandergesetzt zu haben, um mit ihrer Hilfe seine These zu untermauern, daß diese jüdischen “γνῶμαι διάφοροι” die christlichen Häretiker beeinflußt hätten.⁵⁵ Bedauerlicherweise fehlt in den bei Eusebius erhaltenen Zitaten die entsprechende Passage, in der diese jüdischen Gruppen genauer beschrieben waren. Der Kirchenvater weist lediglich auf von Hegesipp überlieferte, “ungeschriebene, jüdische Tradition”⁵⁶ hin, ohne weitere Einzelheiten über dessen Adaption solcher jüdischen Lehren mitzuteilen.

Zu dem Konzept des Hegesipp, der die Wurzeln christlicher Häresien in den jüdischen Gruppen und ihren messianischen Vorstellungen zu entdecken meinte, paßt nun ein merkwürdiges Detail in den Kurzmitteilungen des sog. *Indiculus de haeresibus*. In der Darstellung des Pseudo-Hieronymus wird nämlich, wie oben erwähnt, für etliche der insgesamt zehn jüdischen “haereses” deren Lehren über den “Christus” angegeben, wobei nicht von Jesus, sondern vom jüdischen Messias die Rede ist. Dies läßt sich daraus erschließen, daß von den Pharisäern ausdrücklich festgehalten wird, sie “verneinen, daß der Christus gekommen sei”.⁵⁷ Die Galiläer, Essener u.a. jedoch würden ihre Lehren auf einen Christus zurückführen, womit keineswegs Jesus gemeint sein kann. Diese auffällige Konzentration auf die jüdische Messiasvorstellung könnte als ein Fingerzeig zu werten sein, daß Hegesipp zumindest als eine der Quellen infrage kommt, aus denen der unbekannte Autor des *Indiculus de haeresibus* sein Referat geschöpft hat. Von Hegesipp übernahm er dann nicht nur seine Angaben zur Messiasvorstellung der jeweiligen, von ihm nur kurz dargestellten Gruppen, sondern auch die Nachrichten über den Boykott römischer Geldstücke durch die Galiläer. Dieselbe Herkunft läßt sich überdies für den Hinweis des Pseudo-Hieronymus vermuten, daß die “Galiläer” sich weigerten, den Kaiser ihren “Herrn” (*dominum*) zu nennen, was Josephus von Judas und seinen Anhänger berichtet hatte.

In diesem Zusammenhang sei auch darauf hingewiesen, daß mit dem Namen “Galiläer” Aufständische gegen die römische Herrschaft

⁵⁵ Auch an anderer Stelle hat Hegesipp der Beziehung zwischen der jüdischen Messiaserwartung und dem Christentum große Bedeutung zugemessen. Beispielsweise behauptet er, Jakobus habe einige der “ἐπτά ἀιρέσεων” gewonnen, Jesus als den erwarteten Messias anzunehmen, *Hist. eccl.* II 23, 9 (Text: E. Schwartz 1908, 69, 5–6).

⁵⁶ *Hist. eccl.* IV 22, 8; dazu Gustafsson 1961, 228.

⁵⁷ Ps. Hieronymus ed. Öhler 1856, 283: “Pharisaei negant Christum venisse...”.

bezeichnet sind, die sich von demjenigen Judas herleiteten, den bereits Josephus unter dem Beinamen der "Galiläer" kannte. Der Name Galiläer wurde somit später auf die ganze von Judas ausgehende Bewegung übertragen, was dazu paßt, daß schon Josephus der Aufstandsgruppe des Judas eine lange Nachwirkung weit über die Zeit der Revolte gegen den Zensus des Quirinius hinaus zuschrieb.⁵⁸

Im Rückblick läßt sich also feststellen: Die oben erwähnten Aussagen Hippolyts über die Ablehnung römischer Münzen durch jüdische Gruppierungen, die religiöse Vorschriften "über das nötige Maß" hinaus einhielten, könnten auf Hegesipps "ὑπομνήματα" als Vorlage zurückgehen,⁵⁹ wobei Hippolyt die Nachrichten über die jüdischen Messiasvorstellungen einfach fortließ, weil er sich ganz auf die übertriebene Auslegung des Bilderverbots konzentrierte. Diese Zusammenhänge wurden in dem Exzerpt des Autors des *Indiculus de haeresibus* aber wegen der umfangreichen Kürzungen eher verschleiert. Trotzdem können wir davon ausgehen, daß sowohl Pseudo-Hieronymus als auch Hippolyt unterschiedlich umfangreiche Auszüge aus Hegesipps Bericht über die sieben "jüdischen Sekten" bieten und diese Nachrichten noch durch Exzerpte aus anderen Werken der patristischen Literatur vermehrten, die uns heute ebenfalls nicht mehr erhalten sind.⁶⁰

Josephus und das jüdische Bilderverbot

Wenden wir uns nun noch einmal den Werken des Josephus im Hinblick auf mögliche Parallelen in den Nachrichten des Hippolyt und Pseudo-Hieronymus zu, so lassen einige Notizen des jüdischen Historikers vermuten, daß er als einer der Anführer der Revolte gegen die Römer von der radikalen Toraauslegung durch jüdische Aufständische gewußt hat. Zudem war ihm wohl die extrem bilderfeindliche Haltung bestimmter jüdischer Gruppen bekannt. Diese entschiedene Ablehnung war nämlich tief im zeitgenössischen Judentum verwurzelt. Daher wagten es weder die Hasmonäer noch Herodes, ihr Porträt auf

⁵⁸ Vgl. Hilgenfeld 1886, 34.

⁵⁹ Die Vermutung, daß Hegesipp Hippolyts Quelle war, äußerte auch Ch. Burchard 1977, 39 Anm. 201.

⁶⁰ Simon 1964, 86.

die von ihnen geprägten Kupfermünzen zu setzen.⁶¹ Außerdem gab es gegen den von Herodes am Tempeltor angebrachten Adler kurz vor dem Tod des Königs im Jahr 4. v. Chr. gewaltsame Ausschreitungen, bei denen dieses schmückende Bildwerk herabgerissen wurde.⁶² Auch im Jahr 37 n. Chr. protestierten führende Juden (ἄνδρες οἱ πρῶτοι)⁶³ dagegen, daß von dem syrischen Legaten Vitellius römische Feldzeichen mit Kaiserbildern in das jüdische Siedlungsgebiet hineingebracht wurden. Dieser Plan des Legaten verstieß nach ihrer Ansicht gegen biblische Gebote, selbst wenn es sich nur um den Durchzug römischer Truppen handelte, die so schneller zu ihrem Einsatzort gelangen sollten. Dieses Ereignis hat Josephus in seine *Jüdischen Altertümer* aufgenommen. Dabei erläutert er, daß im jüdischen "Land" (διὰ τῆς χώρας) die Kaiserbilder der Legionsstandarten nicht erlaubt seien.⁶⁴ Diese Auslegung des zweiten Dekaloggebots wurde offenbar von vielen Juden akzeptiert und konnte umso leichter von Kreisen, die eine von Hippolyt als übertrieben streng bezeichnete Toraauslegung vertraten, auf die Akzeptanz von römischen Münzen übertragen worden sein, die ja, wie E. Stauffer treffend bemerkte, einer Miniaturausgabe der Kaiserbüsten z.B. auf Feldzeichen glichen.⁶⁵ Die von dem *Indiculus de haeresibus* erwähnte Galiläergruppe hätte somit lediglich eine weit verbreitete jüdische Überzeugung zugespitzt und mit ihrer Übertragung auf die Münzen der Römer ein neues Konfliktfeld mit dem römischen Staat eröffnet. Überdies zogen die Römer grundsätzlich in der von ihnen hergestellten Währung die Steuern ein, wie es treffend in der Zinsgroschenperikope des *Neuen Testaments* vermerkt ist, in der die römischen Denare als Steuermünzen bezeichnet sind (Mt 22:19). Wenn Judas und seine Anhänger gegen den Zensus des Statthalters Quirinius gewaltsam aufbegehrten, so lag es zumindest nahe, diesen Widerstand auf dasjenige Geld auszudehnen, in dem die Steuern eingezogen wurden. Außerdem konnten die Aufrührer auf Zustimmung in der Bevölkerung rechnen, wenn sie auf eine konsequente Einhaltung

⁶¹ Vgl. Goodenough 1953, 271–72; Richardson 1986, 355; Levine 1998, 48; Hendin 2001, 110.

⁶² War 1.650 (Text: O. Michel, O. Bauernfeind 1962, 172): "ἀθέμιτον γὰρ εἶναι κατὰ τὸν νόον...ζῶον τινὸς ἐπώνυμον ἔργον εἶναι;" vgl. *Ant.* 17.151.

⁶³ *Ant.* 18.121 (Text: Feldman 1965, 84); vgl. dazu Schürer 1901, 485 Anm. 134; Smallwood 2001, 173.

⁶⁴ *Ant.* 18.121 (Text: Feldman 1965, 84): "ὥρμημένῳ δ' αὐτῷ διὰ τῆς Ἰουδαίων ἄγειν τὸν στρατὸν ὑπαντίασαντες ἄνδρες οἱ πρῶτοι παρητοῦντο τὴν διὰ τῆς χώρας ὁδόν".

⁶⁵ E. Stauffer 1948, 136.

des Bilderverbots drängten. Hervorzuheben ist nämlich, daß die ablehnende Haltung gegenüber Bildwerken, wie Josephus eher beiläufig mitteilt, Rückhalt bis weit in die jüdische Oberschicht hinein hatte, die z.B. gegen die Feldzeichen des Vitellius opponierte.

Im übrigen stand Josephus selbst dieser Auslegung des biblischen Bilderverbots mit einer gewissen Sympathie gegenüber, wie sich aus einer Episode seiner *Vita* erschließen läßt. Hier erwähnt er aus der Zeit seiner Befehlsgewalt während des Aufstands gegen die Römer, daß auf Druck der Jerusalemer Führung der Palast des Tetrarchen Herodes in Tiberias zerstört wurde, weil er "mit Tiergestalten versehen sei, wo doch die Gesetze so zu bauen verböten".⁶⁶ Selbst wenn dieser Bauschmuck nach Josephus nur als Vorwand diente, um reiche Beute aus königlichem Besitz zu machen,⁶⁷ bezeugt uns dieses Detail die kompromißlose Ablehnung der Bildwerke.⁶⁸ Diese dunkle Seite seiner eigenen Biographie könnte darüber hinaus das Schweigen des Josephus über diesen Teil des jüdischen Widerstands gegen die Römer erklären.

Rabbinische Quellen zur Auslegung des alttestamentlichen Bilderverbots

Unsere bisher gemachten Beobachtungen, insbesondere anhand der josephischen Geschichtsschreibung, lassen sich durch rabbinische Traditionen bestätigen und gewinnen mit ihrer Hilfe ein schärferes Profil. Wenden wir uns nämlich der rabbinischen Literatur zu, so kann man zumindest Spuren derselben Auffassung finden.

Im allgemeinen lehnten die Rabbinen die Verwendung der von den Römern hergestellten Münzen trotz der auf ihnen aufgeprägten Bilder von Kaisern und Gottheiten keineswegs ab. Beispielsweise erlaubte Rabbi Simon ben Gamaliel am Ende des 2. Jh. n. Chr. alle Bilder auf "geringgeachteten" Gegenständen (שעל המבוזין), während er "wertvolle" Dinge (שעל המכובדין) mit Bildschmuck für verboten

⁶⁶ *Life* 65 (Text und Übersetzung: Siegert, Schreckenberg, Vogel 2001, 46): "ζῶων μορφὰς ἔχοντα, τῶν νόμων οὕτως τι κατασκευάζειν ἀπογορευόντων".

⁶⁷ *Life* 66 (Text: Siegert, Schreckenberg, Vogel 2001, 46–47).

⁶⁸ *Life* 65 (Text: Siegert, Schreckenberg, Vogel 2001, 46) Josephus betont, er habe die schnelle Ausführung der Zerstörung angeordnet und darauf gedrängt. Zu den historischen Hintergründen s. Vogel 1999, 75–76.

erachtete.⁶⁹ Diese Unterscheidung ist in der *Tosefta* dahingehend erläutert, daß zu allem erlaubten "Geringgeachteten" "Kessel, Wasserpfeife, Tiegel, Kochgeschirr, Becken, Tücher und Münzen"⁷⁰ zählten. Solche verbreiteten Dinge für den täglichen Gebrauch, die nicht als besonders wertvoll galten oder gar in Ehren gehalten wurden, durften mit bildlichen Darstellungen verziert sein.

Daneben gibt es aber rabbinische Überlieferungen, die in eine ganz andere Richtung weisen. Sie belegen uns, daß unter den Rabbinen eine ablehnende Haltung gegenüber Bildern auf Münzen bekannt war und von rabbinischen Gelehrten in gewisser Weise auch adaptiert und durch bestimmte Modifikationen in ihrer Grundsätzlichkeit entschärft wurde, indem sie die radikale Ausdeutung der Tora abmilderten und für den Alltag handhabbar machten. Zugleich wurde der in dieser Exegese verborgene, politisch brisante Kern gewissermaßen entschärft, und seine gegen die römische Herrschaft gerichtete, gefährliche Zuspitzung war verschwunden. In diesem Zusammenhang sind insbesondere die in verschiedenen rabbinischen Schriften aufgezeichneten, anekdotenhaften Geschichten interessant, die um die Gestalt des Nachum ben Simai kreisen, der in Palästina am Ende des 3. Jh. n. Chr. lebte. Nachum ben Simai ist nur durch Erzählungen bekannt, die alle davon handeln, wie er das biblische Bilderverbot im Alltag eingehalten hat.⁷¹ Aus diesem Grund wurde er in der rabbinischen Literatur an mehreren Stellen als "Heiligensohn" (בֶּנֶן שֶׁל קְדוּשִׁים)⁷² bezeichnet.⁷³ Dieses besondere Lob wird damit begründet, daß "...er nicht einmal das Bild einer Münze betrachtete".⁷⁴ Damit wird ihm dasselbe Verhalten zugeschrieben, das Hippolyt für die jüdische Oppositionsbewegung gegen Rom erwähnte. Die exzeptionelle Konsequenz, die Nachum an den Tag legte, wurde sogar expressis verbis hervorgehoben, und er diente sogar als Vorbild.⁷⁵ Doch müssen wir eine wichtige

⁶⁹ m. 'Abod. Zar. 3:3.

⁷⁰ t. 'Abod. Zar. 5:1 (Text: Zuckerman 1880, 468 / Übersetzung: Strack, Billerbeck 1997, 393): "כגון היורות מחמי חמין הטיגין והקוקמסין והספלין והסדיגין והמטבע". Zu dieser Stelle vgl. Blidstein 1974, 161.

⁷¹ Zu Nachum ben Simai vgl. u. a. Fine 1997, 19.

⁷² b. 'Abod. Zar. 50a.

⁷³ Zu diesem Beinamen vgl. Urbach 1959, 153.

⁷⁴ b. 'Abod. Zar. 50a (Text und Übersetzung: L. Goldschmidt 1903, 970): "דאפילו: בצורתא דזוזא לא מסתכל".

⁷⁵ In b. 'Abod. Zar. 50a beruft sich z.B. Rabbi Jochanan auf Nachum ben Simai, der für ihn ein Vorbild dafür war, daß es erlaubt sei, auf einer Straße zu gehen, die mit Steinen von einem Mercurius (מרקוליס) gepflastert sei.

Einschränkung für unsere Fragestellung festhalten: Von Nachum ben Simai ist einzig und allein berichtet, daß er sich darauf konzentrierte, keine Münzbilder anzusehen. Es wird nämlich nirgends erwähnt, daß Nachum sich weigerte, Münzen mit bildlichen Darstellungen als Zahlungsmittel zu benutzen oder bei sich zu "tragen", wie es Hippoyt beschreibt. Somit hatte er seine Ablehnung von Münzbildern auf einen entscheidenden Punkt reduziert, denn es ging ihm ausschließlich darum, die Geldstücke nicht anzusehen. Infolgedessen konnte er sich gegenüber römischen Behörden nicht strafbar machen, weil er sich allein auf das Nichtansehen der Geldstücke beschränkte, was nicht gegen die römischen Gesetze verstieß.⁷⁶ Außerdem entschärfte er damit das Konfliktpotential, das der von Hippoyt und dem unbekannten Verfasser des *Indiculus de haeresibus* dokumentierte, radikale Standpunkt der sog. "Galiläer" implizierte. Dabei ging Nachum, wie vorausgesetzt ist, davon aus, daß das Ansehen eines Bildes eine Form der von der Bibel verbotenen Verehrung von Bildern ist.

Dieselbe Strategie verfolgte Nachum offenbar nicht nur gegenüber paganen Geldstücken, sondern auch bei seinem Verhalten gegenüber Standbildern, die in den Städten des römischen Reichs an vielen Orten wie den Stadttoren angebracht waren.⁷⁷ In einer Anekdote über sein Begräbnis heißt es dazu: "Als Rabbi Nachum ben Simai starb, verhüllte man die Bilder mit Matten. Man sagte: Wie er sie zu seinen Lebzeiten nicht anschaute, soll er sie in seinem Tode nicht anschauen müssen".⁷⁸ Vorausgesetzt ist dabei offensichtlich, daß der Leichnam des Nachum auf dem Weg zum Friedhof, der in der Antike stets außerhalb der

⁷⁶ Man sollte Nachum ben Simai darum auch keine besonders konservative Haltung in dieser Frage unterstellen. Er suchte eher nach einem Kompromiß, der den Münzgebrauch erleichterte und einem Konflikt mit den römischen Behörden aus dem Weg ging, anders: Levine 1989, 86.

⁷⁷ Zu dieser Episode vgl. auch die Überlegungen von Blidstein 1974, 158–159; Hengel 1976, 200 sowie Schäfer 2002, 344, der auf den legendarischen Charakter dieser Erzählung hinweist.

⁷⁸ *y. 'Abod. Zar.* 42c, 3, 1–2 (Text: Schäfer, Becker 1995, 272 / Übersetzung: Wewers 1980, 90): כד דמך רבי נחום בר סימאי חפון איקונתא מחצלן אמר כמה דלא מחתון: בחייו לא יחמינן בדמכותיה

Diese Überlieferung wird in der rabbinischen Literatur noch mehrfach wiederholt und mit der Person des Nachum ben Simai verbunden, z. B. *b. Sabb.* 149a; s. die Sammlung der Stellen bei Strack, Billerbeck 1989, 692, 727; ders., 1997, 391 sowie Krauss 1911, 716 Anm. 682; S. Helfer 1922, 46; Rist 1936, 324; Levine 1989, 86.

Mauern der Stadt lag,⁷⁹ an Bildwerken (איִקוֹנָתָא)⁸⁰ vorübergetragen wurde, die das Stadttor schmückten. Dabei sollte wohl entsprechend der Interpretation des Bilderverbots, die Nachum zu seinen Lebzeiten vertreten hatte, vermieden werden, daß er selbst nach seinem Tod zufällig seinen Blick auf diese Bilder richtete. Dennoch ist in den rabbinischen Texten der Unterschied zu der von Hippolyt überlieferten Ansicht transparent: Es wird in ihnen gerade nicht erzählt, daß Nachum dazu aufgefordert habe, an Bildwerken nicht vorbeizugehen und sich geweigert habe, durch ein Tor mit darüber aufgestellten Statuen zu gehen.⁸¹

Ergebnis

Die Nachrichten des Josephus können durch die Mitteilungen in patristischen Quellen ergänzt werden. Diese Quellen beleuchten viel deutlicher, als dies bei Josephus geschieht, die radikale Interpretation des biblischen Bilderverbots durch die jüdische Opposition gegen die römische Herrschaft.

Diese Kirchenväterberichte über die Ablehnung von paganen Bildwerken fußen auf Nachrichten von Zeugen wie etwa Hegesipp, der mit der religiösen und politischen Situation in Palästina vertraut war und als zuverlässiger Berichterstatter angesehen werden kann.

Dabei ist ferner von Bedeutung, daß die Nachrichten Hippolyts und die des Autors des *Indiculus de haeresibus* durch rabbinisches Belegmaterial als zuverlässig bestätigt werden. Zudem erhellen sich die untersuchten Berichte gegenseitig. Beispielsweise wird die kompromißbereite Interpretation des biblischen Bilderverbots durch Nachum ben Simai, deren gegen die jüdischen Aufständischen gerichteten Implikationen in den rabbinischen Erzählungen nicht erwähnt werden, erst evident, wenn man hierzu die Notizen des Hippolyt heranzieht.

⁷⁹ Zu dieser Sitte, die auch in rabbinischen Quellen bezeugt ist, vgl. Klein 1908, 50.

⁸⁰ Dieses aramäische Lehnwort ist von dem griechischen Begriff "εἰκότιον" abgeleitet, s. Krauss 1899, 40.

⁸¹ Nachum wird sogar als Vorbild dafür in Anspruch genommen, daß es erlaubt sei, an einem heidnischen Götterbild – etwa bei einer Prozession an einem paganen Fest – vorüberzugehen, γ. 'Abod. Zar. 43b, 75. Hinter dieser Problematik steht eine fundamentale Auseinandersetzung um die durch heidnische Götterbilder übertragene Unreinheit, s. G. Alon 1977, 171.

English summary

The paper deals with the resistance by Jewish rebels led by a certain so-called Galilean, Judas against the Roman census. Judas regarded submission to human rulers as contravening the first of the Ten Commandments. Therefore his adherents opposed Roman taxation, because everybody who paid taxes acknowledged the legitimacy of the government. Josephus does not conceal the religious underpinning of the rebellion, but he also does not make it a pivotal point in his narrative. He restricts himself to a few brief remarks. Probably because of the apologetic aim of his writing, Josephus hesitated to pollute the already tense atmosphere of the Jewish defeat in the war against Rome, by making Jewish religion responsible for the bloody conflict.

The paper attempts to throw light on Josephus' report by way of additional sources which illuminate the religious reasons for the rebellion. The first text is a part of the refutation of Christian heretical groups written by Hippolytus. The second text comes from an anonymous author who wrote a treatise concerned with Christian heretics that included a brief passage on Jewish groups. His book was attributed to the famous theologian Hieronymus, but its author was probably far less important.

The reports of Hippolytus and Pseudo-Hieronymus can be traced back to Christian theologians of the 2nd century who were familiar with contemporary Judaism. Above all they fit in well with some reports of the church historian Eusebius about Hegesippus' writings. Eusebius tells us that Hegesippus described the doctrine of Jewish groups e.g. the Galileans.

Hippolytus and Pseudo-Hieronymus inform us, that some Jews interpreted the biblical ban on images as a total rejection of images. This view made it impossible for them to use Roman coins stamped with images and they did neither "carry" them nor "look upon them" nor "make" them. They did also not enter through gates decorated with statues, since they regarded this act as against Jewish law.

The trustworthiness of these patristic reports is confirmed by rabbinical traditions. In general, the rabbis allowed the use of Roman coins in spite of the images of emperors and pagan deities stamped on them and they tried to tone down the radical interpretation of the Bible mentioned by Hippolytus. This is illustrated by stories about Nachum ben Simai: He refused to look upon images on coins, but he did use Roman money. He thereby avoided possible conflicts with

the Roman government that collected taxes in their own currency. If one refused to use the government's currency, the penalty was death. Nachum thus restricted his refusal to look at images to when it didn't contradict Roman law. The same compromising behavior also characterized Nachum's reaction on statues.

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RECONSTRUCTING EXODUS TRADITION: MOSES IN THE SECOND BOOK OF JOSEPHUS' *ANTIQUITIES*

Giovanni Frulla

Foreword

Writing a story that derives widely from the mythical, religious, and literary context of the Near East, the author of Exodus 1–15 produces a text which becomes a model for the following ages, when Israel is often subjected to a foreign power and always aims to reach freedom. The liberation and the going out of Egypt have always been core themes for Jewish cultural settings and, for this reason they have been modified, elaborated and integrated in all ages.

I will try to summarize how and why Josephus represents Moses in his works, focusing in particular on the second book of the *Antiquities*, in order to give a wider picture of the exodus in the I century CE, when biblical tradition is in contact with other traditions and cultures.¹

It is clear that many scholars have already studied the role of Moses in Josephus (one example is the work of Louis Feldman),² but my own point of view starts specifically from the perspective of the Exodus tradition, analysing the text in order to reconstruct the different steps of the transmission of the story.³

Reflecting on the book of Exodus the immediate question is about Moses: Who is he? What does he represent?⁴

¹ On September 2, 2006 I discussed my doctoral thesis in History and Civilization of the Ancient Mediterranean at the University of Pavia. The purpose of my dissertation is to give a contribution to the reconstruction of the Exodus tradition, focusing in particular on Ezekiel the tragedian and analysing his work in comparison with Josephus' *Antiquities* and the biblical text. This paper is taken from my work.

² See for example his famous essay. Feldman 1998, 374–442.

³ I want to thank in particular Professor Lucio Troiani and Dr. Elio Jucci (both from the University of Pavia) for their precious suggestions during my doctoral research. A special thanks goes to Prof. Leonardo Marcheselli for his assistance with the English language during the preparation of the article.

⁴ It is obvious, but important, to underline that the Exodus story becomes a model for other periods of Jewish history, such as the Exile, when Hebrews are under the control of a foreign power and, in this way, they reflect the condition of slavery described in Exodus and adapted to a different geographic and historical context.

The biblical account of Exodus 1–15 describes Moses as a liberator, sent by God to save the people from slavery, in strict confidence and contact with Him: he speaks with Him, like Abraham and other people in the Bible.⁵

Moreover, Moses embodies the prophet: this is evident in the similarity between Moses and Elijah.⁶

Moses, intermediary of divine will, resumes also Near Eastern mythology, in particular the cosmogonical myths of the creation of the world and the primeval battle between the sea monster and the positive divinity, who eventually establishes human order and cosmic rules. Owing to this, it is rather complicated to determine who Moses is.⁷

The Exodus tradition does not immediately appear certain and lasting. In fact, until the Hellenistic period, we have evidence of different traditions about the release of the Hebrews from Egypt and the characters involved. Among others, the Italian scholar Garbini questions whether in the second century BCE. the Pentateuch could have already been fixed as a corpus and asserts the possibility of a late redaction of the first five books of the Bible.⁸

Moses in the Hellenistic Period

It is very interesting that in the Hellenistic period opinions regarding Moses were not the same, even in the Jewish milieu. Moses is often represented as a military commander and ruler. But other aspects reveal

⁵ See Rendtorff 1997, 11–19. Sometimes, considering Moses' resolution in refusing divine mission, the relationship between God and Moses seems equal. See some considerations in the dated (but still helpful) Coats 1970, 14–26.

⁶ In fact Moses and Elijah are not allowed to observe God face to face (as we find in Exodus 33:18–23e 1King 19:13, even if they are both involved with a theophany: see Briend 1992, 13–50); they are both the main characters of a narrative scheme proper to the divine call, as we can see in Macchi 1996, 67–74; they both choose to be representative of Hebrew monotheism against foreign religions, because in Exodus we have a fight between Moses and Pharaoh's magicians, while in 1King there is a contrast between Elijah and Baal's prophets. For an accurate description of the prerogatives of the "prophet" in particular, see Catastini 1990, 10–121.

⁷ About the influences of Near Eastern mythology on the account of Exodus 1–15 see in particular Day 1985 and Wakeman 1973. A dated, but not less important study on this matter is Gunkel 1895. Other works about this argument are Grottanelli 1979, 5–36 and Anderson 1987. About the cosmogonical battle see also Catastini 2001, 71–89.

⁸ See Garbini 2003, in particular Chapter V (87–109).

interesting features of his character which are not always brought out, and often disagree with the biblical account. Here we take some examples from the works of three authors, Artapanus, Philo, and Ezekiel the Tragedian.

In a long fragment quoted by Eusebius (*Praep. ev.* 9,27,1–39) the historian Artapanus reports the story of Moses and shows him as a hero. He compares Moses to the Greek poet Musaeus (Orpheus' master). The merits of Musaeus are to have discovered crafts, weapons and military engines, and philosophy, and to have transmitted them to mankind. He is seen as a Greek myth, and God plays a secondary role. In fact, Artapanus reports divine interventions only in a very few cases and God remains apart. The author rationally explains some events of the Exodus story, such as the crossing of the Red Sea which he explains as a natural ebb-phenomenon. Probably, in front of a hypothetical Greek audience, he wants to try a first compromise between Jewish faith and Greek culture.⁹

Moreover, Artapanus narrates in detail Moses' campaigns in Ethiopia, presenting him as a clever general and a successful leader, and so showing that the warlike element is one of the specific features of his character.¹⁰

In the 1st century CE, Philo of Alexandria develops a better consciousness of the relationship between Jewish and Greek culture and writes accordingly. He starts *De vita Mosis* with these words:

I purpose to write the life of Moses, whom some describe as the legislator of the Jews, others as the interpreter of the Holy Laws (Philo, *De vita Mosis* 1.1, Colson).

Philo wants to speak to those who reduce Moses to a legislator (the non-Jews), and at the same time to those who see him as a priest and a prophet, an interpreter of divine will (the Jews). Out of the Jewish context, Moses (similar to Greek myths) appears as one who establishes the laws and rules of a community (as also Christian authors who mention him).

⁹ For the description of Moses as a hero and the reference to Musaeus see Troiani 1997, 99–100. About Artapanus in general see Denis 2000, 2: 1135–144 in particular. See also Charlesworth 1983, 1: 890–91 about the dating and the Alexandrian provenance of this historian.

¹⁰ Josephus also narrates the account of Moses' campaign in Ethiopia, so we will consider this aspect in the next paragraph.

Philo deals with Law also in another work, named *Hypothetikà*, quoted by Eusebius in *Praep. Ev.* 8, where he analyzes some Jewish rules and commandments, showing them to be good also for non-Jews. Moses' relationship with law is more intimate and mysterious. This aspect links him for example to 2Maccabees 2, where also Solomon has a strict familiarity with divine Law. Both are also connected with the temple. We have not only the connection Moses-Law, but also his priestly function (linked to the temple), which is not less important.¹¹ In summary, Jewish literature from the Hellenistic period tells about different aspects of Moses: legislator, judge, priest, and military leader.

Another curious example of different coexistent traditions is in the work of Ezekiel, author of tragedies. In the 269 verses of *Exagoge* he follows the Exodus' account and depicts Moses in a rather syncretistic way, including aspects of his character.¹²

Moses in fact is described as a king, judge, and visionary prophet who is able to foresee the future through his premonitory dreams. The tragedy narrates also the meeting with Ethiopians, a reference linked to the tradition of a warrior Moses. Ezekiel can create this mix for the poetic nature of his composition. In writing tragedy he freely uses the materials at his disposal and offers a remarkable collection of this material. The Moses that emerges is a fluid character with not many fixed features.¹³

¹¹ The stories contained into the two introductory letters of 2Maccabees underline the importance of the Temple: we can say that, at the end of the II century BCE more or less, we find an internal movement of Judaism, a movement of propaganda, defence and promotion of the Temple, the distinctive and specific element of the people itself. For this see Doran 1981, 6–11. The parallelism between Moses and Solomon is an example of the relationships between Moses and Law, and between Moses and the Temple. The connection between these two characters is evident. For example in 1King 8 Solomon, after building the Temple, provides its dedication, pronouncing a long pray to God (see Cogan 2001, 293); the context is similar to the final part of the book of Exodus (36–40), where Moses establishes a place for the ark of the covenant.

¹² A critical comment on the *Exagoge* is available in Kuiper 1900, 237–80 and Wieneke 1931. More recent studies are Fornaro 1982, Jacobson 1983 and Holladay 1989, 301–529. On Ezekiel the Tragedian in general and about the fragments which have reached us we can read also Hadas 1959, 99–101; Strugnell 1967, 449–57; Kraus 1968, 164–75; Starobinski-Safran 1974, 216–24; Nickelsburg 1984, 125–30; Robertson 1985, 803–19; Horst 1988, 519–46 (in particular 521–25); Id. 1990, 72–93; Denis 2000, 2: 1201–216.

¹³ A more complete description of the work of Ezekiel the Tragedian is available in Frulla 2005, 87–107.

Moses in the Second Book of Josephus' Antiquities

In the 1st century CE Flavius Josephus decides to present Jewish history basing his work on the sacred tradition, and setting it in a historical perspective which often obliges him to insert aspects of that kind. We face a few questions: which idea of Moses was in Josephus' mind? And, accordingly, which Exodus was the model for that historical reconstruction, not always consistent with the biblical text? In order to answer, it is necessary to underline some specific features of Moses, as he appears in Josephus' writings. The study of the relationship between this and parallel traditions can help us to understand the true aim of Josephus in his historical reconstruction.¹⁴

Moses is discussed in *Against Apion*, but the analysis of this work is not included in this article: *Apion* would require a specific treatment and the symbolic role of Moses contained is not concerned with the historical reconstruction with which we are dealing. Here we deal specifically with the account of the second book of the *Antiquities*, where we can find the release of the Hebrews from Egypt and the presentation of Moses.¹⁵

a. *The additions of the Antiquities*

Josephus does not deny the classical interpretation of Moses as a legislator, as we can read in 3.213: Moses wrote laws and constitutions, directly inspired by God. But in the second book of the *Antiquities* we have other characteristics of Moses. The first one is his strict similarity to a real military commander. Moses is presented as a general, and the additions to his military deeds are the best evidences of his warlike function.

¹⁴ It is important to note that in the first century CE we find many traditions circulating: probably this is the reason for the birth of different exegeses, and alongside them, different perspectives of analysis of the sacred texts and on their interpretation. It is likely that Josephus follows one of these different uses of biblical tradition.

¹⁵ In the first book of *Apion* Josephus reports a list of data about the origins of Hebrews, also derived from pagan works. The descriptions of the situation are sometimes very different: they outline many features of the story that we cannot find in the Bible, and of the role of Moses during the exodus. A specific study of *Apion* could be interesting in a research about the debate regarding the origins and the movements of the Hebrews and the resolution of this controversy in ancient and modern times. For a commentary of *Apion* see Troiani 1977.

In 2.239–253, for example, we find Moses against the Ethiopians, as in Artapanus, but in a more complex elaboration. Moses has to free Egypt from the Ethiopian army, and he has the occasion to show everybody his military cleverness, confirmed by the episode of the snakes and by the method used to eliminate them (*Ant.* 2.245–247). From § 243 it seems clear that Moses' mission is an attempt to provoke his death in battle. But Moses defeats the Ethiopians and besieges them in Sheba, until Tharbi, the Ethiopian king's daughter, agrees to marry him to obtain peace (§ 252–253).¹⁶

The δόλος (one of the keywords of the narrative) shows that the Egyptian plot against Moses is evident in the following passage (2.254–255), where the intention to kill him is based on a sense of envy (φθόνος), caused by his growing prestige and fame. Moses is in danger because his ability could be a menace to Egypt itself, as he might turn into an enemy, dangerous and difficult to control. He is so aware of his capacities that he doesn't hesitate to remind the Pharaoh of his deeds in Ethiopia and the successes of his army, and most of all of the lack of reward for all these acts (§ 282).¹⁷

We have no explicit references to the Ethiopian events in the biblical text, because the Bible does not say a lot about Moses before the theophany. Josephus, instead, describes a very real and firm character, who is able to bear his first difficulties and knows his purpose very well, i.e., freedom (ἐλευθερία) for the Jewish people (§ 290).

Josephus' account continues with the quarrel between Moses and Pharaoh and the celebration of Passover, until the death of Egyptian firstborns and the consequent departure of the Hebrews from Egypt. Moses leads his people to freedom, and chooses a route that again reveals his predisposition to military matters. In fact, he chooses a secondary and longer way through the desert in order to avoid the Egyptians and other hostile peoples (§§ 322–323). Here Moses' reasons seem to answer to precise tactical requirements.¹⁸

Another episode where Moses appears as a general is in his speech to the people before the final battle against the Egyptians (§§ 330–333). We have here the same exhortation before a battle we can find in the accounts of Classical historians. The same scheme is present in some

¹⁶ See the commentary in Feldman 2000, 202–05.

¹⁷ See *ibid.*, 214.

¹⁸ See *ibid.*, 226.

cases also in 1 and 2 Maccabees, in particular when Judas speaks to his army and tries to convince his soldiers they have God's favour and protection. Josephus uses this narrative scheme to point out two main concepts: the first is the inferior condition of the Hebrews that face an adverse fate (where the idea of fate does not depend on human will, but on divine intervention); the second is the divine support for the faithful people. In this way, Moses can excite Hebrews to battle with some expectations of victory.¹⁹

Josephus' perspective appears more clearly if we look at his consideration after the crossing of the Red Sea, at the end of the second book (§§ 347–348). According to Josephus, nobody could question it, since even the historians who narrate the deeds of Alexander the Great mention a similar episode. When Alexander had to cross the Sea of Pamphilia, the waters drew back from him. By comparing Moses to Alexander in the narration of this supernatural event, Josephus confirms the warlike function of his character and also clarifies all the doubts regarding his account. Though based on Sacred Books (§ 347), it is certainly a historical work as are others which belong to the same genre, but are of non-Jewish provenance.²⁰

Another interesting aspect of the Exodus' account of the *Antiquities* is the charge of magic (sorcery) directly or indirectly addressed against Moses. At § 284 in fact Pharaoh accuses Moses of using not only deception in order to defeat him, but also *τερατουργίαις καὶ μαγείαις*, with wonders and magics. Furthermore, at § 320, Pharaoh repents having let the Hebrews go *κατὰ γοητείαν τὴν Μωυσέος*, for Moses' witchcraft (or marvels). Moses' paranormal abilities (if we can say that) are not new in the biblical account, such as in the episode of the competition against Pharaoh's magicians, but it is interesting to point out as Josephus goes into details, underlining the charge as real magic art. The idea of a connection between Moses and prodigious events is related to Jewish Hellenistic literature, which in fact reports several extraordinary things done by the liberator. Artapanus, for example, inserts some facts (such as Moses' escape from prison, or the restitution of life to the king) proper of an uncommon character.

¹⁹ The passage outlines not only Moses' military acumen and determination as chief and commander, but also his great faith in God and his mercy. See Feldman 2000, 227.

²⁰ In this way Josephus tries to make the miracle itself more credible, because he quotes a famous precedent. See Feldman 2000, 230.

According to Josephus, however, Moses acts only because he is sent by God and follows only God's directions.²¹

Josephus' description of the death of Moses, at the end of book 4, seems to be an assumption (like the apocryphal contemporary *Assumption of Moses*), but he is particularly alert in order to avoid confusion: Moses, in fact, would have mentioned his own death in Deuteronomy to make people aware that he was not a divinity. This matter is connected to the problem of Josephus' sources: in fact it is clear that, for his historical reconstruction Josephus does not only use the sacred tradition (as he says) but also other parallel accounts, inserted and reproduced into his account.

b. *Parallelisms with the New Testament*

In the analysis of Moses, as he appears in Josephus' writings, a reference is necessary to the role played by his cultural background and contemporary literature. In particular, we have to consider the New Testament, which undoubtedly influences the subject and the general planning of Josephus' work. We can start from Moses' childhood, wherein lie the origins of the contrast and of the hostilities between Hebrews and Egyptians.²²

When Josephus defines Judaism as "the noblest laws and philosophy in existence"²³ he speaks in apologetic terms and describes Jewish people in a positive perspective. The Jews are not interested in competing with other nations in terms of revolting against a foreign power. The misunderstanding that makes the Hebrew hostile under the government of other nations is explained indirectly in the second book of *Antiquities*, in §§ 205–216, where an important innovation is introduced to interpret the outcome of the Hebrew-Egyptian relationships. In § 205, in fact, the presumed cause is the announcement of the coming of a newborn who will deliver the Hebrews from slavery. This baby will be in possession of immense virtues and will reach an eternal glory. Alarmed by this prophecy, related by one of his scribes, the king

²¹ See Feldman 2000, 214–15 and 225.

²² I thank Prof. Steve Mason for several suggestions he gave me during my period of study and research at York University, in Toronto, in April–May 2004, and for the frequent occasions of debate during the same experience.

²³ See Mason 2003, 116 (but we can consider the entire passage relating to this problem, contained at 111–16).

orders all the Hebrew's male infants to be drowned in the Nile (§ 206). But divine Providence, according to Josephus' version, wants a happy ending, so the newborn is saved and brought up secretly (§ 209).²⁴

Both these two elements, the presence of a prophecy and the connection with a slaughter of innocent newborns, refer to a similar episode in the New Testament (Matthew 1–2). As we can see, in this passage there are the same steps as in Josephus' report. There is a prophecy in which a child will be the saviour of the people from spiritual slavery (Matthew 1:20–22) and there is the consequent slaughter (Matthew 2:16). *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* on Exodus 1:15 reports a dream of Pharaoh himself, interpreted by Jannes and Jambres, magicians of Egypt. Some rabbinic traditions (*Sanhedrin* 101a, *Sotah* 12b, *Midrash Exod. Rabbah* 1.18) underline that it is not a dream of the Pharaoh, but a prediction, made by astrologers, about a pregnant woman, and a child who will be the saviour of the Hebrews.²⁵

For the similarity between Josephus and Matthew, it has been proposed that Josephus' account may have influenced the story of the slaughter of the innocents in Matthew. Moreover, that the story of the announcement of the birth of Moses was possibly known by the author of the gospel and may have supplied details for the narration of the birth of Jesus.²⁶

There is also another point of contact between the two narratives: the dream of the baby's father. In the *Antiquities* (§§ 210–216) we can read about a prayer of Amaram, Moses' father, and an apparition of God himself. Also in Matthew we find a strict relationship between Joseph, Jesus' father, and God, who in this case appears as an angel.²⁷

The premonitory dream is the key to the whole story. For the baby's father it is God's permission to act. Only after contact with God can men do what they have to do. According to Josephus, the prophecy confirmed by augurs and by the dream, is the greatest and most important cause of the Egyptian reaction and oppression. He often puts in evidence how the Egyptian opinion about Moses was influenced by

²⁴ About the problem and the role of the Fate see Mason 2001, 384–98 in particular.

²⁵ See Feldman 2000, 188.

²⁶ Cfr. Idem, 189 (with a detailed description of the interpretations of the scholars).

²⁷ Cfr. Matthew 1:20–21 and 2:13. Also in the case of the dream of Amaram the tradition is divided. Some rabbinic passages (*Sotah* 12b–13a, *Megillah* 14a) have a prophecy of Miriam, Moses' sister, who has a dream in *Bib. Ant.* 9.10, where there is no reference to Amaram's dream.

this portent and, vice versa, could influence their mutual relationships. Josephus seems to follow a common context, the background against which the New Testament developed. The dream and the slaughter of innocent newborn, actually, appear also in many Apocryphal texts relating to the New Testament, such as *The Nativity of Mary*, *Proto-Gospel of James*, *Pseudo-Matthew*, *Story of Joseph the Carpenter*.²⁸

The scheme of prophecy finds a sound context for its development. Against this background the attention turns to the expectation of a saviour, in a messianic hope that is present also in the New Testament. Josephus seems to be influenced by this perspective, and in fact he follows the common structure of the messianic message. Nevertheless, he seems to refuse this messianic expectation, setting the salvation in the past, and denying the possibility of messianic hope in the future.

Conclusions

At the end of these few and rapid examples about Moses we can try to summarize the main aspects and to draw some conclusions as regards our original questions. At the same time the reflections that we have just presented are particularly interesting because a lot of questions remain still.

a. A new Moses

Flavius Josephus offers us the description of a character that does not always correspond to the one we find in the Bible. Josephus' Moses has some new features and peculiarities, almost unpublished, at least as regards official Judaism. It is not so, if we consider the whole Jewish tradition, in particular the Hellenistic one. Beside the usual portrait of Moses the legislator, we have in fact (in Josephus' writings) the use of some images belonging to the Jewish context. Moses is a military leader and warrior, Moses is linked to the supernatural, he is the only intermediary between God and human kind, the sole possible liberator, predestined to free his people. From this point of view Josephus' Moses is not as new as it might seem from a first reading.

²⁸ Some considerations about these texts are available in Moraldi 1996, respectively 74–75, 101, 120–24, 146.

He is, instead, the last natural follower of an Exodus' tradition which is not shaped until a late epoch and which sees other parallel narratives about Moses, circulating near to the official version.

b. *Moses and Flavius Josephus*

In Flavius Josephus Moses represents the main character of all Jewish history. The messianic context in which the *Antiquities*' narration is inserted is the demonstration of how important is, for Josephus, to re-read Jewish history under the criterion of divine providence, though not so much historical as it appears. The facts depend on God's will and make sense only in a religious perspective. This is the same position that inspires Josephus' political opinions and also animates his actions with contemporary Jews and Romans. Retelling Exodus is important in order to understand current events. Considering Moses' deeds within a messianic context, the author wants indirectly to criticize the tensions at the base of the First Jewish revolt, which, in his opinion, derived from an internal crisis, which led to war, but was not legitimate. The conflict was not a rebellion of the whole Jewish people, but only of a group of "tyrants" that persuaded the people to fight against the Roman Empire, probably using the hope of a messianic salvation for a more real objective.²⁹

Even if Josephus takes into much consideration the importance of prophecy and of divinely inspired predictions (which he is able to explain, because he is a priest and he possesses the gift of interpretation), we can argue that he refuses to share the messianic hopes of the revolutionary movements of his century.³⁰

c. *Reconstructing the facts: Flavius Josephus' purposes*

So, why does Josephus transmit an Exodus containing additions and a Moses not always corresponding to the Bible?

The device Josephus uses in order to reconstruct Exodus' story is the emblematic example of the complex transmission of this account, and at the same time it is the concrete realization of a historiographical

²⁹ See Mason 2003, 78–81.

³⁰ About Josephus ability in interpreting divine predictions see Bilde 1998, 35–61. On his connections with political movements of the epoch see Momigliano 1979, 564–74 (571 in particular).

method which has significance against the background of the first century CE, when historical and political events are strictly combined with ancient and new religions.

Pagan tradition interprets Moses as the legislator, as we have already found in the quotation from Philo. Josephus, with his work, wants to reconsider this interpretative trend of Alexandrian Judaism and of the Philonian perspective in order to show a sort of opening to the pagan points of view and to the non-Jewish cultures and religions. Meanwhile, though, it is necessary for him to recover Jewish tradition related to the Exodus' story, in which Moses is a general, a hero, a philosopher, and a magician, in order to show the progress of Hebrew culture over time.

There is no gap, according to Josephus, between official Judaism and minor traditions. We have no contrast with the surrounding non-Jewish environment. Jewish history reconsiders everything and Moses, in particular, becomes adhesive of the variety of traditions and narratives produced about Jews and by the Jews themselves.

The example of Exodus is emblematic for this type of historiographic method. History is subdued to this need of recovery, which without problems provides the insertion into the narration of parallel tradition and episodes which belong to the mythical and religious sphere more than to the historical one.

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UNITY AND CHRONOLOGY IN THE *JEWISH ANTIQUITIES*

Dov Gera

Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* is often treated not as a unified work but rather as a combination of two distinct parts: the first part is a retelling of the biblical narrative, while the second surveys the history of the Jews from Alexander the Great to the outbreak of the First Jewish Revolt.¹ Such a view is perhaps understandable in light of the reverence of scholars of many faiths towards the Bible; a reverence which seems to extend even to Josephus' reworking of it. A contributing factor is the tendency of scholars to focus on subjects of their choice. This seems to place the biblical scholar and the intertestamental one on opposite sides of a fault line.

Josephus however did not share these attitudes, for in his preface to the *Jewish Antiquities* he tells us that his aim was to write a work which would encompass the entire archaeology of the Jews as well as their constitution translated from the Hebrew (*Ant.* 1.5). A bit later he tells us that "countless are the things revealed through the Sacred Scriptures, since, indeed, the history of 5,000 years is embraced in them..." (*Ant.* 1.13, Feldman; cf. *C. Ap.* 1.1). In both statements Josephus makes no distinction between the history of the biblical period and the intertestamental one. The two eras are part and parcel of the entire archaeology of the Jews, and for the description of both, the historian has recourse to the sacred scriptures, written in Hebrew. Josephus' statements constitute a difficulty for Jewish and Christian scholars alike, for these pronouncements assume a process in which Hebrew texts were continuously added to the body of the sacred scriptures until the endpoint chosen by the Jewish historian for his *Jewish Antiquities*, and perhaps even later.² Thus, he could make use of

¹ For such a view see Schalit 1944, xv–xvii; Bilde 1988, 89. Both scholars make the point that books 1–10 of the *Antiquities* form a history of the First Temple period, while books 11–20 constitute the history of the Second Temple period. In my view this actually highlights the unity of the *Jewish Antiquities*.

² Feldman (2000a, 5 note 5) "corrects" Josephus, stating that the sacred writings cover only part of the entire history.

these sources to delineate 5,000 years of Jewish archaeology, which in themselves seem to be a close approximation of the number of years that have passed, according to Josephus' calculations, from the birth of Adam until the destruction of the Second Temple.³ To Josephus then, the benevolence of Antiochus III (*Ant.* 12.138–146), and the cruelty of Florus (*Ant.* 20.252–257), were part of the “countless...things” that were to be found in the “sacred scriptures” as much as the Flood was (*Ant.* 1.89–95). But our need to treat the *Jewish Antiquities* as a single unit in and of itself with its own structure and characteristics, and not as two distinct halves, stems from the language of Josephus who speaks of his purpose to “set forth the precise details of what is in the Scriptures according to its proper order” (*Ant.* 1.17, Feldman—κατὰ τὴν οἰκειάν τάξιν). This would seem to indicate that in Josephus' eyes, his work was organized according to some guiding principle. Feldman thinks that Josephus refers here to the organization of his own work, superior to that of the Bible.⁴ Furthermore, throughout his work, Josephus makes anticipatory remarks, promising to elaborate on this or that subject “in the proper place (κατὰ χώραν),”⁵ or on a more suitable (εὐκαιρότερον) occasion.⁶ Are we not justified in regarding these allusions as further assurances by the historian that he had indeed thought out in advance the entire scheme for his work and that in its execution he had lived up to his original plans? Shaye Cohen argued that “Josephus normally follows the order of the Bible, except when he strives to produce a coherent, thematic narrative”.⁷ Should we then understand Josephus' guiding principle to be thematic? While Cohen's conclusion is surely correct, I do not think, and Cohen does not claim, that this *modus operandi* of Josephus could be identified as the guiding principle in the *Jewish Antiquities*. In what follows, the argument will be made that for Josephus it was of paramount importance to arrange both biblical and postbiblical events in their chronological sequence.

³ Josephus' data add up to 4,893 years and 10 days. See *Ant.* 1.81–82; 8.61, 99; 10.147; 20.233, 234, 237–246, 250. Admittedly, other calculations, based on Josephus' conflicting chronological notes can be made. However, even if one accepts Josephus' statement that the First Temple was destroyed 4,513 years after Adam's birth (*Ant.* 10.148), the remaining 487 years would exceed the end of the biblical history by a few hundred years.

⁴ Feldman (2000a, 7 note 21) refers to Josephus' remarks that Moses had left his writings scattered in the way that he has received them from God (*Ant.* 4.197).

⁵ *Ant.* 1.170; 7.89, 103; 8.229; 10.80; 12.237; 13.275; 14.78, 176.

⁶ *Ant.* 3.218; 7.69; 8.211; 9.291; 10.107; 12.388. See too, *Ant.* 3.74; 14.323.

⁷ Cohen 1979, 40–42. The quotation may be found on p. 40.

To demonstrate this, we shall turn to various episodes, found in both the first and second decade of his work, and see how chronological considerations affected the historian's treatment of them.

Towards the end of the book of Judges we find three stories threaded together by a recurring editorial pronouncement which proclaims that "in those days there was no king in Israel." Two of these pronouncements also add that at the time "all the people did what was right in their own eyes" (NRSV).⁸ The first story tells of Micah, a man from Ephraim, who made an idol which he installed within a shrine. Later on, a Levite from Bethlehem became the priest there (Judges 17). The second tale, closely linked with the first, recounts the migration of the tribe of Dan to the north. On their way up north, the Danites decided to steal Micah's idol and were successful in convincing the priest to join them. The Danites then conquered the city of Laish which they renamed Dan, and installed the idol in it (Judges 18). The last narrative, which also concludes the book, deals with a Levite and his concubine who were passing through the Benjaminite city of Gibeah, and were invited by one of the residents to pass the night at his house. However, the local population demanded that the host hand over the visitor to them in order to molest him. He refused, but in the end, the Levite, apparently in order to save himself, turned his mistress over to the mob. The woman was raped, and subsequently died. In the wake of this crime, war was declared upon the tribe of Benjamin by the other eleven tribes (Judges 19–21). These stories deal with rampant idolatry among the Israelites, as well as trickery, immorality, fraternal disputes and wars, and as such they are well suited to the motto mentioned above. The absence of any recognized Israelite leader adds to the harmony between contents and caption. Thus, the last five chapters of the book of Judges are well situated. They come after the period of the Judges which is typified by a recurrent cycle. The Israelites first sin, and God then arranges that one of the local Canaanite rulers oppress them for a while. The Hebrews then repent, and God selects a leader who saves the people, acts as their judge and brings a period of tranquility, until the people revert to their evil ways. In our chapters no judge is present, and the state of anarchy expressed in them paves the way to the theme of 1 Samuel—the crowning of a king of Israel.

Let us turn to Josephus' handling of the story of the Levite and his mistress. In his recital this episode is not found towards the end of the

⁸ Judg 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25.

book of Judges narrative, but in a different location altogether. The historian begins his version of Judges in *Ant.* 5.120. Within 16 sections he disposes of the first two chapters of Judges, and then turns to the Levite (*Ant.* 5.136–174). Why did Josephus place the story here, almost at the very beginning of his Judges narrative, even before the first mention of the earliest judge, Othniel son of Kenaz?⁹ Attridge suggests that for Josephus an “important consideration may be the moralizing structure of the whole book. For the effect of the transposition is to distribute accounts of corruption throughout the period covered by Bk. V” [of *Ant.*].¹⁰ This view has gained some support. However, a similar transposition of this affair has taken place in *Seder Olam Rabbah*, a midrashic chronographic treatise, which dates the Levite episode to the time of Cushan-Rishathaim,¹¹ a king of Aram whose oppression of the Israelites occasioned the rise of the first judge (Judg 3:7–11). Should we treat Josephus’ reasoning for antedating our story differently from the rabbinic chronologist (who does not exhibit Josephus’ moralistic and dramatic tendencies)?¹² George Foote Moore, in his century old commentary on the book of Judges found it “incredible that the tribe of Benjamin was almost exterminated only a generation or two before the time of Saul”.¹³ Thackeray responded by suggesting that Josephus had antedated the story in order “to allow time for the tribe of Benjamin to recover itself before it furnished the nation with its first king”.¹⁴ However, this line of reasoning does not explain why Josephus inserted the story of the Levite, his wife (for this is what Josephus makes her), and the ensuing war in the specific place that he did, nor do we understand how Josephus and the author of *Seder Olam Rabbah* arrived at an almost identical solution. It would seem

⁹ On Othniel, see Judg 3:9–11. Josephus retells the story in *Ant.* 5.182–184, giving him his father’s name by mistake.

¹⁰ Attridge 1976, 134–35. See too, Spilsbury 1998, 154; Feldman 2000b, 259; Begg 2005, 33 note 358.

¹¹ *Seder Olam Rabbah* 12 (Ratner 1988, 52–53). A later rabbinic work, *Seder Eliyahu Rabba* (11) 12 (Friedmann 1969, 57), follows this dating using almost the same words. For English translations of these tractates see, Guggenheimer 1998, 121–23; Braude and Kapstein 1981, 169.

¹² In fact the almost identical solution of Josephus and the Jewish chronographer would suggest that both authors moved the story of the Levite and his mistress because of chronological considerations, *pace* Feldman 2000b, 259.

¹³ Moore 1895, 404–05. The quote is on p. 405.

¹⁴ Thackeray in Thackeray and Marcus 1934, 62–63 note b. See already Whiston 1862, 208 note.

that the explanation for both questions is quite simple. In the biblical account, the eleven tribes came to Bethel to consult the oracle, on the eve of the third tribal battle. Now, the Bible tells us who the officiating priest was: he was Phinehas, son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron (Judg 20:26–28). Moore comments that “the mention of Phinehas would fix the time of the action in the first generation after the occupation of Western Palestine, to which period it is assigned by Josephus and the Jewish chronology; but this is probably...the guess of a very late editor or scribe”.¹⁵ Moore, whose disinterest here in the later Jewish sources is quite evident, has pointed to the right solution.¹⁶ An author with an interest in chronology could not date the story of the Levite and the Benjaminite war to a generation other than the one which followed Joshua. The point of transition from Joshua’s generation to the next one is marked by the final verse of Joshua. The Masoretic Text informs us of the death of Eleazar, Phinehas’ father (Josh 24:33). Since in our story, Phinehas is already the officiating chief priest, it was easy for Josephus to conclude that the son’s term of office began upon his father’s demise.¹⁷ It is also possible that the biblical text perused by Josephus was similar to that of the Septuagint. If that were the case, then the notice that Phineas replaced his father as priest (i. e. chief priest) upon the latter’s death (Josh 24:33–33a) would have been spelled out for the Jewish historian. Be that as it may, Josephus, when paraphrasing the last verse of Joshua, tells us that Eleazar the high priest left the priesthood to his son Phinehas.¹⁸ Josephus then had to find an appropriate place within the early chapters of the book of Judges narrative in which to insert the story of the Levite and his mistress. Such a place could be found in Judg 2, where an angel of the Lord reminds the Israelites of God’s command to not make a covenant with the Canaanites, a command not heeded by the Hebrews. The

¹⁵ Moore 1895, 434.

¹⁶ While Moore’s focus was on how the biblical text of Judges was formed, our interest here is how it was understood by Josephus.

¹⁷ Other biblical passages lead to the same conclusion: Num 25:7–13; Ezra 7:5 (2 Esd 7:5); 1 Chr 5:29–30; 6:35; 9:20. This conclusion applies to both Josephus and the anonymous author of *Seder Olam Rabbah*.

¹⁸ *Ant.* 5.119. In *Ant.* 5.120, where Josephus retells the opening phrase of Judges, he reintroduces Phinehas, although Phinehas does not feature in the biblical text, which telling us that the sons of Israel turned to God to find out what lay in their future. Josephus logically concluded that the medium for God Almighty’s reply would have been the high priest. Furthermore, Judg 1:1 and 20:27–28 are similar in both language and setting, and the latter passage has Phinehas act as God’s intermediary.

messenger promised that God Almighty would leave the Canaanites in place and use them to harass the Israelites (Judges 2:1–3). Josephus employs his retelling of Judges 2 (*Ant.* 5.133),¹⁹ as a backdrop against which he sets the story of the Levite and the tribal war. Thus Josephus moves our story from one transitional period of lawlessness, when the Israelites lack leadership because of the disappearance of the judges, to a similar, earlier period, marked by Joshua's death.²⁰

Let us turn to the migration of the Danites (Judges 18). Josephus retells this story, albeit with noteworthy omissions.²¹ However, while in the Bible this tale precedes that of the Levite and the concubine, in Josephus the order of the stories is reversed. We first hear about the Levite and the tribal war, and only then comes the section about the resettlement of the Danites (*Ant.* 5.175–178). Why did Josephus change the order of the biblical narrative?

If the biblical origin of these two stories is to be considered, Josephus had no reason to reverse the order, because both come from the same section of Judges, a section characterized by the catch phrase “in those days there was no king in Israel”. However, if the Jewish historian tried to extract some chronological hints from the Danites story, then he would have been able to conclude that the priest of the Danites was Moses' grandson,²² and therefore a contemporary of Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron. Again, no reason for a metastasis, but the change could stem from Josephus' dating of the Levite's story. The historian was focusing on the chronology of the stories in Judges 17–21, and

¹⁹ Cf. Begg 2005, 32 note 351.

²⁰ Glatt (1993, 92–93) has reached a similar conclusion saying that “Josephus views the beginning of the Judges period as the most likely occasion” for the events narrated in Judges 17–21. However, Glatt does not give any reason *why* Josephus thought the period starting right after the death of Joshua to be the most likely. Nodet (1995, 148 note 3) did notice the chronological observation of Judges 20:28, but did not see its significance.

²¹ Josephus completely ignores Judges 17, the story of Micah, because it testifies to pervasive idolatry among the Israelites. For the same reasons, the historian expunged this element from the Danite migration story. Cf. Feldman 2000b, 257; Begg 2005, 42 note 454.

²² Judges 18:30 names the priest as Jonathan son of Gershom son of Manasseh, but Manasseh (מְנַשֶּׁה) is written with a suspended *nun*. This suggests that his name was actually Moses (מֹשֶׁה). Some of the lesser witnesses to LXX likewise read Moses. Consult the note of Harlé (1999, 238–239) *ad loc.* See too, *t. Sanh.* 14:8; *b. B. Bat.* 109b, which testify to the existence of this tradition. Josephus suppresses the name of the priest and his ancestors, for the reason mentioned in the previous note. The grandson of Moses would have been a glaring example of an idol worshipper. See Feldman 2000b, 257–58.

chose the most securely dated of them to head the rest. In addition Phinehas, as chief priest of the Israelites of his time, was the person by whose term of office events could be dated.

Josephus' treatment of the story of Ruth supplies another example of the use of the high priest as a means of dating. In the Septuagint, the book of Ruth is placed after that of Judges. Josephus retells Ruth's story right after the death of Samson (mentioned in Judg 16:30–31), and this arrangement is clearly in line with the Septuagint (bearing in mind what we have seen about Josephus' handling of Judges 17–21). Now the book of Ruth opens with the words: "In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land" (1:1, NRSV). Josephus begins the same story somewhat differently: "After the death of Samson, the leader of the Israelites was Eli the high priest. In his days, their country was afflicted by a famine" (*Ant.* 5.318, Thackeray). We do not know how Josephus came to the conclusion that Ruth lived during Eli's tenure as high priest. Perhaps Theodore Reinach was right in assuming that Josephus had counted the generations backwards from David to Boaz.²³ But it is equally significant that the historian replaces one chronological reference with another. Josephus, apparently, was not pleased with the broader, less defined, chronological observation of the biblical text and sought to replace it with a more narrow and specific comment. Placing the story within a high priest's term of office, would answer his requirements.

Before moving on to the second decade of the *Antiquities*, it is perhaps worth mentioning that 1 Maccabees is the main source for books 12–13 of that work.²⁴ 1 Maccabees records a letter written by Jonathan the Hasmonean to the Spartans. Then comes a copy of an epistle supposedly written by a Spartan king, Areus, to an earlier high priest named Onias (12:6–18, 19–23). The arrangement of the two documents in 1 Maccabees agrees with Hellenistic diplomatic usage: the more recent letter appears first, and only then do we find, attached to it, a copy of the earlier message. Josephus too records the text of these two letters. In his version the Greek is more polished, the form of the

²³ See his note *ad loc.* in Reinach 1900, 354 note 3. Rappaport (1930, 44), suggests that the place of the book of Ruth in LXX was bound to lead Josephus to the conclusion that Ruth's story occurred after the death of the last judge, Samson, and therefore in the time of the next leader, Eli, who appears at the beginning of 1 Samuel as the presiding priest.

²⁴ For useful tables comparing these two sources (as well as 2 Maccabees and book 1 of the *Jewish War*), see Sievers 2001.

Spartan king's name is superior to the one found in 1 Maccabees, and Josephus is also able to add some details which are missing from his postulated source, 1 Maccabees.²⁵ One further difference is that while Josephus places Jonathan's missive in exactly the same location as in 1 Maccabees,²⁶ the Spartan king's epistle has been moved to an earlier period, to the time of the high priest Onias III.²⁷ Menahem Stern wrote that "we cannot explain why Josephus found it necessary to change the location of the document".²⁸ I would suggest, however, that Josephus chose to move the Areus letter out of chronological considerations.²⁹ The earlier document, purportedly written by a Spartan king and addressed to a high priest named Onias, could not be quoted within the period allotted to the Hasmonean high priest. The proper place for it had to be found. Josephus, who had no knowledge of Lacedaemonian history, was left with one clue, the name Onias. Whereas in the story of the Levite the high priest's name and patronymic secured a positive identification of the period, the Areus letter did not furnish Josephus with a patronymic. Consequently it is not surprising that Josephus failed to identify the right Onias. (Of the three homonymous high priests, he chose the only one who could not have conceivably received a letter from a Spartan king, be he named Areus or otherwise). The removal of the Areus letter from its original place suggests that no matter how awkward and arbitrary Josephus' rearrangements may seem, he was committed to the integration of the events narrated by him into the suitable chronological framework, in what he perceived to be the proper place for them.³⁰

²⁵ See Bickermann 1928, 786; Cardauns 1967, 317; Gruen 1998, 254 note 33.

²⁶ In both texts Jonathan's letter to Sparta follows upon his decision to renew relations with Rome. See 1 Macc 12:1–5, 6–18; *Ant.* 13.163–165, 166–170.

²⁷ *Ant.* 12.225–227. Onias III becomes high priest at the beginning of v. 225, and dies at *Ant.* 12.237. However, Schwartz (2002, 149) identifies the Onias of vs. 225 with Onias II. According to the text when Simon (I, according to Schwartz) died "his son Onias became his successor in office" (Marcus). Yet, when Simon I expired, his son was still a boy, and had to wait until Eleazar and Manasses had their turn as high priests (*Ant.* 12.43–44, 157). Schwartz's assumption entails the difficulty that not only the "high-priestly chronicle" used by Josephus here was inaccurate, but that the historian, who quotes from such chronicles elsewhere, did not possess any section relating to the times of Simon II and Onias III.

²⁸ Stern 1995, 65 (in Hebrew; the translation is mine—D. G.).

²⁹ See already the suggestion of Tcherikover 1959, 462 note 54: "The whole mélange was caused by Josephus' decision to interrupt the narrative for chronological reasons..., and to tell the reader what happened in the reign of Seleucus IV".

³⁰ Similarly, in *Ant.* 12.258–263, Josephus produces a set of 3 documents according to their chronological order. The original diplomatic sequence was quite different. See Bickerman 2007, 379–83.

Another passage related by Josephus within the framework of Onias III's high priesthood is the latter part of the story concerning Hyrcanus the Tobiad.³¹ We are told there that Hyrcanus ruled his estate, placed to the east of the Jordan River, "for seven years, during all the time that Seleucus reigned over Syria".³² I have taken this detail to be an integral part of the Tobiad saga.³³ If this is right, we can see how advantageous this piece of news would have been to Josephus. The historian must have known from his sources, as we do from one unknown to him, 2 Maccabees, that Seleucus IV and Onias III were contemporaries.³⁴ Therefore, Hyrcanus' exploits had to be placed within the high priesthood of Onias III, although the Tobiad legend makes no connection between these two personalities. One can therefore see the similarity between the integration of the story of the Danites within the high priesthood of Pinehas to the present one.

In his handling of the last two episodes, Josephus concluded (erroneously) that both were contemporaneous, belonging to the time of Onias III. He therefore set them side by side. But we still need to know how did Josephus deal with other periods in which events constantly move from one theater to another. One such era is that of the divided monarchy, covered by parts of 1 and 2 Kings (1 Kgs 12; 2 Kgs 17). There, the biblical editor employs his own methodology to cover the parallel histories of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel.³⁵ Once the separation of what was the kingdom of Solomon becomes a fact (1 Kgs 12:1–24), the narrator describes the 22 years of Jeroboam's reign over Israel (1 Kgs 12:25–14:20).³⁶ After that, the focus shifts to the Judaic kingdom and the editor tells us, in succession, of the events there during the reigns of Rehoboam, Abijah and Asa (1 Kgs 14:21–15:24). In

³¹ *Ant.* 12.228–236. For a discussion of the Tobiad legend with its two parts, see Gera 1990; 1998, 36–58; Gruen 1998, 99–106, 236–40.

³² *Ant.* 12.234. The translation is that of Marcus. I have merely replaced the translator's "Asia" with the text's "Syria".

³³ Gera 1990, 31 note 44, 38 note 77; 1998, 37, 55 note 80, 57 note 94. See too: Schwartz 1998, 58.

³⁴ 2 Macc 3:1–4:7. Josephus dates the death of Onias III to the very beginning of Antiochus IV Epiphanes' reign (*Ant.* 12.237).

³⁵ The artificiality of the division between 1 and 2 Kings is exemplified by the fact that the reign of Ahaziah, king of Israel, begins at the very end of 1 Kings, and continues directly at the opening of the second book (1 Kgs 22:52; 2 Kgs 1:18). See Gray 1970, 1; Long 1984, 14.

³⁶ In this passage there are substantial differences between the MT and LXX. 3 Kgdms 12:24a–24z is a long addition placed after 1 Kgs 12:24. 1 Kgs 14:1–20 is absent from LXX. Parts of the additional Greek text paraphrase sections of 1 Kgs 14:1–20.

other words, the narrator chose first to describe the events within the kingdom of Israel, then turned his attention to the deeds of the kings of Judah whose reigns paralleled those of the king of Israel. Similarly, once the narrator has finished describing Asa's long reign he switches back to the affairs of Israel and records the reigns of seven of its sovereigns, all of whom were crowned in the course of Asa's extended reign. This methodology is used until the dissolution of the kingdom of Israel, although its use is less consistent in 2 Kings.³⁷ One advantage of the editor's chosen technique is that the reign of each king is a unit within itself. However, when the histories of the kingdom of Judah and Israel converge, the result is not a happy one. Thus we hear, within the framework of Asa's reign, of his wars with Israel's king, Baasha (1 Kgs 15:16–21) before we even get to hear of the latter's ascendancy to the throne (15:28).³⁸ In another instance, the editor is forced to deviate from his usual method, and to place the reign of the Judaic king, Ahaziah son of Joram (2 Kgs 8:25–9:29) within the description of the rule of Joram son of Ahab over Israel (2 Kgs 3:1–9:26). Both kings were killed by the rebel Jehu, within a single day (2 Kgs 9:21–28). As a result, the biblical narrator found it impossible to separate their reigns. Another criticism which may be leveled against the editor is that his thematic treatment of each king comes, to some extent, at the expense of the orderly chronological progression of the story. Thus, after we have been told of Asa's 41 year reign (1 Kgs 15:9–24), the narrator is forced to return to Asa's second year because at that time Nadab became king over Israel (1 Kgs 15:25). Admittedly, a discussion of Josephus' handling of the parallel histories of the kings of Judah and Israel may be hampered by the divergent nature of the texts of the Hebrew and Greek Bible covering that period. Thus, any assessment of Josephus' handling of the biblical material may seem to be arbitrary, because of our inability to prove which text or texts were used by the Jewish historian. However, if we look at the segment of parallel history which covers Asa's reign in Judah, and six out of the seven reigns of his contemporaries in Israel, we will find that the structure of the Septuagint is in line with the Masoretic one. We first encounter a descrip-

³⁷ Gray 1970, 25; Long 1984, 22–23; 1991, 3–4; Cogan 2001, 100.

³⁸ 1 Kgs 15:27–29; 15:32–16:6. Cf. 3 Kgdms 15:27–29; 15:33–16:6.

tion of Asa's extended rule, and only then do we read about the reigns of his six contemporaries.³⁹ How does Josephus deal with this era?

The question is not an idle one, despite the fact that his version of the period of the divided monarchy has been recently studied in the most detailed manner.⁴⁰ Was Josephus influenced by chronological considerations while reorganizing the biblical text? In the *Jewish Antiquities* King Asa first appears at the end of a section centered on his father Abijah. The son is mentioned as Abijah's successor to the throne, and in this very short notice on Asa's reign, we hear only that the land enjoyed peace for 10 years.⁴¹ Immediately afterwards, Josephus tells us of the death of Jeroboam, king of Israel, after a reign of 22 years.⁴² In the Bible, Jeroboam's demise is mentioned long before we are told of Asa's rise to power. The change may be explained quite simply. The Bible tells us that Asa's enthronement was synchronous with Jeroboam's twentieth year (1 Kgs 15:9), and that the latter's son Nadab became king of Israel in Asa's second year (15:25). Josephus decided to place Jeroboam's death, and the crowning of Nadab, very early in Asa's reign, in the place where they would have been inserted had 1 Kings been arranged in a strict chronological sequence. From this point the Jewish historian goes on to narrate the affairs of Israel during Nadab's two year reign until his assassination by Baasha.⁴³ While the biblical text, after detailing Nadab's reign, goes on to describe, in one continuous long section, what happened to Israel's later kings, from Baasha to Omri,⁴⁴ Josephus reverts to Asa. In 2 Chronicles, as we have seen, the report of the king's deeds begins with a statement that his first ten years as ruler were marked by peace (13:23). Then

³⁹ 1 Kgs 15:9–24 (Asa); 15:25–31 (Nadab); 15:32–16:6 (Baasha; see also previous note); 16:8–14 (Elah); 16:15–20 (Zimri); 16:21–22 (struggle between Tibni and Omri); 16:23–28 (Omri as monarch).

⁴⁰ Begg 1993; 2000, 5–386; Begg in Begg and Spilsbury 2005, 56–203.

⁴¹ *Ant.* 8.286. Josephus' sources here are 1 Kgs 15:8–10; 2 Chron 13:23. The wording of the two passages is quite similar. However, the addition in 2 Chron 13:23—"in his days the land had rest for ten years" (NRSV)—transforms this section from a schematic conclusion of Abijah's reign into a sentence which also marks the beginning of Asa's reign. Since Josephus makes use of 2 Chronicles here, *Ant.* 8.286 is both a conclusion of the reign of Abijah and an *opening* of his son's rule. Begg (1993, 109–110 and 117–139; and in Begg and Spilsbury 2005, 79 note 1027) ignores this.

⁴² *Ant.* 8.287a, is based on 1 Kgs 14:20a. Jeroboam's death is not mentioned in the Greek Bible, and that version assigns him no less than 24 years as king. See 3 Kgdms 15:8–9.

⁴³ *Ant.* 8.287b–289. For the biblical source, see 1 Kgs 14:20b; 15:25–29; 14:11.

⁴⁴ At this point the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint part ways, as noted before.

comes a short section which praises Asa for his efforts to root out idolatry from his kingdom (14:1–4). In the parallel biblical report, 1 Kings, the opening verse discussing Asa's reign also touches upon his commitment to ban idolatry.⁴⁵ This is followed by a report on the war which Baasha launched against the king of Judah (1 Kgs 15:16–22). 2 Chronicles, however, with its more detailed description of Asa's reign, has some material which is placed before that dispute. How does Josephus retell the story of Asa, narrated by the two biblical books? It would seem that he decided that the material in 2 Chronicles which precedes Baasha's confrontation with Asa, must be earlier. Therefore, Josephus starts this second account of Asa's deeds by paraphrasing the chronicler. He tells us of Asa's excellent character, makes only a veiled allusion to Asa's efforts to root out idolatry, paraphrases the story of Asa's war against the Ethiopian Zerah, and of the prophecy of Azariah, and the king's response to it.⁴⁶ At this point Josephus announces his return to the affairs of the people of Israel and their king. He retells the story of Nadab's killing by Baasha (previously mentioned within the framework of Nadab's deeds), notes Baasha's wickedness, and uses the prophecy of Jehu which foretold doom to the king and his descendants to elaborate on the king's disdain for the Lord's words.⁴⁷ The Jewish historian then introduces Baasha's occupation of the town of Ramah, and the strengthening of its fortifications (*Ant.* 8.303). In Josephus, then, Baasha's aggression against the kingdom of Judah is narrated, as it should be, within the framework of the *acta* of Baasha, the king of Israel. In the Bible, this initiative of Baasha appears in the section allotted to Asa in both 1 Kgs (15:17) and 2 Chron (16:1b). Josephus, by dividing the Asa story into several segments and by introducing the occupation of Ramah within the narrative of Baasha's reign, avoids the blunder of the narrator of 1 Kings who, it will be remembered, had mentioned this dispute before telling of Baasha's rise to power. The historian can then go on and paraphrase the story of the war between the

⁴⁵ 1 Kgs 15:12. The biblical narrator continues in the same vein in vv. 13–15, but these lines have an almost verbatim parallel in 2 Chron 15:16–18.

⁴⁶ *Ant.* 8.290–297. Cf. 2 Chron 14:1–4, 7–14; 15:1–9; 1 Kgs 15:11–15. See Begg 1993, 117–128. We have already encountered Josephus' tendency to leave out biblical allusions to idolatrous practices among his people (above, note 21). Here too Josephus omits all mention of the similar behavior of the people of Judah, and of Asa's objection to them. He merely alludes to the king's efforts to root out evil from his realm. Cf. Begg in Begg and Spilsbury 2005, 80–82, and especially notes 1043 and 1046.

⁴⁷ *Ant.* 8.298–302. See 1 Kgs 15:33–16:4.

two kings within the framework of Baasha's reign, at variance with the Bible. Once the narrative of this war, which ended with Baasha's withdrawal, had been completed, Josephus could make use of the words of the editor of 1 Kings, which sum up Baasha's reign, to end his discussion of that king, thus connecting political and military failure with death.⁴⁸ Whereas previously, after telling of Nadab's death, Josephus chose to focus his gaze on the affairs of Asa, the death of Baasha does not impel him to act similarly. Instead, he resumes his story of the kingdom of Israel.⁴⁹ His decision to do so stems from his portrayal of Asa. The latter appears in 1 Kings as a righteous, industrious king who is not devoid of political ability. The only thing that casts a shadow on his gilded reign is the debilitating sickness he came to suffer in his old age (15:9–24). In the other biblical source the picture is more complex. Asa's beginnings are auspicious. The Chronicler lauds Asa for bringing peace to his kingdom, and speaks of his praiseworthy character, clearly demonstrated by the king's efforts to cleanse the realm from pagan practices. Asa also achieved military success, overcoming the Ethiopians, and again made a show of his pious character by heeding the words of the prophet Azariah, making a renewed effort to root out idolatry, rebuilding the altar, and compelling his people to renew their covenant with God (2 Chron 13:23–15:19). However, the chronicler presents an entirely different picture of Asa's later years. It was then that the king was attacked by Baasha. Asa's decision to seek political and military aid from the king of Aram provokes a strong condemnation by the prophet Hanani, who rebukes him for having relied upon the assistance of a foreign king, and not that of God. Asa then turns against the prophet, and against some of the people as well. The king's illness and death quickly follow, the implication being that the sinful Asa was punished by the deity (2 Chron 16:1–14). Josephus, it will be remembered, covered the war between Baasha and Asa within his narrative on the king of Israel's reign. The historian omits the negative tradition concerning Asa in 2 Chronicles, which follows the description of that war. He further glosses over the mention of Asa's illness

⁴⁸ For Baasha's war with Asa, and Baasha's death, see *Ant.* 8.303–307a. This is based on 2 Chron 16:1b–6; 1 Kgs 15:17–22; 16:6a.

⁴⁹ Begg (1993, 129) is right not to see any break after *Ant.* 8.306 or 307. In my view the section starting at *Ant.* 8.298 is part of a larger unit describing the affairs of the kingdom of Israel. Begg, probably because of the intermingling of the affairs of Asa and Baasha here, as well as for editorial reasons, regards *Ant.* 8.298 ff. as a special unit devoted to the interaction of the affairs of both sovereigns.

which also appears in 1 Kings (15:23), that being the only detail in that book which might be construed as evidence of some blemish on the king's part. Josephus chose to follow the overall presentation of 1 Kings and to portray Asa as a positive and edifying ruler.⁵⁰ This left him with no additional biblical material on Asa after the Baasha affair, save his death. But the story of his death could not be told before the mention of the crowning of Ahab. Consequently, Josephus continues to delineate the successive rule of the kings of Israel from Baasha's heir, Elah, to Omri. He then mentions Ahab's ascent to the throne, recorded in the Bible in connection with Omri's demise, and only then turns to Asa's death.⁵¹

Josephus' description of the reign of Asa in Judah, and that of six of his contemporaries in Israel, does not follow the structure of 1 Kings for the divided monarchy. He avoids the thematic unity that the biblical narrator is at pains to follow.⁵² Unlike the biblical editor, he does not move the actions of the kings forwards in great leaps. Nor does he turn backwards in almost equally large steps. Instead, he divides his material, especially that relating to a long serving king like Asa, so that the parallel affairs of Israel and Judah can progress step by step. Josephus commits himself, to the best of his ability, to a narrative that is chronologically linear, even if this comes at the expense of the thematic unity of his source.⁵³

Let us see if the technique used by Josephus when telling of synchronous events in the affairs of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, is mirrored in his dealings with contemporaneous postbiblical events which took place in distinct geographical arenas. Jonathan the Hasmonean's leadership of the people of Judea, discussed in 1 Maccabees, may serve as a starting point. That book tells us, amongst other things, of the war waged by the pretender Alexander Balas against the Seleucid king, Demetrius I. As a result, Demetrius was killed. The victor then approached Ptolemy VI Philometor of Egypt, formed an alliance

⁵⁰ For Josephus' figure of Asa, see *Ant.* 8.290, 293–297, 314. Cf. Begg 1993, 149–50; Begg in Begg and Spilsbury 2005, 85 note 1116, 87 note 1157.

⁵¹ *Ant.* 8.307b–314. Josephus' relies here on 1 Kgs 16:6b, 8–28; 15:24; 2 Chron 16:13. The reference to Asa's dying after having ruled 41 years may also originate from 1 Kgs 15:10.

⁵² The biblical editor's one exception, concerning king Ahaziah of Judah, was discussed above, pp. 12–13.

⁵³ Begg (1993) shows little concern for the chronological aspect of Josephus' rewriting of the Bible, but cf. Begg 2000, 629.

with him and married his daughter (10:48–58). Josephus, paraphrasing 1 Maccabees, tells us how Balas concentrated his forces against Demetrius,⁵⁴ then adds a few sentences from an unknown source on Demetrius' noble death on the battlefield,⁵⁵ to which he appends a rather long section consisting of two parts. The first quotes a letter said to have been written by Onias IV. In it the priest asks Ptolemy Philometor and his wife to let him build a Jewish temple in Egypt. The king and his consort reply with their own epistle, granting Onias his request. The second part tells of Philometor's support of the Alexandrian Jews in their dispute with the Samaritans (*Ant.* 13.62–73, 74–79). Only then does Josephus return to his source, 1 Maccabees, and speaks of Balas' approach to the Ptolemaic king (*Ant.* 13.80–82).⁵⁶ The Jewish historian, who states his intention "to make public all the honors given our nation...in order that the other nations may not fail to recognize that both the kings of Asia and of Europe have held us in esteem..." (*Ant.* 14.186, Marcus),⁵⁷ did not wish to forego the opportunity of letting his readers know of the respect and appreciation shown to the Jews by Ptolemy Philometor of Egypt. At the same time, he had to find the correct chronological point in which to insert this narrative concerning the affairs of the king and the Jews. One possibility would have been to place the two stories, or at least the first, within the events of 163 BCE because it was at this juncture, the execution of Menelaus the high priest and the appointment of Alcimus in his stead, that Josephus had dated the flight of Onias IV to Ptolemy VI in the *Jewish Antiquities*.⁵⁸ However, Josephus did not take that option, and as we have seen inserted the story elsewhere. It is possible that he chose to introduce the two Jewish-Egyptian tales where he did, because of the mention of Philometor in the 1 Maccabees narrative. Josephus could string together three stories centered on the figure of Ptolemy Philometor. The source (or sources) for the first two is unknown, but the third

⁵⁴ *Ant.* 13.58 is based on 1 Macc 10:48.

⁵⁵ *Ant.* 13.59–61. The positive depiction of Demetrius I here seems to rule out the possibility that our main source here is 1 Maccabees. However, Josephus may have amalgamated elements from his unknown source with some borrowed from 1 Macc 10: 49–50. See Sievers 2001, 164.

⁵⁶ Josephus source here is 1 Macc 10:51–58.

⁵⁷ See too *Ant.* 16.174–175. For this element in the *Jewish Antiquities*, see Bilde 1988, 99–101.

⁵⁸ *Ant.* 12.387. Note however that in *War* 1.31–33; 7.423, this event is dated to ca. 169 BCE.

(*Ant.* 13.80–82), from 1 Maccabees, would lead the reader back to the affairs of Jonathan the Hasmonean. Josephus' section on Philometor is therefore characterized by its theme, the king of Egypt,⁵⁹ which he spliced into his account of Judean affairs. This betrays Josephus' commitment to chronology and to the narration in tandem of the Jewish history in both Judea and Egypt.⁶⁰ However, Josephus' synchronization of the affairs of Judea and Egypt is not finely tuned. The historian, ignorant of an exact date for his two Jewish-Egyptian episodes, uses Ptolemaic involvement in the affairs of Coele-Syria as means of introducing them. If we take the sources used by the historian into account, we can say that Josephus is as accurate (or inaccurate) in the matter of the tribal wars narrated in Judges as he is concerning Egyptian Jewry of the second century BCE.

It is ironic that Josephus' interest in, and obsession with, a presentation of Jewish archaeology that is chronologically linear is matched by his inability, on numerous occasions, to place events in their proper chronological setting. Mention has been made of the Spartan letter addressed to Onias. Similarly, he dates a letter written by Caius Fannius son of Caius, commonly identified as the consul of 161 BCE, C. Fannius Strabo, within the years 49–44 BCE, simply because he confuses the consul with a Fannius of the mid-first century BCE.⁶¹ More glaring still is the insertion of four decrees of the second century BCE into the historian's narrative of Hyrcanus II's rule.⁶² Yet these decrees belong to the time of John Hyrcanus.⁶³ It would seem that the mention of the name Hyrcanus in the decrees, has led Josephus to ascribe them to the later Hyrcanus, and it was the historian who made the neces-

⁵⁹ Therefore I doubt if we can date the construction of the Oniad temple to 152 BCE or later as maintained by Schwartz (2004, 51–52). He argues that Josephus' placing of the building of the Oniad Temple (*Ant.* 13.62 ff.), after the assumption of the high priesthood by Jonathan (*Ant.* 13.46), dated to 152 BCE, provides us with a *terminus a quo*. For a survey of the problems regarding the date of the temple's establishment, see Gruen 1997, 48–57.

⁶⁰ *Ant.* 13.284–287, is another example of Josephus' habit of interpolating additional material into his Judean narrative in order to tell of roughly contemporaneous events concerning Egyptian Jewry.

⁶¹ *Ant.* 14.230 and 233. See Gera 1998, 310 with note 149.

⁶² *Ant.* 14.145–148a, 149–155, 247–255. For Josephus' ascription of the documents to Hyrcanus II, see *Ant.* 14.144, 155, 265.

⁶³ For discussion of these documents, see Giovannini and Müller 1971, 156–65; Timpe 1974, 146–50; Schürer 1973, 204–05 and note 7; 1979, 52–53 note 143; Gruen 1984, 748–51.

sary adjustments to Hyrcanus' patronymic and title.⁶⁴ Homonymity has been the occasion of Josephus' downfall several times over.

Josephus' tendency to err in matters of chronology is not limited to documents of a diplomatic nature. One glaring example will suffice. The saga of the Tobiad family is placed by Josephus after the marriage of the Seleucid princess Cleopatra, daughter of Antiochus III the Great, to king Ptolemy V Epiphanes.⁶⁵ Yet, scholars *en masse* have rejected Josephus' chronology, placing the story of the Tobiads in the third century BCE, at the time when Coele-Syria was part of the Ptolemaic kingdom. The Ptolemaic setting of the story, and the lack of any sign of Seleucid sovereignty in that area, convinced scholars that most of what we are told in the Tobiad saga relates to the period of direct Ptolemaic rule over Coele-Syria (allowing only for its ending to occur *ca.* 200–175). Josephus' claim that Antiochus III, had ceded control over Coele-Syria, and had given it to his new son-in-law was rejected as untrustworthy. Josephus' next assertion, that the revenues coming from this territory were divided between the two kings, was considered equally suspect (*Ant.* 12.154–155).⁶⁶ Recently there has been an attempt by Daniel Schwartz to justify Josephus' placing of the story in the second century BCE, and to claim that indeed Antiochus III allowed the income of the province to revert to the Ptolemaic kingdom.⁶⁷ Schwartz's point of departure is to ask "why...when Antiochus (III) was first throwing all of his effort into the northern Mediterranean, and later when he and...Seleucus IV, were so weakened by Magnesia and Apamea, did Ptolemaic Egypt *do nothing* by way of *revanche*?" He then goes on to suggest that Antiochus, by giving to Ptolemy V the revenues from his former province, was shrewdly pacifying a potential enemy in the rear of the Seleucid kingdom, while his ambitions were directed to the north and

⁶⁴ See Stern 1973, 195; Pucci Ben Zeev 1998, 22, 402.

⁶⁵ Josephus notes the marriage and the handing over of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia as dowry by Antiochus to his new son-in-law in *Ant.* 12.154. The Tobiad saga is narrated in verses 156–222, 228–236.

⁶⁶ The article of the great Holleaux (1942, 342–45) deserves first mention. See too Büchler 1975, 44–48, 53–71; Tcherikover 1959, 128–30; Schürer 1973, 140 note 4; Hengel 1974, I.268–269, II.179 note 76; Will and Orrieux 1986, 78–81. Additional bibliography was assembled by Schwartz 1998, 50 note 8.

⁶⁷ Schwartz (1998). See Fuks' criticism (2001), and the response of Schwartz (2002). In fact, Schwartz's idea had been anticipated by Cuq (1927).

northwest.⁶⁸ Schwartz basically wants to argue from silence, from the complete inaction he assigns to the Ptolemaic kingdom in restoring the lost province (even though his assumption that nothing was done is somewhat exaggerated; see below). This is always a hazardous proposition.⁶⁹ I readily agree with his point that it would have been natural for the Ptolemaic kingdom to aim for the recapture of Coele-Syria. However, the effort to take on the Seleucid kingdom, even after Magnesia, was no mean feat. What should have been asked is whether the Ptolemaic kingdom had the means for such an undertaking. It must be remembered that in the years 203–196 BCE, not only Coele-Syria was lost. Other territories, perhaps more important for the kingdom, were wrested away by Philip V of Macedon and Antiochus the Great. The Ptolemies were left without any foothold in Asia Minor, the Aegean Islands and Thrace. Rome, which at first declared itself to be on the side of Ptolemy Epiphanes, chose later (196 BCE) to uphold the freedom of the Greek cities in Europe and Asia Minor. This meant, from the Ptolemaic point of view, that Rome was now opposed to the Ptolemaic claim for their former possessions. For the next quarter century relations between the Rome and the Ptolemies would remain distant and cool. The offer of Antiochus III at this juncture to give his daughter in marriage to the young Ptolemy V must have been seen as an assurance that Seleucid ambitions would not extend to what remained of the Ptolemaic kingdom. Nor did Antiochus III need to offer more, in light of the overall sorry state of his southern neighbor. Furthermore, Ptolemy V, crowned at the age of 6 (204 BCE), was incapable of ruling for much of the period. In itself this need not reflect on the kingdom, but in fact, in Epiphanes' first years as king, power at court shifted from one chief minister to the next in an alarming rate. Moreover, the government of Alexandria faced serious difficulties in controlling Egypt itself. In the years between 206–186 BCE parts of Upper Egypt were held by a renegade Pharaonic kingdom. The Delta in the north was also infested with

⁶⁸ Schwartz 1998, 48–50; 2002, 146 (the italics are mine—D. G.). Schwartz's question actually reproduces a query of one of Ptolemy V's courtiers who asked his king why he did not do anything concerning Coele-Syria, which was his by right. See Diod. 29.29.

⁶⁹ See Schwartz, 2002, 147 (in response to Fuks): "The sixth (point) is merely an argument from silence".

rebels, and it was only in 185 BCE that they were completely defeated.⁷⁰ Not much of this picture is noted in Schwartz's historical sketch, which concentrates on the Roman-Seleucid confrontation.⁷¹ What is mentioned is an offhand remark concerning Egypt's internal problems and the suggestion that "foreign campaigns may even be useful ways of dealing with them".⁷² In short, Schwartz's dealings with the historical background do not only fall short. They are misleading in the sense that his interpretation denies the events of any historical context. Leaders and governments can act at will, without taking account of their position in respect to other powers. While phenomena such as these do happen, they are not the rule. The Ptolemaic government's abstention from any attack on Seleucid Coele-Syria until 184 BCE is best explained by internal and external constraints. However, by that date, the position of the Ptolemaic kingdom would have improved somewhat. The king had matured, and his ministers of the day had proven their salt by defeating the rebels in Upper and Lower Egypt. The Seleucid kingdom had been considerably weakened, having been beaten by Rome, and was forced to withdraw from both Europe and Asia Minor. The Treaty of Apamea imposed heavily on the Seleucid kingdom, thereby diminishing its standing. It should come as no surprise that precisely at this time, we see Ptolemy V doing *something* "by way of revanche". A Ptolemaic naval force, headed by Ptolemy's *synthrophos* Aristonicus, raided the island of Aradus on the Phoenician coast before July, 182 BCE. Soon after, Ptolemy V is reported to have initiated preparations for the re-occupation of Coele-Syria. The king was then killed (180 BCE), and his widow, sister of Seleucus IV, became regent until her death 4 years later. In view of her family connections and her need to insure that her son, Ptolemy Philometor, aged 6, retain the throne, preparations for the war stopped. Following her death, Cleopatra I's wise policy was abandoned with disastrous results. The policy of restraint in the years between 197–185 BCE, born of necessity, had been the right one.⁷³ This (condensed) survey suggests that once the Seleucid

⁷⁰ Will 1982, 105–49, 152–74, 178–93; Gera 1998, 20–25, 59–83; Hölbl 2001, 136–40, 153–59.

⁷¹ Schwartz 1998, 47–48.

⁷² Schwartz 1998, 48 note 4.

⁷³ Gera 1998, 89–105; Hölbl 2001, 141–143. Schwartz (1998, 61 note 43), notices Ptolemy V's preparations to attack Coele-Syria but ignores the assault on Aradus.

kingdom had been weakened, and the rebellions in Egypt had been crushed, Ptolemy V showed his unwillingness to accept the loss of Coele-Syria, as is shown by the attack of Aristonicus. Since Schwartz's argumentation rests on a premise which have been shown to be inaccurate, perhaps the additional argument, that Antiochus III gave the revenues of Coele-Syria to Ptolemy V, should be rejected without further ado. However, since it might be claimed that the Ptolemaic king was not willing to satisfy himself with the incomes of Coele-Syria, and wanted the whole province completely to himself, let us examine the issue a bit more. Had the revenues of Coele-Syria been allotted to Ptolemy V and his wife, a limited attack on the Seleucid kingdom, such as Aristonicus' plundering of Aradus, would have been foolhardy. The expected booty could not match a steady, year by year flow of income from Coele-Syria. The Seleucid king would then have revoked his father's undertaking, and Ptolemy V would have been left without any revenues from Coele-Syria, and without gaining it back. Furthermore, the understanding that Antiochus the Great gave Ptolemy V of Egypt a share in the income of Coele-Syria rests on a reading of *Ant.* 12.154–155.⁷⁴ However, Holleaux has shown that the theme of division of revenues between two sovereigns (βασιλεῖς) mentioned by Josephus in *v.* 155 was borrowed by the historian from the main body of the Tobiad saga (*Ant.* 12.177–178). The French scholar has further demonstrated that there the reference is to the separate shares of the Ptolemaic king and queen in the revenues of Coele-Syria. Once this position is accepted, we are left with no evidence at all of Antiochus III sharing the income of Coele-Syria with his son-in-law.⁷⁵ Fuks, criticizing Schwartz's views, mentions a point in the story where the tax-farmer Joseph is given 2,000 soldiers by the Ptolemaic king. These were to allow him to exact the taxes by force, should the need arise. Schwartz treats this point as a matter of taxation, which according to him does not necessarily imply rule.⁷⁶ However, the real point here is the ability of the Ptolemaic king to send his own troops into the area and enforce his wishes, which he does through Joseph and the soldiers (*Ant.* 12.181–183). Military rule is a clear sign of sovereignty. Since it is agreed that Antiochus III did

⁷⁴ Schwartz 1998, 50.

⁷⁵ Holleaux 1942, 347–55. Due notice to this was given by Fuks (2001, 354 note 3). Schwartz in his response (2002), does not address this obstacle to his theory.

⁷⁶ *Ant.* 12.180. See Fuks 2001, 356 (point No. 1) *versus* Schwartz 2002, 147.

not relinquish his authority in Coele-Syria (contrary to the statement in *Ant.* 12.154),⁷⁷ the Ptolemaic king's ability to deploy his troops there can only be accepted if the tale was composed with an underlying assumption that the activities of Joseph, as well as Hyrcanus' initial exploits, happened at the time when the Ptolemies ruled Coele-Syria.⁷⁸ Hence, the established view is the right one. By placing the Tobiad story where he did, Josephus committed a chronological error.⁷⁹

It is mistakes such as these that have earned Josephus a bad name. Consistency in methodology and accuracy in chronology are not his strong points. Yet, this should not cloud our vision as to the seriousness with which he regarded his craft. In the *Jewish Antiquities* he attempted, to the best of his abilities, to produce a linear, chronologically oriented narrative of the history of his people. As in other features of his work, a clear cut, black and white picture cannot be attained.

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⁷⁷ Schwartz 1998, 61 note 43: "...Syria was ruling Coele-Syria at the time".

⁷⁸ Note also the king's threat to send military settlers to Judea, *Ant.* 12.159. See already Holleaux 1942, 343; Tcherikover 1959, 128.

⁷⁹ For an explanation of Josephus' mistake, see Gera 1998, 37.

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POLYBIUS AND JOSEPHUS ON ROME

Erich S. Gruen

The great Greek historian Polybius set high standards for historical writing. His scorn (or at least professed scorn) for most of his predecessors was deep. Polybius delivered sharp criticism of armchair historians who sit in their studies, collect and examine documents, and write with authority about matters of which they lack all experience. Those who have never engaged personally in politics and war, he asserted, have no business writing history because they don't know what they are talking about (12.25g.1–2, 28a.7–10).

Josephus, the indispensable historian of the Jews, echoed those sentiments. In the introduction of the *Jewish War*, his first composition, he blasts those historians who have written on the subject but did not take part in the actions (1.1). Much later, in his final work, the *Contra Apionem*, he still hammered at that theme. He ripped Greek historians who write about events in which they played no role. And he reiterated his contempt for those who published accounts of the Jewish war but never set foot in the places about which they wrote (1.45–46). It is worth noting that Josephus attacks those who criticized his history as if it were nothing but a schoolboy exercise entered in a prize competition (1.53). That appears, as most scholars recognize, to be based on Thucydides' famous comment that his history is a possession for all time, not a prize essay composed for the moment and then forgotten (Thuc. 1.22). What many have failed to notice, however, is that this statement also closely resembles a passage in Polybius who maintains that the purpose of writing history is not to publish a clever essay but to deliver a lesson that will endure for the indefinite future.¹

The parallels in the lives, careers, and attitudes of these two historians, in fact, are quite remarkable. Both reached positions of prominence in the political and military spheres of their respective states, Polybius as a leader of the Achaean League, a major regional power in Greece, and Josephus as member of a distinguished family and himself

¹ Polyb. 3.31.12–13; Barclay 2007, 39.

a Judean general. Both held critical posts in their nations at a time when they came into conflict with the might of Rome. Polybius was among those implicated in purported anti-Roman activities during the Third Macedonian War and was summarily removed to Rome where he lived as a semi-hostage for close to twenty years. Josephus served as commander of Jewish forces in Galilee during the great Jewish rebellion, surrendered to the Romans, was released, and, like Polybius, landed in Rome, where he stayed for more than two decades. Both wrote the bulk of their work in Rome, under the patronage of Rome's most powerful and influential figures, the house of Aemilius Paullus in the case of Polybius, the imperial family in the case of Josephus. And, most importantly, each wrote histories directed, at least in large part, to their fellow countrymen, defeated and crushed by Rome, histories that sought to elucidate Roman behavior and explain Roman success as a lesson to Greeks and Jews respectively.

A compelling motive inspired Polybius' whole enterprise: a desire to trace the rise of Rome to a position of preeminence through which the city brought the whole Mediterranean world under its sway.² Resistance to this juggernaut could—and did—lead to disaster. Polybius repeatedly brands the enemies of Rome as irrational, irresponsible, and even mad.³ That judgment culminates in his bitter and furious comments about Greek leaders whose reckless actions propelled his own homeland into an insane conflict with Rome, the Achaean War, the upshot of which was to cast destruction and calamity upon Greece, a pitiable fate that the folly of the Greeks brought upon themselves.⁴ All of this, of course, strikes familiar cords for readers of Josephus. The Jewish historian fastened blame for the disastrous Jewish War with Rome upon heedless leaders, afflicted with irrationality, lunatic schemes, and unreasonable passion that amounted to insanity.⁵

The rash and headlong destructiveness ascribed by both authors to their own fellow citizens stemmed, so they argued, from a failure of understanding—a failure to see that the Roman acquisition of world supremacy was guided by an invisible hand that led to a predetermined outcome. Polybius characterized the process as *τύχη*, an ambiguous and tortured term. The historian employs it in more than one sense in his

² Polyb. 1.2.7–8, 1.3.7–10, 3.1.4.

³ Polyb. 2.21.2, 5.102.1, 7.2–7, 8.24.10.

⁴ Polyb. 38.1.1–9, 38.10.6–13, 38.11.6–11, 38.12.4–11, 38.13.8, 38.16.1–9, 38.18.7–8.

⁵ E.g. *War* 2.346, 2.395, 2.412, 5.364–365, 5.376, 5.406, 6.378, 6.409.

history. It often carries the connotation of chance or randomness, even happenstance. At other times, it comes closer to fate or providence. Polybius had no rigorous consistency on this score.⁶ He does, on occasion, even construe the word as an alternative or parallel to the gods.⁷ Most significantly, he renders τύχη as a form of divine fate that guaranteed the success of Rome in bringing the entire world under a single rule and dominion, something never heretofore accomplished.⁸ That striking phraseology expressed his considered judgment and the summation of his agenda.

The similarities with Josephus here cannot be missed. The Jewish historian also employs the term τύχη in the context of transferring world dominion to the Romans. The speech set in Agrippa's mouth to dissuade the Jews from taking up arms against Rome makes the point more than once.⁹ Here too God and τύχη seem almost interchangeable. Agrippa asserts that God has moved to the side of Rome, the role that he had also assigned to τύχη.¹⁰ The overlapping between the concepts makes a striking conjunction. In Josephus' formulation, τύχη advanced the aims of Vespasian, a feature that the Roman ascribed to divine προνοία (*BJ*, 4.622). When Josephus seeks to justify his surrender, he cites his prayer to God affirming that the divine will accorded with the passage of τύχη to the Romans.¹¹ The point emerges most forcefully in Josephus' own speech outside the walls of the city, at the instigation of Titus, urging the Jews to yield to the imperial power. There is no use, he says, in defying the masters of the universe: τύχη has passed from everywhere over to the Romans, and God who has brought imperial power from nation to nation has now set it in Italy.¹²

⁶ See, e.g. Polyb. 1.2.2–4, 18.28.5, 29.21.3–5 (as capricious fortune); 36.17.2 (in the sense of chance or the unexpected); 15.20.4–6, 38.7.11, 38.8.8; 39.8.1–2 (in the sense of watchful spirit with the power of punishment).

For Polybius' varied usages of τύχη, see the careful studies of Walbank 1957, 16–26; idem. (1972), 60–65; Pedech 1964, 331–54; and, more recently, Sterling 2000, 138–139.

⁷ Polyb. 10.5.8; 10.9.2: εἰς δὲ τοὺς θεοὺς καὶ τὴν τύχην.

⁸ Polyb. 1.4.1–5, 8.2.3–6, 21.16.8: ἡ τύχη παρέδωκεν αὐτοῖς τὴν τῆς οἰκουμένης ἀρχὴν καὶ δυναστείαν.

⁹ War 2.360, 2.373.

¹⁰ War 2.390; cf. 2.360.

¹¹ War 3.351–354: μετέβη δὲ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους ἡ τύχη πᾶσα.

¹² War 5.367–368; 5.412; esp. 5.367: μεταβῆναι γὰρ πρὸς αὐτοὺς πάντοθεν τὴν τύχην. καὶ κατὰ ἔθνος τὸν θεὸν ἐμπεριάγοντα τὴν ἀρχὴν νῦν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰταλίας εἶναι; *Life*, 17. Cf. Price 2005, 116–17.

The correspondences between these two historians are numerous and undeniable. Josephus also cites Polybius three times on other matters.¹³ He plainly knew and evidently read the work of the Achaean historian. That is now generally acknowledged and need not be re-argued.¹⁴ How far Josephus' own attitudes and opinions on the relations of Jews to the power of Rome owe their formulations to the closely comparable views of Polybius on the Greeks' experience with Roman might and authority can only be a matter of speculation. The issue requires no investigation here. Both historians, in any case, writing in Rome in analogous circumstances and analyzing the reasons (or absence of reasons) that impelled their nations to clash with the masters of the universe only to suffer baleful consequences, reached similar conclusions. The march of history, whether identified with *τύχη* or with Yahweh, now sides with Rome, justifies Rome's triumph over reckless and self-destructive rebels, and proclaims the hand of destiny in Roman rule. It behooves Greek and Jew alike to swim with the tide of the future. All of this is widely acknowledged in the scholarship.

Yet there is another aspect of the story that has received little attention. Polybius and Josephus are no mere apologists for Roman power. They recognize the folly of overt resistance to the great behemoth. And they lament the irrational excesses of their own peoples that brought catastrophe upon their nations, a lesson to be learned, and mistakes never to be repeated. But that is not the same as welcoming the rule of Rome and enjoying the peace, prosperity, and security of living in the embrace of the empire. Neither Polybius nor Josephus praises the benefits that Rome brought to the world. Nothing in their texts hails the establishment of stability, the blessings of civilization, or the benefactions of Rome to the far-flung regions of the world.¹⁵ The power of Rome and its invincibility—not its benevolence—constitute the recurring motif.

And one can go further. A closer look at the writings of Polybius and Josephus shows a notable number of criticisms of Rome, some subtle and veiled, others more direct and undisguised, that give a

¹³ *Ant.* 12.135–137, 12.358–359; *Apion*, 2.84; cf. *Ant.* 12.402.

¹⁴ The case was adumbrated by Cohen 1982, 366–381. And the compelling arguments of Eckstein 1990, 175–208, put the connection beyond doubt. See now also Hadas-Lebel 1999, 159–65; Mader 2000, 41–42, 46, 52; Sterling 2000, 135–51; Walbank 2002, 258–76.

¹⁵ See Stern 1987, 74–78 on Josephus, with regard to this point. Cf. Eckstein 1990, 203–204.

different impression of the historians' outlook and analysis. They might not quite qualify as "speaking truth to power." But they do suggest a slyly subversive and cautiously cynical perspective that put them in a category very different from the apologists for empire.

Polybius, to be sure, admired Roman principles and Roman institutions. As is well known, he gives much credit to the strength and balance of Rome's constitution for its imperial success.¹⁶ Polybius reckons the unbroken expansion of Roman territory into the Western and Eastern Mediterranean as a feat of incomparable magnitude.¹⁷ But his understanding of Roman behavior was rudely shaken by the upheavals of the late 150s and early 140s BCE, culminating in the subjugation of his native land. This shock induced Polybius to reconsider his perspective and to attach a whole new portion to his history. He gives as his reason a desire to assess the character of Roman rule and to determine whether it merits praise or blame.¹⁸ That he should pose such an issue at all constitutes a powerful statement. The historian here invites his readers to consider the consequences and desirability of the entire Roman enterprise. It would certainly stop any reader short. Polybius' motivation here has been the subject of much speculation and controversy. This is not the place to settle that matter. The complex blend of moralism and pragmatism defies a confident conclusion. But the idea that Polybius considered Roman success as sufficient to establish the propriety of empire, and that his final books represented a defense of Roman policy falls well short of persuasion. Such a verdict cannot adequately account for the series of scornful observations that Polybius delivers in those books. There is more going on here. The historian, most probably, sought to leave his readers in no doubt about the nature of Roman behavior, thus to warn his countrymen by implication against any further suicidal upheaval.¹⁹ One looks in vain for an explicit overall evaluation. Perhaps it proved

¹⁶ See, e.g., Polyb. 6.11–18 (on the Roman constitution); 24.8.2–5, 24.10.11–12, 24.13.13 (on Roman character).

¹⁷ Polyb. 1.2.1–7, 3.59.3, 29.21.1–9.

¹⁸ Polyb. 3.4.7: πότερα φευκτὴν ἢ τοῦναντίον εἶναι συμβαίνειν τὴν Ῥωμαίων δυναστείαν...πότερον ἐπαινετὴν καὶ ζηλωτὴν ἢ ψεκτὴν γεγρονέναι νομιστέον τὴν ἀρχὴν αὐτῶν.

¹⁹ Cf. Gruen 1976, 74–75; idem. 1984, 346–48, with additional bibliography. For the view that Polybius became a spokesman for the Roman point of view, see Walbank 1965, 2–11; 1972, 166–81; 1977, 139–62. That interpretation is cogently contested by Shimron 1979–80, 94–117.

too problematic—or hazardous. But a notable message comes through. The historian indulges in a striking sequence of remarks scattered through the last books of his history that shine a less than flattering light upon Roman actions.

Polybius repeatedly draws attention to Roman cynicism and self-interest, to the encouragement of servility among eastern princes, to deliberate efforts to undermine other states, to devious diplomacy, and to specious pretexts for the infliction of terror. A number of instances can illustrate the point. The Roman Senate prompted king Prusias of Bithynia to appear before them in an outfit normally worn by manumitted slaves and to grovel before them in humiliating and contemptible fashion (30.18). In the case of Dalmatia, so Polybius claims, Rome lacked an excuse for making war but invented one for no other reason than to give its troops some work to do, lest they become too lazy and idle from inactivity (32.13.4–9). To keep the Seleucid rulers of Syria in line, a Roman envoy took it upon himself to burn their warships, hamstringing their elephants, and generally degrade the royal power (31.2.9–11). And, in a series of arbitration decisions that adjudicated rival claims between Carthaginians and Numidians, Roman arbiters always decided against the Carthaginians, according to Polybius, not because of the merits of the case but because it was in the interests of Rome (31.21.5–6). Indeed, so Polybius observes elsewhere, the Romans had long since determined to make war on Carthage, and were simply looking for a pretext that might appear justifiable in the eyes of others (36.2.1–4). As Polybius puts it more generally, Romans adapt their policy for capitalizing on the faults of neighbors in order to augment their own dominance (31.10.7). And they were indignant if all affairs were not brought to them and done in accordance with their wishes (23.17.4).

These passages constitute a remarkable assemblage of comments—and much of Polybius' text in these last books is missing. There may have been a lot more of the same. It misreads Polybius to interpret these remarks simply as detached observations, even indeed as a positive evaluation of Roman pragmatism. They do not amount to a mere record of events but to a clear judgment.²⁰ The Greek historian, living

²⁰ The idea that Polybius' analysis was essentially hard-headed, realistic, and non-judgmental gains expression in several of Walbank's works; see previous note. Petzold 1969, 53–64, however, rightly recognized the moral posture of Polybius in the last books. Eckstein 1995 shows in detail the moral dimension that inheres in much of

and writing in Rome, and acquainted with a circle of Roman aristocrats and intellectuals, delivered a sharp assessment. He did not shrink from exposing what he saw as adulteration and impairment of Roman character. Romans of an earlier day, he stated, would not compromise principle for cash—but he could no longer make such a confident assertion about Romans of his own day (18.34.6–18.35.2). Indeed, the arrival of great wealth in the wake of Rome's military triumph over Perseus deeply affected the deportment of Roman youths. They indulged in extravagant expenditures and (in Polybius' view) disgraceful sexual adventures.²¹ Expansion across the sea had eroded sensitivity to moral behavior. Romans had once confiscated works of art from Syracuse, at least exhibiting some aesthetic interest; now they used priceless Corinthian paintings as dice boards for the sport of soldiers (9.10, 39.2). Even more telling, Polybius sets this somber evaluation at a broader level, beyond the particular case of Rome. As he puts it, the state that attains unchallenged empire will enjoy prosperity but yield to extravagance, its citizens absorbed in mutual rivalries; the struggle for office, wealth, and boastful ostentation will signal the beginnings of a change for the worse (6.57.5–6). The institutions and character of Rome's citizenry had gained them an empire. But once they had acquired that empire, the very qualities that had made it possible began to unravel and would eventually place it in jeopardy. Polybius stood in awe of the Roman achievement, but suffered disappointment and expressed disillusionment. The darker portrait casts its spell.

The darker portrait lurks in Josephus' vision as well. Ruthlessness and terror appear again and again in the actions of Roman military men. No surprise here, one might argue: war and the crushing of rebellion naturally call forth such actions; Roman military mentality engendered them, and the historian simply recorded them. One can leave aside such actions as demanded by the exigencies of battle and the ferocity of conflict. But Roman behavior of this sort with regard to Jews occurs repeatedly in Josephus' narrative of events well before the outbreak of open rebellion. It appears from the start, when Pompey captured the temple and his troops butchered Jewish priests in the course of pouring libations and conducting their rituals (*War*, 1.150;

Polybius' history and the intensity of his commitment to an evaluation of behavior on moral grounds; see, especially, 96–117, 225–36.

²¹ Polyb. 31.25.2–7.

Ant. 14.66–67). A decade later Crassus stripped the temple of all its gold, taking everything that Pompey had left (*War* 1.179; *Ant.* 14.105–109). Another ten years passed, and Cassius was in the east, reducing Judean cities to servitude, so Josephus puts it.²² In the upheavals after the death of Herod in 4 BCE, soldiers of the Roman procurator Sabinus burned the porticoes of the Temple and plundered the treasury. Whatever remained was simply confiscated by Sabinus (*War* 2.49–50; *Ant.* 17.261–264). Once Judea became a Roman province, Josephus does not hesitate to set out the transgressions committed by a sequence of governors appointed by the crown. One needs to look only at his account of Pontius Pilate's actions under Tiberius that included notorious provocations of the Jews and the beating to death of Jewish protesters (*War* 2.169–177; *Ant.* 18.55–62). In the reign of Claudius, the Roman governor Ventidius Cumanus quelled turmoil by killing substantial numbers of Jews.²³ His successor Felix also engaged in widespread executions of Jews and even, according to Josephus, engineered the murder of a high priest.²⁴

Worse was still to come. Josephus describes the procurator Albinus, an appointee of Nero, as one for whom there was not a single act of villainy that he failed to commit.²⁵ But even Albinus' wickedness was far exceeded by that of his successor, Gessius Florus, who, Josephus says, made Albinus seem by comparison a man of exemplary virtue.²⁶ There is no need to catalogue the acts of iniquity and criminality that Josephus ascribes to these Roman officials and that led to the outbreak of the Great Revolt. The Jewish historian certainly did not hold back in detailing the atrocities of the Roman leadership and the military. It is telling that in his *Vita* Josephus asserts that Jews took up arms against Rome not by choice but out of necessity (27).

This extended to the emperors themselves. Josephus is quick to recite the failings of the Julio-Claudian rulers. He outlines the grim and suspicious character of Tiberius, the murderous megalomania of Gaius Caligula, and the excesses and cruelty of Nero.²⁷ Of course, in

²² *War* 1.221–222; ἑξανδραποδισάμενος; *Ant.* 14.275.

²³ *War* 2.236; *Ant.* 20.110–112, 20.122.

²⁴ *War* 2.260, 2.270; *Ant.* 20.160–165, 20.177.

²⁵ *War* 2.272: οὐκ ἔστιν δὲ ἥντινα κακουργίας ιδέαν πράττειν.

²⁶ *War* 2.277: ἀπέδειξεν ὁ μετ' αὐτὸν ἐλθὼν Γέσσιος φλώρος ἀγαθώτατον κατὰ σύγκρισιν; *Ant.* 20.252–253.

²⁷ Tiberius: *Ant.* 18.168–178, 18.225–226; Caligula: *War* 2.184–203; *Ant.* 18.257–303, 19.1–27, 19.201–211; Nero: *War* 2.250–251; *Ant.* 20.154.

each of these cases, Josephus merely follows the consensus of Roman historians and the portraits that prevailed in the age of the Flavians. But it is noteworthy that he dwells in considerable detail on the accession of Claudius, following the death of Caligula. Josephus provides a graphic presentation of Claudius' panicked efforts to hide in a closet, and the need of the Praetorian Guard to drag him out and thrust him into power against his will, in part through the intervention of the Jewish king Agrippa.²⁸ The narrative exposes not only the fearfulness and spinelessness of Claudius but the impotence of the Roman Senate, the emptiness of aristocratic rhetoric in the face of the troops, and the raw military power and ruthlessness that lay at the heart of Roman rule. Josephus does not spare even Vespasian. He calls attention to the future emperor's ruthlessness, the slaughter of captives, the merciless treatment of young and old, the demolition of villages and towns, and the enslavement of survivors.²⁹

Nor does Titus himself escape the strictures of the historian. Josephus, so it is usually assumed, presents a rosy portrait of the man who led Roman forces at the time of the destruction of the temple.³⁰ After all, Titus became his patron and protector. And Josephus notoriously strains to exculpate Titus from the dastardly deed: the commander sought to spare the city and its great shrine. If Josephus be believed, the burning of the temple came against Titus' wishes and much to his sorrow.³¹ Whatever the credibility of that judgment, it does not form part of a consistently positive image of the Roman. Josephus more than once calls attention to atrocities ordered by Titus—even when he attempts to offer explanations for them. After taking a Galilean city, for instance, Titus ordered the massacre of every male, old and young, in that town, and the sale of all women and children into slavery (*War* 3.298–305). He showed equal unscrupulousness at Jotapata, where he conducted wholesale slaughter, even having soldiers shove helpless defenders down a steep incline where they were crushed in a general *melée* (*War* 3.329–331). He had no qualms about the torture and crucifixion of Jewish prisoners (*War* 5.289, 5.449–451). And, for

²⁸ *War* 19.212–273.

²⁹ *War* 3.132–134, 3.336–338, 3.532–542, 4.447–448.

³⁰ See, e.g., Yavetz 1975, 411–432; Paul 1993, 56–66.

³¹ *War* 1.28, 5.334, 6.124–128, 6.214–243, 6.254–266, 7.112–113. Cf. also the occasional reference to Titus' pity for the victims of Roman cruelty—which he had himself allowed; e.g. *War* 5.449–451.

relaxation, after the taking of Jerusalem, he enjoyed the spectacles at Caesarea Philippi and Beirut in which captives in the thousands were torn apart by wild beasts, perished through gladiatorial combat, or were consumed by flames (*War* 7.23, 7.37–39).³² All perhaps is fair in war. But these episodes hardly present an edifying picture of Titus. One can press the point further. Josephus' presentation of Titus' generalship implies more subtly that the commander did not always match Roman expectations of looking to the safety of his men, enforcing adequate discipline, and exercising good judgment.³³ And, if the destruction of the Temple did indeed occur against Titus' wishes, this surely reflects ill upon the general's own control of that most critical episode, an inference that Josephus' readers could readily draw—without his having to spell it out.³⁴ Indeed, despite the labored exculpation of Titus, Josephus elsewhere acknowledges that after the fall of Jerusalem and the fire the Roman commander ordered the destruction of the city and its Temple—a notable signal to his readership (*War* 7.1.1; *Ant.* 20.250).

That the Roman empire was a despotic entity emerges without ambiguity from Josephus' work. His text makes that point most conspicuously in the famous speech that he puts into the mouth of Agrippa in attempting to dissuade the Jews from taking up arms against Rome. Agrippa expounds at length upon the irresistible and invincible might of Rome that extends over all the known peoples of the world and against which no opposition stands a chance. And it is telling that Agrippa repeatedly represents the status of those who dwell under Roman sovereignty as "servitude." He employs the terms δουλεία, δουλεύειν, and δοῦλος again and again in that speech.³⁵ He characterizes Roman officials as unbearably harsh (*War* 2.352). And he refers to the Romans unabashedly as "despots."³⁶ Reduction of the peoples of the world to the condition of slavery is the main message. The best that Agrippa can do is to advise the Jews to submit to it rather than resist it (*War* 2.361). That hardly constitutes an advertisement for the blessings of Roman rule.

Roman rule, however, might not endure forever. That prospect emerges in the pages of both Polybius and Josephus. They suggest a

³² Cf. Yavetz 1975, 415.

³³ See on this the cogent comments of McLaren 2005, 282–87.

³⁴ Cf. the discussion of Parente 2005, 61–69.

³⁵ *War* 2.349, 2.355–356, 2.361, 2.365, 2.379.

³⁶ *War* 2.397: Ῥωμαίους δεσπότας.

future without Rome—a not unwelcome future. Polybius draws a memorable portrait set in the immediate aftermath of Rome's destruction of Carthage. The Roman general Scipio Aemilianus, who headed the forces that defeated Carthage and ordered its annihilation, was a friend and former pupil of Polybius. And the historian was present as flames rose over the city of Carthage. Scipio, so he tells us, burst into tears, and then explained the reason to Polybius. He wept because he could foresee another conqueror some day issuing similar orders for the destruction of Rome—and punctuated the prophecy by quoting Homeric verses on the fate of Troy. The scene left a potent impact upon Polybius who redrafted it later in moving fashion for his readers.³⁷ The melancholy character of this passage as a reminder of the capriciousness of fortune is not uncharacteristic of Polybius.³⁸ Whether or not Scipio meant his words as a lugubrious reflection upon Roman policy, Polybius' decision to reproduce them and thus to reaffirm the reversals that τύχη can bring left an ominous cloud over Roman success—as the historian clearly intended.

Allusion to the future fate of Rome appears less dramatically, but most revealingly, in Josephus' writings as well. His lengthy but selective paraphrase of the book of Daniel contains a significant passage. Daniel was asked to decipher the dream of Nebuchadnezzar regarding the huge image made of various parts (gold, silver, bronze, iron, and a mixture of iron and clay), then smashed to bits by a stone that grew to be a great mountain filling the earth (Dan. 2.31–35). The prophet interpreted it as a sequence of kingdoms, the last of which would be shattered by the kingdom of God that will endure forever.³⁹ In the period when the book of Daniel was composed or completed, in the 160s BCE, the last earthly kingdom can only have been that of the Hellenistic monarchies. But, by Josephus' day, that kingdom was widely understood to be Rome. Josephus himself asserts that Daniel

³⁷ Polyb. 38.21–22: ἀλλ' οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως ἐγὼ δέδια καὶ προορώμαι μή ποτέ τις ἄλλος τοῦτο τὸ παράγγελμα δώσει περὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας πατρίδος. Scipio's citation of Homer appears in Diodorus, 32.24 and Appian, *Pun.* 132, not in the extant fragment of Polybius. But both authors make reference to Polybius' conversation with Scipio, and there is no reason to doubt that they found it in his text; see Walbank 1979, 722–25. Appian also ascribes to Scipio a reference to the succession of world empires, including most recently Macedonia, all of which had met their doom, thus presaging Rome's own. It is not altogether clear that this derives from Polybius. See Mendels 1981, 333–34.

³⁸ Cf. Eckstein 1995, 268–70.

³⁹ Dan. 2:36–45. See the commentary of Collins 1993, 165–71.

had predicted the coming of the Roman empire (*AJ*, 10.276). In paraphrasing Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, however, Josephus stops short of recounting his explanation of the great stone, referring the reader to Daniel's text itself.⁴⁰ An outright statement about the kingdom of God eventually pulverizing the Roman empire might have been impolitic. But Josephus had already said enough for any knowledgeable reader—at least any knowledgeable Jewish reader. He had no need to be too explicit about it. The eschatological future was plain enough. Rome's demise had already been predestined, and Josephus made a point of calling attention to it.⁴¹

Josephus did not lack subtlety. In addition to the remarks on Daniel in the *Antiquities*, Josephus twice more makes veiled allusions to the eventual fate of the Roman empire, one in his first work, the *Jewish War*, and one in his last, the *Contra Apionem*. In the *War* he recounts his own speech to the besieged Jews, urging them to surrender to the overwhelming force of Roman might. There is no point in resisting the despots, he says, to whom all are subject.⁴² He adds further that τύχη has passed to the Romans and that God, having granted supreme rule to various nations in turn, *now* rests in Italy.⁴³ The *now* is notable, and possibly pregnant with significance. The idea that Rome too will have its end is unexpressed, but lurks not too far beneath the surface. In the *Contra Apionem* Josephus remarks, almost in passing, that only a few nations have had the opportunity to gain empire (ἡγεμονία) and even they have suffered changes in fortune (μεταβολαί) that reduced them again to servitude.⁴⁴ He does not elaborate on this. That would have been superfluous. The implication could hardly be missed.

In short, Polybius and Josephus did indeed share common ground. Not only in their life experiences as intellectuals and leaders of their nations who wrote about the subjugation of those nations to Rome, while being sponsored and subsidized in the land of the conqueror. But also in their complex and equivocal outlook on the ruling power. They respected the success of Roman imperialism and they castigated

⁴⁰ *Ant.* 10.210: ... ὥς καὶ περὶ τῶν ἀδήλων τί γενήσεται βούλεσθαι μαθεῖν, σπουδασάτω τὸ βιβλίον ἀναγνῶναι τὸ Δανιήλου.

⁴¹ So, rightly, Mason 1994, 165–176; Spilsbury 2003, 10–17; *idem.*, 2005, 224–25.

⁴² *War*, 5.366: δεῖν μέντοι καὶ δεσπότης ἀδοξεῖν ταπεινότερους, οὐχ οἷς ὑποχείρια τὰ πάντα.

⁴³ *War*, 5.367: τὴν ἀρχὴν νῦν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰταλίας. Cf. Barclay 2005, 329–330.

⁴⁴ *Apion.* 2.127: καὶ τούτους αἱ μεταβολαὶ πάλιν ἄλλοις δουλεύειν ἐπέξευξαν; Barclay 2005, 329; *idem.* 2007, 235.

the calamitous foolishness of contesting its overwhelming might. At the same time, however, they exposed, in more nuanced fashion, the oppression and despotic character of the conqueror, and could look ahead to a time when that conqueror would meet its own fate. How many Roman readers would pick up on these subversive sentiments—or would care—we cannot know. But acute Greek readers of Polybius would understand and appreciate—as would the discerning Jewish audiences of Josephus.⁴⁵

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CONVENIENT FICTION OR CAUSAL FACTOR?
THE QUESTIONING OF JEWISH ANTIQUITY
ACCORDING TO *AGAINST APION* 1.2

Gunnar Haaland

Introduction

This volume highlights and explores the crossroads between literary analysis and historical reconstruction. Most contributions examine the relationship between ‘what Josephus wrote’ in Rome and ‘what actually happened’—primarily in the Land of Israel. Presently, however, I am concerned with a different kind of historical reconstruction: What is the relationship between what Josephus wrote and his actual situation in Rome, his actual audience, the actual response to his writings, etc.?¹

The first few lines of *Against Apion* lead us to such a junction and raise such questions. In his opening address to Epaphroditus, Josephus claims that the evidence for Jewish origins and history should be sufficiently demonstrated by his *Antiquities* (*Apion* 1.1). He continues:

Since, however, I observe that a considerable number of persons, influenced by the malicious calumnies of certain individuals, discredit the statements in my history concerning our antiquity, and adduce as proof of the comparative modernity of our race the fact that it has not been thought worthy of mention by the best known Greek historians, I consider it my duty to devote a brief treatise to all these points... (*Apion* 1.2–3)²

Apparently, Josephus wishes to respond to criticism along two lines.³ He is first of all concerned with the alleged questioning of Jewish antiquity through references to Greek historiography. Secondly, he claims that his critics are inspired by the “malicious calumnies” of Apion, Apollonius Molon and others. Presently, we will focus on

¹ This article represents a development of a chapter in my dissertation. See Haaland 2006a, 235–42. For a recent commendation of historical inquiry along such lines, see Mason 2003, 187–88.

² The writings of Josephus are quoted from the edition of the Loeb Classical Library.

³ For a similar analysis of the preface as a reference to a two-fold challenge, see Barclay 2005b, 31–33.

the former issue, which is Josephus' chief concern in roughly the first quarter of *Against Apion* (1.1–218), whereas we leave out the previous literary treatments of the Jews and Josephus' responses in the later parts of treatise.⁴

Chaim Milikowsky takes Josephus' reference to contemporaneous critics mostly at face value:

Quite clearly, he is responding to specific stimuli: someone doubted the antiquity of the Jews, and instead of simply taking this doubt to be a sign of the doubter's ignorance, Josephus feels the need to prove the antiquity of the Jews by recourse to the Greek-writing authors of the Jews' neighboring countries.⁵

Other scholars are more skeptical. Martin Goodman suspects that these critics were “invented by Josephus as straw men to knock down.”⁶ Erich Gruen, similarly, expresses his “strong suspicion that he (Josephus) has concocted a confrontation on this issue.”⁷ John Barclay is more specific. He accepts the veracity of Josephus' reference to criticism against *Antiquities* while suggesting that Josephus has misrepresented the *content* of the criticism. It was probably more a matter of cultural insignificance (cf. *Apion* 1.2: “not been thought worthy of mention”) than comparative modernity.⁸ Most confident on this issue is Arthur Droge:

Josephus' reference to a “considerable number” of Greeks who doubted the antiquity of the Jews was a necessary and convenient fiction: necessary because it provided a pretext for his chronological argument in defense of Moses' unparalleled antiquity; and convenient because the relative lateness of Greek culture was an easy target.⁹

⁴ Several scholars emphasize that the accounts of the Jews by Manetho, Chaeremon, Lysimachus and Apion as we have them in *Against Apion* are the results of Josephus' deliberate, rhetorical adaptation. The anti-Jewish bias of these authors may therefore originally have been far less conspicuous. See e.g. Barclay 1998, 203, 206–21; Gruen 2005; Jones 2005. Moreover, Feldman points out that several of those statements that provoke Josephus' reaction may have appeared quite harmless or even commending to a different audience. See e.g. Feldman 1996. However, as far as I can see, it remains that Josephus was not the sole inventor of ancient anti-Jewish polemics.

⁵ Milikowsky 2002, 173.

⁶ Goodman 2004, 21; cf. Goodman 1999, 52. Karin Keeble, a student of Goodman's, makes the same point, but is far less reserved. See Keeble 1991, 15–16, 25–26, 29, 39.

⁷ In the end, however, Gruen apparently assumes that Josephus indeed faced such criticism. See Gruen 2005, 40, 48.

⁸ Barclay 2005b, 32.

⁹ Droge 1996, 140, cf. 117.

The suspicion arises for the following reasons, in particular: First, Jewish antiquity appears to have been widely recognized in Josephus' days. Second, and more specifically, it is claimed that no such charge against the Jews is preserved anywhere else in the literature from antiquity.¹⁰ Third, and even more specifically, Josephus' failure to name his critics, let alone provide literary evidence for the questioning of Jewish antiquity, gives reason for suspicion.¹¹ Fourth, the introduction of such criticism serves Josephus' rhetorical strategies, as Droge in particular emphasizes.¹² Of these four points, the first and the third can be treated quite briefly, whereas the second and the fourth demand a more thorough discussion.

Jewish Antiquity and the Recent Culture of the Greeks

First of all, the questioning of Jewish antiquity based on Greek evidence is indeed quite conspicuous. Not only was there a widespread consensus regarding "the relative lateness of Greek culture" ever since Herodotus and Plato,¹³ the antiquity of the Jews was also well established from Hecataeus of Abdera and onwards. The Jewish way of life was certainly subject to skepticism and ridicule, but it mostly appears as if Jewish antiquity was presupposed.

Evidence for the wide recognition of Jewish antiquity is even found within *Against Apion*. At the beginning of the final part of the treatise (*Apion* 2.145–296), Josephus refers to "our legislator, who lived in the remotest past" and adds the following comment: "that, I presume, is

¹⁰ See e.g. Pilhofer 1990, 216; Keeble, 15; Goodman 2004, 21; Barclay 2005b, 32; Gruen 2005, 40.

¹¹ See e.g. Gruen 2005, 40–41.

¹² Keeble 1991, 25–26, 28, adds some additional arguments that are less convincing and partly circular: The questioning of Jewish antiquity seems fictitious because it provides a convenient opportunity for Josephus to highlight his skills as historian, because he is concerned about providing evidence for the truth of the accusation, and because he disguises its artificial nature by treating it alongside of genuine criticism.

¹³ See e.g. Herodotus, *Hist.* 2 *passim*. For Greek dependence upon Egyptian legislation, see e.g. Herodotus, *Hist.* 2.177. For the antiquity of Egyptian records and genealogies, see e.g. Herodotus, *Hist.* 2.100, 142–43; Cicero, *Resp.* 3.14. For Greek philosophers learning from Egyptian priests, see e.g. Plato, *Tim.* 22; Isocrates, *Bus.* 22–23, 28; Diodorus 1.96; Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 10. For scholarly discussions, see e.g. Lewy 1938, 215–28, 234; Schäublin 1982, 318–21; Smelik and Hermerlijk 1984, 1873–1876; Pilhofer 1990, 17–75; Droge 1996, 119–21; Feldman 1998, 229–30; Berthelot 2000; Gruen 2005, 40–41; Barclay 2005b, 37–39.

admitted even by our most unscrupulous detractors" (*Apion* 2.156). And toward the end, he returns to Moses' chronological superiority compared with "those other legislators" (*Apion* 2.279) as an apparently uncontroversial matter. Hence Greek critics questioning the antiquity of the Jews indeed appear as "an easy target."

In this connection, I would add that in *Against Apion* Josephus deliberately casts the attacks on Jewish character as "Egyptian" and the questioning of Jewish antiquity as "Greek."¹⁴ We can only surmise that both charges were brought forward by Romans, as well, but it is clearly most convenient for Josephus to direct his counterattacks against Egyptians of poor character and Greeks of recent origin. So far, Josephus' "Greek" critics seem suspicious.

Josephus' anonymous critics

This brings us to the third point, namely Josephus' failure to identify his critics. He is clearly referring to criticism that has emerged during the few years that has passed since the publication of *Antiquities*. We should hardly expect literary evidence from within such a limited time span. And Josephus may have had good reasons not to name his critics. From "convenience or cowardice," as Aryeh Kasher puts it,¹⁵ Josephus probably wished to avoid confrontation with more influential and powerful antagonists.¹⁶ In other words, Josephus' anonymous critics alert us about the importance of his rhetorical strategies, but this point is mostly insignificant as evidence against the veracity of Josephus' claims that his critics have dismissed the notion of Jewish antiquity.

Jewish Antiquity and Josephus' Rhetorical Strategies

What, then, about Droge's claim that the questioning of Jewish antiquity serves as a "necessary...fiction," because "it provided a pretext for his

¹⁴ See e.g. Haaland 2006a, 209–30.

¹⁵ Kasher 1996, 152.

¹⁶ Kasher 1996, 151–52, suggests that Josephus is referring to both Roman and Greek authors and names Tacitus, Quintilian, Martial, Juvenal, Epictetus, Plutarch and others as possible candidates. According to Gruen 2005, 32, Barclay's commentary on *Against Apion* (which had not yet appeared when this article was written) similarly "leaves open to possibility that Josephus refers to Romans who give credence to Greek historians." As Gruen correctly notes, *Apion* 1.15 implies that Josephus' critics are Greeks, but in my view, this passage does not settle the case conclusively.

chronological argument in defense of Moses' unparalleled antiquity"? In fact, Josephus' ardent and extensive defense of Jewish antiquity, which covers most of the first part of *Against Apion* (1.1–218), simply does not fulfill the function assigned to it by Droge. In this part of the treatise there is no "chronological argument in defense of Moses' unparalleled antiquity." Josephus' main point throughout this first part is to prove the antiquity of the Jews, but not their "unparalleled antiquity." This emerges from the attacks on Greek historiography, from the association of Jewish historiography to that of Egypt, Phoenicia and Babylonia, from the attempt to explain the silence of most Greek authors about the Jews, and from the quotations from Egyptian, Phoenician and Babylonian sources accompanied by detailed discussions of chronology (*Apion* 1.103–105, 108, 126–127; cf. 2.15–19). All these points underscore Josephus' general claims for Jewish antiquity, but only at the expense of the Greeks. The antiquity of the Egyptian, Phoenician and Babylonian cultures is presupposed. Josephus never makes any attempt to argue that the Jewish civilization is more ancient than any of those.

Of course, the chronological superiority of the Jewish civilization compared to that of the Greeks is an important premise for his later claims about "unparalleled antiquity," but this more daring point is made only in the final part of *Against Apion* (2.145–296). And this point is not established by any "chronological argument," but mainly by narrative and rhetorical means. First, we should observe how Egypt and all her hosts disappear from *Against Apion* by the death of Apion, which is recorded with scorn and rudeness to the maximum of Josephus' capacity (*Apion* 2.144).¹⁷ Moses, on the other hand, leads the Israelites out of Egypt and through the desert (*Apion* 2.157–158), and provides for them the best laws possible (*Apion* 2.158–161). Hence Moses and the Jews are left behind as the sole representatives of the ancient Near East in the final part of the treatise.¹⁸

At this point there is a conspicuous difference between the first and the final part of *Against Apion*: At the outset, the Egyptian culture, accompanied by that of Phoenicians and Babylonians, is presented as

¹⁷ Note that the Egyptian priests are spared from this character assassination. See *Apion* 1.140–144. With rhetorical efficiency Josephus pictures them as the keepers of historical records and upholders of ancient tradition in the first part of *Against Apion* (1.1–218), and avoids any mention of their position and functions within the Egyptian cult at the end of the third part. See Barclay 2004, 112.

¹⁸ Egypt only reemerges as Josephus summarizes his argument at the very end of the treatise (*Apion* 2.289).

an ancient civilization from which the Greeks have learned (*Apion* 1.8–14). In the final part of the treatise (*Apion* 2.145–296), however, the Jewish culture takes on this role alone (*Apion* 2.154, 168, 255–257, 279–286, 293–295). Quite conspicuously, Josephus provides no cross-reference back to his previous chronological argument.¹⁹ Even if Josephus could successfully make a chronological argument for Jewish antiquity, he could hardly prove chronologically that Moses was the first of all legislators (*Apion* 2.154) and the Jewish culture the source of all civilizations (*Apion* 2.293–295). Instead of involving himself in futile argumentation, Josephus makes his case for Jewish supreme antiquity by sophisticated, rhetorical means.

Another element in Josephus' argument contributes to placing Moses and the Jews in this position, namely the way he narrows the motive of Greek dependence upon barbarians, which appears already at the outset of *Against Apion* (1.14), to the dependence of Greek philosophers upon Moses mainly regarding the perception of God (*Apion* 2.168, 255, 281). Within the context of philosophical theology, there is no room—or need—for Egyptians, Phoenicians and Babylonians. Only the Jews could reasonably be presented as the source of the abstract concepts of the deity propounded by several Greek schools of philosophy.²⁰

Thus, it turns out that the first part of *Against Apion* (1.1–218) makes little sense if the questioning of Jewish antiquity was fabricated by Josephus himself. Contrary to Droge's claim, such a fiction—no matter how convenient—would by no means be necessary. Josephus' detailed argument for Jewish antiquity would rather be disturbing and pointless if the opposite case were unthinkable and incredible; only if the questioning of Jewish antiquity were a real challenge would Josephus' argument be necessary.

More on General Plausibility and Josephus' Rhetorical Strategies

Despite its attractiveness at first sight, the idea that Josephus fabricated the questioning of Jewish antiquity does not appear to be entirely plausible considering the larger argument of which it is a part. Instead,

¹⁹ See Gerber 1997, 98–99; Gerber 1999, 264.

²⁰ See e.g. Kasher 1996, 154.

along with Milikowsky, I will pursue an interpretation of *Against Apion* that makes Josephus' opening words a positive point of departure. It is first of all highly plausible that *Antiquities* caused suspicion and criticism from Greek intellectuals and their supporters. It is also quite likely that such criticism was based largely on the lack of references to the Jews in Greek sources, as Josephus claims. What more can we infer about this "Greek" criticism against *Antiquities*? Droge admits that a "Greek reader of the *Antiquities* might well dispute Josephus' *description* of Jewish origins."²¹ John Barclay points to cultural insignificance as a likely focus of Greek criticism, which helps explain the purpose of Josephus' Greek evidence toward the end of *Against Apion*'s first part (*Apion* 1.161–218).²² In fact, this material is insignificant in relation to the question of antiquity, but valuable as evidence for Greek respect, admiration and friendliness toward the Jews.

In addition, however, I will argue that it is highly plausible that certain critics—or even "a considerable number," as Josephus claims (*Apion* 1.2)—simply dismissed Josephus' account of Jewish history *including* his claims about Jewish antiquity. First, there is no reason to assume that Josephus was the only "intellectual" of his time that did not always stick to strict logic and indisputable arguments.²³ From the point of view of a conservative Roman, the Jews represented a new superstition in the city and Josephus' claims for Jewish antiquity may have been carelessly dismissed without serious consideration. Second, there was a general skepticism toward exaggerated claims about the antiquity of eastern nations, as Barclay points out.²⁴ Third, Josephus declares in the preface of *Antiquities* that the Jewish "sacred Scriptures... embrace the history of five thousand years" (*Ant.* 1.13). If this figure is interpreted not as a dating of the creation of the world, but as a dating of the emergence of the Jewish people, it would clearly represent a gross exaggeration. In fact, when Josephus repeats the same number in *Against Apion*, his wording lends itself to exactly this (mis)-

²¹ Droge 1996, 118 (original emphasis).

²² Barclay 2005b, 32.

²³ Several studies of Josephus' rhetoric in *Against Apion* have demonstrated that his argumentation is more impressive by its power than convincing by its logic and consistency. See e.g. Schaublin 1982, 318–21, 326–28; S. Cohen 1988, 4–9; Van Henten and Abusch 1996, 307–309; Barclay 1998, 221; Barclay 2005a, 325, 331; K. Jones 2005. The comprehensive argumentation analysis of *Apion* 2.145–296 in Gerber 1997, 122–55, also points out certain shortcomings and flaws. See e.g. Gerber 1997, 176.

²⁴ Barclay 2005b, 38–39.

understanding: “the extreme antiquity of our Jewish race, the purity of the original stock, and the manner in which it established itself in the country which we occupy today. That history embraces a period of five thousand years” (*Apion* 1.1). Later in *Against Apion*, however, he gives more modest figures: He estimates the period “from the birth of man down to the death of the lawgiver” to be “only a little short of three thousand years” (*Apion* 1.39), thereby (probably) implying that Moses lived approximately two thousand years back in time. This corresponds fairly well with his subsequent claim that the exodus “preceded the Trojan War by nearly a thousand years” (*Apion* 1.104). Yet I see no reason to doubt that even these more moderate figures could instigate objections from Josephus’ contemporaries, just as they certainly would from modern scholars.²⁵

No Evidence for the Questioning of Jewish Antiquity?

My remaining points take issue with the contention that, apart from *Against Apion* 1.2, there is no evidence for the questioning of Jewish antiquity in the extant sources.

First, Goodman points out an interesting parallel in Origen’s *Against Celsus*.²⁶ Apparently, Celsus considered the notion of Jewish antiquity ridiculous, shameless and undocumented: “They shamelessly undertook to trace their genealogy back to the first offspring of sorcerers and deceivers...in spite of the fact that throughout the length of past history such an idea has never even been claimed...yet now the Jews make claims about them in answer to certain others.” (*Cels.* 4.33, 35)²⁷ Just like Josephus, Origen challenges both the cultural hegemony of the Greek tradition in general and the chronological argument of his antagonist in particular (*Cels.* 4.33–36).

The second point relates to the chronological argument of Josephus’ antagonists. According to Josephus, Apion “dates the exodus to the seventh Olympiad, and in the first year of that Olympiad” (*Apion* 2.17). As H. St. John Thackeray notes, this brings us to the middle of the eighth century BCE,²⁸ which would make the establish-

²⁵ See Foakes Jackson 1930, 20; Goode 1935, 25. This obvious point has been neglected by recent scholarship.

²⁶ See Goodman 1999, 52; cf. e.g. Feldman 1990, 108–115.

²⁷ Quoted from Chadwick 1965, 209–11.

²⁸ See comment in the margin *ad locum* and footnote to *Apion* 2.156.

ment of the Jewish nation a relatively recent event, even according to Greek standards. The dating of the exodus to the reign of Bocchoris by Lysimachus (preserved in *Apion* 1.305) and Tacitus (*Hist.* 5.3) also most likely points toward the eighth century BCE.²⁹

Third, Josephus presupposes skepticism toward Jewish antiquity already in *Antiquities*, as I have noted elsewhere.³⁰ In his speech to Agrippa concerning the rights of the Ionian Jews, Nicolaus of Damascus makes the following claim: “Now our customs are excellent in themselves, if one examines them carefully, and they are also ancient, even though some may not believe this” (*Ant.* 16.44). Hence the questioning of Jewish antiquity is clearly not a feature that Josephus conveniently invents for the sake of his argument in *Against Apion*. On the contrary, the evidence suggests that Jewish claims for antiquity in general, and the claims of Josephus in *Antiquities* in particular, were indeed subject to an amount of doubt and criticism.

A Convenient Point of Departure, Not a Necessary Fiction

This way of reasoning can be summarized by rephrasing the evaluation of Droge quoted above: Josephus’ reference to a “considerable number” of Greeks (or people that trusted Greek historiography) that doubted the antiquity of the Jews was *an urgent and convenient starting point*. It was urgent because antiquity was equal with significance, prominence and honor in Josephus’ world.³¹ And as Droge correctly remarks, it was convenient because the relative lateness of Greek culture was an easy target.³²

Abandoning the Greeks

If we assume that *Against Apion*—at least partly—was caused by criticism against *Antiquities* from Greeks or from Romans that treasured the Greek culture (at least as long as it served their criticism of Josephus), not only the extensive defense of Jewish antiquity at the expense of the

²⁹ See e.g. Thackeray’s footnote to *Apion* 1.305; Stern 1974–1978, 1:385; 2:35–36.

³⁰ See Haaland 2002, 55–56.

³¹ See e.g. *Apion* 2.151; Droge 1996, 125.

³² See the similar statement by Gruen 2005, 41: “It certainly allowed Josephus to discredit the idea quite easily and unequivocally. A neat set-up.”

Greeks in the first part of the treatise (*Apion* 1.1–218) makes sense; we may even be close to a reasonable explanation for the rather comprehensive anti-Greek rhetoric of the final part (*Apion* 2.145–296). Apparently, Josephus' previous attempts to present Jewish culture on Greek premises in *Antiquities* did not succeed.³³ We may easily envisage how he may have been dismissed by influential Greeks, or by more or less *philhellene* Romans. As a result, Josephus abandons his previous strategy. Instead of making attempts to picture Jews and Judaism in Greek dress as in *Antiquities*, he frames *Against Apion* as a presentation of his native culture in Roman terms.³⁴

Josephus' Audience—Benevolent or Skeptical?

Steve Mason has repeatedly argued that Josephus addresses an audience of benevolent gentiles throughout his writings.³⁵ However, if our present interpretation of *Against Apion* in general and its opening lines in particular is correct, if Josephus' claims about Jewish antiquity in *Antiquities* was indeed subject to serious criticism, then we encounter a reader response of a totally different nature than the one Mason has envisioned. And nonetheless, Josephus continues to address exactly the same kind of audience. This ambiguity precludes any clear and simple conclusion about the attitude of Josephus' audience toward his message.³⁶ Even if I have presently argued for an "at face value" reading of *Against Apion* 1.2, I would definitely not recommend such an approach as a general rule within Josephan scholarship.

³³ In *Antiquities*, Josephus treats the Greeks politely and favorably from the very beginning to the very end, with a nasty comment in *Ant.* 1.121 as the only exception. In general, Greek culture serves as a positive point of reference and standard of measurement. See e.g. Haaland 2002, 53–54, 56; Haaland 2006a, 229; Haaland 2006b, 272, 284.

³⁴ The Roman character and context of *Contra Apionem* is emphasized in much recent scholarship. See e.g. Goodman 1994, 334–35; Goodman 1999; Haaland 1999; Haaland 2005; Barclay 2000; Barclay 2005a. I am indebted to Professor Oskar Skarsaune for the suggested explanation of this feature.

³⁵ See e.g. Mason 1996; Mason 2000, xvii–xx; Mason 2001, xix–xxi; Mason 2005.

³⁶ For further elaboration, see Haaland 2006a, 243–60, particularly 254–57.

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WHERE IS THE TEMPLE SITE OF ONIAS IV IN EGYPT?

Gohei Hata

Introduction

One of the most important historical sites in Egypt for students of Judaism in the Hellenistic and Roman periods would be the temple site of Onias IV. This temple was built around the middle of the second century BCE and continued to exist for more than two hundred and twenty years until it was destroyed on the order of Vespasian.

Josephus refers to the founder of the temple, as well as its size, its size, location, duration, and destruction both in the *Jewish War* and in the *Jewish Antiquities*, but some serious discrepancies exist between these two works.¹ W. M. Flinders Petrie, “the Father of Modern Egyptology,” who read the works of Josephus in his own way, excavated Tell el Yehudiyeh in 1905 and 1906, and claimed that Tell el Yehudiyeh was the site of Onias’ temple.² Since the publication of his archaeological report in 1906, quite a few scholars have argued both in support of and against Petrie’s identification of Onias’ temple with Tell el Yehudiyeh.³

¹ One of the serious discrepancies between the *Jewish War* and *Jewish Antiquities* is the construction period of the temple and the name of the person who put the project into action. According to the *War* 1:31–33 and 7:423, the person who built the temple was Onias III who, according to the *Second Book of Maccabees* 4:34, was slain by the hand of Menelaus. This Onias III fled to Alexandria from Jerusalem when Antiochus IV Epiphanes of Syria was “at war with the Jews” (*War* 7:423), that is, in 166 BCE. On the other hand, according to *Ant.* 12:385–387, Onias (IV), the son of the high priest (Onias III) left Jerusalem when the high priesthood was given to Alcimus. This would indicate that Onias (IV) fled to Alexandria around 162 BCE, and this would also indicate that the construction of the temple started after 162 BCE. According to *War* 7:436, the duration of the temple from the erection to its closure by the order of Vespasian was three hundred and forty-three years. We would speculate that Vespasian ordered Lupus, the governor of Alexandria, to close (or destruct) the temple in 71 CE or later, and our speculation would suggest that the construction of the temple started around 272 or 271 BCE. As H. St. J. Thackeray says in his footnote to his English translation of the *War* in the LCL, the figure mentioned in the text is wrong.

² Petrie, 1906, 19–27, and especially his conclusions about the site of Onias’ temple on page 27.

³ See Feldman 1984, 459–463 and also the bibliography Bohak 1996.

In this paper, (1) we propose that our Onias was Onias IV, who was defeated in Jerusalem in the power struggle over the legitimacy of high priesthood and as a result fled to Egypt; (2) we suggest that Josephus himself visited the temple of Onias IV when he was temporarily staying in Alexandria on his way back to Jerusalem from Rome in the year 66 CE; (3) we argue against Petrie's identification, and put forward the suggestion that the place named Bubastis (the present Tell Basta) is the site of Onias IV's temple; (4) we refer to past excavations of Bubastis by Edouard Naville and Labib Habachi;⁴ (5) we report on our preliminary survey on Bubastis in 2005 and 2006. In our survey, we have located Bubastiagria of Josephus⁵ on the site of the present Tell Basta; and finally, (6) in our concluding remarks, we would emphasize the importance of excavations in the site of Onias IV's temple.

Historical Background of the Temple of Onias IV

There occurred a serious power struggle between the high priest of the Hasmonean family and Onias IV, son of Onias III who was a high priest in Jerusalem before he was treacherously killed by his political rival in 175 BCE.⁶ It was quite natural for Onias IV to claim the high priesthood because it belonged to the traditional high priest family. We do not know how long this power struggle lasted in Jerusalem, but one thing is clear: Onias IV and his supporters were defeated. As a result, Onias IV and his supporters, some priests and some Levites in Jerusalem, fled to Egypt via Pelusium in the middle of the second century BCE. Where did they go? No one knows for sure, but we may speculate that they fled to Alexandria because it was a city with a strong Jewish community. Josephus, however, has nowhere given us any hint of the size of this group. If it were a small group, they might have been temporarily received as a group of refugees by the Jewish community in Alexandria. But, if it were a large one, they might not have been welcomed in Alexandria from the outset. However, even if the group was small, yet the reason for their escape into Alexandria went against the interest of the Alexandrian Jewish community, which

⁴ Naville, 1891.

⁵ Josephus first mentions the name of Bubastis-of-the Field (or the Field-of-Bubastis) in the *Ant.* 13:66 and then in the *Ant.* 13:70 in the same form.

⁶ 2 Macc 4:34.

had been supporting the temple in Jerusalem, they may not have been made welcome. Even if it were the case that they had been received for a short time, they might have felt uncomfortable among their fellow Jews in Alexandria.

What on earth do people do when they feel uncomfortable and unwelcome in a place to which they have fled? Certainly they would seek a new haven. If Onias IV and his supporters felt uncomfortable in Alexandria, they might well have left this city early and looked for a new haven in some other Jewish communities of the Lower Nile Delta. However, if they were not warmly received even in other Jewish communities, what would they have done? They would have had one option; they would have had to build their own haven by their own hands. They could build their own temple because Onias IV was in a position to claim the High Priesthood, and because some of his supporters were, as we have already mentioned, priests and Levites from the temple of Jerusalem. Of course, they needed a piece of land large enough to build a temple, and their community around it. They looked for the land, and finally found the totally abandoned site of the Egyptian temple in Bubastisagria (Bubastis-of-the Field, or the Field of Bubastis, the present Tell Basta) which, as Herodotus (484?–425?BCE) suggests, was once one of the largest thriving cities in the Delta.⁷ There, all the pillars and stones of the old temple had fallen down, and no one had removed them. Onias IV acquired this site and he ordered the builders to use the pillars and stones of the old temple for building their new temple. If hieroglyphic signs had been inscribed upon the surface of some of the pillars and stones, they simply scraped them off. The history of Egyptian temples teaches us that when they built a new temple, they often used the old pillars and stones. The idea of recycling construction materials is very old indeed.

⁷ The place name Bubastis appears in the *History* of Herodotus. In Book II.59, he refers to the name of the town called Bubastis, in Book II.60 to the annual great festival of the town, and in Book III.137 to the canals and the temple of goddess Bubastis which, according to him, is equal to Greek Artemis. Although the relationship between the goddess in the form of a cat and the temple he mentions is not clear, in Book II.66, Herodotus refers to a custom of the people who brought the dead cat to a burial place of Bubastis for mummification. Besides these interesting pieces of information, in Book XVI.49 and Book LI, Diodorus of Sicily refers briefly to the invasion of Artaxerxes and his pillage and destruction of the temple, and in Book XVII.1.27, Strabo refers to the town and the nomos (state) of Bubastis. Besides these references we could find the place name no Bubastis but “Bubastos” in the Greek translation of the Book of Ezekiel 30.17.

We have already suggested that Onias IV acquired this land. On the basis of Josephus's account, it is now possible to say that Onias IV petitioned Ptolemy VI (180–146 BCE) to grant him this abandoned place, but it is also possible to imagine that some Jewish people of later generations after the death of Onias IV, in an attempt to justify Onias IV's acquisition of the land, created a story that Ptolemy VI and his queen Cleopatra had granted him this abandoned place. Here we would like to emphasize that even if the overall story of land acquisition told by Josephus were a sham, there seems to be some truth in his description. We would like to think it correct when Josephus says in his *Ant.* 13:66–67, 70 that the land Onias IV was going to acquire was the site of a ruined Egyptian temple. We do want to know when the foundation stone of Onias IV was laid, and when its construction work terminated, but we should be content to say for the present that it was built in the 60s or around the middle of the second century BCE. The exact date of its building would be clarified if someone could excavate the exact place of Onias IV's temple. Let us wait for the opportunity for this to happen with great expectation!

Josephus and his Interest in the Temple of Onias IV

According to his *Life* 13 ff., Josephus, in the year 64 CE, went to Rome to secure the release of his acquaintances. Let us imagine that he left Rome, together with his released acquaintances, shortly after achieving his initial purpose. The fact that he returned to Jerusalem just before the war against Rome broke out in the early summer of 66 CE may suggest to us that Josephus was staying in Alexandria and its vicinity for some purpose which he could not disclose openly. I have already suggested in an article,⁸ based on the account in *War* 2:577–582 that as soon as he was dispatched to Galilee by the wartime cabinet of Jerusalem, Josephus trained some of the Galileans in the Roman military manner. Judging from his in-depth account of the total strength of the Roman army in *War* 3:64–106, we could postulate that Josephus himself had some kind of military training in nearby Nicopolis, when he was in Alexandria. We would also expect that during his stay in Alexandria he visited some of the Jewish communities in the Delta,

⁸ Hata 1994.

including Heliopolis and Bubastisagria (Bubastis-of-the Field or the Field-of-Bubastis). We could produce indirect evidence for his visiting Heliopolis at least. Josephus had a personal interest in Manetho, a native of Heliopolis, who dedicated his *History of Egypt* to Ptolemy I. It was most probably in Heliopolis that Manetho heard and collected many scandalous stories about Moses and his exodus, claims which Josephus later refuted in his *Contra Apionem*. It was most probably when Josephus was sojourning in Heliopolis that he learned some legendary stories of Moses such as his leadership in the campaign against the Ethiopians, or his marriage to Tarbis the Ethiopian king's daughter, an event which Josephus later recounted in *Ant.* 2:239–54. We could also produce indirect evidence for his visiting Bubastisagria, by pointing out his special interest in this place. He does refer to the temple repeatedly in his works. It is well known that Josephus opens his *Jewish War* with a reference to Onias IV's land,⁹ and closes the final volume of his *Jewish War* with a reference to the destruction of this temple.¹⁰ Not only in the *Jewish War*, but also in books 12 and 13 of the *Jewish Antiquities*, Josephus refers to Onias IV and his temple, with the inclusion of Onias IV's petition to the king Ptolemy VI and his queen, and their reply.¹¹ These frequent references could be explained only by supposing that Josephus himself visited Bubastisagria, saw the temple of Onias IV and the Jewish community thereabout, and heard (or collected) a story of the origin of the temple which might be connected with the above mentioned petition and response. If what we suppose were close to a historical fact, we could then argue that there were some correct elements in the description of the petition of Onias IV, or that Josephus cited it because he could testify that there were some correct descriptions in it.

Flinders Petrie's Identification and Our Challenge

Out of interest in Josephus' description of the temple of Onias, Flinders Petrie, a British archaeologist, attempted to identify the site of Onias' temple, and published his report in 1906.¹² The fourth chapter of this

⁹ *War* 1:33.

¹⁰ *War* 7:420–436.

¹¹ *Ant.* 12:387, 13:62ff.

¹² Petrie 1906.

report is entitled "The Temple of Onias." It opens with the following remark:

The curious episode of the return of the Jews to Egypt, as a refuge from the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes, and their establishment of a new centre of worship there at about 154 BC, is well known from the accounts preserved by Josephus. The site of this new Temple had so far not been identified, although it was generally recognized as having been about Tell el Yehudiyeh. The treatment of the statement of Josephus, crediting him with having "mixed together and applied to one settlement circumstances which refer to several Jewish establishments" (Neville, *Mound of the Jews*, p. 20) is not generally conducive to settling questions. In this and other cases, when we ascertain the facts, it is seen that we do best to stick closely to our authorities. As the passages of Josephus can easily be referred to at length, it will be best here to give a summary of them, and then to discuss the data which they afford.¹³

After saying this, Petrie points out that *War* 7:426–436 refers to the whole region of the Jewish settlements on the east of the Delta as *Oneion*, from Onias, and that *Ant.* 14:127–139 implies a larger district. Petrie then mentions that Onias who fled from Antiochus Epiphanes and was well received by Ptolemy VI (Philometor) appears to be the Onias, a Jewish general of Ptolemy VI mentioned in *Contra Apionem* 2:49. Ptolemy VI thus gave this Onias land which was "180 *stadia* from Memphis, where Onias built a fortress and a temple, not similar to that at Jerusalem, but such as resembled a tower. He built it of large stones to the height of 60 cubits." Petrie then refers to the altar described by Josephus, and quotes his words: "The entire temple was encompassed with a wall of burnt brick, though it had gates of stones." On the basis of Josephus, Petrie mentions that Lupus, the Prefect of Egypt in 71 CE, closed the temple, and Paulinus, his successor, after stripping the place, made it entirely inaccessible. As to the letter of petition by Onias and the reply from Ptolemy and his queen inserted in *Ant.* 13:65–68, 70–71, Petrie mentions that the question of authenticity or forgery of the petition and the reply do not much affect the indications regarding the place. Petrie goes on to say that Onias is said to have come to Leontopolis, and to have found a suitable place in a fortress called *Bubastis of the Fields*, that is Bubastisagria of Josephus; it was full of materials of some sort. Petrie repeats what Josephus says here, i.e., Onias asked leave to purify this place, which belonged to no

¹³ Petrie 1906, 19–20.



Photo 1: Tel el Yehudiyeh

master, and was in ruins, and to build there a temple after the pattern of that in Jerusalem, and of the same dimensions. Ptolemy VI granted him the ruined temple site in Leontopolis in the *nome* of Heliopolis, named *Bubastis of the Fields*. So Onias took it and built a temple and altar, like those of Jerusalem, but smaller and poorer. Petrie claims that such are the essential points in the accounts of Josephus, both in the *Jewish War* and in the *Jewish Antiquities*.

On the basis of the following three main reasons, Petrie identifies Tell el Yehudiyeh as the site of Onias's temple¹⁴ (See photo Tel el Yehudiyeh):

- (1) There is no centre for the worship of Bast between Belbeys and Memphis, except Tell el Yehudiyeh, where the figure of Hor holding the shrine of Bast has now been found.
- (2) The distance between Tell el Yahudiyeh and the north gate of Memphis is about 186 *stadia*, which is close to the 180 *stadia* Josephus mentions.

¹⁴ Petrie 1906, 20.

- (3) There is a mound in Tell el Yehudiyeh which indicates that the buildings on it could have risen to a height of at least 59 cubits from the plain below. The 59 cubits are close to the 60 cubits Josephus mentions.¹⁵

After settling these three essentials, Petrie was now free to look further at the details. In our paper, however, we will not go into the details which Petrie discussed. Could we accept Petrie's identification of Tell el Yehudiyeh as the site of Onias' temple? Before arguing against his identification of the temple site, let us first challenge his identification of Onias. As we have already seen, Petrie not only identifies our Onias as the Onias who was a Jewish general in the army of Ptolemy VI mentioned in *Contra Apionem* 2:49, but also regards him as the one who escaped from the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes.

We would argue against Petrie's identification of Onias because it is hard for us to imagine that a mere general of the Ptolemaic army could consider building a temple for his fellow Jewish people in the Delta. The person who had such a concern or such an ambition would necessarily be a special person, perhaps the one who once tried to establish himself in the temple system of Jerusalem, but was expelled from there when he failed to do so. This person must have had some supporters among the priests and Levites of Jerusalem. If so, Petrie's Onias could not be a viable candidate. Only Onias IV, son of Onias III, could be a candidate. Onias IV had sufficient reasons for building a temple somewhere in Egypt, which, as Josephus suggests in his *Ant.* 13: 64, could be justified and encouraged by the prophecy of Isaiah 19:19.

Then, how about the identification of the temple site by Petrie? We would argue against his identification on the basis of the following: Petrie pointed out that a figure of Hor (=Horus) had been found, but we would say that only one figure of Hor would not have been enough evidence. Petrie pointed out that the distance between Tell el Yehudiyeh and the northern gate of Memphis is about 186 *stadia*, which, according to him, is close to 180 *stadia* that Josephus mentions. We would say that the figure of 180 *stadia* mentioned by Josephus is not trustworthy because he is not ordinarily meticulous about the distances between places.¹⁶ Therefore, we should not accept Josephus's

¹⁵ Petrie 1906, 20.

¹⁶ That Josephus is not meticulous about the distance between places in Palestine, both in the *Jewish War* and *Jewish Antiquities*, is discussed by Zeev Safrai. See his article

figure seriously. The same should be true of the height of the buildings Josephus mentions.

What is disappointing for us is that Petrie failed to show us sufficient objects from the top of the mound to prove that the mound in Tell el Yehudieh was the site of Onias' temple, though he found some stone vases of the XII Dynasty, and in an earlier visit, the daggers, poetry, and scarabs of the Hyksos age, the scarabs of the XII–XVII Dynasty or of the XVIII Dynasty onward, Hyksos graves and later tombs, the coffins of the 18th Dynasty, the corn grinders of 26th Dynasty, the foreign pottery of the 20th Dynasty, the amulets, glass eye beads of the 13th (?) Dynasty, the Green glazed new year bottles of the 26th Dynasty. Petrie himself admits that "only a few objects were found on the top of the hill." The objects he found there are a clay jar seal, an earring of glass beads on bronze wire, and a ram's horn, and a few other assorted items. As to the clay jar, Petrie imagined that it was used ceremonially for sacrifice, but it is only after many clay jars were found near the altar for sacrificial animals that we could say that they were used in this way. How could we agree with Petrie's imagination when the site of the altar was not yet found and only one clay jar was found? As to the divisions of the temple such as porch, holy place, and the *most holy place*, Petrie says that "there is no trace left, as the whole was located on one mass of brickwork, which is all that remains."¹⁷ Our premise in our argument against Petrie is that Onias IV was the person who could claim the high priesthood. This leads us to envisage and emphasize that Onias IV built the temple with the *most holy place* inside it. The *most holy place* would have been built in a most conspicuous way whose trace should be found rather easily in the excavations. The temple without the *most holy place* is, in this case, unthinkable and unimaginable. If Petrie could not find it on the layers of the mound, this alone would strongly suggest to us that the temple site of Onias IV must be found elsewhere than Tell el Yehudiyeh. We would think of the present Tell Basta, which was once called Bubastos or Bubastis¹⁸ or Josephus's Bubastisagria.

"The Description of the Land of Israel in Josephus' Works," in Lous H. Feldman and Gohei Hata (eds) 1989.

¹⁷ Petrie 1906, 24.

¹⁸ See above, fn.7.

The Persons Who Excavated Bubastisagria

The first person who excavated Bubastis was A. Mariette Pasha, a French archaeologist who later became the first director of Antiquities in the Cairo Museum. He paid attention to the site in the middle of the nineteenth century, but his excavation is not considered to have been a success.¹⁹ So we will disregard the results of his excavation. The persons we now turn to are Edouard Naville and Labib Habachi.

Naville excavated Bubastis for two years from 1887 to 1889. According to the preface of his report, *Bubastis*,²⁰ when he started his excavation in 1887, the dealers in antiquities had been working in the site for years and the *fellaheen* had been digging for “*sebakh*” (decomposed organic debris to be used as an agricultural fertilizer). The construction of the railway was also under way. Thus, he complained, the areas of excavation had been greatly reduced and limited.

In this excavation of 1887, Naville, with Griffith, found the great temple. It was comprised of the entrance hall, festival hall, and hypostyle hall. In the festival hall, a number of inscriptions of Rameses II and Osorkon II, the remains of the 12th Dynasty, and the cartouches of Pepi I were found. Pepi I’s cartouches suggested to Naville that the origin of the town went as far back as the 6th Dynasty.

In the excavations of 1888 in which Rev. W. MacGregor and Count d’Hulst participated, the remains of the Hyksos were found and the town turned out to have been once an important settlement for them. In the excavation of 1889 which Dr. Godard joined from America, they found that the names of Cheops and Chefren of the 4th Dynasty inscribed on the blocks in the Entrance Hall. This suggested to Naville that the origin of the site went back further than the 6th Dynasty. Cheops is Kufu whom Herodotus looked upon as the builder of the great pyramid in Giza.

Naville’s report, *Bubastis* (1887–1889) is composed of many and varied chapter, but the chapter which attracts our attention is the one dealing with the Ptolemies and the Romans. However regarding that period there is nothing more reported than the two inscriptions on the two blocks of red granite found at the entrance to the Hypostyle Hall, and a headless torso wearing “a toga with an ornamental fringe

¹⁹ Naville 1891, 2.

²⁰ Naville 1891.

exactly similar to that of the Roman statue in the museum of Ghizeh.”²¹ There is no report on any finds relating to our concern and purpose. Actually, there is no reference at all to the temple of Onias (IV) in Naville’s report on Bubastis.

In *Tell Basta*, L. Habachi makes a detailed report on the remains of the temple of Pepi I which was dedicated to the goddess Bastet, and he also reports on his excavation in a different area of the site of the great temple which Naville found.²² Like the report of Naville, this account is extremely important to those interested in the history of Egypt, but to those who are trying to locate the temple site of Onias IV it is disappointing. Habachi did not show any interest at all in the temple of Onias IV. However, there is one map of Tell Basta of his time, which would be of service to us.

Our Surveys

We made the first preliminary survey on 2 and 3 September in 2005 in an attempt to locate the site of Onias IV’s temple.²³ We visited the four sites, that is, Leontopolis (N:30° 41.052; E:21° 21.043) in Tell Muqdam, Bubastis or Tell Basta (N:30° 34.430, E:31° 30.765) in Al Zagazig, Tell el Yehudiyeh (N:30° 17.635, E:31° 19.971), and Tell Yahood (N: 30° 22.893, E:31° 31.750) in Ghita, and then spent three days in the research room of the Cairo Museum to check the finds from the sites we visited.

The site of Tell Muqdam had been already excavated by the University of California and they published their reports on the web.²⁴ We had already checked and discussed the results of their excavations in Tokyo before we visited the site. Although the name Leontopolis would

²¹ Naville 1891, 59.

²² Habachi 1957.

²³ Dr. Akio Moriya, Professor of the Old Testament of Tokyo Christian Women’s College and I conducted the surveys. Dr. Kawatoko of the Near Eastern Cultural Center, who had been digging in Egypt for the past thirty years and his team were with us. In our second survey, Dr. Yoshiyuki Sudo, Professor of Nagoya University joined us. Mr. Tarek Ahamed Harsh, director of the Canal Archaeological Sone Office in Tell-el Kibir and Mr. Hassam Mohammed Saleman, director of The Delta Archaeological Center were also with us. I have published the report of our two surveys (in Japanese) on “Tell Basta: The Promised Land for Archaeological Digging” in *Tama Art University Academic Bulletin*, No.21 (2006) 101–115.

²⁴ See, for example, the Tell El-Muqdam Project in “ARF Newsletter 1995 v2–2.”

suggest some possible relation with the report of Josephus since Onias IV says in his letter of petition that "...when I came with the Jews to Leontopolis in the nome of Heliopolis and to other places where our nation is settled" (*Ant.* 13.65) or since Ptolemy VI and his queen say in their reply to Onias IV that "We have read your petition asking that it be permitted you to cleanse the ruined temple in Leontopolis in the nome of Heliopolis, called *Bubastis of the Fields*..." (*Ant.* 13:70), the actual site of Leontopolis we visited would not indicate at all that there is any relationship with the temple site because there was no trace of the ruined Egyptian temple with fallen pillars and stones.

Tell Yehudiyeh was a site which we thought we must thoroughly inspect because as we have already mentioned, Petrie identified it as the site of Onias's temple. There, we could easily ascend the wall of the Hyksos that Petrie mentions and the small mound on which, according to Petrie, the temple of Onias was supposed to have been built. The impression we had when we stood on top of the mound was that it was too small for the site of the temple of Onias which we could duly suppose might have grown larger in the passage of time. Part of the so-called Hyksos wall gives us an impression that the original wall might have surrounded a large camp. If so, why did not Josephus who we suppose visited the temple site of Onias mention this camp? According to his *Contra Apionem*, Josephus was evidently interested in the invasion of Hyksos in the land of Egypt and their dynasty because of Manetho's reference to the race. Had all the trace of the camp already been removed when he visited there?

Tell Yahood in Ghita is a place that has not yet been excavated, and thus the Egyptian director of the Antiquities Agency strongly recommended that it be excavated. Judging from some pieces of broken clay jars which appeared on the surface of the mound, they belong to the Hellenistic and Roman periods, but this place seemed to have nothing to do with the site of Onias IV's temple because no part of this site fits with the account of Josephus.

Bubastis, or the present Tell Basta, is located in the south-east of Al Zagazig. Bubastis was in the 18th nomos of the Lower Egypt, and the capital city of the 22nd and 23rd dynasties. It was also a central place for the worship of goddess Bastet, from which Bubastis or Bubastos is derived. The present Tell Basta is surrounded by a fenced wall perhaps partly because the Egyptians authorities want to keep it safe for the tourists who come and see the place, and partly because there are military barracks inside. As soon as we entered the gate, the fallen pillars and stones—some of which had hieroglyphic inscriptions—



Photo 2: Tel Basta

came into our sight to the south (See photo Tel Basta). They are part of the Great Temple which Naville excavated and part of the temple built by Teti and Pepi I. Everyone who is familiar with the accounts of Josephus will soon recall them, especially the accounts of the ruined temple site full of “materials of some kind.” The place where the fallen pillars and stones were scattered around is rectangular and its total length seems to exceed 600 meters. In the southern part of this place, part of a canal was found when the army was digging the land by a bulldozer. This canal seems to be one of the two canals which Herodotus mentions,²⁵ and must be the one to be used for boats carrying the stones from quarries. In the eastern part of these sites which are close to the military barracks are several small tells that were not excavated by Naville and Habachi. One or several of these sites should be recommended for future excavations.

We made another preparatory investigation again on 31 August and 1 September, 2006. In the Petrie Museum in London, we read the reports, letters, and notes Petrie left for us, and checked some of the finds he brought from Tell el Yehudiyeh for the museum display. As a result of our second investigations, we are more confident that Petrie’s

²⁵ Herodotus, *History*, II.60.

identification is wrong, and after revisiting the four sites and carefully examining them, we became thoroughly confident that we should look at some areas in Tell Basta as a site of Onias IV's temple.

Some Concluding Remarks

We would like to emphasize that the students of Judaism in the Hellenistic and Roman periods should pay much more attention to the exact site of Onias IV's temple and that we should locate its site and excavate the site in the near future. If excavations in the future are successful, they will at least prompt the considerations and questions:

- (1) Judaism in the Hellenistic and Roman periods had two temples against its basic ideology of "One God, and One Temple" in Judaism;
- (2) What was the relationship between the Onias IV's temple and the one in Jerusalem? Were they hostile to each other to the very end when both temples were destroyed in the second half of the first century CE?
- (3) What was the attitude of the Jewish community in Bubastis toward their fellow Jews in Jerusalem at the time of the war against the Romans?
- (4) How was the relationship between the Jewish community in Bubastis and the one in Alexandria? Were they hostile to each other from the beginning to the end?
- (5) How was the relationship between the Jewish community in Bubastis and other Jewish communities in the Delta? What sort of daily traffic existed between them?
- (6) How was the relationship between the Jewish community in Bubastis and other Egyptian communities, especially Heliopolis?
- (7) What sorts of biblical books did they use? Did they produce any Greek translations of any of the biblical books for their own use or in an attempt to discredit the Greek translations produced by the Alexandrian Jewish community?

Whatever results the excavations may reveal, we emphasize that someone interested in Jewish history should propose that this site be excavated. The present Tell Basta, indeed, seems to be a site of promise, with the full expectation of archaeological finds, but no milk and honey.

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CONSTRUCTING HEROD AS A TYRANT: ASSESSING JOSEPHUS' PARALLEL PASSAGES

Jan Willem van Henten

I. Introduction

Herod the Great has been remembered as a tyrant for almost twenty centuries and even scholars have characterized him as such.¹ For Christians, Herod's image as a tyrant has been fuelled by the New Testament story about the three wise men who came to honor Jesus (Matthew 2:1–18). Matthew concludes this passage with a brief report about Herod's brutal decision to kill all children in and around Bethlehem of two years or under (Matt. 2:16–18). Herod's reputation as a bloody murderer, however, is not only based on the New Testament. Photius' paraphrasing of Josephus' *Antiquities* also hints at murders by the king, which are not mentioned by Matthew:

This Herod is the son of Antipater the Idumaeon and his Arab wife; her name was Cypros. During his reign Christ our God was born from the womb of the Virgin for the salvation of our species. Despite his fury against him, Herod failed to get the Master, but he made himself the assassin of numerous little children. It is stated that he exceeded every other tyrant in cruelty and bloodthirstiness. (Photius, codex 238).²

This passage builds on Matthew's story of Herod murdering the little children in Bethlehem. It emphasizes Herod's murderous character

¹ See the brief discussion of Herod's reception in Schalit 2001, 646–9. Also Sandmel 1967, and <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/biography/Herod.html>, consulted on June 19, 2006. This contribution was written before Kasher and Witztum 2007 appeared, which offers a very different perspective on Herod as a tyrant. I warmly thank Rogier Oranje for many useful references and Emma England for correcting my English.

² Henry 1967, 142–43. All translations of ancient passages are my own unless stated otherwise. Translations from book 1 of Josephus' *Jewish War* are from Antony Forte and Joseph Sievers' forthcoming translation for the Brill Josephus project (Chapman, Forte, Mason, and Sievers, forthcoming). I warmly thank them for allowing me to use their translation.

and considers him the worst tyrant ever.³ A close reading of Photius' quote shows that his characterization of Herod as a tyrant is inspired by particular phrases in Josephus. This calls for a search into Josephus' passages about Herod as a tyrant.

Josephus is, of course, our primary source for Herod the Great, but it is important to note that he tells the Herod story twice. As a matter of fact, the presentations of Herod as a tyrant in *The Jewish War* and *The Antiquities* differ greatly, requiring a separate discussion of both works. Therefore, I intend to discuss in this contribution all of Josephus' passages that explicitly suggest that Herod was a tyrant.⁴ I will first analyze the relevant passages in the *War* and then discuss the *Antiquities*, in order to compare the Herod images related to tyranny in both works. Before this I will offer a brief survey of negative stereotypes of tyranny in antiquity.

II. *Stereotypes of tyrants*

Significantly, stereotypes about wicked tyrants have remained quite fixed over the centuries. The famous debate about the ideal form of government between Otanes, Megabyzus and Darius in Herodotus' *Histories* 3.80–3 describes tyranny as the negative outcome of monarchy. Otanes argues for the introduction of democratic government and disqualifies monarchic rule with clichés of tyranny: “How can one fit monarchy into any sound system of ethics, when it allows a man to do whatever he likes without any responsibility or control”? (*Hist.* 3.80; trans. de Sélincourt and Burn). Many of Otanes' points in his speech return as commonplace in later passages that are critical about tyrants. He notes that abuse of power is inherent to ruling alone; this leads to the danger that monarchs rule as autocrats who refuse to be accountable. A king also runs the risk that two vices corrupt his rule: envy (φθόνος) and arrogance (ὑβρις).⁵ A monarch can become envious of subjects who excel, but pleased by wicked persons. He is suscep-

³ The famous quote from Augustus in Macrobius (*Sat.* 2.4.11) “It is better to be Herod's swine than his son” is dependent on Mat. 2:1–18.

⁴ Landau 2006 offers a detailed discussion of the Herod images in *War* and *Antiquities*.

⁵ Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.80, emphasizes that these two vices are the basis of all wicked deeds of kings.

tible to slander, is inconsistent, aims for praise but not too much; he abolishes ancestral customs, violates women, and executes persons without a trial. Most of these aspects of the image of bad tyrants are also emphasized by other authors from the sixth and fifth centuries BCE. They sometimes articulate their examples of tyrannical actions differently and add still other clichés: irresponsibility, dishonesty during public appearances, arbitrary behavior, cruelty as well as the violation of promises.⁶

The sum of tyrannical characteristics put forward in Classical Greek literary sources can be presented in a matrix form (figure 1, below). In this way the list can function as a checklist for individual passages about rulers depicted as tyrants, as is demonstrated by a number of famous tyrants and the key passages that describe their actions. Of course, the material of this matrix is limited in several ways, it concerns only five tyrants and one key passage per tyrant. I deliberately included tyrants from the Classical era as well as the first century CE in order to see how much continuity can be observed in the list of characteristics. The horizontal rows concern the tyrannical characteristics and note whether a specific passage includes this characteristic or not. The columns concern the key passages about five selected rulers who were considered tyrants.

Table 1: Matrix of Tyrannical Characteristics

	Cambyses	Polycrates	L. Tarquinius Superbus	Nero	Domitian
	Herodotus 3.1–38, 61–6	Herodotus 3.39–47, 4–60, 120–8, 142	Livy 1.46–60	Suetonius Nero	Suetonius Domitian
1. hybris	x	x	x	x	x
2. autocracy	x	x	x	x	x
3. misuse of power		x	x	x	x
4. injustice in public		x	x	x	
5. legal injustice	x		x	x	x
6. arbitrariness	x	x		x	x
7. ending ancestral customs	x		x	x	x

⁶ Berve 1967, 190–206. See also Mossé 1969, 141–45.

Table 1 (*cont.*)

	Cambyses	Polycrates	L. Tarquinius Superbus	Nero	Domitian
	Herodotus 3.1–38, 61–6	Herodotus 3.39–47, 4–60, 120–8, 142	Livy 1.46–60	Suetonius Nero	Suetonius Domitian
8. improper behavior to women	x			x	x
9. violence against opponents or subjects	x	x	x	x	x
10. cruelty	x		x	x	x
11. robbery		x		x	x
12. envy of excellent subjects	x		x	x	x
13. susceptibility to slander				x	x
14. fear of friends	x		x	x	x
15. cowardice			x	x	
16. madness	x		x	x	
17. murder of relatives	x	x	x	x	x

Of course, there is considerable subjectivity in this matrix, not only because the list of tyrants is far from complete, but also because various Greek phrases have to be summarized in a few key words in English. I hope, nevertheless, that the matrix shows that there is considerable continuity between passages from the fifth century BCE. until the beginning of the second century CE, so that it can be safely used as a starting point for a discussion of Herod's tyrannical images in Flavius Josephus.⁷

III. *Herod as a tyrant in The Jewish War*

Surprisingly, a close reading of the *Jewish War* that specifically looks for depictions of Herod as a tyrant is largely unsuccessful. Explicit vocabulary connected with the semantic field of τύραννος and related

⁷ For images of tyrants in the Hellenistic and Roman periods see Berve 1967, 476–509 and the Index sv *Tyrannenpersönlichkeit*, vol. 2, 771–72; also van Henten 2000.

words is absent, with one or two exceptions (below). Clusters of motifs that are part of the stereotype of wicked tyrants are also missing. Of course, modern readers may interpret several deeds of Herod as the typical behavior of a tyrant, and the *War* reports many instances of strong criticism of Herod by his opponents. Early on in his career, for example, after his appointment as governor of Galilee by his father, Herod decided to attack Ezekias and his fellow brigands, who were active near the Syrian border (*War* 1.204; cf. *Ant.* 14.159). Herod killed these men, but did not have permission to do so without a trial, as his opponents later hold against him. Hyrcanus II even accused Herod of manslaughter, but acquitted him again, acting on Sextus Caesar's advice (*War* 1.210–215; *Ant.* 15.165–169). Herod ordered the killing of persons without trial or permission by the Sanhedrin several times,⁸ but are there standards for assessing such executions? They were no doubt common practice for ancient rulers, just as much as ordering the torture of people suspected of committing criminal acts or of associating with suspected criminals.

What matters for my discussion is that there are hardly any passages in the *War* that depict Herod by using stereotypical images of wicked tyrants like Antiochus IV or Nero, whose images become blacker and blacker in early Jewish or Christian literature up to becoming paragons of Satan. In *The Jewish War* Josephus offers just a few scattered hints that might suggest that Herod behaved like a tyrant, but these concern a single event or represent the perspective of an (unfriendly) character in the narrative. *War* 1.492–497 (cf. *Ant.* 15.235–254), for example, describes Herod's reaction to his suspicions that his son, Alexander, was plotting against him. Alexander was later executed on Herod's command, together with his brother Aristobulus (*War* 1.551; *Ant.* 16.394). Herod's suspicions frightened him terribly and made him send out spies day and night. Josephus reports that the palace was filled with terrible lawlessness (δεινῆς ἀνομίας ἐνεπλήσθη) during that time (*War* 1.493) and that Herod "became so bitter (προῦβη εἰς τοσοῦτον πικρίας) that he did not look gently even on those who were not under accusation, and was extremely harsh (ἀπηνέστατος) with his friends, too." (1.494). Herod's execution of his wife Mariamme (below), as well as his two sons Alexander and Aristobulus, is taken up in a later passage concerning the testimony of female slaves who were put to torture

⁸ See, for example, *War* 1.252, *Ant.* 14.335–336; *War* 1.433, 437 (Hyrcanus and his grandson Jonathan-Aristobulus; cf. *Ant.* 15.164–182 and 15.50–56).

and testified against Antipater, another son of Herod. Antipater was scheming wickedly against his father. The women testified that Antipater and Herod's brother Pheroras said to each other that "after Alexander and Aristobulus, Herod would go after them and their wives. For after (what he did to) Mariamme and her offspring, he would spare no one. It would be better, then, to flee as far away as possible from the beast (φεύγειν ὥς πορρωτάτω τοῦ θηρίου)." (*War* 1.586; cf. *Ant.* 17.66–67).⁹

In the Herod narrative of *The Jewish War* itself there is no elaborate passage in which Josephus explicitly presents Herod as a tyrant. The situation in *The Antiquities* is different: even the *War* sections paralleling the *Antiquities* passages which explicitly associate Herod with tyranny lack motifs and vocabulary referring to tyranny (see the next paragraph).

In fact, there is just one passage in *The Jewish War* that unambiguously depicts Herod as a tyrant. At first glance, this passage does not seem to present Josephus' own view; it transmits the opinion of opponents of Herod and Archelaus after Herod's death (*War* 2.84–92). The context of this flashback is the visit of Herod's competing sons, Archelaus and Antipas, to Rome to acquire the throne of Judea from the emperor. While they were awaiting Augustus' decision about Herod's succession, Jewish petitioners went to the emperor and pleaded for Archelaus' deposition. They preferred Roman suzerainty to a Herodian ruler as long as they were able to live in accordance with Jewish practices.¹⁰ Strikingly, their main argument, as presented by Josephus, does not concern Archelaus, since it is a summary of Herod's wicked deeds described in highly dramatic tones. Their accusation against Herod lists countless murders, torture of the survivors, destruction of the cities of the Jews, benefactions to non-Jews at the expense of the Jews ("he had shed Jewish blood to gratify foreign people"), poverty and unlawful-

⁹ The women also reported the following statement by Antipater to Pheroras: "...It is impossible, however, to escape from such a bloodthirsty beast (ἐκφυγεῖν οὕτω φονικὸν θηρίον), in whose eyes we do not even have the right to show our affection for anyone..." (*War* 1.589). Cf. also the reference to Herod's unrelenting anger towards his sons Alexander and Aristobulus, provoked by Eurycles (εἰς ἀνήκεστον ὀργὴν ἐξαγριοῦνται, *War* 1.526; cf. *Ant.* 16.363 about Herod's anger during the accusation of the two: "he showed the strongest signs of anger and savageness" (μέγιστα θυμοῦ καὶ ἀγριότητος ἐνεδίδου σημεῖα).

¹⁰ *War* 2.84–93; *Ant.* 17.304–314.

ness (*War* 2.84–86).¹¹ The accusations are introduced and concluded with characterizations of the former king as a tyrant, actually as the worst tyrant ever. *The Jewish War* 2.84 renders the following statement of the petitioners for the emperor: “declaring that it was not to a king that they had submitted but to the most savage tyrant that had ever lived (τῶν πάποτε τυραννησάντων ὀμότεατον ἐνηνοχέναι τύραννον,).”¹² After these accusations of Herod, Archelaus is called “the son of that cruel tyrant” (τόν τηλικούτου τυράννου παῖδα, 2.88). This accusation only makes sense if the underlying reasoning of the petitioners was that Archelaus was as bad as his father.¹³

Four brief observations can be made in connection with this passage. First, the accusations are put forward during a petition to the emperor for the dissolution of Herodian rule, so they convey the opinion of opponents against Herod. Second, if we compare the accusations with Herod’s deeds as depicted in the *War*, they turn out to be a gross exaggeration.¹⁴ Third, Josephus reports that Nicolaus of Damascus successfully countered the accusations by reproaching the Jewish people for being hard to govern and disobedient by nature (τό τε δύσαρκτον καὶ τὸ δυσπειθὲς φύσει πρὸς βασιλεῖς, 2.92).¹⁵ Nicolaus’ rebuttal is clearly also a gross overstatement. More significantly, however, Josephus disposes of Nicolaus’ counter argument in a few lines, while he spotlights the anti-Herodian accusations in this flashback. This implies, in my view, that Josephus the narrator sides with Herod’s opponents here, and for once depicts Herod as a tyrant in *The Jewish War*. Fourth, it is the vocabulary about Herod as a tyrant in this Josephian passage that appears to be echoed in Photius’ statement about Herod as a tyrant.¹⁶

¹¹ Herod’s transgressions of the ancestral Jewish laws are frequently taken up in the *Antiquities* report of the king’s rule, see below section IV. A detailed commentary on *War* 2.84–92 will be given in Chapman, Forte, Mason and Sievers (forthcoming).

¹² Savagery is a common characteristic of wicked tyrants, see figure 1. See also 2 Macc. 7:4; 4 Macc. 9:15, 30; 12:13.

¹³ Cf. the reference to Archelaus’ killing of 3,000 citizens in *War* 2.89; cf. *Ant.* 17.313.

¹⁴ Nicolaus of Damascus’ easy rebuttal of the accusations (*War* 2.92, below) is already a clue to the petitioners’ overstatement of Herod’s negative deeds.

¹⁵ It is significant that Josephus does not specify who the petitioners are in *War* 2.84–92, he consistently uses an unspecified plural (“they”), until he reports Nicolaus’ rebuttal, who refers to “the people” (κατηγορεῖ τοῦ ἔθνους...).

¹⁶ Cf. Josephus, *War* 2.84 “... declaring that it was not to a king that they had submitted but to the most savage tyrant that had ever lived.” (... τῶν πάποτε τυραννησάντων ὀμότεατον ἐνηνοχέναι τύραννον) with Photius, c. 238, “It is stated that he exceeded

The parallel passage of *The Jewish War* 2.84–92, *Ant.* 17.304–314, is in some respects more specific than its forerunner, but its content and message about Herod are not very different from the picture in the *War*. The *Antiquities* also refers to tyranny at the beginning of the petitioners' accusation:

When the delegates of the Jews, who were eagerly looking forward to arguing for the dissolution of the kingdom, were permitted to speak, they turned to accuse Herod of lawless acts. They declared him a king only in name¹⁷ and claimed that he had agreed to take upon himself the ruinous task, like in every tyranny (τῶν δ' ἐν ταῖς τυραννίσιν ἐκάστω), of bringing about the destruction of the Jews. He had not left off from inventing *all kinds of new measures that matched his character*. (17.304).

The accusation is less hysterical than in the *War* on the subject of tyranny itself, where Herod is called the worst tyrant ever, but Herod's apparent determination to ruin the Jews remains very serious. In fact, the suggestion that Herod's tyrannical deeds matched his character implies that Herod was a tyrant by nature, which is a devastating criticism of a ruler. The *Antiquities* passage combines this with the accusation that Herod continuously came up with innovations (*Ant.* 17.304). This ties in with repeated accusations by the narrator that Herod initiated new practices that brought along severe transgressions of the ancestral Jewish laws, such as the introduction of trophies in Jerusalem (*Ant.* 17.272–290) and the erection of the golden eagle on top of the sanctuary (*Ant.* 17.148–164, below).¹⁸

One other detail in *Ant.* 17.304–314 is additional to the list of Herod's wicked deeds in the *War* version of the petition, and again it broadens the portrayal of Herod as a tyrant. The petitioners say that they preferred to remain silent about their ruined virgins and dishonored women, wicked deeds accomplished out of drunkenness and inhuman behavior (17.309). This point hints at a connection between tyranny and Herod regarding his wives named Mariamme. The conclusion of this specific accusation again associates Herod with tyrants: "Such outrage Herod had inflicted upon them; a wild animal (θηρίον) could not have accomplished as much after it had come by the power to rule

every other tyrant in cruelty and bloodthirstiness." (Εἰς ὁμότητα δὲ καὶ μαιφονίαν πάντας ὅσοι τύραννοι ὑπερβαλέσθαι ἱστόρηται).

¹⁷ Cf. *Ant.* 15.281; 16.4.

¹⁸ See section IV with n. 33.

over humans.” (17.309). This brief discussion of *Ant.* 17.304–314 as the parallel passage of *War* 2.84–92 leads us to the depiction of Herod as a tyrant in *The Jewish Antiquities*.

IV. *The Golden Eagle Episode*

By far the most elaborate passage that explicitly describes Herod as a tyrant in *The Jewish Antiquities* concerns the report about the demolition of Herod’s golden eagle at the end of his rule (*Ant.* 17.148–164; cf. *War* 1.648–55; 2.5–7). Some of the Jerusalem Jews must have considered the eagle on top of the sanctuary, no matter what it symbolized, as a horrendous violation of God’s second commandment. Several youngsters eagerly sacrificed their lives for the destruction of this symbol.¹⁹ Josephus’ introductory comments in the golden eagle report suggest that Herod had turned into a cruel tyrant because of his incurable illness. Josephus characterizes Herod at the beginning, as well as at the end, of the eagle section with a cluster of phrases that point to well-known stereotypes of wicked tyrants (above). Herod’s behavior is characterized by rage, cruelty, bitterness and the belief that the people held him in contempt, a motif that is far from standard in stereotypical passages about tyrants:

Because he had given up hope of recovering—for he was around his seventieth year—, *he became enraged and handled everything with pure anger and bitterness*. The reason was *his conviction that he was despised* and that the (Jewish) people took pleasure in his misfortune, especially because some of the more highly respected persons among the people rebelled against him for the following reason. (*Ant.* 17.148)

The emphasis on Herod as a tyrant returns at the end of the report with references to Herod’s rage and cruelty (17.164):

Because of his cruelty and their fear that in his outrage he would even exact vengeance on them, those present [i.e. those present at the assembly to discuss the punishment of the rebels] said that these things had been done without their approval, but also that it seemed to them that they [the rebels] should not go unpunished. So he acted to these others rather indulgently. But he relieved Mathias from his office as high priest on the ground that he had been partly responsible for these things, and appointed, his wife’s brother Joazar as high priest.

¹⁹ Detailed discussion of this episode can be found in van Henten 2006.

Because this brief concluding paragraph in *Ant.* 17.164 refers once again to Herod's tyrannical character, it forms an *inclusio* with the beginning of the eagle narrative in 17.148, and, therefore, emphasizes Herod's tyrannical behavior during this episode. During the assembly, after the eagle's demolition, the Jewish officials clearly disconnect themselves from the perpetrators out of fear of being executed as well.²⁰ They got away with this, but Herod replaced the high priest Mathias because he was suspected of being a member of the rebellious group.

The relevant vocabulary of the introduction and conclusion of the golden eagle passage can be listed as follows:

- Rage: 148 (ἐξηγρίωσεν); 164 (ἐξαγριώσας)²¹
- Anger: 148 (ὀργῇ)
- Bitterness: 148 (πικρία)²²
- The belief he was held in contempt by the people: 148 (δόξα τοῦ καταφρονεῖσθαι καὶ ἡδονῇ τὰς τύχας αὐτοῦ τὸ ἔθνος φέρειν)
- Cruelty: 164 (ὀμότητα)²³

The accumulation of all these traits constructs a coherent image of Herod as a tyrant during the golden eagle episode. This image matches ancient stereotypes of wicked tyrants. It is telling that there are no longer restrictions to the use of these character traits at this stage of Herod's career. Moments of severe anger, for example, occur earlier in the Herod narratives in the *War* as well as the *Antiquities*,²⁴ but both works basically show that the king was capable of controlling

²⁰ Josephus does not identify the members of the assembly, but context and content imply that the group indicated by οἱ δὲ in 17.164 probably refers to the Jewish officials mentioned in 17.160.

²¹ Similar vocabulary characterizes Alexandra (*Ant.* 15.44), rebels (17.216), Athronges and his group (17.282), Tiberius (18.226–227), Gaius (19.27), and Sentius Saturninus' tirade against tyrants (19.175).

²² Herod's bitterness is referred to a few times elsewhere, for example in connection with Herod's taxes (*War* 1.494; 2.87; *Ant.* 16.235; cf. 17.205).

²³ A few other rulers are described in Josephus' works with a similar vocabulary: *War* 1.97 about Alexander Jannaeus' bitterness and cruelty in connection with his crucifixion of 800 Jews; *Ant.* 18.282 about Gaius' anger and bitterness (εἰδ' ἐκπικρανθεὶς Γάιος εἰς ἐμὲ τρέψει τὸ ἀνῆκεστον τῆς ὀργῆς); also *Ant.* 19.130.

²⁴ *War* 1.212, 214, 252, 320, 484, 507, 526, 565, 571, 654–55; *Ant.* 14.180, 436; 15.83, 211, 214, 229; 16.90, 199–200, 262, 366; 17. 50, 69, 83, 191.

and concealing his anger during most of his life (e.g. *War* 1.320, 484; *Ant.* 17.50, 83).²⁵

Two motifs in the *Antiquities* version of the eagle story that contribute to Herod's depiction as a tyrant stand out in comparison to the cluster of stereotypical characteristics of tyrants discussed above. One concerns the king's suspicion that the people held him in contempt (*Ant.* 17.148), a characteristic which is absent from the above list. Josephus mentions other cases of rulers held in contempt, but they are usually held in contempt by individuals or small groups.²⁶ There is one similar case concerning Herod. One of the Galilean brigands who had their base in caves dramatically killed himself, his seven sons and his wife, although Herod had promised him full immunity. Before hurling himself down he bitterly reproached Herod for his humble descent or meanness of spirit (ταπεινότης, *War* 1.311–313; *Ant.* 14.429–430).

The eagle episode is remarkable exactly because Herod fears, at least in the *Antiquities* version, that the entire Jewish people held him in contempt. This reminds one of martyrdom stories and their pitch-black portraits of the ruler as oppressor. In the martyrdom of the Maccabean mother and her seven sons Antiochus IV suspects that he is being held in contempt by the mother and her only remaining son when he tries to persuade this son to give in to the Greek way of life by agreeing to eat pork (2 Macc. 7:24–31; cf. 4 Macc. 12:1–19).²⁷ This characteristic also features in 2 Macc. 7 in the distinction between languages: Greek for non-Jews and the ancestral language for the Jews, probably Hebrew.²⁸ The martyrs speak among themselves in their ancestral language and even address the king in this language (2 Macc. 7:8). This deliberate miscommunication emphasizes the ethnic-cultural clash between the wicked Greek king Antiochus and the Jewish martyrs. Antiochus' temptation of the youngest martyr fails, and the boy announces the king's punishment in harsh and contemptuous terms (2 Macc. 7:31; cf. 4 Macc. 12:11–14). 4 Maccabees

²⁵ Cf. *Ant.* 15.229: "And he was unable to control himself in his speaking and too angry for a judgment."

²⁶ See Syllaueus' contempt for Herod (*War* 1.633) or Saul being held in contempt by wicked persons (*Ant.* 6.67). Cf. also Daniel's contempt for Darius' commandments (*Ant.* 10.255), Ahasverus' response to Vashti's refusal (11.193–194), Sabinus' contempt for Gaius (*Ant.* 19.261) and the contempt for human and divine matters because of the corruption of power in *Ant.* 6.262–268.

²⁷ Van Henten 1997, 105–108.

²⁸ Van Henten 1999.

elaborates the martyrs' contempt for Antiochus, who is portrayed as a wicked tyrant.²⁹ Although the collective contempt for Herod is noted in passing in *Ant.* 17.148, the motif again associates the king with wicked tyrants.

The second motif more explicitly matches one of the motifs in the list (abolition of ancestral customs), it becomes clearer if the context is taken into account. Josephus consistently associates the sages and the youngsters in the eagle narrative of the *Antiquities* with the ancestral Jewish customs. He introduces the two sages who instigate the destruction of the eagle as interpreters of the ancestral laws (ἐξηγηταὶ τῶν πατρίων νόμων, *Ant.* 17.149).³⁰ This presentation constructs a contrast between Herod, who is already characterized as a tyrant in 17.148, and the two sages, who are depicted as highly respected and learned members of the people. This distinction is underpinned by a cluster of phrases that induce readers to interpret Herod and the sages as diametrically opposed. The sages and/or their followers strive for virtue (ἀρετή, *Ant.* 17.149, 152, 158) and piety (εὐσέβεια, 17.150; cf. 159), Herod obviously not. The sages educate the young to live a virtuous life (17.149; cf. 2 Macc. 6:24–28) and to remain faithful to the Jewish laws. They should consider their cause as being entrusted to them by God (τοῦ τε γὰρ θείου τῇ ἀξιώσει πεπιστευμένα, 158). Herod's behavior results in bold transgressions of the Jewish laws: "...For it certainly was because of his boldness (τόλμα) to construct these things against the law's prohibition..." (17.150).³¹ If we combine these statements, Herod and the group of sages and youths appear to be contrasted with each other by their attitude towards the Jewish ancestral laws. One of the youths' statements to Herod during the interrogation confirms this contrast: "It is not at all surprising *if we consider the preservation of the laws*, which Moses left behind in writing... *to be more important than your decrees.*" (*Ant.* 17.159).³² Faithfulness to the ancestral laws

²⁹ Van Henten 1997, 258–67.

³⁰ Rengstorf 1973–1983, 2.122: "expounder, interpreter," the noun occurs three times in Josephus, only in the *Antiquities* and always referring to the two sages (17.147, 214, 216). The noun ἐξηγησις occurs more frequently and can indicate dream interpretation (*Ant.* 2.69, 75, 77, 93) or the explanation of laws (*Ant.* 11.192).

³¹ Josephus' report about Herod's trophies erected during his festival in Jerusalem (*Ant.* 15.268–290), in honor of Augustus, also emphasizes that Herod's innovations implied the abolition of Jewish laws (15.268, 274–75, 276, 277). The theatre as the location of the murder attempt against Herod (15.284) hints, perhaps, at Herod being a tyrant, because murdering a wicked ruler in a crowded theatre is a *topos* in ancient Greek literature. See van Henten 2008, 153. Also *Ant.* 19.14–118.

³² In the parallel narrative in *The Jewish War* the youths explicitly refer to ὁ πατριός νομός: "First [the king] asked whether they had dared to cut down the golden eagle.

(οἱ πάτριοι νόμοι) is highlighted in the *Antiquities*' version of the story (17.149, 150, 151, 152, 159.³³ The opposition of Jewish ancestral laws, identical with the laws of Moses, and Herod's decrees (δόγματα) in 17.159 even suggests that Herod treated his subjects as a foreign ruler.³⁴ This contrast echoes the stories in Daniel 3 and 6 as well as the martyr stories in 2 and 4 Maccabees (cf. 2 Macc. 7:30), which contrast the foreign ruler's laws with God's laws or authority.³⁵

The golden eagle episode in the *Antiquities* narrative suggests on the surface level that a clash occurred between highly respected representatives of the Jewish people and their brutal foreign tyrant. Herod clearly behaves as a tyrant at the end of his life, after he had become seriously ill. How do the other explicit passages in the *Antiquities* that associate Herod with tyranny relate to Herod's full-blown characterization as a tyrant in the golden eagle section? Before taking up this question, however, the eagle passage in *The Jewish War* should be briefly addressed.

Josephus' depiction of Herod in the *War* passage about the eagle differs considerably from the picture in the *Antiquities*. The context of the eagle incident and the chain of events just before and after it, up to Herod's death, is basically the same in both works (*War* 1.641–647, 656–673; *Ant.* 17.134–147, 164–199). Both reports emphasize at the beginning that Herod had become very ill (*War* 1.647, 649; *Ant.* 17.148). Yet, where the *Antiquities* report emphasizes that Herod had become a tyrant at this stage of his life, the *War* passage continues with the notice that there was an uprising of the people (δημοτική τις ἐπανάστασις, 1.648; cf. *Ant.* 17.148 τινες τῶν δημοτικωτέρων ἀνθρώπων ἐπανέστησαν). Next, both passages tell us about Judas and Matthias instigating the young men to demolish the eagle, but the *Jewish War* does not introduce them as interpreters of the Jewish laws, as does the *Antiquities*.³⁶ The *Jewish War* consistently uses σοφιστής in its references to Judas and Matthias (1.648, 650, 655, 656; also *Ant.* 17.152, 155).³⁷ Josephus uses σοφιστής mostly when referring to important

They admitted to it. When (he asked) who it was who ordered this, they responded that their ancestral law (did).” (*War* 1.653).

³³ It is found just once in the parallel narrative *War* 1.653.

³⁴ Cf. *War* 2.86.

³⁵ Van Henten 1997, 10–14.

³⁶ The noun ἐξηγηταί is absent in the *War*. The verb ἐξηγεομαι is used just once in the *War* version of the eagle episode (1.649, in connection with both sages). See also *War* 2.113 and *Ant.* 17.347 and 18.81.

³⁷ Cf. *War* 2.10, 118, 433, 445.

sages or heads of religious and/or political schools. What is important for my discussion is that he does not highlight the importance of the Jewish laws in the *War* passage about the eagle.³⁸ The shorter version of the *War* emphasizes something else, namely that the fact that Herod was going to die was a major factor in the decision to rebel. The *War* mentions a rumor that the king had died (1.651). Serious illness of a ruler could easily trigger rebellious acts, as is apparent from a passage in Suetonius about Augustus' final day. It suggests that Augustus took his death lightly, but frequently inquired whether the rumors of his illness were causing popular disturbances.³⁹ In short, the description in the *War* of Herod's behavior during his interrogation of the youth and the assembly afterwards hardly suggests that Herod was a tyrant. Herod reacts as an experienced and clever ruler, and temporarily overcomes his illness, because of his huge anger about the youths' statements:

Because of his excessive anger (δι' ὑπερβολὴν ὀργῆς) about these responses he got the better of his illness and started an assembly. He denounced the men at great length as sacrilegious because, by using the law as a pretext, they were attempting something more ambitious, and he insisted that they be punished for sacrilege. (1.654).

Thus, instead of the picture of Herod painted in the *Antiquities*, where the king is presented as a foreign tyrant who abolished Jewish ancestral practices, Herod accuses the rebels of sacrilege in the *War*. During the assembly the people even invite him to execute the instigators as well as those who carried out the plan (1.654). Therefore, the portrayal of Herod as a tyrant in the golden eagle narrative is exclusive to the report in the *Antiquities*.⁴⁰

Josephus' comments in the *Antiquities* report of the king's death (17.190–192) are consistent with his portrayal of the king during the last period of Herod's rule. Josephus' concluding remarks include another indication of Herod's tyrannical character with the following

³⁸ Michel and Bauernfeind 1962–1969, vol. 1, 425. Rengstorff 1973–1983, vol. 4, 28–29, s.v. σοφιστής. Sometimes the word is pejorative in Josephus, meaning “sophist, charlatan, demagogue,” e.g. in *Apion* 2.236.

³⁹ Suetonius, *Aug.* 99.

⁴⁰ The sequel in the *Antiquities* narrative about the king's very last days also presents him as a wicked tyrant, as is apparent from the very cruel plan for a mass execution in the Jericho hippodrome to ensure extensive mourning after his death (*Ant.* 173–181; cf. *War* 1.659–660). Cf. Josephus' introduction of the plan in *Ant.* 17.173 “A ‘black gall’ was taking hold of him, which made him savage towards everybody... (ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἐξαγραίνουσα)”.

word play: “He was a cruel man to everybody alike (ἄνθρωπος ὁμοῖος εἰς πάντας ὁμοίως), being smaller than his anger and bigger than his justice (ὀργῆς μὲν ἥσσων κρείσσων δὲ τοῦ δικαίου), though he was gifted with a good fortune, which was better than anybody else’s (17.191).” The passage highlights once more Herod’s cruelty, excessive anger and injustice.

V. Brief hints at Herod’s tyrannical behavior in the *Antiquities*

The consistent portrayal of Herod as a wicked tyrant in the *Antiquities* report about the king’s final period might suggest, at first glance, that Herod was only a tyrant in the last phase of his life. It is true that Josephus puts Herod’s explicit tyrannical image to the forefront only in the last sections of the Herod narrative in the *Antiquities*. Nevertheless, there are other *Antiquities* passages that associate Herod, at least briefly, with tyranny from the earliest stage of his career onwards. However, most of these passages do not explicitly present the opinion of Josephus as narrator. Most of the time they reflect the perspective of certain characters in the narrative.

V.1. *Ezekias and his fellow brigands*

The first passage in *The Jewish Antiquities* that hints at Herod being a tyrant focuses on killing persons without a trial. Herod’s assault on the chief-brigand Ezekias, as well as his fellows, has already been discussed in connection with Herod’s image in the *War*. The *Antiquities* expands the report of this event and, especially, its aftermath (*Ant.* 14.158–184); it also returns to this episode at the beginning of book 15 in three flashbacks (*Ant.* 15.2, 4, 18).

A minor addition in the *Antiquities* to the *War* report about Ezekias’ end is the emphasis on Herod’s youth when his father entrusted the Galilee to him: Josephus claims that Herod was only fifteen years old at the time (*Ant.* 15.158)! This indication of Herod’s age must be a mistake, because it does not match other details about Herod’s life. Herod was probably about twenty-five when he took action against Ezekias and his brigands.⁴¹ Nevertheless, the emphasis of Josephus

⁴¹ Otto 1913, 18; Marcus and Wikgren 1963, 533 note d.

as narrator should be taken seriously here. Josephus emphasizes that Herod behaved as a tyrant when he was fifteen.

The aftermath of the execution again associates the young Herod with tyranny. While the Syrians and the Romans apparently appreciated Herod's elimination of Ezekias' gang, prominent Jews were very unhappy with Antipater and his sons' actions.⁴² They complained to Hyrcanus II and accused Antipater that he and his sons exceeded their authority, but their main target appeared to be Herod (*Ant.* 14.163–168). They recalled Herod's unlawful execution of Ezekias and his men, which was neither authorized by Hyrcanus nor by the Synhedrion (14.167).⁴³ Their accusations and the dramatic daily appeals in the temple by the mothers of the murdered brigands (14.168) made Hyrcanus put Herod on trial (14.168–178).⁴⁴

Herod survived the trial, which must have been part of a complicated struggle for power between several factions. In *Ant.* 14.177 Josephus notes that the members of the Synhedrion intended to have Herod executed.⁴⁵ Josephus provides conflicting information about Herod's acquittal or escape from the trial,⁴⁶ but one sentence that leads up to the accusation against Herod is particularly relevant for my argument. It demonstrates the fear that the prominent Jews felt about the power of Antipater and his sons: "But the chief Jews were in great fear when they saw how violent and bold Herod was, and how much he longed for a rule as a tyrant (ὁρῶντες τὸν Ἡρώδη βίαιον καὶ τολμηρὸν καὶ τυραννίδος γλιχόμενον, *Ant.* 14.165)". The association of illegal executions with tyranny matches the tyrannical stereotype,⁴⁷ but the statement is not elaborated and it is put forward by a group of Herod's

⁴² Cf. 14.163 (οἱ δ' ἐν τέλει τῶν Ἰουδαίων) with 14.165 (οἱ πρῶτοι τῶν Ἰουδαίων).

⁴³ The reference to the Synhedrion is unique to the *Antiquities* report. *Ant.* 14.167 implies that the execution of every person, even a criminal, had to be brought before the Synhedrion. The requirements for a trial are already indicated in the Pentateuch (Deut 1:16–17; 19:15–21; cf. Num 35:30; Deut 17:2–8), but Josephus' reference to the Synhedrion as a single body in the forties of the first century BCE is, perhaps, anachronistic, McLaren 1991, 74–77.

⁴⁴ This detail is highly implausible, the mothers look like lobbyists but were, in fact, living near the Syrian border. Jerusalemites would not have shed tears over the death of robbers near the Syrian border.

⁴⁵ Their strategy backfired according to Samaias' prediction about Herod during his trial (*Ant.* 14.174–175; also 15.4) that he would kill all members of the Synhedrion except himself, and Hyrcanus as well, which became true according to *Ant.* 14.175. The sequel of the narrative confirms this explicitly only for Hyrcanus (*Ant.* 15.164–179). The death of the Synhedrion members is, perhaps, implied in *Ant.* 15.2–4.

⁴⁶ *Ant.* 14.170, 177, 182 and *War* 1.211.

⁴⁷ See Otnes' argument Herod. 3.80–3, discussed here in section II; and Livy 1.49.4–5 concerning L. Tarquinius Superbus.

opponents. The narrator does not explicitly side with this accusation, but the position of this statement at the very beginning of the narrative about Herod's career, as well as the suggestive vocabulary ("violent," βίαιος, "bold," τολμηρός and "longing for a rule as a tyrant"), implies a proleptic function for this passage. It reads as a marker for Herod's characterization: to some Jews Herod was a very dangerous person from the beginning of his public performance onward. In their opinion Herod was naturally violent and bold, and his ambition was to rule as a tyrant.

V.2. *Complaints by the Gadarenes*

A second passage concerns *Ant.* 15.354, which reports that the citizens of the Decapolis city of Gadara, located south-east of Lake Gennesaret, were dissatisfied with Herod. Gadara was added to Herod's territory in 30 BCE (*War* 1.396; *Ant.* 15.217). After Herod's death it became a free city again.⁴⁸ *Ant.* 15.351 mentions complaints by Gadarenes against Herod before M. Agrippa in Mytilene (23–21 BCE). These are unspecified but mentioned together with complaints by Zenodorus. When Augustus visited Syria in 20 BCE, most of the Gadarenes complained to him personally (*Ant.* 15.354–359). Herod was too severe in his commands and acted like a tyrant (βαρὺν καὶ τυραννικὸν εἶναι, 15.354). Zenodorus had promised to transfer the Gadarenes to Caesar's territory (i.e. Syria), which prompted them to accuse Herod of outrageous acts, robberies, and destructions of temples (15.357). This list fits the accusation of tyrannical behavior in 15.354. Yet, the accusation may well be an exaggeration,⁴⁹ because it is, in part, refuted by Josephus' text itself. Herod's behavior to the Gadarenes, as described by Josephus, suggests a merciful attitude. The king's actions were not that of a tyrant: he released the Gadarenes, whom Agrippa had sent to him in chains, after their accusations (*Ant.* 15.351, 354). Josephus' own remarks as narrator support the image of a gentle Herod. He makes the following generalizing comment on Herod's policy: "For more than anyone else he had the reputation of being inexorably harsh for his own people, but of being generous to foreigners by letting them go after they had done wrong." (15.356). Augustus acquitted Herod of

⁴⁸ For a brief survey of the history of Gadara, see Schürer 1973–1987, vol. 2, 132–36.

⁴⁹ With Schalit 2001, 306–07, who refers elsewhere to this passage as an example of the dissatisfaction of the Greek cities with Herod's rule (p. 212).

the charges by the Gadarenes, which seems to have been the end of this case.⁵⁰

V.3. *The two Mariammes*

Ant. 15.70 describes the responses by Herod's first wife Mariamme and her mother Alexandra to the king's order to kill them in case he would not return from his visit to Egypt. Herod had to meet Marc Antony in Egypt in order to counter the accusation that he had murdered Mariamme's brother Aristobulus (*Ant.* 15.62–67; 35/34 BCE). Herod gave the secret order to his brother-in-law Joseph, who replaced him during his absence.⁵¹ The passage with the reaction of both women to Herod's order reads:

Yet, the women [Mariamme and Alexandra], as is likely, did not grasp⁵² the affection of Herod's disposition to them in advance, but the cruelty of it; if he would die *they would not escape destruction and a tyrannical death*. So they considered the deeper sense of what was said to be cruel (*Ant.* 15.70; cf. 15.85, 204, 208).

A "tyrannical death" probably implies here a death caused by a tyrant, which means that Mariamme and Alexandra associate Herod's decision with the behavior of a cruel tyrant. Information in the context explains the motives for Herod's behavior. Herod had his doubts about getting away with the accusation concerning Aristobulus (15.67). Antony's partner Cleopatra was happy to have Herod executed in order to take over his kingdom.⁵³ Josephus adds the reason for Herod's secret order to kill Mariamme if he would not survive his trip to Egypt: "For he, he said, felt great affection for his wife and feared the outrage that somebody else would court her after his death." (*Ant.* 15.66). This fear is immediately associated with Antony (15.67), who had received a portrait from Mariamme through Alexandra's scheming (15.26–27).

⁵⁰ Schürer 1973–1987, vol. 2, 134.

⁵¹ *Ant.* 15.65 suggests that Joseph was Herod's uncle, but other passages seem to contradict this. *War* 1.441 and *Ant.* 15.81 note that Joseph was Salome's husband, and *Ant.* 15.169 implies that Josephus was unaware of Joseph being Herod's uncle. Several scholars suggest, therefore, that the Greek *θεῖον* 'uncle' is a mistake in *Ant.* 15.65; the original text may have read *πενθερόν* 'brother-in-law', Marcus and Wikgren 1963, 33 note d.

⁵² Perhaps one should translate 'believe' with MSS LAMW.

⁵³ Van Henten 2005.

Herod apparently could not bear the thought that he would have a rival who courted Mariamme (15.82).

The parallel passage in the *War* (1.441–443) explains Herod's motive for his secret order differently. Joseph revealed the secret to Mariamme "... out of a desire to give proof to the woman of the king's love for her, since not even in death could he endure to be separated from her." (*War* 1.441; see also 1.442). Mariamme's immediate response to Herod's boasting of his love for her is quite cynical when she reveals her knowledge about the order: "No doubt you have given a fine demonstration of the love between us with your instructions to Joseph to put me to death." (1.442). The continuation of the narrative describes in a tantalizingly brief way that Herod lost control of himself because of his anger and jealousy; and so he ordered the execution of both Mariamme and Joseph (*War* 1.443).⁵⁴ However, there is no hint whatsoever, in this *War* passage, that Herod acted as a tyrant.

The execution of Mariamme comes much later in the *Antiquities* and its prehistory is told at length this time. It comes to a dramatic climax after Herod's return from his successful meeting with Octavian on the island of Rhodes (*Ant.* 15.185–187, 202–239).⁵⁵ Mariamme is devastated once again by Herod's orders to have her killed in case he himself would find death abroad. This time Josepus and Soaemus were ordered to execute her.⁵⁶ Herod was torn between extreme feelings of anger, hatred and love (15.211–212, 214, 229). A well-prepared arrangement, with the king's cup-bearer, by Herod's sister Salome eventually leads to Mariamme's execution (*Ant.* 15.223–239).⁵⁷

⁵⁴ The parallel passage in the *Antiquities* reports that only Joseph was executed, and Alexandra put in custody (*Ant.* 15.87).

⁵⁵ This implies another date for Mariamme's death, 29 BCE instead of 34–35 BCE (above). Otto 1913, 10, argues that Josephus incorporated two conflicting sources about Mariamme's death and that Nicolaus of Damascus gave the later date. Schalit 2001, 114–16, 132–38 and 575–88 (esp. 587), considers Josephus' detailed description of Mariamme's end in the *Antiquities* for the greatest part fictitious, but argues that Mariamme's growing hatred of Herod, Salome's involvement in Mariamme's death, and Herod's order to kill her as reported in the *Antiquities* are historical.

⁵⁶ Herod's order to Josepus and Soaemus to execute Mariamme at Alexandreion is, perhaps, a doublet of the king's order to Joseph, or the other way around, see Schürer 1973–1987, vol. 1, 302 n. 49 with references. Schalit 2001, 116, considers both orders historical, because Herod was twice in a very dangerous situation, first his meeting with Antony in Egypt and next the meeting with Octavian at Rhodes. Herod may have dealt with his affairs at home in both situations in analogous ways.

⁵⁷ Cf. the very brief and general note about Salome's confirmation of the rumor about Mariamme's affair with Joseph in *War* 1. 443.

Salome's plan came to fruition when Mariamme refused to lie down with Herod. Mariamme's statement in the narrative conveys one of the main features of tyrannical behavior, that of murdering ones own relatives:

When the king was laying down to rest at noon, he called for Mariamme out of the affection he always felt for her. She did come in, but did not lie down, although he urged her to. She poured contempt on him and railed that he had killed her father⁵⁸ and her brother. (*Ant.* 15.222).

Mariamme's accusation that Herod murdered his relatives foreshadowed her own demise.

Mariamme's brief hint at Herod's tyrannical behavior seems a small detail in the elaborate report about her death in the *Antiquities*, but it does not stand on its own. It repeats her earlier outcry in connection to Herod's order to Joseph and is followed by a remark in connection to another wife of Herod. Around 24 BCE the king married the daughter of Simon, son of Boethus, a priest from Alexandria (*Ant.* 15.319–322). Her name was also Mariamme (*War* 1.562, 573, 599).⁵⁹ Josephus' introduction of this marriage in the *Antiquities* is telling: "He also took a wife for himself. This was motivated out of sexual desire because he did not have high regard for a happy family life." (*Ant.* 15.319). Josephus notes another reason for Herod's decision: she was the most beautiful woman of her time (*Ant.* 15.320). Josephus characterizes Herod as a powerful macho man, who can easily afford to take the most beautiful woman around and arrange a marriage with her. For our discussion of Herod as a tyrant, one sentence is important in this *Antiquities* passage. Josephus tells us that Herod decided to marry her in order to prevent rumors: "Yet, he rejected the thought of accomplishing everything by using his power, suspecting, which was true, *that he would be accused of using force as well as of tyrannical behavior*, and considered it better to marry the maiden. (*Ant.* 15.321)."

Herod, therefore, struck a deal with Simon, the girl's father, and offered him the high priesthood. Josephus notes in passing that Herod "pursued his desire in a quite reasonable way" (*Ant.* 15.322).

There is no parallel report in *The Jewish War* about this arrangement of a marriage with a second extraordinarily beautiful Mariamme. The hint at Herod's use of force and tyranny in connection with this

⁵⁸ MS L and E: grandfather.

⁵⁹ Other passages mention Boethus as her father, Schürer 1973–1987, vol. 1, 320–21; vol. 2, 229.

Mariamme is contradicted by Josephus' own comment in *Ant.* 15.322. However, the suggestion that Herod may have been a tyrant was nevertheless given to Josephus' readers. It recalls the protest of the first Mariamme against Herod's two orders to kill her if he himself would die abroad.

V.4. *Herod's law concerning burglary*

Most of book 16 of the *Antiquities* deals with the lamentable fate of Mariamme's sons by Herod, Alexander and Aristobulus, but Josephus' introduction concerns a different topic. It is a brief report about a new law with a few narratorial comments (*Ant.* 16.1–5). Nevertheless, this introduction sets the tone for the rest of book 16, and expresses the view of the narrator about Herod. Josephus calls Herod's law "an offence against (Jewish) religion" (ἁμαρτία πρὸς τὴν θρησκείαν, *Ant.* 16.2).

Criminal acts in the city of Jerusalem as well as the Judean countryside made Herod draw up a harsh law concerning burglary (*Ant.* 16.1–2). Josephus notes that it was very hard for those who were caught and it also implied the abolition of the ancestral customs (κατάλυσιν περιείχε τῶν πατρίων ἑθῶν, *Ant.* 16.2). This second point ties in with Josephus' comments elsewhere that Herod's innovations resulted in the abolition of the ancestral customs.⁶⁰ Josephus explains this point by contrasting Herod's law with the ancestral laws. Herod's law implied that thieves were sold as slaves and exported to foreign territories (*Ant.* 16.1). Its consequence was not only that these slaves had to live among non-Jews (16.2), which rendered the observance of Jewish practices difficult if not impossible; it also made their slavery unlimited (16.3), because non-Jews could hardly be supposed to keep the Jewish laws. Josephus further explains that the Jewish laws concerning theft were based upon restitution and compensation by temporary slavery if restitution was impossible: "For the laws commanded that a thief pays a fourfold fine, and that he is to be sold if he is not able to, but at any rate not to foreigners so that he would have to endure perpetual slavery. For he had to be released after a period of six years. (*Ant.* 16.3)."

This passage paraphrases and re-interprets several related passages in the Mosaic laws concerning theft. The passage in Exodus 21:37 states that thieves should provide restitution for what they had stolen:

⁶⁰ Clear cases are the trophies in Jerusalem and the golden eagle, see above subsection IV.

five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.⁶¹ In his own rendering of this passage Josephus takes a fourfold restitution as the usual compensation and a fivefold one as the exception (*Ant.* 4.271–272).⁶² Exodus 22:3 is also taken up in *Ant.* 16.3, which formulates that if thieves were not capable of supplying restitution, they had to be sold. The main issue, that Jewish slaves had to be released after six years of servitude is based on Exodus 21:2.

Josephus' conclusion about Herod's law, in this brief introductory section, is devastating for Herod's image. It emphasizes the king's tyrannical character with several hints at a tyrannical stereotype: "That the punishment, as it was laid down then, became hard and unlawful, demonstrated his arrogance; whereby he was keen on imposing the punishment not in a king-like but in a tyrannical way, neglectful of the public interest of his subjects. (16.4)."

The passage lists harshness, arrogance, unlawful measures, tyrannical punishment and neglect of his subjects. A brief second narratorial comment suggests that Herod's law concerning burglary was exemplary for the king's other measures and that it explained the hatred of his subjects and their accusations against the king: "Now, these deeds, taking place in the same way as his other actions, were part of (the reason for) their accusations and dislike of him." (16.5). The plural form in this sentence suggests more of the same and implies that Herod really was a bad king. It should be noted, however, that Josephus does not elaborate his accusation in the continuation of his narrative, which switches to Herod's trip to Rome (16.6.).

VI. Conclusion

My survey of Josephean passages that present Herod the Great as a tyrant implies a principle difference between the passages in the *War* and those in the *Antiquities*. Apart from one or two scattered hints (*War* 1.493–494, 586), the *Jewish War* only depicts Herod as a tyrant in a flashback embedded in the narrative about Archelaus (*War* 2.84–92). This flashback is paralleled and broadened in the

⁶¹ Cf. Exod. 22:3, 6. 8.

⁶² Feldman 2000, 432–39. 2 Sam. 12:6 about Nathan's parable also mentions a fourfold restitution.

Antiquities (17.304–314), with the important addition that Josephus now suggests that Herod was a tyrant by nature. This becomes explicit in the report about the golden eagle (*Ant.* 17.148–164) and its aftermath, but on closer inspection Josephus already hints at Herod's tyrannical character in the narrative about his first official performance. The elimination of Ezekias and his fellow brigands (*Ant.* 14.165) shows that he did not have scruples about illegal executions. Other short statements from characters in the narrative or comments by Josephus himself associate Herod time and again with tyrants of the wicked type (*Ant.* 15.70, 222, 321, 353; 16.1–5), but the theme comes only to a narrative climax in the golden eagle section.

Thus, Josephus transformed Herod's image in the narrative of the *Antiquities* and turned the king into a tyrant by showing, initially in bits and pieces but constantly from the golden eagle episode onwards, that Herod displayed the tyrannical characteristics listed in the flashback in *Ant.* 17.304–314. In my view, Josephus is suggesting that Herod openly behaved as a tyrant during the final period of his rule, but that he had it in him from the beginning, as his action against Ezekias shows. If we combine Josephus' description of Herod's final period with the brief passages about earlier incidents of tyrannical rule, the result is an elaborate picture of a tyrant that includes most of the characteristics of the tyrannical stereotype discussed at the beginning of this paper: *hybris*, autocracy, legal injustice, abolition of ancestral customs, violation of decency, violence against opponents, cruelty, murder of relatives, susceptibility to slander, envy of excellent subjects, fear of friends and, finally, madness: behavior like a wild animal. We have noted several times that this image does not always fit the context or the purport of the narrative. We can only speculate about Josephus' motives for re-crafting Herod's image in the *Antiquities* as a brutal tyrant who only showed himself in his true colors at the end of his life. Perhaps he has blackened the king more in his later work in order to disqualify a monarchic administration for the Jews and enhance support for another type of government. Or he may have adapted Herod's image as a means to respond to political changes in Rome, or, perhaps, even to express a subtle criticism of the ruling Roman elite and their treatment of Jewish subjects.⁶³ We will never know for sure.

⁶³ See Spilsbury 2003.

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JOSEPHUS AT JOTAPATA: WHY JOSEPHUS WROTE WHAT HE WROTE

Tessel M. Jonquière

Introduction

The episode about Josephus at Jotapata (*War* 3.340–392) has been a subject of discussion for as long as people have been studying Josephus or even reading his writings. People judge Josephus because of this story; they call him a traitor, someone who played a double game. But why did he write about the incident in this way? It must have been important for Josephus to address the incident, since at the time he apparently was accused of treason because of his decision to surrender. But what he wrote hardly exonerates him. This could mean that it contains an element of truth. Another argument for this is that he had the Romans reading over his shoulder, and since they were also present in Jotapata and may have known what really happened, we can assume that Josephus could not write complete nonsense. Unfortunately we may never know whether Josephus wrote what truly happened, since there are no other accounts of the event and since Josephus is both author and main character. It is therefore interesting to review the episode once more and try to figure out why he wrote what he wrote.

In the story, Josephus presents himself differently from other stories, in three ways: as a prophet, a priest and as a praying person. Nowhere else in his work does he present himself in any of these three roles, and the combination makes it all the more interesting to investigate them further. A critical discussion of these three elements of the story may shed a new light on Josephus' method of writing his personal history.

The Story

When the Romans capture Jotapata, Josephus escapes and hides in a cave. Here he meets some rich Jewish citizens who are also hiding. Two men sent by Vespasian find the cave and ask Josephus to give himself up, but he does not trust them. Vespasian then sends Nicanor,

an old acquaintance of Josephus', to convince him that he truly does not intend to trick him. At first Josephus still refuses to go with them, but, when the soldiers get angry and try to set fire to the cave, he remembers a dream he once had in which God foretold to him the misfortune of the Jews and the fate of the Roman emperors. Since he himself is a dream interpreter, Josephus thinks it is his duty to convey this divine message to Vespasian. Therefore he decides to give himself up; but before he goes with the Romans, he prays (*War* 3.340–354).

After this prayer, Josephus wants to go with Nicanor, but the Jews with him in the cave try to prevent him and suggest that killing himself would be better than giving up a life of freedom. Thus Josephus, being of the opinion that it would be “a betrayal of God’s commands, should he die before delivering the divine message”, starts to speak to them and argues in an extensive speech how wrong it would be to commit suicide (361–382). The other Jews are not persuaded however, but continue to resist. In the end, Josephus proposes that they should all kill each other, determining who should kill whom by drawing lots. This they agree to. In the event, however, Josephus survives the collective suicide (together with one other man whom he convinces to choose life over death) and goes with Nicanor to Vespasian (383–392).¹

The whole episode in the cave must have been important for Josephus himself, since it marked the transition from his Judean life to his life as a writer in Rome. Moreover, it was about the moment that saved his life but that also made him known as a traitor among his own people. The decision Josephus made had significant consequences, so it is interesting to see how he explains it.

Prophet, Priest and Prayer

Several aspects stand out from the story. Firstly, it is the only time he speaks of himself as a prophet; secondly, it is the only time he refers to his practice as a priest; and finally, it is the only time in his entire work he attributes a prayer to himself. In the following section, each of these aspects will be discussed separately.

¹ In *Life* Josephus only casually refers to these events saying that he gave a detailed description of them in *War* (*Life* 412).

Prophet

Josephus writes that he decided to surrender because he remembered a revelation, a vision that came to him in his dreams, which he was unable to interpret until now. From what he writes, it is obvious that Josephus sees himself as a prophet: someone who receives a message from God concerning events in the future and sees it as his duty to bring this message to the people concerned.

Josephus does not use the word *προφήτης* literally, but he uses many expressions that are related.² To begin with, he starts by saying that he found a place to hide “aided by some divine providence” (341); when the Romans set fire to the cave, suddenly he remembers “those nightly dreams, in which God had foretold to him the impending fate of the Jews and the destinies of the Roman sovereigns” (351). He explains that he was “an interpreter of dreams” and “skilled in divining the meaning of ambiguous utterances of the Deity” (352). In his prayer, he says that God “chose his spirit to announce the things that are to come” and that he is God’s servant (354). He responds to the Jews who want to prevent him from surrendering that he believes he is meant to “deliver God’s message” (362). When Josephus finally stands before Vespasian, he says that he has come “as a messenger of greater destinies”: he is “sent on this errand by God” (400). Finally, Vespasian releases Josephus because of his predictions, “which had proven to be divine” (4.625). Later, he calls Josephus “a minister of the voice of God” (4.626).

It cannot be denied that in this episode Josephus portrays himself as a prophet. He does so on no other occasion: he is a general, a writer, of priestly descent, but nowhere is he a prophet, except at Jotapata.³

There are two statements from which we know the content of the revelation. In 3.351, he says that God foretold “the impending fate of the Jews and the destinies of the Roman sovereigns”. From the prayer in 354 we know that the message concerned the Jews, the Romans

² See also the chapter on Josephus as prophet in Gray 1993, 35–79. See for an opposite view Feldman 1990, f.i. 405–06, 408, 422, who claims that Josephus did not look upon himself as a prophet.

³ Josephus compares himself to Jeremiah in *War* 5.391–393. But in this text he refers to the similarity of their warning messages and the people’s reaction to these messages (Jeremiah was not punished by either king or people, whereas Josephus is attacked). Josephus does not, however, parallel himself to Jeremiah as a prophet. He calls his message to the people an exhortation (*παρακαλοῦντα*) rather than a prophecy.

and himself. Later we learn that an important part of it consisted in the prediction of Vespasian becoming emperor. Other things we know about the revelation are: that it came to him in more than one dream (351, 353); that the dreams came from God (351); that he had them recently (353); that they were horrible (353); and that they concerned events that were to happen in the future (354).

But there are some snags in the story. The revelation comes to Josephus in nightly dreams. It is, however, strange that he does not record the exact contents of the dreams, apart from stating that they were horrible (353): this is in contrast to other occasions, even in *War*, where he relates the dreams of Archelaus (2.112–113) and Glaphyra (2.226) extensively.⁴ He also describes a dream of his own in *Life* (208–209). But concerning these important dreams, that saved his life, Josephus remains vague: he just relates their meaning, and even this he only conveys in general terms.

Another strange thing is *how* he suddenly understands the meaning of the dreams: though with the help of scripture. Nowhere else in his work does Josephus describe the interpretation of a dream with the use of the sacred books. People like Joseph and Daniel interpret dreams with the knowledge they themselves have. This is also what Josephus says: he became inspired (ἐνθούς). But he says that he was inspired by the books. What part or which prophecies helped him, however, he does not tell. We will get back to this subject later.

Priest

Josephus described himself as a prophet in receiving the revelation, but he says that he used his skills as a priest to decode the message. This is not the only time Josephus calls himself a priest: he does so on several occasions; but this is the only occasion on which he writes of himself as exercising his priestly skills. The other instances are more concerned with the *status* of being a priest rather than with the *function*.⁵

From the beginning of *Life* we know that Josephus comes from a priestly family and that he was educated as such. He was well-known for his skills at interpreting the law (7–9). In *Life* 198, he presents himself

⁴ See also many dreams in the *Antiquities*, as for example those dreamt or interpreted by Joseph (*Ant.* 2.11–13, 64, 71, 80–83) and Daniel (*Ant.* 10.206–207, 216). For more dreams see Gnuse 1996.

⁵ Rajak 1983, 18.

as a priest, parallel to calling himself “from Jerusalem” and “having expert knowledge of the law”. In the preface to *War*, he introduces himself as Joseph, son of Matthias, a priest from Jerusalem (*War* 1.3).

In *Against Apion* 1.54, he tells his readers that he translated the sacred writings, “being a priest by birth and having studied the philosophy in those writings”.⁶ Implicitly he is saying that he was thus the right person for the job. He says something similar in *Antiquities* 20.264, where he says that his people, when it comes to writing down their history, prefer knowledge of the laws over language skills. It is debatable whether this is a case of priestly status or function. I think he uses it as a background here, just to convince people of his suitability, rather than to portray himself as a priest working with the books.

But this is what he does in the story about the revelation at Jotapata. We practically see Josephus exercise his skills; he is interpreting his dreams with the help of the scriptures. Because he is a priest, he knows the prophecies of the sacred books; at this crucial moment he becomes inspired by those books (τῶν ἱερῶν βίβλων..., ὧν... ἐνθούσης) and reads the meaning of his dreams, which tell him about a prophecy.

The prophecy

The prophecy that Josephus tells Vespasian, is mentioned by other writers as well: Tacitus, Suetonius and Cassius Dio recall the prophecy. Both Suetonius and Cassius Dio mention that it was Josephus who foretold Vespasian’s rise to power.⁷ It is, however, very possible that they knew Josephus’ writings. Suetonius may even have known Josephus himself; Cassius Dio may have learned of it from Suetonius, if not from Josephus’ own work.

Tacitus, however, is a different case. He does not mention Josephus’ name, but speaks of an existing prediction. Tacitus says: “There was a firm persuasion that in the ancient records of their [i.e. the Jews’, TJ] priests was contained a prediction of how at this very time the

⁶ Translation Whiston.

⁷ Suetonius, *Divus Vespasianus* 5.6: “And when Josephus, one of the noble prisoners, was put in chains, he confidently affirmed that he should be released in a very short time by the same Vespasian, but he would be emperor first.” Cassius Dio, *Historia Romana* 66: 1.4: “These portents needed interpretation; but not so the saying of a Jew named Josephus: he, having earlier been captured by Vespasian and imprisoned, laughed and said: ‘You may imprison me now, but a year from now, when you have become emperor, you will release me’.”

East was to grow powerful, and rulers, coming from Judaea, were to acquire universal empire. These mysterious prophecies had pointed to Vespasian and Titus.” (*Historiae* 5.13)

Tacitus tells us that there was a tradition which said that in Jewish scripture the rise of a ruler from the East was predicted. Turning to Jewish texts, we meet with the notion indeed. We read it in Isaiah 41, where there is talk of a king from the East that will dominate all people because God will give him power. In Isaiah the reference is obviously meant to point to Cyrus. But we also see the idea in the *Sibylline Oracles* III, 652–656: “And then God will send a king from the East, who will give the entire earth rest from evil war, by killing some and making treaties with others. He will not do all these things by his own plans, but trusting the noble orders of the great God.”⁸

It is very possible that Josephus was aware of this notion, just as Tacitus was. Possibly Josephus did indeed make some prediction when he came out of the cave: it is rather big to lie about, since there were witnesses to the event. It is also obvious that Josephus linked the old Jewish tradition to Vespasian, at least at the time of writing. In *War* 6.312–313 he speaks about an ancient oracle found in the Sacred Scriptures. He says that the Jews thought it was going to be someone of their own people, but, Josephus says, “in reality it signified the sovereignty of Vespasian, who was proclaimed emperor on Jewish soil.”

Now we get back to Josephus’ acting as a priest; since it was apparently believed that the rise of the ruler was predicted in Jewish scripture, it was all the more logical for Josephus to say that he was able to understand his dream by way of the sacred books.

Prayer

The third unusual element Josephus brings into the story is the prayer. It is unusual for the following three reasons. Firstly, it is the only prayer in his entire work that Josephus attributes to himself. Secondly, in contrast to the *Antiquities*, there are only few prayers in *War* (namely 12, as opposed to 122 in the *Antiquitates*); and most of these few prayers are very minor, containing just a short reference. But this one is quite extensive, and even written in direct speech. This occurs several times in the *Antiquities*, but in *War* this prayer is the only one written in

⁸ Buitenwerf 2003, 273–74.

such a way. All of this makes the prayer especially noteworthy: contrary to writing speeches (which are numerous in *War*), Josephus was not yet used to writing prayers when he wrote this work. He (probably) did not have a source which used prayers, as he had when he wrote the *Antiquities*; the fact that he used a prayer at this point is telling and makes the content all the more interesting.

The third particularity is the subject and function of the prayer. In my book on prayer in Josephus' work, I have argued that Josephus uses prayers as literary instruments in his stories.⁹ Almost every time he writes a prayer (even if he does so in a story based on a source which had a prayer as well), he seems to have a purpose for it: he either dramatizes the story, portrays character, gives the story a slight twist or lays stress on certain aspects of it. In my book, I have grouped all prayers with regard to their function. Yet Josephus' prayer stands on its own, being the only prayer obviously used to justify the actions of the praying person: in this case, of course, his own. He even says so himself: "God, I ask you as a witness that I go away not as a traitor, but as your servant" (*War* 3.354).

The prayer is said to have been *λεληθυῖα εὐχή*. *Λεληθυῖα* comes from *λανθάνειν*, meaning "to escape notice"; in combination with a noun, it means "unnoticed". Josephus informs his readers that no-one saw or heard him saying this prayer. This statement could mean one of two things. The first possibility is that he really did pray at the time and did not want to be seen by anyone while doing so. The second is that he did not in fact pray at that moment but wanted to safeguard himself against accusations of lying by people who were present and who might say that they had not seen him pray.

Because Josephus is praying without being heard by the other people in the cave, neither the Jews nor the Romans know Josephus' motive for wanting to surrender himself. Within the story, he does not tell anyone about the revelation he has had and, as his prayer is said secretly, no one is in a position to find out, except—of course—Josephus' readers.

In the prayer, Josephus briefly recalls the message God sent him: God has decided to break down the Jewish nation, and to transfer fortune to the Romans. Since God chose Josephus' spirit to tell the future, he is compelled to surrender and go with the Romans; he only

⁹ Jonquière 2007, 221–40.

asks God to be his witness that he goes as God's servant and not as a traitor.¹⁰ It is of course his intention to let his readers know why he decided to surrender. But why did he not just use an editorial comment, as he does so often?

Conclusions

I think Josephus chose to write in this way because of the severity of the accusations that were made against him: he was called a traitor to his own people. In order to justify himself, he had to use something powerful, something that appealed to his Jewish readers, and this something was his religion, his piety. Had he written for a Greco-Roman audience, he might have done otherwise.

Prophet, priest, prayer: three words related to religion; all three particulars in a story used by Josephus as justification for his actions. Prophets and priests are prominent members of the Jewish community. Stressing that he himself is both must have seemed especially convincing to him; and saying that the prophecy he made to Vespasian was already present in Jewish scripture, and that he explained it by way of the sacred books, added to this.

The prayer shows Josephus' piety in two ways. First, he says that his surrender was no betrayal, but rather that it was what God truly wanted him to do. He was not following the orders of the Roman general who came to take him, but the will of God. At the start of the episode Josephus says he refused to go, because it was his conviction that he had to suffer for his previous actions (3.346). The decision to go with the Romans after all, he motivates by saying (by way of the prayer) that he was ordered to do so by God. He repeats this in 361, where he writes that it would be a betrayal of God's commands should he die before delivering his message to Vespasian.

Secondly, the piety is shown because he preferred to explain his behaviour by way of a prayer rather than by way of a speech or an authorial remark. Josephus' objective in *War* is to convince the Jews that the Romans won the war because they served as an instrument of God; with this he wants to convince them that further resistance

¹⁰ For a more detailed discussion of this and other elements of the prayer see Jonquière 2007, 207–13.

is of no use. This prayer fits in very well with this purpose. With a specifically Jewish instrument, a prayer to the God of their ancestors, Josephus connects directly with his Jewish audience and shows them that the only right thing for him to do at that moment was to surrender himself to the Romans.

In the introduction, we have already asserted that it is impossible to determine what really happened in that cave. All we know is what Josephus wrote, and he was not unbiased. We can, however, after this discussion, say more of Josephus' method of defending himself in *War*: he did it in such a way that he hoped would make his Jewish audience, who accused him of treason, understand. But of course he also had to think of his Roman patrons, who had commissioned him to write the history and who wanted him to convince the Jews with it to accept the Roman governance. So that is why Josephus wrote the story as he did; in order to justify himself to his people, he chose a typically Jewish form, but he also made sure that the content was acceptable to the Romans.

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JOSEPHUS ON HEROD'S SPRING FROM THE SHADOWS OF THE PARTHIAN INVASION

Aryeh Kasher

The Parthian Threat to the Roman Sway in the East

In late 41 BCE, impelled by the great Parthian invasion, a massive political upheaval took place in Syria and Palestine.¹ Ostensibly, the incursion wreaked havoc on Herod's aspirations to the royal throne after his engagement to Mariamme the Hasmonean (42 BCE). But in fact, one might say that it was a blessing in disguise for it was precisely this event that paved his way to the crown²—this without detracting from “fate” or “fortune” (ἡ τύχη), an aspect Josephus was so fond of in regard to Herod—nor diminishing Herod's own personal resourcefulness or manipulative abilities.³

When the Parthian forces poured into Syria, eventually reaching Judea and Jerusalem (40 BCE), Phasaël and Herod found themselves under siege by the Parthian commander Barzaphranes (or Brazaphranes) in the Hasmonean palace.⁴ Conflicts immediately erupted between the two over their assessment of the situation and the possible means of escape. Phasaël deluded himself that, together with the high priest John Hyrcanus II, he might be able to negotiate with Pacorus, son of the Parthian monarch, to exit the besieged city of Jerusalem without a fight and perhaps even win him over to their side by bribery or other temptations greater than those promised by their rival, Matathias Antigonus, son of Judas Aristobulus II.⁵ Herod, by contrast, did

¹ Debevoise 1968, 108ff.; Stern 1995, 249–255; but Kokkinos 1998, 368 offered many references to correct the chronology. Flusser 2002, 55–56 suggested that 1 Enoch 56:5–8 describes the great Parthian invasion, which reached as far as Palestine and likely created a messianic atmosphere.

² *War* 1.284–385; *Ant.* 14.384–385, 403–404; see e.g. Moore 1932, 74; Stern 1995, 256ff.

³ See for example *War* 1.275, 301, 371, 430; esp. *Ant.* 14.9, 381, 386–387, 455; 15.20, 209, 373–379, 17.191–192.

⁴ *War* 1, 248–252; *Ant.* 14.330–341; Schalit 1969, 74ff.

⁵ Regarding Cassius Dio's testimony to these events: He confused Aristobulus with Antigonus (48.26.2), so that Josephus' testimony is much more reliable, more-

not trust the Parthians and suspected that they had resolved to support Mattathias Antigonus because Herod and his brother Phasael had in any case been identified by them as avowed followers of Rome. However, he did not prevent Phasael and John Hyrcanus II from carrying out what they had agreed upon with Bazaphranes, i.e., holding direct negotiations with Pacorus, who was in the northern part of the country at the time. Herod himself, being extremely mistrustful by nature, had many of his valued belongings transported to Idumaea for safekeeping (*War* 1.268; *Ant.* 14.364). After learning from various sources that the mission of John Hyrcanus II and Phasael had met with failure and that they had fallen captive to the Parthians,⁶ he managed to flee with all due caution, for fear that a similar trap had been laid for him.⁷ As recounted by Josephus, Herod fled Jerusalem in haste under the cover of night, with the city surrounded by Parthian divisions and loyalists of Mattathias Antigonus in addition to the many pilgrims who had come there for the Shavuoth (Pentecost) festival, (*War* 1.253–255, 263–264; *Ant.* 14.337ff.). It is possible that the public commotion might actually have facilitated his escape; but it was certainly an astounding feat, considering that we are speaking of the clandestine flight of several hundred men—itsself a difficult logistical operation. Its success may also have been due to the fortunate choice of a good exit point from the

over he lived roughly a whole century closer to the episode. According to *War* 1.248 and *Ant.* 14.331, Antigonus offered the Parthians a bribe of 1,000 talents and 500 women for their assistance in deposing John Hyrcanus II. Klausner, III, 260, suspected that this was deliberate misinformation derived from Nicolaus of Damascus and intended to defame Antigonus. Unfortunately, his premise can be neither proved nor disproved.

⁶ We are told that Phasael committed suicide in a noble manner: When he understood that he had no chance of survival, he beat his head upon a rock while his hands and feet were chained (*War* 1.269; *Ant.* 14.367–369). John Hyrcanus II was exiled to Babylonia, but not before his ears were cut off so as to disqualify him from resuming the high priesthood. *War* 1.269 says that “Antigonus himself bit Hyrcanus’ ears with his own teeth, as he fell down upon his knees.” The parallel version in *Ant.* 14.366 simply stated that Antigonus “cut off his ears.” It is obvious that the first version is very hostile to Antigonus and aimed to besmirch him as a savage. One should recall in this context what Tacitus (*Annales* 12. 14) related about the Parthian custom of cutting off the ears of an enemy, thereby humiliating him while sparing his life. The case of John Hyrcanus should therefore be seen as inspired by Parthian practice, although the act may have been committed with the knowledge and encouragement of Antigonus and perhaps even in his presence.

⁷ It is worth noting that his mistrust of the Parthians did not prevent him from later negotiating with them over the release of his captive brother Phasael; see *War* 1.274–275; *Ant.* 14.371–372.

city, which we speculate was the Hasmonean citadel at the northwestern corner of Jerusalem bordering on the Valley of Hinnom, seeing as one could more easily flee from there in a southeasterly direction toward the desert. Herod took with him his close family members, including Mariamme his betrothed, and her mother Alexandra,⁸ both of whom encouraged him to seek a safe haven in Idumaea because of their hostility toward Mattathias Antigonus, who, as stated, belonged to a rival branch of the Hasmonean dynasty.

As there is no mention of Herod's wife Doris in the account of those who fled Jerusalem, it is reasonable to assume that she had separated from him, although without an actual divorce, in the wake of his betrothal to Mariamme. No further information is available concerning Doris until 37 BCE, when shortly after divorcing her Herod married Mariamme.⁹ Presumably, she fled to Idumaea to take refuge on her family land, perhaps in the desert portion of the region, which would be safer in time of war.

During his flight from Jerusalem, Herod also tried to head in the same direction, or, more precisely, to the fortress at Masada, which he had conquered from Malichus' brother only a short while earlier.¹⁰ It appears that he also felt unsafe in western Idumaea for fear that the Parthian divisions, together with Antigonus, would swarm the area in pursuit of him—which indeed was the case, as we shall see below. Doris was not among those who fled toward Masada for the simple and understandable reason that her future "successor" (i.e., "rival-wife") Mariamme, along with her mother Alexandra and young brother Aristobulus, were headed there.

The route to Masada was fraught with great danger for those fleeing there, as described in *Ant.* 14.359:

⁸ His commitment to see to her safety and her needs was most likely because of his betrothal to her.

⁹ Perhaps this is the reason for the confusion caused by *War* 1.432 regarding the date of Herod's divorce from Doris, a matter that will be discussed below in the context of his marriage to Mariamme.

¹⁰ *War* 1.256ff.; *Ant.* 14.342ff.; see Schalit 1969, 74–75; Smallwood 1981, 52. It is important to note that there is no parallel in *War*, to the passage in *Ant.* 14.352–358, with the exception of a few coincidental points.

Nor indeed was he free from the Jews all along as he was in his flight;¹¹ for by that time he was gotten sixty furlongs out of the city, and was upon the road, they fell upon him, and fought hand to hand with him (προσβάλλοντές τε καὶ εἰς χειρὰς ἐρχόμενοι κατὰ τὴν ὁδόν), whom he also put to flight, and overcame, not like one that was in distress and in necessity, but like one that was excellently prepared for war, and had what he wanted in great plenty (trans. by Whiston).

From the first sentence of Josephus' account, it is clear that the episode was very limited in scale from a military standpoint, i.e., it was a "hand-to-hand" skirmish as opposed to an actual battle. Thus Herod's sense of glory, as cited in the second sentence, is not proportionate to the scope of the event. Only in his imagination was this a great victory, and only in retrospect did it become a "fact" deemed worthy of serious consideration and typical Herodian treatment in the form of a colossal monument like the Herodium—all in order to immortalize the event for generations to come and evoke a sense of awe.

According to *Ant.* 14.361, while fleeing the site of the clash in the direction of Idumaea, or more precisely, at the site known as Oressa,¹² Herod met his brother Joseph and there he "held a council [with him] to take advice about all his affairs, and what was fit to be done in his circumstances, since he had a great multitude (πολλοῦ πλῆθους) that followed him, besides his mercenary soldiers." He was well aware of the fact that the fortress "Masada, whither he proposed to fly, was too small to contain so great a multitude (τοσοῦτον ὄχλον)." For this reason, he decided to send away "the greater part of his company, being above nine thousand, and bid them go, some one way, and some another, and so save themselves in Idumea" (*ibid.*, 362). He himself remained behind at the head of a small group including the women (Mariamme his betrothed, her mother Alexandra, and his own mother Cyprus, along with his younger sister Salome and his younger brother Pheroras) and other members of his entourage.¹³ It seems that Herod's

¹¹ Graetz 1987, I, 482, 484) considered this detail to be further proof of the Jewish people's hatred of Herod and their determination to be rid of him despite his marriage to Mariamme. In Graetz's view, this was the real reason for the flight toward Masada.

¹² Regarding the identification of the site, see Tsafir, Di Segni, Green 1994, 98 (s.v. Caphar Orsa).

¹³ This was apparently the group that fled with him from Jerusalem in the dark of night. The 9,000 cited earlier could have joined him only when he arrived in Idumaea. Apparently they were counted among the Idumaeans warriors under the command of his brother Joseph; see Shatzman 1983, 80–81. If he had really had more than 9,000

hold on Idumaea was not assured even after he dispatched his brother Joseph and his men there, judging by the fact that revolts broke out in the region upon his return from Rome after being crowned king (*War* 1.326).¹⁴ As stated above, Herod did manage beforehand to secure valuable possessions in hiding places in Idumaea (whose locations are unknown to us), and even to boast of his foresight in this regard (*Ant.* 14.364),¹⁵ but in reality he was unable to realize these assets, even had he wanted to, due to the urgency of his situation. The Parthians pursued his men deep into western Idumaea, where they rained destruction on the area and the regional center at Maresha (*ibid.*). Amid these difficult circumstances, Herod set out for Petra to seek the assistance of the Nabateans. But the Nabatean king Malichus I (56/7–28 BCE) refused his request and evaded payment of an old monetary debt to Antipater under the pretext that the invading Parthians had forbidden him to come to Herod's aid (*War* 1.274–249; *Ant.* 14.370–375),¹⁶ thereby causing Herod's situation to deteriorate even further. According to *Antiquities* however, it was not the problems en route, nor the dismal state of mind of the escapees that weakened Herod—at least not initially; rather, Herod experienced an emotional breakdown not long afterward as the result of an event that took place during his flight. Of the extreme shift in Herod's mental state (which is especially significant for our purposes), Josephus wrote in *Ant.* 14. 355–358:

[355] But for Herod himself, he raised his mind above the miserable state he was in, and was of good courage in the midst of his misfortunes; and as he passed along, he bid them every one to be of good cheer, and not to give themselves up to sorrow, because that would hinder them in their flight, which was now the only hope of safety that they had. [356] Accordingly, they tried to bear with patience the calamity they were under, as he exhorted them to do; yet was he once almost going to kill himself, upon the overthrow of a wagon, and the danger his mother was then in of being killed; and this on two accounts, because of his great concern for her, and because he was afraid lest, by this delay, the

warriors in Jerusalem, he would not have been in a position of such numerical inferiority, and would have been able to resist while still in the city.

¹⁴ Ben-Shalom 1993, 36–37 and nn. 10, 12–14.

¹⁵ Prophetic abilities were attributed to him after the fact by Nicolaus; but it is quite possible that this was in full accordance with his own wishes—and even at his request. We will be returning to this important issue below.

¹⁶ Herod could later use this fact to tarnish the Nabateans in Roman eyes, and conversely, to emphasize his loyalty to the Romans. This is exactly what happened to Malichus; cf. Cassius Dio, 48.41.

enemy should overtake him in the pursuit: [357] but as he was drawing his sword, and going to kill himself therewith, those that were present restrained him, and being so many in number, were too hard for him; and told him that he ought not to desert them, and leave them a prey to their enemies, for that it was not the part of a brave man to free himself from the distresses he was in, and to overlook his friends that were in the same distresses also. [358] So he was compelled to let that horrid attempt alone, partly out of shame at what they said to him, and partly out of regard to the great number of those that would not permit him to do what he intended. So he encouraged his mother, and took all the care of her the time would allow, and proceeded on the way he proposed to go with the utmost haste, and that was to the fortress of Masada. And as he had many skirmishes with such of the Parthians as attacked him and pursued him, he was conqueror in them all (trans. by Whiston).¹⁷

It appears that Herod, in the wake of his flight and his mother's accident, found himself in a state of such profound stress and anxiety, coupled with loss of control, that he impulsively tried to harm himself. The serious injury and possible death of his mother were particularly frightening to him, not only because she was the figure closest to him after the death of his father and wielded the greatest influence over him,¹⁸ but because the situation created a serious conflict: the projected delay to care for her was liable to endanger him personally. For this reason, one can certainly describe this event as "traumatic" in that there was a danger of losing an individual with whom he was especially close, under circumstances that placed his own life in real danger. But when his men prevented him from harming himself, Herod quickly regained his composure, as attested to above (*Ant.* 14.357–358).

From Josephus' description, it emerges that Herod's men actually struggled physically to stop him; however, when he realized that his mother was only injured, and apparently not as critically as he had initially believed, he composed himself. It is entirely possible that he was also affected by criticism over his defeatist attitude. Josephus' remarks give the clear impression that his inner-circle caused him to be ashamed

¹⁷ There is no reference to this incident in *War*, which is more faithful to the pro-Herodian source of Nicolaus, ostensibly due to his tendency to conceal Herod's weaknesses and faults. It is not clear from what source Josephus drew his information for the *Antiquities*, version. Grant, 47, was inclined to doubt its authenticity, based on the peculiar and unsubstantiated claim that "the story may be a court legend to stress his family feelings."

¹⁸ Josephus stated in *War* 1.417, when enumerating Herod's building projects in memory of his family, that he "also loved his father more than anyone else."

of his actions and, even more so, gave him the incentive to regain his poise by expressing the fear that they themselves would be in mortal danger from the enemy if left without his support and resourcefulness. Most likely, it was precisely this realization that his leadership was crucial in this time of danger that helped restore his sense of calm and infused him with renewed faith in his strength not only to survive but also to triumph. The concluding sentence of the account offers ample confirmation of this, especially since it makes general reference to new acts of bravery, indicating that this passage was intended to set the tone for future events. Indeed, when the attempt to harm himself failed due to the swift intervention of his men, Herod was filled with shame,¹⁹ particularly in light of the argument that suicide offers the easy solution of escaping reality; in Josephus' words (based on Schalit's Hebrew translation of *Ant.* 14.357), "it is not the quality of a brave man²⁰ to extricate himself from his troubles and disregard his fellows [who are] in such a state." The latter claim regarding Herod's conduct apparently held great significance in his eyes, especially since the trait of bravery related to his self-image and was also implied by his Greek name Ἡρώδης,²¹ evoking in him the need—and the pretentiousness—to justify it in the eyes of one and all whenever possible.

According to *War* 1.429–430, Herod had always had a fierce desire to be portrayed as a man of superior emotional qualities, as befitted his physical attributes, which he sought to develop in various ways including physical training, javelin throwing (or lance), archery, horseback riding, hunting, fighting, and the like. This positive assessment has no parallel in *Antiquities*, where Josephus tended to criticize Herod whenever possible.²² By contrast, the pro-Herodian *War*, relied on such sympathetic sources as Nicolaus of Damascus, and reflected what Herod wished to have written about himself. According to Josephus

¹⁹ It is important to recall in this context that shame and feelings of failure are characteristic symptoms of Paranoid Personality Disorder, as mentioned in the Introduction of Levi 1997, 69, 107, 162, 183–85.

²⁰ The Greek source uses the term οὐ εἶναι γενναίου, meaning "not noble" (cf. Marcus's translation, ad loc.). Schalit's Hebrew translation interprets the phrase to mean "the quality of a brave man", apparently inspired by Whiston.

²¹ Schürer, I, pp. 294–95, n. 20; Perowne, p. 23; cf. Liddell & Scott, p. 778 (s.v. ἥρωος).

²² Especially blatant is his negative portrayal in *Ant.* 15.150–159, which will later be discussed in detail. While Josephus also praised him, this was mostly in cases when Herod acted against the enemies of the Jews such as the Nabateans (for example, in *Ant.* 14. 370, as cited earlier).

(*Ant.* 14.370), when Herod regained his composure, he became even more vigorous than before and was eager to hatch schemes involving acts of daring. These rapid and severe mood swings, suggestive of cyclothymia, indicate a lack of emotional stability on Herod's part, not to mention the fact that his opinions became noticeably more radical; further examples of these extreme fluctuations will be offered below. This phenomenon was discerned even by Josephus himself, in his remark in this context on Herod's rapid transition from a state of distress to vigorous activity (*Ant.* 14.370):

...the great miseries he was in did not discourage him, but made him sharp in discovering surprising undertakings (trans. by Whiston).

Josephus recounted further that after Herod had regained his bearings, he managed to wage a successful battle to survive even as he fled his pursuers through the Thekoa Desert.²³ It later became clear that these three events—his mother's accident, his attempt to harm himself, and his successful fight for survival in the desert—left such a deep impression on his psyche that already at this point he thought of erecting a personal monument near Thekoa at the first opportunity in order to commemorate these incidents. In other words, the notion of erecting a memorial to himself came to him shortly after the events in question, and gave him no rest until he had acted on it. Also telling is the fact that his desert battle for survival was seen by him as a heroic event when in reality it was nothing more than a skirmish along the way (*Ant.* 14.359). Thus the justification for building this colossal monument (Herodium) was, from beginning to end, a product of his imagination, fed by his appetite for fame, glory, and immortality.

The Rift between Herod and the Nabateans

As part of the events surrounding his flight from Jerusalem, it is recounted that Herod considered ransoming his brother Phasael from his Parthian captors with funds that he wished to secure from Malichus, king of the Nabateans, some of it as repayment for a sum left long ago in trust by his father Antipater and the rest in the form of a

²³ *War* 1.265; *Ant.* 14. 359–360, and see above.

loan.²⁴ Unlike his conduct in the past, this time he displayed a willingness to negotiate with the Parthians over the release of his brother, even offering, in addition to the bribes, the young son of Phasael as a hostage. It is quite possible that he secretly harbored the reprehensible hope that the Parthians would in any case do away with both Phasael and his son. From his perspective, such a move was even advantageous since he would appear to be fulfilling his moral duty and familial loyalty toward his brother; and if he received money from the Nabatean king, he would not be forced to give it as a bribe to the Parthians but could use it to finance his future activities. The unresponsiveness on the part of Malichus "solved" the problem of Phasael and his son for Herod, and indeed there is no reference whatsoever, including in *War*, to Herod's having tormented himself over this.

It seems that in fact Malichus' aloofness had significant and unexpected ramifications for the future of Herod's relationship with the Nabateans. A perusal of Josephus indicates that Malichus' refusal to help made him a traitor in Herod's eyes, in other words, an enemy who could no longer be trusted—and even his ultimate regret was of no use in this instance. On the contrary, Herod responded to later efforts at conciliation with harsh words flung impulsively (*War* 1.277: ὡς ὑπηγόρευε τὸ πάθος), sending away the Nabatean emissaries in a rage. In our opinion, his furious reaction attests to a pattern of paranoid mistrust, in the sense of 'whoever is not for me is against me.' This extreme response in effect instantly turned all Nabateans into his enemy. The insult dealt him by Malichus was beyond his capacity to forgive or forget. The incident may have been particularly painful for him, not only because of the fact that his request for help was rebuffed but also because he felt it showed a disregard for the noble origins of his Nabatean mother.

Events on the ground supported Herod in his conclusion that his only hope lay with Rome; accordingly, he set out for the capital as quickly as possible. Passing through Alexandria, he did not even consider the tempting offer by Cleopatra VII, queen of Egypt, to appoint him to a senior military post in her service.²⁵ The Roman orientation

²⁴ *War* 1.274–275; *Ant.* 14. 371–372.

²⁵ *War* 1.279; *Ant.* 14. 376; no mention is made in *Ant.* of this offer. Grant (49) believed that Herod took the risk of cooperating with her, but this is unsupported by the sources. On the contrary, Herod suspected her of scheming against him. She may already have been aware of Antony's political plans concerning Herod, particularly if

had already been ingrained in him by his father, in addition to the fact that he himself had experienced personal ties with Rome since the days of Julius Caesar. Not only did his choice not disappoint him but it was highly fortuitous in its timing, as we shall see below.

Herod is Crowned in Rome as King of Judea

Herod set sail for Rome from Alexandria in approximately mid-February 40 BCE, that is, at the height of winter (*War* 1.280).²⁶ Owing to the seasonal storms, he could not sail directly across the Mediterranean but chose a roundabout route along the coasts of Asia Minor and the islands of the Aegean Sea. He was also forced to spend several months in Rhodes preparing his ship at the local dockyards for the remainder of his journey to Rome (*Ant.* 14.378).²⁷ He made use of the delay to strengthen his ties with two local figures, Sappinas and Ptolemy (Ptolemaeus), citizens of Rhodes whom he apparently knew from past business dealings in Ascalon and who he believed could help open doors for him in Rome and in the business world in general.²⁸

we assume that she knew about the bribes offered by Herod to Antony to pave his way to the crown (*Ant.* 14.382). Although there is no textual support for Cleopatra's plot to ensnare Herod through such a military appointment, the possibility is quite reasonable in view of her later efforts to lure him astray when she visited the Jordan Valley to receive the revenues from the balsam plantations in the Jericho area (*Ant.* 15.97–103).

²⁶ See the persuasive chronological computations of Kokkinos, pp. 367ff.

²⁷ Grant (49) claimed that Cleopatra offered him a ship to sail to Rhodes, but this has no support in the sources. On the contrary, *Ant.* 14.375–377 gives the definite impression that his voyage from Pelusium to Alexandria and later to Rhodes was carried out on his own initiative. It is not clear whether he bought a new ship or contented himself with repairing the first ship he found (cf. *War* 1.280, below); either way, it is obvious that he wanted a ship of his own so as not to be dependent on others; cf. Perowne, pp. 57–58.

²⁸ On the prominent role of Ascalon in international trade during this period, see Fuks, 84–96; Dvorjetski, 99–134. Sapphinius' name is mentioned by Josephus only three times (*War* 1.280; *Ant.* 14.378; 16. 257; see Schalit, p. 107. Unfortunately, there is no further information about him beyond the writings of Josephus. Concerning Ptolemy, more information is available, since Josephus tells that he built an impressive political career under Herod, being nominated to the position of Dioiketes (minister of the royal finances) and royal seal-bearer in charge of executing the King's will; see *Ant.*, 15. 191, 330; XVII, 195, 228; *War* 1.473, 667; II, 24, 69; Schalit, p. 84 (nn. 97–98); Schürer, I, p. 311; Stern 1983, pp. 70, 77, 78, 86; Dar, pp. 38–50, esp. pp. 38–41; Roller, pp. 63–64, 233. Schalit and Dar believed they were related to Idumaeans who had fled Jerusalem as a result of the Parthian invasion and later

Herod ultimately earned a name for himself in Rhodes by initiating, along with these two men, a project to restore the city from the damage inflicted by the Roman civil war that broke out after the death of Julius Caesar. In the words of Josephus, Herod, "though he were in necessity himself, he neglected not to do it a kindness, but did what he could to recover it to its former state" (ibid., 378).

In the parallel version in *War* (1.280), no mention is made of his generosity; rather, it is noted only that despite his great financial difficulty, with the help of his two friends he managed to build a new ship for himself. A number of scholars are inclined to accept the fuller version of *Antiquities*, as correct.²⁹ Be that as it may, it is reasonable to assume that during his stay in Rhodes, Herod became aware of the tremendous financial possibilities latent in the local Jewish community and their brethren in Asia Minor and the Aegean Islands, as a result of the sizeable contributions they sent to Jerusalem. This had already been demonstrated in the sensational trial of Flaccus, Roman governor of Asia Minor, held in 59 BCE.³⁰ Since the trial reverberated throughout the Jewish world, there is reason to believe that Herod remembered it clearly and drew certain conclusions from it useful to him at a later point. In our opinion, the reference in *Ant.* 14.378 to the restoration of Rhodes as taking place in 40 BCE is open to question since Herod lacked both the means and the experience at the time. Since such a move would be more compatible with a later stage in his career, our conjecture is that in 40 BCE he merely conceived the notion and outlined the initial plans for the rehabilitation of the city. At most, he invested only a nominal sum to lay the cornerstone of the

reached Rhodes, but they rather could be Roodian businessmen whom Herod had met previously in Ascalon.

²⁹ See for example: Schalit, pp. 83ff.; Roller, pp. 2, 11, 34, 86–87, 232–34. Jones (p. 42) believed that Herod's financial resources came from monies donated by Jewish communities in Asia Minor, but there is no direct confirmation of this in the sources.

³⁰ See Levy, pp. 19ff. The proximity in time is highly significant here, since only 19 years had passed and the affair was presumably not yet forgotten. In excavations conducted in Jerusalem, the archeologist Benjamin Mazar found a Greek inscription dating from 17/18 BCE that mentioned a certain donor from Rhodes with a Greek name. If he was a Jew, then his donation should be understood no differently than that of numerous other Diaspora Jews. But if he was not Jewish, he may well have been a wealthy citizen of Rhodes who was sympathetic toward his Jewish neighbors as a result of his close personal ties with Herod since his visit there; see Isaac, 1–4. The date of the inscription indicates that the "fundraising drive" for the Jerusalem temple was actually begun not long before its construction.

planned project and issued a statement of intention to complete the undertaking in future, if and when he met with success in Rome. It is our view that this is a more realistic possibility than assuming that the restoration of Rhodes was launched as early as 40 BCE.

After deepening his ties with Sappinas and Ptolemy, Herod sailed with them to Brundisium (present-day Brindisi), from where they continued together to Rome. His companions apparently traveled to Rome to receive the imperial blessing for the rehabilitation project and perhaps to raise funds for it as well. It should also be noted that during this same period (October 40 BCE), the Treaty of Brundisium was concluded between Antony and Octavian (more below), ending the animosity between them after they had both tied their fates to the alliance known as the Second Triumvirate.³¹ It is entirely possible that Herod first made the acquaintance of Octavian at this time, upon the initiative of Antony, thereby paving the way for Herod's success in Rome. Indeed, it seems that from the moment he arrived in the Roman capital, fortune smiled upon him. Understandably, he placed his trust mainly in Mark Antony, whom he had known during his father's prime, when Antony had served in the Roman army under Pompey. The meeting between the two is eloquently described by Josephus (*Ant.* 14.381–382):

[381] This account made Antony commiserate the change that had happened in Herod's condition; and reasoning with himself that this was a common case among those that are placed in such great dignities, and that they are liable to the mutations that come from fortune, he was very ready to give him the assistance he desired, [382] and this because he called to mind the friendship he had had with Antipater because Herod offered him money to make him king, as he had formerly given it him to make him tetrarch, and chiefly because of his hatred to Antigonus; for he took him to be a seditious person, and an enemy to the Romans (trans. by Whiston; cf. *War* 1.282).

It was Antony who influenced Octavian, his young ally in the Second Triumvirate, to launch together with him an initiative to crown Herod king of Judea amid the special political circumstances created by the great Parthian invasion. As stated, under the auspices of the Parthian invaders, Mattathias Antigonus had been declared king of Jerusalem. This confluence of events sparked widespread support in Rome for

³¹ See Shatzman, 574–576.

crowning Herod king of Judea and enlisting him in the massive Roman effort to roll back the Parthians and their followers. Indeed, the two members of the Triumvirate won sweeping support for a "senatorial decision" (*senatus consultum*) crowning Herod king of Judea. In the words of Josephus (*Ant.* 14.386–387):

[386] And this was the principal instance of Antony's affection for Herod, that he not only procured him a kingdom which he did not expect (for he did not come with an intention to ask the kingdom for himself, which he did not suppose the Romans would grant him, who used to bestow it on some of the royal family, [387] but intended to desire it for his wife's brother, who was grandson by his father to Aristobulus, and to Hyrcanus by his mother), but that he procured it for him so suddenly, that he obtained what he did not expect, and departed out of Italy in so few days as seven in all (trans. by Whiston).

Of course, one should not be misled by these words, which reflect an "apologetic" argument aimed at Jewish public opinion. The fact that there is no parallel reference in *War*, makes it difficult to determine the source of Josephus' knowledge.³² In our estimation, this is one of the instances when Josephus relied on internal Jewish information, which attributed to Herod underhanded and deceitful intentions aimed at "justifying" his appointment as king in the eyes of his Jewish subjects and "blaming" the Romans for the decision. Such a disingenuous claim was convenient for him since, after all, who would dare to go against the will of a united and resolute Roman Empire.

Based on the way in which the information is presented, it appears that Josephus himself doubted its credibility. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that the account was cleverly based on half-truths, namely, Antony's support for Herod, on the one hand, and the Roman practice of preferring kings from a known, legitimate dynasty (as seen by their subjects), on the other.³³ The combination of half-truths and overt lies, according to which it was Herod himself who supposedly asked the Romans to appoint his young brother-in-law as king, is problematic and lacking in credibility, since it is difficult to conceive of Herod acting in such an altruistic manner.³⁴ Herod's appointment as king resulted from circumstantial political factors, and should be interpreted simply as an expression of Roman anger and dissatisfaction with the fact

³² Perowne (p. 58) naively accepted this "truth"; compare below.

³³ *Ant.* 14. 386, 403, 489, and see Kasher 2005, pp. 187, 195–97, 202–04, 206.

³⁴ It is therefore amazing that Jones (p. 43) accepted this.

that the Jews had accepted the rule of Mattathias Antigonus, placed in power by the Parthians who were major enemies of Rome at the time (*ibid.*, 404).³⁵ Only in this way can one offer a convincing explanation for Rome's departure from its traditional practice of crowning a king from a royal dynasty seen as suitable by its subjects.

Moreover, as stated explicitly by Josephus in both accounts (*War* 1.282; *Ant.* 14.382), Herod promised a bribe to Antony if and when he was crowned king, just as he had done when appointed by him to serve as tetrarch (*Ant.* 14.327).³⁶ Herod acted similarly when Cassius promised to appoint him king of Judea after his victory in the Roman civil war following the assassination of Julius Caesar (*War*, I, 225; *Ant.* 14. 280). On that occasion as well, the deed was done at Herod's instigation and in exchange for a suitable payment. The preceding is sufficient to refute the false and sanctimonious claim that his original intention had been to offer the kingship to the brother of his betrothed, Aristobulus III. Every act of Herod's throughout his life was for his benefit alone—something that is true of individuals whose egocentrism is the product of paranoid personality disorder.

Herod's legal and political status was initially defined in accordance with Roman juridical criteria as *rex socius et amicus populi Romani* (that is, "an ally-king and friend of the Roman people"), thereby obligating him to absolute political and military subjugation to Rome. He was prohibited from engaging in any personal initiative whatsoever in matters of security and state without the appropriate approval from Rome, nor was he permitted to determine his own successor.³⁷ Herod's loyalty to Rome naturally had to be proven through immediate enlistment in the war effort to expel the Parthian invader from imperial territory. He took part willingly, as the endeavor fitted with his own struggle to secure the kingship of Judea. The elimination of his rival Mattathias Antigonus, who had ascended the throne with the help of Parthian lances, was compatible with Roman efforts to push the Parthians across the Euphrates River. In other words, the commonality

³⁵ On the different reasons that led the Romans to crown Herod, see Ben-Shalom, pp. 284–85.

³⁶ Cf. *War* 1.244, although no bribe is mentioned in this version. The appointment of Herod and Phasael as tetrarchs is mentioned for the first time by Josephus in *Ant.* 14.327. On the significance of this office see Marcus 1943, VII, p. 621, n. i.

³⁷ On the legal and political obligations stemming from this status, see Schalit, 146ff.; Stern 1985, 59ff. 251 (nn. 9, 11, 14, 15); Braund, *passim*; Paltiel, *passim*.

of interests between Herod and Rome rested on the Parthian threat; as long as it loomed, there was no reason to believe that the Romans would alter their policy toward him.³⁸ Rome was not yet sufficiently familiar with the social fabric of Jerusalem to be able to grasp the depth of Jewish loyalty to the Hasmonean dynasty or the magnitude of the hatred toward Herod. The Romans learned this only at a later stage, when the physical elimination of the Hasmonean dynasty by Herod was already a widely known *fait accompli*, not to mention a source of derision in the eyes of the Emperor himself.³⁹ Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize that the Romans never actually renounced Herod, and only on one occasion—late in his reign, when he was suspected of initiating his second war against the Nabateans without authorization—did he receive a veiled warning that this forthcoming attitude was liable to change; in practice, however, such a thing never took place.⁴⁰ On the contrary, it appears that Roman policy towards Herod remained consistent throughout his life. It was the Hasmonean dynasty that the Romans turned their backs on, apparently long before Herod was appointed king, that is, early in the reign of Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BCE). This political turnaround took place in response to the decision by the Hasmonean king to abandon the historical alliance with Rome in favor of political ties with the Parthians.⁴¹ It is not surprising that, from this point forward, Hellenist and Roman literature began to speak of the Hasmonean Dynasty in strident tones,⁴² indicating that the crowning of Herod in 40 BCE had been well thought-out politically. True, this policy was initiated by Antony and Octavian, but public opinion in Rome was already ripe for such a move. As a consequence, the actual decision was made unanimously by the Roman

³⁸ For the historical background, see Stern 1995, 249–274. One should bear in mind that the Parthian threat loomed over Rome at least until the days of Emperor Trajan (114–116 CE).

³⁹ According to a later tradition, when Augustus learned of the execution of Antipater, Herod's eldest son, he is said to have stated sarcastically: "Better to be Herod's pig than his son"; see Stern 1980, II, 665–66 (no. 543).

⁴⁰ As a matter of fact, he became involved in this war because of Syllaeus the Nabatean; a detailed discussion of this issue will be offered below.

⁴¹ See Rappaport 1969, 43–54. According to Pucci-Ben Zeev 1981, 331–38, there is a reasonable basis for assuming that John Hyrcanus I was actually the first to initiate this step.

⁴² For further details, see Kasher 1990, 133ff.

Senate; and what is important in our view is that it was not expected to be modified.

Zvi Yavetz rightfully enumerated three principal reasons for crowning Herod as king: (a) a reward for his unqualified loyalty to Rome; (b) the desire to bolster his political standing in Jerusalem since, as an Idumean commoner, he could not serve as high priest; and (c) his great prestige among the non-Jewish population in Palestine, who had a mutually hostile relationship with the Jews.⁴³

After attaining the crown, Herod sought to make the anniversary of his coronation into an annual national holiday (*Ant.* 15.423).⁴⁴ In his great arrogance, he wanted his subjects to adapt themselves to the new reality, undoubtedly echoing the accepted practice of most of the Hellenist monarchs in the lands of the Near East. His coronation took place during the winter of 40 BCE, as can be inferred from *War* 1.279–281 and *Ant.* 14.376–380.⁴⁵ The dating of the event is also based on numismatic findings,⁴⁶ moreover it fits chronologically with the signing of the Treaty of Brundisium between Octavian and Antony (October 40 BCE), that is, shortly before Herod entered the gates of Rome (in December).⁴⁷

The decision by the Senate to crown Herod as king of Judea can be seen as a “crossing of the Rubicon” in Roman policy towards the Jewish nation in Palestine, as this was the first public and explicit rebuffing of the Hasmonean dynasty. The importance of Herod’s coronation was reflected in its ceremonial aspects at the conclusion of the Senate session, Herod strode arm in arm with Antony and Octavian before the consuls and other men of power, after which they ascended together to the Capitol to offer a sacrifice to the god Jupiter and to deposit the senatorial resolution in his temple.⁴⁸ It seems that Herod had no religious compunctions regarding the ceremony, even if he himself did

⁴³ Yavetz, 322.

⁴⁴ At a later point, he even combined the anniversary of his coronation with the dedication of the Jerusalem temple so as to make it a national festival; see in detail below.

⁴⁵ Otto, cols. 25–26; Marcus, VII, pp. 648–49, n. a; Schalit, pp. 83–88; Grant, p. 41; Schürer, I, pp. 281–82 (n. 3); Smallwood, pp. 55–56; Roller, p. 12 (n. 8); Kokkinos, pp. 367–69.

⁴⁶ Meyshan, pp. 100–108.

⁴⁷ Cf. Plutarch, Antony, 30; Yavetz, pp. 19–20; Shatzman, pp. 574–76; Kokkinos, loc. cit.; Banowitz, p. 3.

⁴⁸ *War* 1.285; *Ant.* 14.388–389. Antony later held a banquet in honor of the event, presumably attended by the cream of Roman society.

not offer a sacrifice.⁴⁹ It must be recalled that the city of Rome was home to many Jews who resided not far from Capitol Hill, most of them were freed slaves who had come there following Pompey's conquest (63 BCE) of Hasmonean Palestine. It is unimaginable that Herod would have taken the religious risk of offering a personal sacrifice to Jupiter, since word of such an act would likely have reached Jerusalem and sparked a major scandal and needless resentment. In Herod's eyes, the most significant point was the crowning itself since it represented a political declaration by the ranking elite; moreover, its legal validity could not be questioned once the "senatorial decision" had been deposited in the Capitoline temple. It is easy to speculate that he felt great pride as an Idumaeen rejected by Jewish society who had been granted kingship over the Jews—and by the leading personalities of the Roman world, no less. The apologetic excuse later uttered by him that he had no choice but to obey the word of his Roman masters was nothing more than an empty statement and a sanctimonious pretext intended to forestall Jewish disapproval.

Despite being crowned king, and regardless of the solid Roman consensus in his favor, Herod remained consumed with fear that Roman policy toward him might change. He was still convinced that his selection as king deviated from the traditional policy in countries under direct or indirect Roman rule, by which members of known royal dynasties, accepted by their subjects, were crowned king. Since this pragmatic strategy was aimed at preventing internal upheaval (in the form of riots and revolts), Herod was concerned that the Roman rulers might one day decide to return to this approach, particularly when they became aware of the depth of Jewish hatred toward him. Such fears never left him, and in certain situations he was seized by crippling emotional distress. It would not be an overstatement to say that the entire course of his life was shaped by ongoing existential anxiety coupled with constant stress in the face of unexpected changes—changes whose future course was unpredictable, as were his own methods of coping with them. In principle, these fears had no real, discernible basis; but since they appeared so plausible to him, he perceived them as highly threatening. Such a pattern is typical of an individual with paranoid personality disorder, but this theme is dealt with at length in Kasher and Witztum.

⁴⁹ Cf. Grant, p. 50.

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JOSEPHUS ON POISONING AND MAGIC CURES OR, ON THE MEANING OF *PHARMAKON*

Samuel S. Kottek

Introduction

Josephus no doubt considered King Solomon to be a paragon of wisdom. The wisdom and sagacity of Solomon are indeed mentioned in the Bible, however medicine is not included in the many branches of knowledge that he mastered.¹ For Josephus, however, healing was apparently a necessary part of general wisdom:

There was no form of nature with which he (Solomon) was not acquainted, or which he passed over without examining, but he studied them all philosophically and revealed the most complete knowledge of their several properties. And the Lord granted him knowledge of the art used against demons² for the benefit and healing of men (*Ant.* 8.44–45).

Josephus further affirms that King Solomon left magic devices and formulas for later generations: “He also composed incantations by which illnesses are relieved, and left behind forms of exorcisms with which those possessed by demons drive them out, never to return.” (*Ant.* 8.45). There is no hint whatsoever in the Bible of the alleged magic powers of Solomon. It is however well known that early Jewish, Christian (and later also Muslim) traditions contain such allegations.³ We shall come back to Josephus’ description of magic cures later in this study.

Without considering here in detail Josephus’ biography, or rather, autobiography, we would like to stress that he had been well trained in his youth. His father Matthias (Heb. *Matityahu*) was indeed “among the most notable men in Jerusalem” and Josephus’ education was no doubt as excellent as could be achieved then and there.⁴

¹ Cf. I Kings 5: 9–14 and esp. vv. 10–11: “And Solomon’s wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the eastern peoples and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men...”.

² Gr. *kata ton daimonon technen*.

³ Cf. note of Thackeray *ad locum* (LCL Edition, vol. V, 595 note g).

⁴ There are however in *Life* no details on the curriculum of his studies.

He thus states: "I won universal applause for my love of letters" (*Life*, 8).

Later, when he was writing his works in Rome, Josephus found a benevolent patron in Epaphroditus, who owned a large library, which he apparently could consult at leisure. His works *Against Apion* and *The Life* were dedicated "To you, Epaphroditus,⁵ who are a devoted lover of truth." Josephus might well have found in that library some works of Hippocrates, Celsus, Soranus, and possibly Dioscorides, who was his contemporary.⁶

Theophrastus (370–286 BCE) and Pliny the Elder (23–79 CE)—the latter having in his books XX–XXVI widely used the former—had described medicinal plants. These works also could have been perused, although this remains obviously conjectural. Regarding formulas of poisonous drugs on one hand and of magic procedures on the other, the works of Dioscorides and Pliny were probably the most productive; we shall endeavor to show some similarities.

Poisoning

In Scripture

Several Hebrew words are used for 'poison' in the Bible, mostly in a metaphorical context. Isaiah for instance exclaims: "Awake, awake, O Jerusalem, who has drunk the cup of poison,⁷ who has drunk to the dregs the deep bowl of poison (Heb. *kos ha-tar'elah*, Isa. 51: 17, 22)." And in the book of Job it says: "Food in his bowels is turned (into) gall of asps within him"⁸ (*Job*, 20: 14).

It is remarkable that Josephus (as Philo had done before him) attributes to the Bible a very stringent attitude toward poisoning. He was well aware of the relatively frequent incurrence of poisoning in Roman

⁵ Epaphroditus is named in the first and in the last sentence of *Against Apion*. We remember that *Life* formed an appendix to the *Antiquities*.

⁶ Dioscorides was an army surgeon of Nero, and was active in Rome from 54 to 68 CE.

⁷ Heb. *kos hamato*, which may also be translated "the cup of his anger". *Heimah* means wrath, fury, and also venom.

⁸ The "gall of asps" (Heb. *merorat petanim*) features the venom of vipers. The Latin *aspis* designed the viper, but also the Egyptian cobra (*coluber haje*). See also *Job* 20: 16 (Heb. *eph'eh* for 'viper').

society,⁹ and even the mere possession of poison would allegedly lead to a death penalty: "Poison, whether deadly or of those designed for other injurious ends, let no Israelite possess. If one be caught with it in his keeping, let him die, undergoing the fate that he would have inflicted on the intended victims of the drug" (*Ant.* 4. 279).

This has been considered as an interpretation of the biblical injunction: "You will not suffer a witch (Heb. *mekhashefah*) to live" (Ex. 22: 17). Indeed, in the Septuagint *mekhashefah* is translated as *pharmakous*, and it is well known that *pharmakon* is (also) poison. Philo certainly used the Septuagint, however Josephus obviously knew Hebrew. Had he perhaps been influenced by Philo? Let us have a look at Philo's account *ad hoc*: "For there are others, the worst of villains, (...) the sorcerers and poisoners,¹⁰ who (...) think out (...) devices to harm their neighbors. And therefore he (Moses) ordered that poisoners, male or female, should (...) perish as soon as they are detected" (*Spec.* 3.93–94). This is how poison and magic (our present topic) became engaged together.

In King Herod's Family

The court of King Herod was not less plagued with intrigues than the court of Roman emperors. Herod's wife Mariamne and their son Antipater were thus accused of having acquired poison in order to be freed from Herod's attacks. His sister Salome persuaded his cupbearer to tell the king that Mariamne had enticed him to give the king a 'love potion.' The cupbearer said he knew nothing about the composition of that potion, this was enough to arouse the suspicion of poisoning. After a mock-trial, Mariamne was sentenced to death and executed.¹¹

King Herod became, according to Josephus, subject to morbid fears of being murdered by his own sons. The sons were moreover incensed against each other. Antipater once said that "Alexander had a poisonous drug prepared in Ascalon" (*Ant.* 16. 253).¹² But Herod was unable to find the drug. It was later revealed that Antipater had "prepared a

⁹ Cf. the female magician and poisoner Canidia (e.g. Horace, *Epodes*, 5—Ode 5 "Against Canidia". See Kaufman 1932; Horstmanshoff 1999. Physicians were often involved as purveyors of poison.

¹⁰ Gr. *oi magoi kai pharmakeutai*. This is Philo's rendering of *pharmakous*, in fact this term may designate one who handles poison and also a magician or sorcerer.

¹¹ See *Ant.* 15.7, 225. Herod allegedly later deeply regretted this barbarous ordeal.

¹² See also *War* 1.485.

fatal drug and had given it to Pheroras with instructions to give it to his father" (*Ant.* 17.69). "And the drug had been brought from Egypt (...) and had come to Pherora's wife, for her husband had given it to her to keep. (...) The drug was brought from Egypt by Antiphilus, having been furnished him by his brother, who is a physician,¹³ and Theudion brought it to us." (*Ant.* 17.70–73)

All these details were disclosed by Pheroras' wife. She added that her husband had asked her to burn the drug "before my eyes," she left however some of it in the vial, in order that "if the king should treat her badly, she might end her life with this and thus escape torture" (*Ibid.*, 75–76).

Sometime later, Batyllus, Antipater's freedman, came back from Rome. He was put to torture and "was found to have brought a drug (...), in order that, if the first drug did not take effect on the king, they might then do away with him by using this one" (*Ant.* 17.79).

Herod's brother Pheroras died, and after the funeral two of his freedmen came to Herod and told him that Pheroras had supper with his wife the day before he fell sick and that a certain potion was put into some food, "to which he was not accustomed".¹⁴

This drug, moreover, had been brought by a woman from Arabia, ostensibly to stimulate his erotic feeling—it was called a love potion (Gr. *philtron*)—but in reality to kill him. Now the women in Arabia are the most skilful of all in the use of drugs. (...) To persuade her to sell the drug, both the mother and the sister of Pheroras' wife had gone to that region and had returned, bringing her along,¹⁵ on the day before the dinner. (*Ant.* 17.62–63).

It thus appears that, according to Josephus, such poisonous drugs could be imported from Egypt, from Ascalon (with a physician involved), from Arabia, or else from Rome. Women played a conspicuous role

¹³ Philo, while speaking on the use of snake venom in medicine, remarks that "Those who take up the medical profession with care and energy" make use of venomous animals "as an important factor in compounding their remedies" (*Providence* 2.60). Indeed, venoms were used as major ingredients in the famous 'theriac' (a compound that was a supposed cure-all) See also *War* 1.592–600 where Josephus added that this physician lived in Alexandria.

¹⁴ This detail will be discussed later on.

¹⁵ It is not quite clear why the woman had been brought along, not just the poison.

in these stories,¹⁶ and the fake presentation of poison as a love potion is also to be stressed.

Regarding the formula of the poison, it appears only in one place. "(Batyllus) arrived with another noxious drug (Gr. *asthenesei pharmakon*) composed of the poison of asps and the secretions of other reptiles¹⁷ (...), should the first poison fail to take effect" (*War* 1.601).

I would like to add a comment to the case of Pheroras' death. The drug was allegedly put in "a food to which he was not accustomed". It could be that the freedman, or the servants noticed that Pheroras felt uneasy while eating that dish. It was thought in ancient times that poison gives to food into which it is mixed a bad taste, or bitterness, or acidity, and/or a special smell.¹⁸ This question will obviously be left open.

Magic Cures

The Baaras Root

King Herod built a palace in Machaerus, a settlement situated at the north-eastern end of the Dead Sea.¹⁹ While describing the site, Josephus gives evidence of his botanical interests: "Within the palace once grew a plant of rue (Gr. *peganon*) of an amazing size. Indeed, in height and thickness no fig tree surpassed it" (*War* 7.178). Theophrastus mentions the fact that rue, classified as an under-shrub, sometimes becomes tree-like.²⁰ Josephus remarks that in his times the plant had disappeared, for "it had been cut down by the Jews who took possession of the place" (*War* 7.179).

¹⁶ We remember the role of the female sorceress and poisoner Canidia, and there are more such female figures mentioned in Horace's *Odes*. See note 9, above.

¹⁷ Pliny mentions the venom of asps, their bite is dangerous, but "however much (of it) is drunk, it is harmless, having no wasting power (Lat. *tabifica vis*)". See *Nat. Hist.* 29, 65. He also mentions 'snakes' and *hydri* (water snakes).

¹⁸ See for instance the statement of Maimonides in his *Book on Poisons*, part II, chap. 1 (in Rabbinowicz 1935, 49).

¹⁹ Machaerus, now called al-Mukawir, is situated some 20 km. southwest of Madaba, Jordan. According to Pliny, it was the strongest place in Judaea, after Jerusalem (cf. *Nat. Hist.* 5, 17; 72).

²⁰ See *The Enquiry into Plants* (Hort 1916, I, 3, 4).

We come now to the Baaras plant, which grew in a valley to the north of Machaerus, and had allegedly magic powers.²¹ “Flame-colored and emitting a brilliant light towards evening, it eludes the grasp of persons who approach with the intention of plucking it, as it shrinks up and can only be made to stand still by pouring upon it certain secretions of the human body” (*War* 7.181).

Here the translator also shrunk—from translating literally! For the Greek text says quite clearly that these ‘secretions’ were either urine, or menstrual blood from women.²² Josephus then adds that touching this root was fatal. Therefore the following stratagem was used. “They dig all round it (the plant), leaving but a minute portion of the root covered. Then they tie a dog to it, and the animal rushing to follow the person who tied him easily pulls it up, but instantly dies” (*War* 7.183–184).

Once plucked, the root becomes innocuous. It possesses, Josephus states, “one virtue for which it is prized”: “For the so-called demons, in other words the spirits of wicked men which enter the living and kill them unless aid is forthcoming,²³ are promptly expelled by this root, if merely applied to the patients” (*War* 7.185).

Was the Baaras root mandrake? There is at least an analogy with the way mandrake was plucked up, as documented in ancient times. According to Theophrastus, people used to “draw circles with a sword around the plant and then cut it with their face turned toward the west.”²⁴ Theophrastus considered the root to be effective against erysipelas, gout, sleeplessness, and in love potions. Pliny has nearly the same, adding that the diggers avoid facing the wind.²⁵ He also mentions that mandrake is effective as an antidote against snakebites and to induce anesthesia. Dioscorides does not mention the digging, while stressing its use as an aphrodisiac.²⁶ We remember that the *dudaim* of the Hebrew Bible (Gen. 30: 14) are usually translated ‘mandrakes’—

²¹ According to Löw, the name ‘Baaras’ could be related to the Hebrew *bo’er*, to burn (cf. ‘flame-colored’—see *Die Flora der Juden*, 1881, 188 n. 1).

²² Gr. *ouron gunaikos e to emmenon haima*... The same ‘secretions’ were used, according to Josephus, in order to discharge bitumen (pitch) from the ships of fishermen who caught it from the surface of the Dead Sea (cf. *War* 4.480). Josephus also mentions that bitumen was used in a number of medical preparations.

²³ This is a rather severe definition of possession by a demon, which deserves further reflection.

²⁴ See *Enquiry* (cf. note 20, above) IX, 8,8 [Vol. II, 259–61]. Not literally.

²⁵ See *Nat. Hist.* XXV, 148 [Vol. VII, 240–43].

²⁶ See *De Materia Medica*, Book IV, 76, 570–74.

with an alleged use against sterility, or possibly as an aphrodisiac. This source is however beyond the scope of our present study.

The story of the Baaras plant and its lethal power on those who pluck it up, had a lasting influence on medieval authors, as illustrated in several herbals.²⁷

There is in the Mishnah a brief reference to a so-called “man of the field” (Heb. *adonei ha-sadeh*). It has the shape of a man and a long string ties it from its navel to a root in the ground. It causes the death of anyone approaching into its reach. If however the string is torn from afar, it dies at once.²⁸

King Solomon and the Demons

King Solomon’s outstanding wisdom is extolled in the Bible (I Kings 5: 9–14). It “excelled the wisdom of all the children of the eastern countries and all the wisdom of Egypt” (v. 10). However healing is not included in Solomon’s fields of expertise, although natural sciences are mentioned.²⁹ Josephus however considers him (also) as a *magus* expert in occult ‘sciences’. “And the Lord granted him knowledge of the art used against demons for the benefit and healing of men. He also composed incantations³⁰ by which illnesses are relieved, and left behind forms of exorcisms with which those possessed by demons drive them out,³¹ never to return” (*Ant.* 8.45).

²⁷ See for instance Platearius, *Le livre des simples médecines* (15th cent.), B.N. Paris, Ms. lat. 17848, fol. 20v. In *La médecine médiévale à travers les mss. de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris 1982), 75.

²⁸ See *b. Kil’ayim* 8, 5 and *j. Kil’ayim* 8, 4, and the commentary of Rabbi Samson from Sens *ad loc.* However the *roots* of the mandrake are anthropomorphous, not the stem—a remote kinship indeed!

²⁹ “And he spoke of trees (...), he spoke also of beasts, and of birds, and of creeping things, and of fishes” (1 Kgs, 5: 13).

³⁰ Gr. *epode*, i.e. a spell, or enchantment. Indeed, these magic spells were either recited, or sung, hence the term enchantment. On Solomon as a *magus*, see Alexander 1986, 342–79, in particular 376–79.

³¹ The translation should be emended here. We would suggest: (*exorcisms*) “by which they drive away demons so that they never return”, as in Whiston. The latter added a note where he stated that he disagreed with Josephus (!) and that such magic cures were derived from Solomon’s heathen wives and concubines in his old age—not imparted to him by the Lord.

It should be remarked that in the book of Jubilees and in the book of Enoch such magical means were forwarded to Noah by the (fallen) angels, while for Josephus they were inspired by the Lord.³²

Josephus describes in detail such a cure, which he allegedly witnessed, and has often been reproduced and discussed:

This kind of cure is of very great power among us to this day, for I have seen a certain Eleazar, a countryman of mine, in the presence of Vespasian (...), free men possessed by demons. This was the manner of the cure: He put to the nose of the possessed man a ring, which had under its seal³³ one of the roots prescribed by Solomon; and then, when the man smelled it, drew out the demon through his nostrils. And when the man at once fell down, (he) adjured the demon never to come back into him, speaking Solomon's name and reciting the incantations which he had composed (*Ant.* 8.46–47).

The Romans who attended the cure might well have been somewhat skeptical, for—according to Josephus—Eleazar wished to ‘prove’ that the demon had come out: “Eleazar placed a cup (or foot-basin) full of water a little way off and commanded the demon (...) to overturn it. (...) And when this was done, the understanding and wisdom³⁴ of Solomon were clearly revealed” (*Ibid.* 48–49).

It has been conjectured that Eleazar might have been an Essene,³⁵ “for this sect possessed books of medicine attributed to Solomon.” Josephus himself writes elsewhere that the Essenes “display an extraordinary interest in the writings of the ancients, singling out in particular those which make for the welfare of soul and body” (*War* 2.136). And he adds: “With the help of these, and with a view to the treatment of diseases, they make investigations into medicinal roots and the properties of stones” (*War* 2.136.).

The *Therapeutae* described by Philo were also known for their expertise in healing of body and soul, but without any actual reference

³² See Kottek 2000.

³³ Solomon's seal had a long story throughout the Middle Ages. Under the caption *Clavicula Salomonis*, or “The Key of Solomon” it comprised all kinds of magic treatises. On the early manuscripts and prints, see www.esotericarchives.com/solomon/ksol.htm.

³⁴ Gr. *sunesis kai sophia*. These terms thus associate sagacity and knowledge.

³⁵ See note of Ralph Marcus *ad locum* (595, note *h*). The fact that they attributed such books to Solomon remains indeed conjectural, although Lightfoot spoke of “possible Solomonic origin”.

to King Solomon.³⁶ Moreover, neophytes who entered the sect (of the Essenes) had to swear “carefully to preserve the books of the sect and the names of the angels” (*War* 2.142). The reference to angels (having in mind the books of *Enoch* and of *Jubilees*) and to stones (mainly used as amulets and talismans)³⁷ shows that magic cures were indeed practiced by the Essenes.³⁸

I wish now to come back to the alleged power of King Solomon over demons, as featured in Jewish and Early Christian literature, more or less contemporary to Josephus. This will however be limited to a brief overview. There is in *Matthew* (12: 22–37) a description of exorcism of a demon.³⁹ People exclaimed: “Is not this the son of David?” Other bystanders thought that this was achieved with the help of Beelzebub, the prince of devils. Now, if the ‘son of David’ is Solomon (not the Messiah!), his power over the ‘prince of devils’ is stressed more in depth in our second source: *the Testament of Solomon*. The *Testament of Solomon* tells how Solomon sent Benaiah, who succeeded in capturing Asmodeus, using a ring on which the name of the Lord was engraved. The ring had allegedly been handed over to Solomon by the archangel Michael.⁴⁰ Solomon thus gained power over a full host of demons, which were expert in causing diseases.

The *Book of Wisdom*⁴¹ mentions that Solomon had the upper hand over spirits (Gr. *bias*), as well as over all kinds of plants, and that he knew the virtues of roots, and many more secrets (VII, 21–23).

Last, but not least, the *Book of Raziel* begins with a ‘historical’ introduction, where it is asserted that the included secrets were bestowed to Noah by the angel Raziel. They were then transmitted to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Levi, Kehat, Amram, Moses, Joshua, the Elders, the Prophets, the Sages, and (then) to King Solomon.⁴²

³⁶ On the question whether Josephus used Philo’s works, Feldman 1984, 410–418.

³⁷ The classic work of Dioscorides contained a full chapter on stones (*De Materia Medica*, ch. 5).

³⁸ On this topic, see Kottek 1994, 161–70.

³⁹ See also *Mark* 3: 22–30, and *Luke* 11: 14–23. On this excursus of Matthew, Fischer 1968.

⁴⁰ No root is mentioned in this source. See “Magic and Healing...” (cf. note 32, above), p.11. The demons were allegedly forced to help build the Temple in Jerusalem.

⁴¹ Formerly better known under the title *The Wisdom of Solomon*.

⁴² Margalioth 1966, 65–66. The *Book of Raziel* was first printed in Amsterdam in 1701. The time of its composition is still unclear, despite Margalioth’s opinion.

Our question is: Did Josephus have access to anyone of these sources, to which we could have added the books of *Enoch* and of *Jubilees*? Unfortunately, we are unable to forward any documented answer, as these Hellenistic Jewish (and Early Christian) writings cannot be dated with exactitude.

Conclusion

We have shown how poisoners and magicians were associated in the Greek version of Scripture, under the ambivalent term *pharmakous*. Regarding poisoning, Josephus could arguably compare the deleterious atmosphere that existed at Herod's court to the intrigues and atrocities that infected Roman high society. He apparently relied mainly, as regarded Herod's environment, on the work of Nicholas of Damascus.⁴³ The only detail of some interest is the provenance of the poisons, namely Ascalon, Egypt, Rome and Arabia. We hear very little about the composition of the drugs, and incidentally it seems that the venom of asps and "other reptiles" would have been innocuous by ingestion.

Regarding magic cures, the scene of exorcism described by Josephus is a fine literary piece, and the excursus on the Baaras root has given rise to a long-lasting legend around the mandrake. It remains however problematic whether the Baaras plant was mandrake, or not.

The most telling aspect of this study is, in my opinion, the alleged mastership of King Solomon over the demons. It seems that Josephus has initiated this legend.⁴⁴ Josephus had in mind to extol the wisdom of the Jewish monarch. His writings having been preserved owing to the Church Fathers, it is remarkable that the Christian scholars were responsible for the lasting success-story of the "Seal of Solomon".

Legends have their own history, and Josephus may be seen (also) as a historian of legends—or perhaps as a legendary historian.

⁴³ Nicholas (born ca. 64 BCE), knew Herod personally and even supported him. His *Historia Universalis* comprised 144 books.

⁴⁴ There might however have been a Jewish oral tradition, later included in the Talmud. For we read the following statement (cf. b. *Sanhedrin* 20b): "At the beginning (i.e., before he took wives of foreign origin), King Solomon had authority over the 'upper powers' (Heb. 'al ha-elyonim). This is exactly opposite to what Whiston wrote (cf. note 31, above).

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JOSEPHUS AND DISCREPANT SOURCES

Etienne Nodet

Josephus' sloppiness is well known, as well as his biases. Many times, however, when apparently no major political or ideological problem is involved, his strange statements or inconsistencies can be explained by his attempt to preserve all the data available to him. This paper presents a sample of such cases, which may provide a glimpse into his biblical sources or allow a reassessment of historical details.

Biblical Matters

Before examining specific cases, a general statement on the sources of Josephus' biblical paraphrase is appropriate, for it is generally taken for granted that in spite of his unambiguous statements he rewrote a previous Greek translation. On the contrary, a detailed study of the *Antiquities* indicates that he used a peculiar Hebrew source. One may add that besides the Pentateuch, the nature and authority of the Greek Bible is difficult to assess.

On Josephus' Bible

Josephus himself tells us that he has "translated" (μεθρμηνευμένην) from the Hebrew Scriptures (*Ant.* 1.5). The same claim is sometimes made within the narrative, even more clearly. About Jonas, he feels compelled to tell of the miracles as written "in the Hebrew books" (9.208). Later he insists (10.218): "In the beginning of this history, I have said that I intended to do no more than translate (or 'paraphrase' μεταφράζειν) the Hebrew books into the Greek language..., without adding to, or removing from, them anything of my own". In *Apion* 1.54 he states: "I have translated (μεθρμηνευκα) the *Archaeology* from the holy books".

He does have many agreements with MT against LXX. For instance, the members of Jacob's family who arrived with him in Egypt are 70

according to Gen 46:27 MT, *Jubilees* 44:33 f. and *Ant.* 2.176, but 75 for LXX, Ac 7.14 and a Qumran fragment.

As a shepherd, Moses comes to Horeb (Ex 3:1), and MT only adds “the mountain of God”; so Josephus, who dwells at length on the topic (*Ant.* 2.265).

In 1 Kgs 9:13 king Hiram names the cities which Solomon wanted to give him “land of Cabul” (ארץ כבול), and *Ant.* 8.142 has a transcription Χαβαλῶν γῆ, while LXX reads “land of boundary” (from גבול), an error probably prompted by some geographical knowledge about Galilee.

Josephus paraphrases the beginning of the Jonah story. He writes Νινύα (*Ant.* 9.208) for נִינְוָה “Nineveh” unlike LXX Νινευη (Jon 1:2). In Jonah 1:9, Jonas replies עברי אנוכי “I am a Hebrew”, but LXX has δούλος κυρίου ἐγώ εἰμι “I am a servant of the Lord”, reading “עבד” instead of “עבר”. *Ant.* 9.211 has “he said he was a Hebrew”, like MT. One may object that the “great fish” which swallowed Jonah (Jonah 2:1 דג גדול) is rendered with κῆτος “sea-monster” by both LXX and *Ant.* 9.213 (cf. Leviathan, Gen 1:21; Job 3:8), but that may simply be the obvious interpretation.

Josephus’ agreement with MT against LXX may reflect a controversy in legal matters; thus, both Lev 24:16 MT and *Ant.* 4.202 forbid the cursing of God’s name (blasphemy), but LXX, Philo (*Vita Mosis* 2.205) and 1 QS 6:27 condemn any utterance of the name (Tetragram).

Sometimes, Josephus’ interpretation of the text differs from the LXX rendering. For instance, according to Gen 4:4, Abel brings an offering of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat (ומחלבהן), LXX ἀπὸ τῶν στεάτων αὐτῶν), but *Ant.* 1.54 has “their milk”, which the Hebrew allows (homonyms); this idiosyncrasy of Josephus may have come from his view that unlike Cain, Abel could not have performed any violent deed, even a sacrifice to God.

In Ex 8:21, the fourth plague (עֲרָב) is normally understood “swarms of flies” (so LXX and Symmachus κυνόμυϊαν “dog-flies”), but with another vocalization either “wild beasts of every sort and kind” (from a reading עֲרָב, so *Ant.* 8.21, Aquila and Theodotion) or “ravens” (from רָב) according to a tradition reported by Origen.

According to Ex 13:18, the Israelites left Egypt fully armed (חֲמִשִּׁים), but LXX renders “the fifth generation” (cf. Gen 15:16), confusing a rare word with the more common “five, fifth people”; Josephus, who states that they were unarmed (*Ant.* 2.321), misunderstood in a different way.

Sometimes, Josephus translates, while LXX is content with a transcription; for instance. At the end of the list of Solomon's governors (1 Kgs 4:19) there is "one governor (נָצִיב) in the land"; LXX transcribes νᾱσιφ, νᾱσειβ, as if it were another proper name, but *Ant.* 8.37 correctly translates ἄρχων "ruler", which can hardly be extracted from the Greek form.

For many parts of the temple building, the technical words are often difficult to understand, e.g. for the vestibule in front of the sanctuary (1 Kgs 6:3 אֹרֶל), LXX cautiously transcribes αἰλαμ, but *Ant.* 8.65 rightly translates πρὸναον.

It is obvious however, that Josephus has many contacts with the various forms of the LXX against the MT. For instance, if the owner of an ox has been warned of its being dangerous ("in the habit of goring"), Ex 21:29 MT states that he must keep it under control (from ישמרנו), but LXX and *Ant.* 4.281 say in different words that he must slaughter it (from a reading ישמדנו). The discrepancy is very easy to explain in Hebrew by a slight graphical difference ד/ר, but we cannot conclude that Josephus did follow a Greek source. Moreover, it is difficult to assess the original LXX wording, for Philo, *Spec. leg.* 3:145 holds that the ox has to be kept in confinement, thus agreeing with MT against LXX as we know it. A rabbinic saying (*m.B. Qam.* 4:9) combines the two readings: "The only good confinement is with a knife". These agreements do not concern the wording, but the content of the narrative, which cannot preclude a common Hebrew source.¹

In fact, many proper names, which involve no special interpretation, are spelled differently from the LXX forms, when they have not been harmonized by Christian copyists. For instance, Noah is always written Νεω as in LXX but in *Ant.* 1.129, where Josephus explains his

¹ An interesting exception can be seen in *Ant.* 1.34, where the wording is almost identical to the LXX's:

– *Ant.* 1.34 ἔπλασεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον χοῦν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς λαβών;

– Gen 2:7 ἔπλασεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον χοῦν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς.

The construction and meaning differ slightly, but one may wonder why such a parallelism occurs only once. Now, in the prolog (*Ant.* 1.25), Josephus lays claim to philosophy, and states he is planning a treatise on *Customs and Causes*, a work he never completed, most probably because he did not have the relevant skills. It has been noticed by H. St. J. Thackeray in the introduction to his translation that in this prolog, and in the Creation story which follows, he had before him Philo's treatise *De opificio mundi*, in which we can read:

– §134 ἔπλασεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον χοῦν λαβών ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς λαβών.

The construction and meaning match Josephus' wording, in spite of a minor change of order.

declension system for the Hebrew names he transcribes, his original spelling Νῶχος has survived.

Zoar, a city close to Sodom (צוער, Gen 19:22) is spelled Ζογορα, Σηγωρ in LXX but Ζοώρ in *Ant.* 1.204; Josephus does not render ז, as we can see for Reuel, son of Esau (רעואל, Gen 36:4, LXX Ραγουηλ), spelled Ῥαουήλος in *Ant.* 2.4; the same way, queen Athalia (עתליה, 2 Kgs 11:13, LXX Γοθολια) appears as Ὀθλία (*Ant.* 9.140); and so in many other places, when there is no well known Greek name (e.g. Gaza, from עזה, is consistently rendered Γάζη).

Gath, the Philistine city (גת, 1 Sam 5:9, LXX Γεθ, Γεθθα) becomes Γίττη in *Ant.* 6.8. The month Kislev (1 Mac 1:54 and 4:52 Χασελευ) appears as Ξένιος or more accurately Ξέλιος in *Ant.* 11.148 and Ἐξελέους in *Ant.* 12.248 and 319. This feature, which occurs frequently, implies that Josephus did not check his wording against a Greek Bible known to us.

Incidentally, some specific renderings indicate that Josephus did use a Hebrew form of 1 Maccabees. For instance, 1 Macc 6:37 says that every elephant was carrying a tower and “thirty men of valor” (from שלשים אנשי חיל), which is simply impossible. Rahlfs conjectures a Greek error Λ for Δ and corrects “four”, but Josephus offers a better solution (*Ant.* 12.371), with τόξοτας “archers” and no figure: he read שלשים as שלישים (originally a team of three warriors, usually rendered by LXX τριστάτης).

As a result of this brief survey, it is appropriate, when Josephus’ paraphrase looks strange, to consider a possible problem with his Hebrew Bible.

Variant Readings

Sometimes, an awkward statement can be explained by a slight alteration of a Hebrew source. Here are two examples.

According to Gen 4:24, “Sevenfold will be avenged Cain, and Lamek seventy and sevenfold”, but Josephus states at this point (*Ant.* 1.63) that Lamek had seventy-seven children by his two wives, but he does not elaborate upon this impressive performance, unknown from ancient sources. However, a prosaic textual explanation may be ventured from the Hebrew:

The verse שבעתים יקם קין למך שבעים ושבעה includes two difficult words which can lead to a very different meaning: יקם, a rare *hofal* form from נקם, can be understood easily as the *hifil* of קום “put

up, beget”; now if the ת of the rare שבעתים is read בנ because of a slight rubbing, the sentence becomes “Seven sons Cain will beget, and Lamek seventy-seven”, and we arrive at Josephus’ wording. Anyhow, such a variant should be held as Josephus’ misreading, and can hardly be authoritative.

In *Ant.* 7.346, when Adonias tries to be proclaimed king, the opponent party includes the best warriors, the high priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, Benaya and “Shimei, David’s friend (φίλος)”. This wording, which sets Shimei at the rank of David’s friend Hushai, is very strange, for in the sequel David in his last speech to Solomon, advises him to punish Shimei, who had badly cursed him during his flight from Jerusalem. According to 1 Kings 1:8 MT, the opponents are Zadoq, Benayah “and Shimei and Rei and the mighty men (ורעי ויהגבורים)”. For “and Rei”, the LXX has a transcription καὶ Ρησει, but the Antiochian version (or “Lucianic”) translates “Shimei and his fellows, these being the mighty”. This version depends on a reading ורעיו הגבורים, where the final ו of the first word is attached to the second. Josephus saw neither version, but we can restore his Hebrew source: it read רעו after “Shimei”, hence the obvious meaning “and Shimei his fellow”, which fits poorly in this context. Again, such a variant, which may have come from rubbing, is hardly authoritative, but it shows that Josephus follows faithfully a source, even at the price of some short-sightedness.

Josephus’ Merging of Variant Readings

Here are some instances where Josephus combines two variant readings.

According to 1 Kgs 13:14 MT, the man of God is found sitting under the “terebinth” (האֵלֶה), but LXX has δρῦν “oak” (from האֵלֶן, of similar shape). In *Ant.* 8.238, Josephus says cautiously “under a tree which was thick with leaves and gave as much shade as a huge oak”, instead of a plain “under a big oak”. This lengthy description suggests that he read in his source האֵלֶה, together with האֵלֶן or באֵלֶן in a marginal gloss, hence the idea of a “oak-like terebinth”, which is a kind of oxymoron. One could contend that Josephus saw LXX and strove to combine both readings, but he does not mention the terebinth; moreover, in *Ant.* 1.342, the “terebinth” of Gen 35:4 becomes an “oak”, from the same confusion between האֵלֶה and האֵלֶן: this is clearly a misreading of the Hebrew, probably because of some corruption.

According to Ex 22:10, if someone is entrusted by the owner of an animal to keep it, and it dies or disappears, an oath by Yhwh will decide between the owner and keeper, etc. Josephus adds details (*Ant.* 4.287): “The depositary has to come before *the* seven judges and swear by God” that he is not guilty. The article indicates that the judges are already known, but there is no tradition, biblical or other, about such a rule, and one may wonder why a special institution has to be defined for this very specific case, while Josephus never mentions any procedure for the others. In Josephus’ context they cannot be other than the seven notables mentioned earlier (*Ant.* 4.214) to form the ruling body of a city. But this looks somewhat artificial. A simple textual problem may explain Josephus’ creation and remove any historical or legal concern. The “oath by Yhwh” is שבעת יהוה in MT, but ὅρκος τοῦ θεοῦ “oath by God” in LXX, from שבעת אלהים. Now the latter phrase can also be understood “seven gods” or “seven judges” (homonyms), for the interpretation of אלהים as “judges” is classical: for Ex 21:6 האלהים, LXX has τὸ δικαστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ “God’s court”, Syriac “the court” (see too *b.B. Mez.* 84a); Philo, *Spec. leg.* 4:34 speaks of a divine court. Thus, the simplest conjecture is that Josephus’ Hebrew source had שבעת יהוה in the text and שבעת אלהים as a LXX-like gloss (or vice versa), and in order to avoid discarding anything he simply read or understood “seven judges”, and connected this body with the one previously mentioned.

If we join this case to the previous ones, we may conclude that Josephus’ Hebrew source was a reference scroll, with some marginal glosses; the many corruptions of similar letters suggest that it was ancient and damaged by a frequent perusal. As for the origin of this source, Josephus states that by the time of the final assault on Jerusalem, he received by Titus’ favor a gift of sacred books (*Vita* §418), but the text is altered and the editors conjecture a lacuna at the very place where the origin of these Hebrew books should have been indicated. However, it may well have been an official copy from the temple reference library. Rabbinic tradition (*Sif. Deut.* §356) indicates that there were three copies of the Law in this library; at some point, a revision was performed, and a new eclectic text built up from them. This was the editorial birth of MT, and R. Aqiba orders the use of *new* copies only and the removal of older ones (*b.Pes.* 112a); *m.Kel.* 15:6 states that the “book of the Temple Court” does not defile the hands, meaning that it is unfit (like LXX) for public worship.

The following case has some textual implications, but they are overshadowed by a controversy on significant ritual matters.

In *Ant.* 4.213, Josephus says that everyone has to put the phylacteries on his arms (pl.), but he goes on to state that these phylacteries are to be put on the head and on the arm (sg.). This is not clear and Josephus seems to be witnessing and mixing up two different customs, as can be shown from the variants of Deut 6:8.

MT וקשרתם לאות על ירך והיו לטטפת בין עיניך “You shall bind them as a sign on your arm and they shall be a frontlet between your eyes”. However, the second verb may have a consecutive meaning “so that they may be”, all the more that the word לטטפת is not quite clear, as the LXX shows.

LXX... καὶ ἔσται ἀσάλευτον (var. -τα) πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν σου (maybe from בעיניך) “...as a sign on your arm (sing.), and they will be unshaken in front of your eyes”.

According to Philo, *Spec. leg.* 4:137–139 nothing is to be put on the forehead, and in *Congr.* §45–46, he explains that the phylacteries move with the hand (or hands); thus he read σαλευτόν (-τά) “mobile”, like the Vetus Latina *mobilia*. As for one arm or both, Philo says nothing, but some technicalities may help: instead of על ירך “on your arm” the Samaritan reads a dual על יריך “on both arms”. Again, a simple conjecture is that Josephus put together two readings, one of them being a gloss, but this is not enough: he witnesses, albeit unwillingly, two different ways of using the phylacteries.

Stages of Josephus' Redactional Activity

We do not know how the ancient writers who composed large books, such as Pliny the Elder, Dionysius of Halicarnassus or Josephus, collected and sorted out huge amounts of data, then wrote and emended drafts. For the *Antiquities*, Josephus was able to divide his material into two halves, with the exile in the middle, each half falling into ten books or scrolls of similar length. This implies a preliminary sketch of the content of the whole work. Besides this, the ancient librarians used to put at the very beginning of a scroll a summary, in order to avoid unrolling it to check its content.

Now, all the manuscripts of the *Antiquities* have a summary prefixed to each book, often with a text poorly preserved; the period

covered by the book is given at the end of every summary. Thus, we may ask whether these summaries reflect Josephus’ preliminary sketches or the work of a later copyist. The conventional answer, stated by Thackeray in the Loeb edition, is that they were composed after Josephus. Indeed, we read at the end of the summary of book 1: “The book covers a period of 3,008 years *according to Josephus, of 1872 according to the Hebrews, of 3459 according to Eusebius*”. Obviously, the words in italics cannot antedate Eusebius’ *Chronicon*, and the figures may be corrupt, but we should not exclude that at least a portion of these summaries come from Josephus’ pen, since he displays a special interest for chronology throughout his works.

The Summary of Antiquities 18

For a preliminary assessment of this question, we examine the case of book 18, in which Josephus rewrites and enlarges his previous account in the *War*. The narrative begins with the census of Quirinius in 6 CE, i.e. the direct Roman rule of Judea, and runs until Caligula’s death in 41 CE, with an appendix on the fate of the Babylonian Jews. The book covers a period of 35 years not 32 as indicated in the summary (#28 below); the error may have come from a correction after the *Chronicon*, where Eusebius squeezed the sources in order to reconcile the datings of Jesus’ birth given by Matthew and Luke.

In the following table, the summary of *Ant.* 18 is wholly translated, with a new division and numbering of the topics, for the sake of clarity. It appears in two different typefaces: Roman for the items parallel to *War* 2 (referenced in the left column), and *italics* for the additional material given in *Ant.* Some topics dealt with in *Ant.* do not appear in the summary; for convenience, detailed subtitles corresponding to them have been added in the summary in **bold**, but they do *not* belong to it.

<i>War</i> 2	Summary of <i>Antiquities</i> 18 (MS(S) AMW Lat) Roman: parallel to <i>War</i> ; <i>Italics</i> : new material; Bold : added in <i>Ant.</i>	<i>Ant.</i> 18
	1. <i>How Quirinius (Cyrenios) was sent by Caesar to make an assessment of Syria and Judea and to liquidate the estate of Archelaus, after Judea had changed from a kingdom to a procuratorship (ἐπαρχία).</i>	§1, 2 ^a , 2 ^c

(cont.)

War 2	Summary of <i>Antiquities</i> 18 (MS(S) AMW Lat) Roman: parallel to <i>War</i> ; <i>Italics</i> : new material; Bold : added in <i>Ant</i> .	<i>Ant.</i> 18
§ 117 ἐπίτροπος	2. How Coponius, a man of equestrian rank, was sent to be <i>procurator</i> (ἑπαρχος) of Judea.	§2 ^b
§ 118	3. How Judas the Galilean and certain others persuaded the masses <i>not to register their properties</i> . 4. <i>Many followed their advice, until Joazar the High Priest induced them rather to give heed to the Romans and to give an evaluation of their properties.</i>	§4–10 §3
§ 119–166 αἰρέσεις	5. What and how many were the <i>philosophical</i> schools among the Jews and what rules they had.	§11–25 (shorter)
§ 168 ^a	6. How Herod and Philip the tetrarchs founded cities <i>in honor of Caesar</i> .	§26–28
§ 168 ^b	[Tiberias.] 7. <i>How the Samaritans scattered bones of the dead in the temple during a festival, and thus defiled the people for seven days.</i>	§36–38 §29–30
§ 167	8. How Salomé, the sister of Herod died leaving Iamnia and its territory, together with Phasaelis and Archelais, to Julia the wife of Caesar (Augustus) 8a. Succession of procurators and high priests. 8b. Parthian events. 8c. Revolt in Commagene. Death of Germanicus.	§31 ^b §31 ^a , 32–35 §39–52 §53–54
§ 169–174	9. How Pontius Pilate sought secretly to introduce busts of Caesar into Jerusalem, but the people, having heard of it, rose up against him until he withdrew them from Jerusalem to Caesarea.	§55–59
§ 175–177	[Pilate builds an aquaduct using the money of the temple.] 9a. <i>Testimonium de Jesu</i>. 9b. Paulina, Mundus and Isis' priests in Rome. 10. <i>What happened to the Jews in Rome about this time.</i> 11. (?) <i>arising from the destruction of Samaria, and how Pilate slew many.</i>	§60–62 §63–64 §65–80 §81–84 §85–87

(cont.)

War 2	Summary of <i>Antiquities</i> 18 (MS(S) AMW Lat) Roman: parallel to <i>War</i> ; <i>Italics</i> : new material; Bold : added in <i>Ant</i> .	<i>Ant.</i> 18
	12. <i>Charges against Pilate brought by the Samaritans before Vitellius.</i>	\$88
	13. <i>How Vitellius compelled him to proceed to Rome to render an account of his actions. Tiberius dies before his arrival</i> (15/3/37)	\$89
	14. <i>The ascent of Vitellius to Jerusalem and the honour accorded him by the people. Passover</i>	\$90
	15. <i>And how he thereupon permitted them to keep under their own control the sacred robe that lay in the Antonia (tower) in custody of the Romans.</i>	\$91–95
	16. <i>The war of Herod (Antipas) the tetrarch with Aretas the king of the Arabians and Herod's defeat.</i>	\$109–114
	17. <i>How Tiberius Caesar wrote to Vitellius—to induce Artabanus the Parthian to send hostages to him—and make war on Aretas.</i>	\$96–105 \$115
	18. <i>The death of Philip and how his tetrarchy became provincial territory.</i> (Lat. adds: <i>de baptista iohanne</i>).	\$106–108
	18a. John the Baptist.	\$116–119
	18b. Vitellius and Herod in Jerusalem. Tiberius' death. Passover.	\$120–125
	18c. Agrippa. Descendants of Herod the Great.	\$126–142
	18d. Agrippa's extravagance and banishment.	\$143–154
§ 178	19. The voyage of Agrippa to Rome to Tiberius Caesar.	\$126; 155–167
§ 179	20. And how, after being accused by his own freedman, he was thrown into chains.	\$168–204
	20a. Tiberius' illness and possible successors.	\$205–223
	20b. Tiberius' death. Gaius (Caligula) succeeds him.	\$224–234
§ 181 ^a	21. How he was released by Gaius after the death of Tiberius and became king of the tetrarchy of Philip.	\$235–239
§ 182–183 ^a (Spain)	22. How Herod, upon making a trip to Rome, and after being accused by Agrippa, was banished (<i>Lugdunum</i>).	\$240–252 ^a (Lyons)

(cont.)

War 2	Summary of <i>Antiquities</i> 18 (MS(S) AMW Lat) Roman: parallel to <i>War</i> ; <i>Italics</i> : new material; Bold : added in <i>Ant</i> .	<i>Ant.</i> 18
§ 183 ^b	23. And How Gaius presented his tetrarchy to Agrippa.	§252 ^b –255
§ 184	[Gaius orders to introduce his statue in Jerusalem.]	§256
	24. A strife of the Jews and Greeks in Alexandria and the dispatch of delegates by both camps to Gaius.	§257 ^a
	25. <i>The charges brought against the Jews by Apion and his fellow delegates on the score of their permitting no image of Caesar.</i>	§257 ^b –258
	25a. The Jewish delegation includes Philo of Alexandria.	§258–260
§185–187	26. How Gaius in his resentment sent Petronius to Syria as governor, giving him orders to collect a force and to open hostilities against the Jews if they did not agree to accept an image of him.	§261–262
§ 188–202	[Arrived at Ptolemais, Petronius renounces and leaves.]	§263–288
	26a. Successful intervention of Agrippa—and reversal.	§289–301
§ 203	[Wrath and death of Gaius.]	§302–309
	27. <i>The disaster that befell the Jews in Babylonia because of the brothers Asinaeus and Anilaeus.</i>	§310–379
	28. The book covers a period of thirty-two years.	

Preliminary Sketch or Summary?

The first comment to be made is that this summary is a bad table of contents, for three sets of reasons:

1. Sometimes, the order of the titles does not match the narrative flow of *Ant.* 18, as in #2, 4; 6, 17, 18, 19.
2. Several titles of the summary are not elaborated in *Ant.* 18. So the titles #2, 4, 8, 14, 16 correspond to one or two verses only of *Ant.*

- 18, which provide no further information. Conversely, some titles correspond to large sections (e.g. #20, 27).
3. Moreover, the summary ignores many portions of *Ant.* 18, almost one third of the book. In some cases, this means nothing, for the topic has already been dealt with in *War* 2, e.g. the foundation of Tiberias (#6) or the affair of Pilate's aqueduct (#9). But the omissions include significant new stories, such as the succession of the Roman procurators and of the high priests (#8a), or Herod's genealogy (#18c). The same way, the well known notices on Jesus and John the Baptist are not mentioned in the summary (see #9a and 18a as well as the addition of Lat. in #18), a strange fact if it was composed by a later copyist, supposedly a Christian. About this, one may object that in #7 of the summary of *Ant.* 1 Abraham is mentioned as "our forefather"; this would imply a Jewish hand, but if so we are getting very close to Josephus' time, for during his lifetime all his works were deposited in, and protected by, Roman public libraries, as reported by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* 3:9).

Now if we hypothesize that this summary is not a table of contents written after the book but a preliminary sketch, composed before its final redaction, all the previous difficulties disappear. A comparison of the summary with *War* 2 shows no discrepancy in the order of the topics, but the previous narrative is interlarded with new pieces of documentation (in *italics*). Besides some new stories of Jewish origin, in Judea (#7), Rome (#10), Egypt (#25), or Babylonia (#27), we can notice that important documents from the Roman archives are now available: a notice on Quirinius' mission and a full-scale report of governor Vitellius' mission around Judea (#11–18). We shall see that the merging of this fresh information with the previous accounts was not easy, as suggested by the alterations of the narrative order. We may add that the story of Asinaeus and Anilaus (*Ant.* 18.310–379) is somewhat lengthy, as if the material planned for insertion was too short to fill up a book of fixed size.

As for the omissions of the summary, it suffices to suppose that after having composed the general outline he found further data, casually or not. It is not far-fetched to surmise that the process of composing such a large work took many years. A fact hints at that: about the affair of Caligula's statue, he paraphrases Philo's *Legatio* (#25a) after presenting him as a prominent philosopher, but this is a new topic, ignored in the summary. This suggests that he discovered Philo's writings only

lately in Rome, but he was able to use them, especially *Opif. mundi*, when he wrote *Ant.* 1.

Discrepant Sources: Quirinius, Coponius, Judas

According to *War* 2.111, 117, Herod's son Archelaus, tetrarch of Judea, was banished to Gaul, and Judea became a Roman eparchy (*praefectura*). Coponius was sent as procurator, entrusted with full powers. Then Judas of Galilee incited the Judeans to revolt, but nothing more is said on any uprising. Much later, at the beginning of the revolt in 66 CE, one Menahem seized Masada (*War* 2.433–434); he is introduced as “son of Judas surnamed the Galilean, that redoubtable sophist who in old days, under Quirinius” had incited the Judeans to revolt. There is no problem to take “son” as a semitism to indicate a zealot of the same party or tenets, but here Quirinius replaces Coponius, without explanation. The same way, Eleazar, the head of the zealots besieged in Masada (73–74 CE), is introduced as “a descendant of the Judas who, as we have previously stated, induced the multitude of the Jews to refuse enrollment, when Quirinius was sent as censor to Judea” (*War* 7.253). Again, Quirinius has replaced Coponius; a new piece of information on Quirinius' census has indeed surfaced, but Josephus ignored it when he spoke of the banishment of Archelaus. This inconsistency may have come from some sloppiness, resulting in incomplete editing of chapters already written. This may have been a result of the publishing system: according to *Life* §365, every book of the *War* was circulated immediately after completion, a method which leads to inconsistencies when corrections are inserted. Incidentally we may note that in the Slavonic version of the *War* (see §III below) there is no inconsistency: Menahem's capture of Masada is not reported, and when Eleazar is introduced there is no allusion to Quirinius' census.

In the summary, both characters are mentioned without connection, and Judas' revolt is not clearly directed against either of them. In *Ant.* 18.1–2, both are sent together, but the wording is unclear: Coponius had full authority, and the census was made by Quirinius, who came in Judea for this purpose; but the latter had been sent in Syria “to be judge (or governor) of the nation and to make an assessment of their property”. At the end of the previous book, Josephus said that Quirinius had to take a census of all of Syria “and to sell the estate of Archelaus” (*Ant.* 17.355). According to *Ant.* 18.26 Augustus had

ordered a general census, of which the one assigned to Quirinius was only a part; it was completed in 6 CE. But in the sequel, Quirinius is the one who deposes the high priest Joazar; so he is acting as a procurator, for we learn that a later procurator had the authority to remove no less than four high priests in a short period (*Ant.* 18.34–35). As for Coponius' procuratorship, no act has been attributed to him when he leaves Judea (§31). By joining him to Quirinus, Josephus has simply put together the two independent bits of information he had. As a consequence, he had to extend the reign of Archelaus to ten years (*Ant.* 17.342), to fill up the period between Herod's death and the completion of the census. But in order to give some content to Coponius' tenure, we may imagine that he was dispatched with full powers in Judea *before* Quirinius' mission, or in other words that there was a certain period, maybe some years, between the banishment of Archelaus and the census together with the confiscation of his estate. *War* 2.111 gives nine years for Archelaus' reign. This figure is better, but we can go further: according to *War* 2.26–37 and 80–92 Archelaus came twice to Rome before Augustus for trial, within one year after Herod's death. The first one focused on Herod's inheritance, for his last will was unclear, but Augustus did not make a ruling. For the second one, the Judeans request that Archelaus be removed, for he was as cruel as his father, and that Judea be united with Syria under Roman rule. Then Augustus' decision was to divide the kingdom among Herod's children, which looks like the conclusion of the first trial; the second one leaves the request without answer, unless we attach to it Archelaus' banishment, mentioned much later. Thus, there is some confusion in Josephus' sources: a second trial did occur, but for some reason it appears as a kind of doublet of the first one; a possible cause is that the first request for a Romanization of Judea was voiced quickly after Herod's death (*War* 2.80).

As for the high priest Joazar son of Boethus, Josephus did not know of him in *Jewish War* 2 and *Antiquities* 17. Here, the summary introduces him as a peacemaker, who was able to reduce the revolt of Judas the Galilean (#4), a fact ignored in *War* 2; more precisely he induces the people to accept Quirinius' census. In the final account, we learn more: appointed by Herod (*Ant.* 17.164), Joazar was deposed by Archelaus at the request of pious people (17.207, 339). In *Ant.* 18.3 Josephus seems to agree with the summary, but immediately after Joazar's successful defense of the census, Judas the Galilean launches his rebellion. Josephus has pieced together his previous narrative and the summary.

Later on (18.26), Quirinius removed him from office because he was “overpowered by a popular faction”. Again, the sources are confused, with two removals of the same high priest without a new appointment in between. But the circumstances are parallel: in *Ant.* 17, he is overpowered by pious people; in *Ant.* 18, by zealots led by Judas. This twofold narrative can be connected with a recognized doublet: the revolt of Judas in Galilee, immediately after Herod’s death (*War* 2.56), and the uprising led by Judas the Galilean after the removal of Archelaus (2.111), perhaps not very distant in time, are the same event, recounted in two different ways.

In sum, Josephus has added to his previous documentation, presented in *War* 2, the content of some Roman archives. The latter should be preferred for accuracy: Archelaus’ banishment after a short tenure, Coponius, and then Quirinius’ census completed in 6 CE, Judas’ uprising, and only one removal of Joazar.

Discrepant Sources: Vitellius and the Removal of Pilate

According to the summary, the whole report on governor Vitellius (#11–17) is not connected with Tiberius’ death. Seen from Rome, it makes sense, for the major problem was to maintain a Roman *limes* preventing the eastern nations, and especially the Parthians, from any access to the Mediterranean see (*mare nostrum*). Thus Herod Antipas’ defeat by Aretas, the Nabatean king of Petra, was much more than a local issue, for it was essential that Herodian Judea (including Galilee and Philip’s tetrarchy) remain under Roman control, all the more so that the Jews were always suspected of having Babylonian or Parthian connections. At any rate, nothing is said of the campaign of Vitellius against Aretas.

In fact, it did not occur, because of Tiberius’ death. Josephus learned of it later from different sources. The first one involves Pilate’s removal. Because of some charges against Pilate, Vitellius removed him from his office, replaced him with one Marcellus and sent him to Tiberius in Rome. Pilate hurried to Italy, but before he arrived Tiberius died (on March 15th or 16th, 37). After saying this (*Ant.* 18.89–90), Josephus reports that Vitellius came from Antioch to Jerusalem by the time of Passover, made important decisions favorable to the Jews, removed the high priest Caiaphas and went home; such a trip is conceivable if Pilate is absent and Tiberius had not yet officially appointed Marcellus

to the position of procurator. In the sequel (§96–105), Josephus mentions Tiberius' letter to Vitellius (see #17), bidding him to establish friendship with the Parthians. According to Tacitus' detailed reports of this mission (*Annales* 6:31), it should be dated in 35 CE. Then, after a loose transition, Josephus reports on Philip's death, in the 20th year of Tiberius' reign, i.e. in 34 CE (§106–108). His tetrarchy was taken by Tiberius and annexed to the province of Syria. Vitellius cannot have been mentioned, for he was consul in 34 CE, and arrived only in 35 CE. Here, Josephus' slight chronological mistake indicates that he used a different source. Later we learn that Vitellius prepared a war against Aretas requested by another letter of Tiberius (§120).

The succession of these events could have been quite smooth, but would have been impossible if Tiberius actually died before Pilate reached Rome. This conclusion implies that he was removed in the beginning of 37 CE, i.e. well after Vitellius' first visit in Jerusalem; but he came without Pilate, who had all the necessary powers. So Pilate had left Judea much earlier, before this visit. In fact, the information on Pilate's late arrival in Rome seems to be spurious. It is quite possible that Josephus' source about this detail was nothing more than a kind of unwarranted saying intended to explain Pilate's disappearance from further Roman records. In fact, Tiberius had left Rome since 26 CE for various places in southern Italy, and died in Misenum; moreover, there is no ground to admit that the death of Tiberius would cancel a suit on criminal charges. Later Christian tradition held that he became a missionary in Gaul. A natural conclusion is that Pilate's removal should be dated in 35 CE, a short time after Vitellius' arrival in Antioch. The usual dating of 36 CE takes at face value Vitellius' two visits in Jerusalem at Passover, but the data can hardly be reconciled.

Indeed, on his way toward Petra, Vitellius came to Jerusalem with Herod Antipas during a major Jewish festival, but on the fourth day he received the news of Tiberius' death, which stopped the campaign. The unnamed festival was obviously Passover, which took place on the week of March 19–25 that year; so the news arrived on March 22. In other words, Vitellius would have come twice in Jerusalem for Passover, but Josephus avoided saying this, as if he suspected a problem. In fact, Vitellius' first visit to Jerusalem entails something nearly impossible, the removal of a high priest during Passover, but the details given, probably of local interest only, indicate a Jewish source. In fact, the steps he took did not necessitate his presence in Jerusalem. It may be

enough to understand that he came to the capital of Judea—Caesarea, maybe for an inspection of Pilate’s removal, but in the Jewish tradition the capital became Jerusalem, which in turn attracted a memory that he did come in 37 CE for Passover, during a campaign of major Roman interest.

At any rate, we may conclude that Josephus here strove to respect all his sources, wherever he found them (Philip’s tetrarchy and Vitellius’ favorable attitude in Judea, from the perspective of Rome and Jerusalem; Pilate’s disappearance), but the result is a difficult narrative, from which clear facts and dates are difficult to extract, even with the help of Roman historians.

A Glance into the Slavonic Version of the War

The Slavonic version of the *War* is controversial but interesting. Its *Vorlage* was in Greek, and there is some reason to surmise that it reflects the first translation by Josephus of his Aramaic *War*, before hiring educated assistants to improve the Greek—and insert further material. It is sufficient to say here first that Bishop Photius of Constantinople stated (*Library*, n. 238) that Josephus spoke of the massacre of the innocents of Bethlehem, a story found in this version only—and unconnected to Jesus (attached to *War* 1.400); and second, that all the numerous Greek books later translated into Slavonic were sent from Constantinople, the starting point of the Christian mission in ancient Russia.

Here is one example of a story given quite differently in the two versions. As for the summaries of the *Antiquities*, we may ask whether the shorter version (Slavonic) is a résumé of the other (Greek), or a kind of draft, before the insertion of further material.

<i>War</i> 2	Slavonic	Greek (usual)
While (Caesar) was thus contemplating, they brought a letter from Varus, governor of Syria, saying: “The Jews are rising to war, not wishing to be under the power of the Romans. So make your plans.”		(39) <i>Before Caesar had come to a decision on this matter, the mother of Archelaus, Malthakè, died, and Varus sent from Syria letters on the revolt of the Jews.</i>

(cont.)

War 2	Slavonic	Greek (usual)
		(40) <i>Varus had foreseen this outbreak. After the departure of Archelaus (for Rome), he had gone up to Jerusalem... and had left in the city a legion... then he had returned to Antioch.</i>
And when Caesar confided this task to Varus,		(41–54) (Sabinus, procurator of Syria, is in Jerusalem [§ 16–19]; he wants to seize the Temple treasure, whence a revolt; he hopes for help from Varus.)
		(55–65) (Insurrections put down. Sabinus is not mentioned.)
Varus took a legion and marched against those guilty of rebellion. He fought with many (troops). Many, among the Romans and among the Jews, perished.		(66–74) (Varus finally arrives in Jerusalem.)
Then the Jews surrendered.		<i>He only had to show his troops to disperse the camp of the Jews. As for Sabinus, not being able to bear the thought of presenting himself to Varus, he has previously left the city for the coast.</i>
and undertook to hand over the guilty.		(75) <i>Varus allocated part of the army in the countryside to catch the authors of the insurrection, many of whom were brought in. He imprisoned those who seemed the less ardent; the most culpable, in number about two thousand, he crucified.</i>
Varus sent to have them brought in. The oldest of them he shut up in prison; he crucified 2000 of the younger.		

The Slavonic account, whose length is less than a tenth that of the Greek, is simple and clear. Varus, the governor of Syria, puts down a rebellion against Rome and punishes the guilty. In the Greek, the origin of the rebellion is Sabinus, who according to *two* preceding passages (War 2.16–18 and 23), is in collusion with Antipas against Archelaus to seize the treasury, an act which Varus had explicitly forbidden

him. This gives rise to a Jewish rebellion, which he did not bring under control, until the arrival of Varus whose presence alone restored order. But Sabinus disappeared. As a matter of fact, the Judeans are in no way revolting against Rome, since they demand the eviction of Archelaus; as seen above.

The Greek account is long and complex, but the Slavonic is not a summary of it: as a matter of fact, its logic is very different, since Sabinus does not appear in it. We can understand then that either the Slavonic has systematically suppressed Sabinus in a series of disconnected passages, without leaving any incoherence, or that the Greek has introduced in three separate locations a new documentation on the plot of Sabinus by adding it to the repression by Varus (the 2,000 crucified of the Slavonic). If we are content with these considerations, it can be admitted that this second possibility is more plausible, since in the opposite case it would be necessary to assume on the part of the Slavonic translator a systematic intention to reduce and transform this particular account in a drastic way, whereas he does nothing like this elsewhere: the politico-military accounts are most often intact in the Slavonic, and sometimes even embellished with more picturesque details.

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JOSEPHUS, THE TEMPLE, AND THE JEWISH WAR

Eyal Regev

Introduction

The Great Revolt began at the temple in 66 CE, when the daily sacrifices on behalf of the emperor were suspended, and ended at the temple, when the zealots were besieged at the temple as the Romans burnt it. This fact is merely a matter of coincidence. Reading the *Jewish War* shows that not only was the temple the central *topos* of the Jewish revolt against Rome, but also the major bone of contention between the Jews themselves during the war.

This paper discusses the ideology of the temple among the Zealots and their opponents (henceforth: the anti-Zealots). It aims to show that each side regarded the temple as the main cause of the civil war against the other side. I will begin with Josephus' often repeated claim that the Zealots polluted the temple and then examine his justification for the destruction of the temple. Following the examination of Josephus' own discourse, I will turn to the question of its historical validity in light of current postmodern historical theories. In order to re-evaluate the historical context and integrity of Josephus' views, I will correlate his discourse with the actual place of the temple in the acts and aspirations of the Zealots and their opponents.

Ever since Martin Hengel's monograph *The Zealots* and Martin Goodman's book *The Ruling Class in Judaea*,¹ scholarship on Josephus has seemed to somewhat neglect the political and religious ideologies

¹ Hengel 1989; Goodman 1987. For the actual historical events and the question of Josephus accuracy in *War*, see Price 1992. I am well aware of the fact that the different Zealot movements differed in their ideological approaches to the temple and their involvement in the cult. Thus, for example, Elazar ben Hanania was the *strategos* of the temple and the son of a former high priest, and Elazar son of Somon and Zachariah son of Avikilus were priests (see Stern 1989, 287–91). However, I will not distinguish between the different factions of Zealots and Sicarii since the discussion of the differences between their attitudes towards and involvement in the temple cult requires a separate study. I follow Hengel (1989, 65 and *passim*) in using the term in its broadest sense. I should also remind the reader that from the polemical perspective of their opponents, including Josephus all the Zealots were probably quite the same.

behind the Great Revolt in general and the Zealot movement in particular. Scholars now tend to be more critical concerning Josephus' discourse of the *Jewish War*,² and are also more occupied with literary and rhetorical concerns, such as reading Josephus in light of Greco-Roman historical conventions.³ Nevertheless, I think that it is still necessary to understand why the Zealots rebelled, and even more so, why the Jews fought so bitterly with each other during the revolt.

Polluting the Temple

In fifteen places throughout his *Jewish War* Josephus accuses the Zealots of polluting the temple or of sacrilege. Within these fifteen cases, he blames them three times for being responsible for impurity in general. He calls the rebels "those who are polluting the Sanctuary" (*War* 2.423);⁴ He argues that the Zealots trampled the temple (*War* 4.262); and in his famous speech to the Zealots in book 5, he declares "this spot (namely, the temple) which you have polluted" (*War* 5.380).

Josephus also accuses the Zealots of the ritual defilement of the temple. He says that on Passover, John of Gischala's men, most of whom were ritually defiled (*anagnoi*), entered the temple hiding their swords (*War* 5.100). Interestingly, Josephus mentions that the anti-Zealot party was much more scrupulous. The high priest Annaus son of Annaus decided not to attack the Zealots in the temple, because, among other things, his troops were 'without previous purification' (*mē proēgneukos*), and must have been purified before entering it (*War* 4.204–205). The warfare of the Zealots also caused the defilement of the sanctuary with blood and corpse impurity. The Zealots who were wounded in the clashes in the city climbed up to the temple, staining the sacred pavement with their blood, hence their blood defiled the sanctuary (*War* 4.201). The war between the different Zealot fractions interfered with the worship of the common and innocent people who

² Cohen 1979; Schwartz 1990.

³ Mader 2000; Landau 2006; Mason 2009.

⁴ All translations follow Thackeray in the Loeb Classical Library edition.

were allowed to enter the temple, and some even died near the altar (*War* 5.15–18).⁵

Most important, I believe, are the accusations concerning the moral impurity of the Zealots and consequently the moral pollution of the temple. In this case sins defile either ritually or symbolically/metaphorically. In his speech, the high priest Jesus son of Gamliel condemns the Zealots for polluting the hallowed ground with their impiety, being intoxicated in the sanctuary, and expending the spoils of their slaughtered victims upon their insatiable bellies (*War* 4.241–242). A bit earlier in Josephus' narrative, Gurion and Simon son of Gamliel assemble the people and urge them "to purge the sanctuary of its bloodstained polluters" (*War* 4.159). Later on, Titus ordered Josephus to call Simon son of Giora and tell him to depart from the temple and fight the Romans outside "without involving the city and the sanctuary... and he should no longer pollute the holy place nor sin against God" (*War* 6.95). On another occasion, in Titus' speech, the Roman general asks: "Why do you defile the temple with the blood of foreigner and native?" (*War* 6.126); "...it is not I who force you to pollute these precincts" (*Ibid.* 127). Titus also promised to protect the temple that no Roman would enter and desecrate it (*Ibid.* 128).

Several times in his own speech in book 5, Josephus relates to the defilement of the temple by the Zealots, and it seems that the nature of the impurity he discusses is mainly moral. Josephus cries: "this spot (namely, the temple) which you have polluted" (*War* 5.380); "the spot which you have stained with blood of your countrymen" (*War* 5.381). He then compares Titus' siege to the one by Pompey in 63 BCE and argues that the temple fell to Pompey, even though those besieged there "were innocent of such offences as yours against the sanctuary and against the laws." (*Ibid.* 397). Josephus continues with harsh condemnations regarding the Zealots' crimes: "the temple has become the receptacle [namely, of moral sins: thefts, treacheries, adulteries and murder, listed above]; native hands have polluted those divine precincts, which even Romans revered from afar, forgoing many customs of their own in deference of your law." Josephus then concludes

⁵ For the war at the temple between the camps of Eleazar son of Simon and John, see also *War* 5.21–26. Compare also the latter clashes between Eleazar and John in *War* 5.101–105.

with an ironic rhetorical question: "and after those sins you still expect that God will be your ally?" (*Ibid.* 402).⁶

Three times Josephus accuses the Zealots besieged in the temple mount of plundering sacred goods. According to Josephus, Eleazar son of Simon's stronghold was the inner court of the temple, where he kept weapons in this holy place. His people used consecrated articles, since they regarded nothing as impious (*War* 5.7–8). John of Gishcala also misappropriated the sacred timber (designated by Agrippa II to underpin the sanctuary) for the construction of engines of war (*War* 5.36; cf. *Ibid.* 39). John plundered the sacred in an additional manner, when he melted holy vessels and gave his soldiers the sacred wine and oil designated for the daily sacrifices (*War* 5.562–565).⁷ These three cases of sacrilege are presented as moral transgressions against the temple cult.

Before considering the rhetorical and historical implications of Josephus' portrayal of the Zealots as desecrating the temple, it is necessary to take note of the notion of the temple's defilement in the Jewish and Greek religions as well as in Josephus' own usage of the language of pure-and-impure. Accusations of defiling the temple are quite common in Second temple literature, especially in the Dead Sea Scrolls⁸ and the Pseudepigrapha.⁹ The crime of sacrilege and the need to purify the temple from such sins are also common in ancient Greek religion.¹⁰ Josephus' non-Jewish readers therefore could sympathize with his condemnations of the pollution of the sacred. Nevertheless, nowhere in Jewish writings are the accusations of defiling the temple as frequent as in Josephus' *Jewish War*. Nowhere is it presented in such varied forms of ritual and moral terms.

Moreover, the noun *katharos* (clean, pure) occurs twenty-five times in *War*¹¹ (for the sake of comparison, in the New Testament it also occurs the same number of times).¹² The noun *miasma* and the adjective *miaros* are also relatively common in *War*. Related nouns and

⁶ For the manner in which Josephus expressed his own views in the speeches of Annaus, Titus and himself in *War*, see Linder 1972, 21–48; Michel (1984, 961, 965–74) who traces priestly ideology in these speeches.

⁷ The Zealots, on the other hand, argued that they should make use of the divine things on behalf of the divinity (*War* 5.564). Cf. Price 1992, 151–53.

⁸ Regev 2003, 257–261.

⁹ Jub. 23:21; 30:15–17; T. Levi 14:5–15:1; Ps. Sol. 8:11–12.

¹⁰ Parker 1983, 64–66, 94, 125, 144–90.

¹¹ Rengstorff 1973–1983, 2.399.

¹² Kittel 1968, 3.423–426.

adjectives such as *hagnos*, *bdeluttomia*, and *agos* also occur several times.¹³ This fact leads to the conclusion that although *War* is a political-historical treatise, and not a legal or halakhic one (as opposed to portions of *Antiquities* or *Against Apion*) it also dealt with ritual and religious concepts. One should also bear in mind Josephus' countless usage of the nouns *ieron* and *naos* in *War* (although many of them are topographical terms related to the temple). In fact, the Josephus presents the temple as a major theme in *War* in his introduction (*War* 1.26). The descriptions of the temple, and its destruction (and the political and military processes that led to this disastrous event) are the climax points of his narrative.¹⁴

Josephus' Theology of Destruction

The moral condemnation of the Zealots and the sicarii is of course very common in *War*.¹⁵ But the persistent claim that their sins pollute the sacred is more far-reaching than mere polemics against political opponents. Josephus not only tries to persuade the reader that the Zealots are immoral and wicked. He makes a point concerning the dreadful fate of the temple as a consequence of their immorality.

Several times throughout his Jewish War, Josephus puts the responsibility for the destruction of the temple on the Zealots and their impious acts. Thus, for example he implies that the Zealots will be responsible for the burning of the temple (*War* 5.416–418). In the following assertions of what can be called Josephus theology of destruction, he pretends to know how God reacted to the Zealots' pollution of the temple. In the very beginning of the revolt, when Cestius Galus failed to capture Jerusalem in 66 CE, Josephus forecasts the later dire implications of this event for the temple. He professes that God has

¹³ *Miasma* (stain, pollution, uncleanness, outrage, sacrilege, fault): *War* 2.455, 473; 6.48, 110; *mīaros* (unclean-wicked, horrible, outrageous): *War* 1.506, 622, 624, 635; 5. 560; 6.124, 347; 7.267, 368; *hagnos* (purity, indicates the fitness of worship): *War* 3.374; 6.425; *bdeluros/bdeluttomai* (to be disgusted by, loathe): *War* 6.172; *agos* (sacrilege) *War* 4.163; *ēnages* (accused, laden with guilt): *War* 2.472. See Rengstorff 1973–83, 1.10–11, 318; 2.94; 3.112.

¹⁴ Chapman 2005, 293–303.

¹⁵ See their bloodshed in *War* 4.317, 325–326; 4.381–385. See also *War* 4.150, where the Zealots' immorality derives from causing collisions between the different official authorities. For the Zealots' transgression of the laws of the Torah, see Hengel 1989, 184–85.

turned away from His sanctuary (*War* 2.539). Later on, in another crucial step towards the completion of the so-called *coup d'état* in Jerusalem, after the death of the high priests Annaus son of Annaus and Jesus son of Gamliel, the historian explains that God desired to purge the sanctuary by fire, due to its pollutions (*War* 4.323). A bit later he mentions a mysterious prophecy that "the sanctuary will be burnt to the ground by right of war whensoever it should be visited by sedition and native hands should be the first to defile God's sacred precincts" (*War* 4.388). This prophecy is fulfilled when he states that "the Romans entered to purge with fire the internal pollution (of the city)" (*War* 5.19).

The divine justification for the destruction is fully expressed when the historian claims that the city "was no longer God's place" and could not survive "after becoming a sepulcher for the bodies of thine own children and converting the sanctuary into a charnel-house of civil war" (*War* 5.19). Later he continues to portray the departure of the divine spirit in familiar terms from Ezekiel 10: "the Deity has fled from the holy places" and taken His stand on the side of the Romans (*War* 5.412).

The Challenge of Postmodern Historical Theory

Josephus presents a very consistent ideology in which the Zealots polluted the temple in every possible manner and caused God to desert it, leaving it to destruction. This is one of his major theological arguments in his *Jewish War*, weaved into the narrative of the civil war and the Roman siege. But here one should certainly ask whether Josephus' arguments actually reflect the history of the Great Revolt or merely represent his own political bias as a Flavian protégé, justifying his defection to the Roman side.¹⁶ Did the anti-Zealot party actually claim that the Zealots were polluting the temple during the revolt? Did the Zealots really defile the temple and plunder the sacred goods? Did Annaus the high priest and his followers infer that the transgressions of the Zealots, and not the Roman policy, cause the destruction of the temple?

Some may think that these are quite naïve questions considering Josephus' bad reputation as a highly biased historian, who took

¹⁶ For Josephus and the Flavians, see Rajak 1983, 185–222.

an active part in the revolt, crossing the lines from the rebels to the Romans, and later writing the *Jewish War* under Flavian supervision. Others are still baffled whether Josephus views represent his original position during the War. Indeed, since Josephus is the initial source on the Great Revolt, the task of evaluating the validity of his assertions should be taken seriously.¹⁷ Determining the authenticity of Josephus' own evaluation of the events is a difficult task. Although many dealt with this problem from different angles, it seems that previous discussions lack an explicit and lucid methodological discussion of what the expectations of the modern historian from the historical narrative are, and what tools enable the scholar to ascertain the credibility of the ancient source.

Post-Modern historical theory, as well as the reactions to it by 'traditional' historians, is concerned with the problem of historical authenticity and credibility, rephrasing old questions in a new guise. Applying this debate to the study of Josephus demonstrates that the problem of Josephus' credibility is not an isolated instance of a political bias by a problematic historian, but rather a general difficulty which is fundamental to any historical research. Coping with the problem of the historical validity of Josephus' discourse may therefore draw certain insights from the historical theory.

In recent years serious doubts have been raised concerning our actual ability to learn about the past. The rise of the so-called Post-modern history challenges current historical scholarship and forces us to rethink the endeavor of the historian. Post-modern critique of traditional historical theoretical methods argues that even if past events are ontological facts (and this point is actually disputed by many), their study is by no means empirical. We cannot directly approach the past. The historian works with sources which are narrative accounts, not with "facts."¹⁸ Theorists of Post-modern history therefore reduce history from objective facts to narrative discourse, claiming that it is socially constructed (just like literature, language and any other cultural phenomenon).

Post-modern history is influenced by Jaques Derrida's literary of deconstructionism. The meaning of deconstructing is to make manifest

¹⁷ On *War* as Flavian propaganda, see Weber 1973; Cotton and Eck 2005. For a relatively positive appreciation of Josephus' reliability in *War* see Rajak 1983, esp. 106–107, 127, 138, 141–42; Price 1992, 180–93. For a bibliographic survey, see Bilde 1988, 191–200.

¹⁸ McLennan 1984, esp. 141–42.

the hidden meanings which continue to lurk within the silences and absences that the text attempts, in vain, to impose. In deconstruction, writing absorbs the social context into a textuality that is wholly alienated from the real. Or, using Derrida's own famous words: "il n'y a pas de hors-texte", there is nothing outside the text.¹⁹

This approach shaped the historical thinking of historical theorists like Kellner, who argues that one should look in ways which reveal the problematics that have shaped the strategies of the historical story, however hidden or disguised they may be. He calls for paying attention to the source's rhetorical language, and understanding how the 'straightness' of any story is a rhetorical invention, i.e., the straightness and coherence of any historical story lie not in the 'events' of the past but in an aesthetic, narrative form.²⁰

Hayden White, perhaps the most notable among these theorists, asserts that "no given set of casually recorded historical events can itself constitute a story; the most it might offer to the historians are story *elements*. The events are *made* into a story by the suppression or subordination of certain of them and the highlighting of others, by characterization, motif repetition, variation of tone and point of view, alternative descriptive strategies, and the like", as in "the emplotment of a story or a play".²¹ He also stresses the subjectivity of the interpretation given by the historian viewing it as "the projection, on the cognitive, aesthetic, and moral (or ideological) levels of conceptualization of the various tropes authorizing prefigurations of the phenomenal field in natural language in general".²²

It is hard to deny that the subjectivity of both the sources and their interpreters complicates the quest for historical truth. One should also admit the postmodern premise that there is no independent standard for determining which of many rival interpretations of a given event is true.²³ Scholars of Josephus, however, are already familiar with the distinction between the bare facts and the historical narrative framework which Josephus constructs, and some might even argue that in certain cases Josephus re-created the facts according to this framework.²⁴ If

¹⁹ Spivak 1976, 158.

²⁰ Kellner 1997. See also Berkhofer 1997.

²¹ White 1978, 84.

²² White 1978, 74. For the problem of "objectivity" and multitude interpretations, see the bibliography in Collins 2005.

²³ Cf. Stanley Fish's assertion cited in Collins 2005, 150.

²⁴ Cohen 1979, 100.

this is the case, it seems that historical narrative (and ancient history in general) can hardly be regarded as reflecting an actual history of events, independent of historiography and historical biases. All that is left is Josephus' own discourse, with no possibility to discern or reconstruct historical truth.

This approach, however, is contested by several scholars, whose views are particularly relevant to the present discussion of Josephus' discourse on the temple's pollution and destruction. As Martha Spiegel responded in her criticism of Post-modern historical theory, this is an absorption of literature and history (or society), text and context, without any access to 'reality': "if we want to contextualize texts, we cannot achieve this merely by textualizing the context. New Historicism, like cultural history, appears to gloss over the problem of the text-context relationship by the adoption of semiotic mode of analysis which occludes the issue altogether by treating culture, institutions, ideology, and power as merely interworked sets of symbolic systems or codes".²⁵ The vocation of the historian therefore cannot be fully 'textualized' or reduced into a 'narrative'.²⁶ Arnaldo Momigliano has added a somewhat old-fashioned argument to the debate: "What has come to distinguish historical writing from any other type of literature is its being submitted as a whole to the control of evidence".²⁷ Nevertheless, the use of evidence for reconstructing history, however, now becomes a much more complicated task, and is not always successful. But it is much more interesting and beneficial than studying ancient texts merely as literature.²⁸

Contextualizing Josephus' Discourse: The Zealot's Capture of the Temple

In what follows I would like to test Spiegel's methodological comment about the necessary relationship between text and context, attempting to rehabilitate the authenticity and credibility of a certain aspect of

²⁵ Spiegel 1997, 192.

²⁶ Spiegel 1997, 195–98. See also Fox-Genovese 1997, 85.

²⁷ Momigliano 1984, 51. For views which are critical towards "the descent into discourse", that is, the dependence of historical writings on language in which speech constitutes reality, arguing for "qualified objectivity", see Collins 2005, 29. For Richard Rorty's *Nonfoundationalism* ("truth is not real, but derived from the quest for coherence and shared beliefs") and its critics, see the survey in Collins 2005, 137–39.

²⁸ Himmelfarb 1997, 173.

Josephus' discourse regarding the debate over the temple during the revolt. I suggest reading Josephus' discourse on the Zealots' pollution of the temple and its dire consequences against their context in Josephus' own historical narratives of events. I believe that this may provide criteria for examining the validity of Josephus' main argument. In attempting to contextualize Josephus' discourse I wish to "deconstruct" his narrative in a way that joins different parts of his discourse, trying to reveal aspects which Josephus actually tries to conceal.

I think that the key for this contextualization is the Zealots' initial interest in the temple. Their interest and acts in relation to the temple and the sacrificial cult may have been perceived by the anti-Zealots, Josephus included, as illegitimate, immoral and defiling. The very first act of the Zealots, led by Eleazar son of Ananias, was a step which officially opened the revolt, was the cessation of pagan sacrifices in general and the sacrifices on behalf of the emperor in particular (*War* 2.409–421). This symbolic act recapitulated the Zealots' interest in cultic reform directed towards both the Romans and the traditional high priesthood and aristocracy in order to remove the danger of pagan desecration of the temple. However, the cessation of these sacrifices is also closely related to their ideology of religious and national freedom.²⁹

When the Zealots completed the take-over of the temple in 68 BCE, they took upon themselves the election of the high priesthood, appointing by use of lots ignoble and low born individuals, who were not of traditional honorable priestly descent.³⁰ Josephus gives a hint concerning the Zealot temple ideology when he mentions the Idumaeans' aim to protect "the house of God" (*War* 4.281). Lastly, as opposed to his claim that God deserted the temple due to the sins of the Zealots, he mentions the Zealots' assurance that the temple will not fall to the Romans since God dwells in it (*War* 5.458–459).

I also suspect that the fact that the main scenes of the early revolt took place at the temple Mount is not a matter of coincidence. In the first clashes with the pro-Roman party and the Roman troops, the

²⁹ For the cult of the ruler and the complete identification of the king with the state, see Hengel 1989, 100–107. For the danger of gentile desecration, see *ibid.* 209. Josephus attributes the ideology of freedom to the Forth Philosophy (*ibid.* 90–127), but, as Hengel implied, it was characteristic to the Zealots in general.

³⁰ *War* 4.147–157. The other priests wept when they saw the degradation of the holy office (*ibid.* 157). The Zealots burnt Ananias' house (2.426; cf. 2.441), and killed Annaus and Jesus son of Gamliel (*War* 4.314–318, 322, 325). These assassinations may have been a systematic attempt to terminate the competing priestly regime. For the sake of comparison, the Zealots' did not kill all the aristocrats. Cf. Price 1992, 93–94.

rebels gathered at the temple mount (*War* 2.422–423). During the feast of wood-carrying there was a conflict between the rebels and the peace party at the temple (*War* 2.425). Menahem the Sicarii was attacked in the temple by other rebels (*War* 2.444–445). After defeating Cestius Gallus, the aristocratic coalition that took over the revolt (headed by Annaus son of Annaus, and later defeated by the Zealots) gathered there and appointed generals, probably also releasing the temple Mount from the Zealots' grip after the Zealots stopped the sacrifices on behalf of the emperor (*War* 2.562).³¹ After the *coup d'état* of 68 CE, the Zealots were concentrated in the temple Mount.³² Josephus states that the temple became the rebels' fortress, "the headquarters of their Tyranny" (*War* 4.151).³³ Thus, for example, at a certain stage during their reign, the Zealots nominated a court of seventy lay judges at the temple (*War* 4.36).

Gathering all these pieces of information scattered throughout the *Jewish War*, it now seems that the main aim of the Zealots in the years 66–70 was to control the temple. Control not only in the military sense, but especially ruling the cult, ceasing the sacrifices on behalf of the Roman emperor, and nominating a high priest not affiliated with the families nominated by the Romans.

But, according to Josephus' own discourse, the control of the temple was also the main concern of the anti-Zealot party. In his speech on the eve of the revolt, Agrippa II warns that a revolt will lead to the destruction of the temple (Josephus emphasizes his claim that the temple is more important to the Jews than their wives and children) (*War* 2.400–401). In Annaus' speech, the main theme is his call to save the temple from the hands of the Zealots. Annaus refers to their defilement of the sanctuary and contrasted their behavior with the Romans' respect and votive donations to the Jewish cult.

According to Annaus, the Romans donated to the temple votive offerings and never overstepped the limits of the permitted area fixed in the temple, or violated the temple rules, but from afar beheld with awe the walls of the sanctuary. However, Annaus adds, the Zealots,

³¹ Price 1992, 56–57. Price (*ibid.* 57) noted that "there is no indication in *BJ* that the revolutionaries ever relinquished control of the temple Mount before the temple meeting, but the aristocratic leaders of the new government had free access until 67/8".

³² E.g. *War* 3.196, 198; 4.272, 305, 570. According to Price 1992, 57, when the Zealots broke away from the coalition, they did not need to capture the temple Mount but merely used their base at the temple and did not let their opponents to enter it.

³³ Here he refers to the appointment of the high priest by lot.

our fellow Jews, perambulated in the temple with hands stained with the blood of their countrymen (*War* 4.181–182). Annaus' speech, encompassing *War* 162–192, stresses the anti-Zealot temple ideology. Annaus' major aim is to urge the adherents of the peace party to act against the Zealots, demonstrated by his call: "Will you wait for the Romans to succor our holy places?" (*War* 4.173). He mourns the abominations committed in the temple, since its unapproachable and hallowed places are crowded with murderers.³⁴ The central role of the temple in this speech is also stressed by its context: indignation towards the Zealots' occupation of the Sanctuary, and by Josephus' portrayal of Annaus as gazing on the temple during his speech (*Ibid.* 162). Josephus also adds that Annaus was speaking as a high priest (*Ibid.* 164). Annaus seals his speech declaring that he is willing to die for the sake of "God and the Sanctuary" (*War* 4.191).

In his own speech, Josephus introduces the history of the temple in order to show that God saved his people only when they were committed to divine fate without resort to hand or weapon, hence the future of the temple is dependent not on Jewish warfare, but commitment to God.³⁵ He argues that the Romans will not destroy the temple since they revered even the holies of the enemies and "restrained their hands from them" (*War* 5.363). Elsewhere, Titus repeatedly blames the Zealots for bringing destruction upon the temple.³⁶ Titus also emphasizes that the Romans acknowledged the sovereignty of the temple cult (*War* 6.335–336). Towards the end of his *Jewish War*, Josephus continues to stress that foreign kings paid respect to the Jewish temple through donations.³⁷

All these long speeches that Josephus puts in the mouths of his heroes aim to show that the anti-Zealot party is concerned with the temple as much as the Zealots, and that anyone who wishes to continue the sacrificial cult should refrain from revolting against the Romans.

³⁴ *War* 4.163; cf. *ibid.* 171, 172, 181.

³⁵ According to Josephus, God in his wonders destroyed the enemies of "this holy place" (*War* 5.377); Abraham lifted his pure hands towards it (*ibid.* 380); Nechos, king of Egypt, felt awe towards it (*ibid.* 381). Josephus also mentions the story of the loss of the Holy Ark to the Philistines and its triumphant return, emphasizing expiations propitiating the sanctuary (*ibid.* 385–386), the destruction of the first temple (*ibid.* 391) and the desolation of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes (*ibid.* 394).

³⁶ *War* 6.328, 346, 348, 349.

³⁷ *War* 7.44–45. For the Roman approach to the temple's destruction, including the question whether it was purposely or accidentally burnt by the Romans, see Barnes 2005; Rives 2005.

Consequently, I suggest that the accusations regarding the pollution of the temple should be evaluated in light of the struggle over the temple and the opposing attitudes about the question of whether the Roman patronage of the Jewish cult is an abomination or an unavoidable (although harmless) burden.

Now I think it is clearer why Josephus put so much stress on these accusations and explained that the destruction of the temple was the result. Given the context of the inner Jewish struggle concerning the temple and the opposing agendas of accepting and rejecting the Roman patronage of the temple cult, I suggest that Josephus' repeated claim was actually the anti-Zealot response to the Zealots' cultic revolution. I therefore follow Hengel's assertion that Josephus is actually responding to the Zealots' argument that the high priesthood and the peace party are responsible for the desecration of the temple due to Roman intervention. Hengel sensed the role of the temple in the Zealots' ideology, although he paid much less attention to this theme in comparison to his detailed discussion of the ideas of zeal and freedom.³⁸

Following the contextualization of the accusations against the Zealots in the general framework of the struggle over the temple in Josephus' reports of events and (probably imaginary) speeches, it is possible to determine with more confidence the connection between these different parts of Josephus' discourse. In Josephus eyes, the temple was the main bone of contention in the civil war of 66–68 CE. Although he tries to silence the Zealot's ideology of the temple, his concealed polemic with this ideology is found throughout *War*. I suggest that as much as Josephus stresses the immorality and impurity of the Zealots, the Zealots actually acted in the name of the very same values, declaring that Romanization equals desecration. It is also possible that the specific types of impurity which Josephus ascribed to the Zealots—ritual, moral, and plundering the sacred—were already attributed to the anti-Zealot party by the Zealots themselves.

In this paper I tried to read Josephus' discourse on the temple during the Great Revolt in order to discover his aims, and to reconstruct portions of the Zealot and anti-Zealot ideology. My use of postmodern

³⁸ Hengel 1989, 185–86, 218. Cf. his general discussion, *ibid.* 206–24. Rhoads (1976, 166–70) noted Josephus' "reverse polemics", when Josephus turned the accusations of the revolutionaries against themselves. For the inference that the Zealots aimed to purify the temple cult from Roman intervention, see *ibid.* 99–100, 107 (following Günther Baumbach).

historical theory and the reactions to it by 'traditional' historians was mostly illustrative. My main methodological point is that even a very biased historical source can provide historical knowledge if one is willing to read it in light of its own context.

However, an important historical question still remains unaddressed: Why did the Zealots believe that the virtual Roman intervention in the temple cult was abominable? Why did they regard the Roman rule and the Romanization of Judea as offensive and threatening? Perhaps a study of the interrelationship between cult and Romanization, as well as a comparative study of revolts in the Roman Empire may throw light on this matter.³⁹ But that, of course, is the subject of a different paper.

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³⁹ For several similar revolts against Rome involving cultic resistance, see Regev 2006, 33–34.

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THE PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE SYNAGOGUE IN LATE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD JUDAEA: EVIDENCE FROM JOSEPHUS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

Samuel Rocca

Introduction

Various passages from Josephus's *Life* can be helpful in achieving a better understanding of the role of the synagogue in late Second Temple period Judaea as the main public building in Jewish cities, towns and villages, as well as a place of prayer. Josephus refers to the synagogue of Tiberias as *proseuche*. This *proseuche* served as the main setting for the assembly of the *boulē*, or city council of Tiberias. This building, probably the main synagogue of Tiberias, is described as a very large building¹, seat of the *boulē*, or city council,² and in which deliberations were held on Sabbath morning,³ and service and prayers were held⁴ thus fulfilling the traditional role of the synagogue as a “house of prayer and Torah reading.” Josephus further describes this building as the site of various assemblies held in Tiberias at the beginning of the Great War in 66 CE.⁵

The monumental Tiberias synagogue appears to have served as the main public building during the week, housing various magistrates, the *boulē*, and, probably, the local *beth din* or court of law, while on the Sabbath functioning again as city council as well as a synagogue. Using various sources, a hypothetical reconstruction of this building may be possible. I would like to suggest that the main synagogue of Tiberias was a basilical structure similar to the contemporary synagogue of Alexandria, which is described in talmudic sources and mentioned by Philo. These buildings were probably inspired by the

¹ See Josephus, *Life* 277. Josephus calls it “*megiston oikema*”, a huge building, and then he adds that the building is capable of accommodating a large crowd.

² See *Life* 279.

³ See *Life* 278–279.

⁴ See *Life* 294–295.

⁵ See *Life* 280–284.

Herodian Royal Stoa on the southern side of the Temple Mount. Thus, the synagogue of Tiberias, which fulfilled religious as well as civic and juridical functions, was modeled after the Roman basilica and played a similar role.

Not only big cities but also towns and villages in Second Temple period Judea had a main public building that served multiple functions. Public buildings have been excavated at Kiriath Sefer and at Gamla. The examples at Kiriath Sefer and Gamla were similar in form to the Hellenistic *bouleterion*, and are reminiscent of Hellenistic *bouleteria* from Asia Minor. Each of these buildings occupies a central position in its respective settlement and has been identified as synagogues by the excavators. I would like to suggest that the apparent absence of other public buildings at these sites probably indicates that these should be regarded as multipurpose public structures, and not only as synagogues. The main civic building in towns and villages thus followed the earlier Hellenistic model of the *bouleterion*. This is probably in contrast to the examples in major cities which were modeled after the Roman basilica.

The Boulē and the Proseuche of Tiberias

Josephus describes in *Life*⁶ the *proseuche* of Tiberias, at the same time, as the site of the *boulē*, the city council's meetings and as house of prayer. Tiberias, founded by Antipas, had a *boulē* or city council. The *boulē* was the main ruling body of Jerusalem as well. Josephus mentions the *boulē* of Jerusalem in the Edict of Claudius to Agrippa I.⁷

⁶ In *Life* Josephus writes mainly on the period related to his appointment as the supreme commander of the Galilee on behalf of the revolutionary government in the years 66–67 CE. The central part of the book is dedicated to the rift between Josephus and the deputation sent by the central government in Galilee, on the orders of Simon Ben Gamaliel and, in lesser measure, by the high priest Hanan. The main adversary in this episode was the Pharisee leader Simon Ben Gamliel, who, influenced by his friend John of Giscala, Josephus' nemesis, attempted to have Josephus replaced and recalled to Jerusalem to justify his actions. This proved largely unsuccessful. The book also contains a harsh polemic against Justus of Tiberias, a fellow rebel and fellow turncoat. A good deal of the book is dedicated to the very difficult relationship between Josephus and the population of Tiberias, the most important city of Galilee. Josephus presents a detailed description of the three factions dividing a city that was not inclined to revolution and rebellion. See *Life* 33–34.

⁷ See Josephus, *Ant.* 20, 11. Here the *boulē* is referred to as the main ruling body of Jerusalem, even though it is followed by the word *demos*, by then a meaningless

Thanks to information scattered in *War*, *Antiquities* and the *Life*, we know quite a lot about the *boulē* of Tiberias in the late Second Temple period. Tiberias, the city founded by Antipas, had a *boulē* composed of sixty members. The *boulē* of Tiberias apparently had a chief *archon* who directed its proceedings. In the years 66–67 CE this was a certain Jeshua Ben Sapphias.⁸ There were other magistrates, including the *deka protoi*, the *archontes*, the *uparchoi* and an *agoranomos*. Under Antipas, for a time the *agoranomos* of Tiberias was no less than the future Agrippa I.⁹ The *boulē* continued well into late antiquity as the main ruling bodies of the Jewish cities of Sepphoris and Tiberias. Rabbinic sources provide some scattered information about the *boulē* of Sepphoris and of Tiberias from the third century till the end of the fourth century.¹⁰

In *Life* we are provided with the opportunity to observe the routine functioning of the *boulē* of Tiberias. This body is not merely mentioned en passant, and Josephus presents a vivid description of a dramatic assembly of the *boulē*. Josephus, who had been appointed by the revolutionary government to direct the defense of Galilee, left Tiberias for Tarichae. The next day, the Sabbath, as soon as Josephus

term—like *Senatus Populusque* in the Imperial period after Tiberius, when the *Comitia* were no longer consulted. According to Tacitus in the *Annales*, only the Senate could approve laws in the Early Imperial period. The truth is that the *comitia* continued to meet under Augustus and Tiberius and well in the Julio-Claudian period. There are some interesting sources concerning the *comitia*. Dio Cassius, *History* 37, 28, 3 and 53, 20, 4, reports on the *comitia* under the rule of Augustus and Tiberius. Pliny the Younger, *Panegyricus* 63, 2, reports on the *comitia*'s meeting under Trajan. For the Tiberian period there are also two epigraphic sources. The first is the Tabula Hebana, found in Tuscany and dated to December 19 CE. This source delineates the new arrangements of *comitia* to commemorate Germanicus. The Tabula Siarensis, found in Spain, dated to the beginning of the first century CE, contains similar arrangements of the *comitia*. On the position of the Roman *comitia* in the Early Imperial period see Millar 2002, 360–377.

⁸ On Jeshua Ben Sapphias see *War* 2.599, 3.450, 452, 457, 467, 498 and *Life* 66 ff., 134 ff., 246, 271, 278, 294 ff., 300 ff.

⁹ About the various city bodies of Tiberias, on the *boulē*, composed of 60 members, and on the *deka protoi*, see *War* 2.639–641; on the *deka protoi*, see *Life*, 69, 296; on the *archontes*, see *War* 2.599; on the *hyparchoi*, see *War* 2.615; and on the *agoranomos*, see *Ant.* 18.149. See also Levine 2000, 50.

¹⁰ On the *Boule* of Sepphoris and Tiberias in Late Antiquity see Goodblatt 2006, 404–431. In this period, however, other magistrates as the *strategoï*, or *duoviri*, are mentioned as heading the *boulē*, now much more similar to the Western *curia*. See y., *Yoma*, 1. 2. 39a. On Jewish *bouleutes* appearing in Rabbinic sources see also y., *Môed Qat.* 2. 3. 81b, y., *Peah*, 1. 16a, y., *Hag.*, 3. 48c—y., *Šabb.* 12. 3. 13c and y., *Pesh.* 4. 1. 30c.

was far away, there was a general assembly in the main synagogue, probably instigated by Josephus' enemies. The first to speak was Jonathan, whose official capacity is not specified, followed by Joshua Ben Sapphias, the city chief magistrate (*archon*).¹¹ The last to speak was Justus of Tiberias. That the debate, even if it was held on Shabbath, was formal, and not informal, is confirmed by the fact that at mid-day, the time for the main Sabbath meal, it was adjourned to the following day, with a motion of Jonathan and his friends. Moreover the council proceedings correspond to those of other *boulē* in the Greek East: speakers present their ideas and motions are passed or vetoed. Joshua the *archon* addressed the city council with the word "citizens," exactly as a speaker in fifth century BCE Athens would have done. However there is indeed a reflection of the new "revolutionary" atmosphere prevailing in the *boulē*. It is reflected in the presence of the *plethos* or

¹¹ On Jeshua Ben Sapphias see Shahar 2005, 245–66. According to Shahar Ben Sapphias was the main rebel leader in Tiberias. In fact together with Justus and John of Giscala, he is the figure that appears most frequently in *Life*. Shahar deals with four episodes in which Ben Sapphias features prominently: the destruction of the palace of Antipas (*Life* 65–69), the plundering of the wife of Ptolemy, King Agrippa's overseer (*War* 2.595–607 and *Life* 126–148), the forcible conversion of the nobles of Trachonitis (*Life* 112–113 and 149–154), and the massacre of the Tiberias Jews who opposed the war (*Life* 67). Shahar stresses that Ben Sapphias was a Zealot leader, connected with the School of Shammai and a rebel leader at local, regional and national level as well. As local leader he dominated the city proletariat of Tiberias; as regional leader he had much influence at Tarichae; and as national leader he closely collaborated with the embassy from Jerusalem. See also Ben Shalom 1993. Thus Shahar sees Ben Sapphias as a new leader, fighting against the old leadership. I think that Shahar is correct in regarding him as one of the extremist leaders. However that does not mean that Ben Sapphias was not the *archon* of the Tiberias *boulē* before the rebellion of 66 CE. Or in other words, that the *boulē* of Tiberias had a different composition, and thus there were different members after 66 CE than before the beginning of the revolt. On the contrary I think that Jeshua, as well as Justus, were respected members of the Tiberias *boulē* prior to 66 CE. Josephus in *Life* 246 describes the mansion of Joshua, evidently Joshua Ben Sapphias, as a great castle or *baris*, imposing as a citadel. He was clearly a man of means. Moreover Josephus describes Justus, son of Pistus in *Life* 40 as "a man not unversed in Greek culture." I presume that someone possessing a good *paideia* had to be a member of the ruling class. Moreover I would like to suggest that the name Justus, Zadok in Hebrew, could indicate his belonging to the priestly aristocracy, as Zadok is a priestly name. There appears to be no contradiction in Joshua having been a demagogic leader and a member of the ruling class of Tiberias. It seems to me that in Galilee, as in Judaea, the revolt was started by the leading element of the society, the aristocracy, albeit forced from below. Only later did other elements, such as the rich olive oil merchant John of Giscala, and of course the mob, take control. For Judaea proper Goodman stresses that as soon as the revolt started in 66 CE, the Sadducees, though in theory pro-Roman, took the side of the rebels so as not to lose face with the population. See Goodman 1987, 36, 42–44, 249.

mob, which assisted at the deliberations, and thus was an element of pressure against those not inclined to support the rebels. The presence of the mob during a session of the city council would have probably been unthinkable before 66 CE. As a result of the disturbance the *boulē* was adjourned for the first day of the week. Returning to Tiberias, Josephus found the people, assembling in the synagogue. Josephus was attacked verbally there by Jonathan once again, producing correspondence in front of the council and the mob.¹²

Another possible role of the *proseuche* of Tiberias, however not mentioned by Josephus, was to serve as a court of law. Although the *boulē* and the city magistrates dominated city life, there were other important authorities such as judges, who probably also administrated justice in the same building where the assembly convened.

And yet the *proseuche* of Tiberias served also as synagogue. This is evident from various passages in the *Life*. Josephus describes the chief archon of Tiberias, Joshua Ben Saphias, coming towards him holding “a copy of the laws of Moses” in his hands. Clearly, a public figure who sat on the local *boulē* would have taken the same law of Moses, the foundation of Jewish law, and read it at the synagogue on the Sabbath.¹³ Later in *Life* the same individuals congregated in the same *proseuche*, used for the proceedings of the city council, to pray.¹⁴ Josephus later clearly describes his discussion, either formal or informal, with Jeshua, the chief archon of Tiberias, in the *proseuche* during prayers.¹⁵ Thus, the building used previously for the convening of the *boulē* was later used as a house of prayer.

Josephus therefore clearly indicates that the same building was used not only as a house of prayer, as its name suggests, but was also the seat of the *boulē*. Thus, this multipurpose building served as both bouleuterion, and seat of the city council, and as *proseuche*, or house of prayer. Although it is possible that the revolutionary Zealots met in the main

¹² See Josephus, *Life* 277–280, 283–285. Josephus uses the terms *demotikon ochlon* or *plethos* to indicate an unlawful assembly of the population; otherwise he would have used the term *ekklesia*. But, as indicated in note 1 above, in the early Roman period the citizens’ assemblies in the Greek East were disappearing and instead, only the aristocratic *boulē* continued to fulfill its duties as the main organ of self-rule of the Greek city states under Roman rule. See Jones 1984, 171, 177.

¹³ *Life* 134.

¹⁴ See *Life* 294–295. Josephus uses the words: *kai pros euchas trapomenon*, which indeed indicate the act of prayer.

¹⁵ *Life* 295.

synagogue instead of the secular bouleuterion because the session was scheduled for the Sabbath, but if that were the case, Josephus would have mentioned the existence of a bouleuterion in Tiberias, as he does in Jerusalem.¹⁶ Based upon Josephus, therefore, the main public building in Tiberias in the Second Temple Period had both secular and religious functions, and it may be regarded as a multi-purpose building. Josephus therefore clearly indicates that the *proseuche* of Tiberias had a double function, secular and religious at once.¹⁷

The Proseuche of Tiberias and the Roman Basilica

Josephus describes the *proseuche* of Tiberias as a “huge building, capable of accommodating a large crowd.”¹⁸ This building is probably described in later Talmudic literature. The Jerusalem Talmud mentions indeed a building called “the synagogue of the *boulē*.”¹⁹ Only the late *midrash* on Psalms describes the synagogue of Tiberias. This is probably the same building mentioned by Josephus as a huge building. Rabbinic sources thus describe this building as a *dyplastoon* building, or a basilica with two concentric rows of columns.²⁰ However rabbinic literature is much problematic. The *midrash* on Psalms 93 is dated to the ninth century CE, and it was written after the terrible earthquake of 749 CE leveled the region. Is the building described a reflection of reality or merely a reflection of the *stoa basilike* of the Temple, a part of

¹⁶ See *War* 6.354.

¹⁷ This building, the *proseuche* of Tiberias, probably stood alone in the Second Temple period. This corresponds to the situation in the whole Greek East at least till the middle of the third century CE. In this period the city authorities did not left place for any challenger. *Euergetism* is channeled to the city public buildings. However in Late Antiquity the situation was different. Later in the fourth century CE there were at least thirteen synagogues in Tiberias (*b.*, *Ber.* 8a.); one of those was the synagogue of the Babylonian community. But by then the central authority in city life was much weaker not only in Tiberias but in the whole Greek East. On the whole the Christian church took on the efforts of *euergetism*, before reserved for the city public buildings only, but now directed to the erection of ecclesiastical buildings. See *Midr. ha-Gadol* on Deuteronomy 5: 12. See also Hirschfeld 2005, 10–12.

¹⁸ See *Life* 277.

¹⁹ See *y.*, *Šeqal* 7:5, 50c. A synagogue of Tiberias is mentioned in *m.*, *Erub.* 10: 10. See also Hirschfeld, 2005, 10–12.

²⁰ See *Midr. on Pss* 93.

the temple well known by the sages?²¹ Two *dyplastoon* buildings within a Jewish context existed at the end of the Second Temple period and may have served as source for the plan of the *proseuche* of Tiberias. The first building was Herod's Royal Stoa (*stoa basilike*) (See Plate No. 1). The second building was the main synagogue of Alexandria.

Josephus provides a detailed description of the Royal Stoa, erected in 21–20 BCE.²² The Royal Stoa, a more developed form of the stoa, was designed to roof a broad area. Since the length of wooden beams was necessarily limited, the portico was shaped as a central hall with two side aisles. The central hall was generally built to a greater height than the aisles to accommodate windows. Its length was around 280 m, a little less than that of the southern retaining wall. Its width must have been at least 40 m.²³ The Royal Stoa more closely resembled a Roman basilica than a Greek stoa. The only difference is that while the basilica is closed on all four sides, the Royal Stoa was open on one of the long sides. This huge structure was probably the biggest basilica in the Roman world. It was longer than the contemporary Basilica Julia and the later Basilica Ulpia.²⁴

The other *dyplastoon* building, the synagogue of Alexandria, mentioned by Philo as a huge building, is well-known also from a different rabbinic source, the Babylonian Talmud, earlier than the midrash on Psalms.²⁵ The fact that the same type of building is described in two

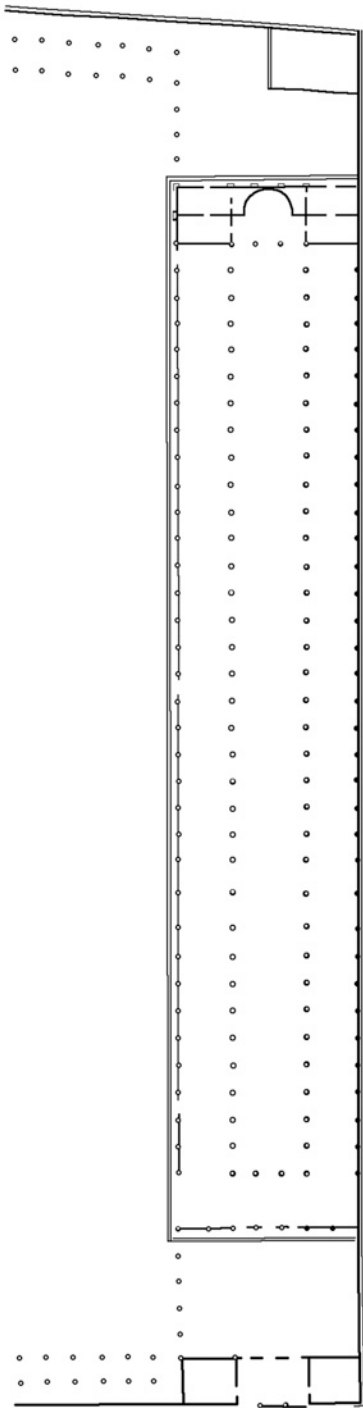
²¹ It is worthy of note the word *dyplastoon*. The Midrash on Psalms uses a technical term that was totally obsolete in Late Antiquity and in the Middle Ages. Is it possible that this term may be a reflection of an earlier reality?

²² See *Ant.* 15.411–417. "...and the Royal basilica deserves to be mentioned as better than any other under the sun... The Royal basilica had columns that stood in four rows one over against the other all along, for the fourth row was interwoven into the wall, which also was built of stone; and the thickness of each pillar was such that three men might, with their arms extended, fathom it round, and join their hands again, while its length was twenty seven feet, with a double spiral at its base; and the number of all the pillars was an hundred and sixty two. The capitals were made in the Corinthian order, and caused amazement by reason of the grandeur of the whole. These four rows of pillars included three intervals for walking in the middle of the Basilica... But the roofs were adorned with deep sculpture in wood, representing many sorts of figures; the middle was much higher than the rest, and the wall of the front was adorned with beams, resting upon pillars, that were interwoven into it, and that front was all of polished stone, insomuch that its fineness was incredible."

²³ See Bahat 1992, 64–70.

²⁴ Carpiceci 1981, 19–22, 50, 147.

²⁵ "We are taught that R. Judah said: He who has never seen Alexandria in Egypt's synagogue with the double colonnade has never seen the glory of Israel. It is said that it was like a huge basilica, one colonnade within another, and it sometimes held twice the number of people that had gone out of Egypt. In it, corresponding to the



Plan 1: Plan of the Royal Stoa at the southern end of the Temple Mount (from M., Ben Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, Jerusalem 1982, p. 125)—Drawn anew by Dalit Weiblat—Krauss.

different sources points to the authenticity of the rabbinic sources, as N. Hacham also points out in his article.²⁶ The building described by Rabbinic sources is also a huge dyplastoon basilica. Clearly this building, which displays Roman characteristics, was erected after the Roman conquest of Egypt in 31 BCE, but before 41 CE, when the pogroms suffered by the Jewish community of Alexandria would probably have made the erection of such a huge and beautiful building impossible.²⁷

seventy-one elders of the Sanhedrin, there were seventy-one golden cathedras, each of them weighing no less than twenty-one talents of gold. In the middle of the synagogue was a wooden bimah, upon which the sexton of the synagogue stood with scarves in his hand. When the time came to answer "Amen" he waved the scarves and the congregation responded with "Amen". Moreover, they were not seated haphazardly. Goldsmiths sat separately, silversmiths sat separately; blacksmiths separately, master weavers separately, and apprentice weavers separately, so that when a stranger or poor man entered the synagogue, he was able to identify the members of his craft. He would then join them, and through them earn a livelihood for himself and members of his family". See *b., Sukkah* 51B. On the Alexandria Synagogue see also Philo, *Legat.* 134, where the building is called "*megiste*" and "*perisemotate*."

²⁶ Hacham analyzes the Talmudic passage (*b., Sukkah* 51B) which describes the synagogue of Alexandria. Hacham points to the fact that the description of the Alexandria synagogue is very similar to that of the temple of Jerusalem. On the similarity between the Alexandria synagogue and the temple, see pp. 464–76. Hacham stresses various terms found in *b., Yoma* 25a to describe the temple as a "big basilica," thus matching the description of the synagogue of Alexandria. The seventy-one golden cathedras of the Seventy-one Elders are in fact similar to the Seventy-one Members of the Sanhedrin who sat in the *Lishkat ha-Gazit*, situated near the temple (*m., Sanh.* 1, 6). Finally, Hacham points out that guild members sat separately in the Alexandria synagogue in a manner similar to that in which guild members participated in the *Simchat Beth ha-Shoeva* ceremony in Jerusalem (*m., Mid.*, 2, 5). According to Hacham, the purpose of the rabbinic sources is not so much to give a detailed description of the building as to compare the Alexandria synagogue to the temple in Jerusalem. This comparison serves to explain the theological purpose of the Alexandria synagogue: to take the place of the Jerusalem sanctuary. Thus R. Judah attributes to this synagogue a status comparable to that of the Jerusalem temple. R. Judah thus legitimizes the Diaspora as an alternative center for the Jewish people. This view, however, is not accepted by all the Sages. Of the opposing view, R. Shmuel stresses the prohibition to return to Egypt. Then R. Shimon Bar Yochai concludes that Egyptian Jewry was destroyed in 115–117 CE because it challenged the Land of Israel. According to R. Shimon Bar Yochai it is forbidden to leave the Land of Israel under any circumstance. In concluding, *b., Sukkah* 55ab has a religious and didactic purpose: to explain the cause of events—the extreme hostility between the Jewish People and Rome—that led to the destruction of Egyptian Jewry. See Hacham 2003, 463–88.

²⁷ The plan of the synagogue of Alexandria appears to have originated in the caesareum of Cyrene (excavated) and in that of Alexandria (not excavated). See Ward-Perkins 1986, 366. See also Bahat 1990, 44. See also Bonacasa and S. Ensoli 2000, 90–96. This synagogue was apparently not financed by a Herodian ruler, because it stood in Egypt, which was the personal property of the Roman emperor, ruled through the *Praefectus Aegyptii*, a member of the equestrian class. Senators could visit Egypt only after receiving the express permission of the Emperor. Thus, a Herodian

It seems to me that Antipas (or Agrippa I/Agrippa II) erected the dyplastoon at Tiberias in imitation of Herod's stoa basilike and maybe also the dyplastoon of Alexandria. The building in Tiberias, like the stoa basilike in Jerusalem, was probably part of a porticoed courtyard. This building was probably no longer in use at the beginning of the fourth century, as by then, a new basilica had been constructed in the center of Tiberias,²⁸ quite different from the building described in Talmudic sources. Antipas also erected other buildings in Tiberias, including a stadium, a palace, and city walls in imitation of similar Herodian buildings.²⁹ In conclusion, it seems to me that the proseuche of Tiberias, a dyplastoon building, used as the seat of the boulē and as synagogue, followed the layout of the Roman basilica.

Proseuchai-Bouleuteria in Towns and Villages

In towns and villages there were different authorities than in the great cities. Josephus wrote that the main authority was in the hands of the seven appointed magistrates, the seven elders, who formed the lowest court, and they were found in towns and villages. Their main task was to settle legal cases. Moreover, Josephus asserts that two Levites had to be co-opted by the local courts, together with the seven judges.³⁰ The

act of *euergetism* could have been seen as interference by the imperial authorities. Moreover Josephus does not mention the building in the lists of buildings erected outside Judea by King Herod. It seems that only the family of the *alabarch* would have been capable of financing that building. See Josephus, *War* 5.205 and *Ant.* 18.159–160, 259, 19.276, 20.100 on Alexander the *alabarch*, leader of the Jewish community of Alexandria.

²⁸ This building consists of an apsidal hall with a semicircular apse facing east. It has an entrance in the eastern wall through the courtyard. This basilica was part of a larger surrounding complex of courtyards and auxiliary rooms covering an area of 200 m². See Hirschfeld 2005, 38. See also Hirschfeld 1991, 11–12.

²⁹ See *Ant.* 18.36–38, on the foundation of Tiberias; *Life* 64–69 on Antipas' palace; *War* 3.537–540, *Life* 90–92 on the stadium; and *War* 3.447–461 on the city walls.

³⁰ According to Josephus, Moses decreed that "seven men should bear rule in every city... and that two men of the tribe of Levi should be assigned to each court as subordinate officers." See *Ant.* 4.214. Josephus obviously attributes to Moses the composition of the contemporary local courts of Judea. According to Josephus, Moses decreed that "seven men should bear rule in every city... and that two men of the tribe of Levi should be assigned to each court as subordinate officers." However this commandment does not appear in the Pentateuch. See also *Ant.* 16.203.

information supplied by Josephus and the Mishnah are at odds in this regard.³¹

Where did these magistrates sit in judgment, obviously in a public building. Were there two main public buildings in each village, one with a secular function, housing the local court of law and one serving as the house of prayer, the *proseuche* or synagogue? Or was only one building was used for both purposes?

This time archaeological excavations rather than literary sources provide a possible answer. Small Jewish settlements of the late Second Temple period have one main public building. These public buildings were shaped following the Late Classical-Hellenistic *bouleuteria*, and thus followed a Greek model. These buildings are quite similar to the Late Classical-Hellenistic *bouleuteria*, such as the ones at Priene and at Miletus.³² G. Foerster, followed by Z. Maoz,³³ were the first to highlight the relationship between the early synagogue buildings of the Second

³¹ The Mishnah alludes to the law court or *beth din*. See *m., Soṭah* 1, 3 and *m., Sanh.* 11, 4. The Talmud also mentions the “seven foremost men of the town.” See *BT, Meg.* 26a. Safrai suggests the existence of two parallel legal systems during the talmudic period. One was the municipal court where the seven elders served as judges, as described above. The other system, probably later than 70 CE, operated within the sphere of the sages. See Safrai 1994, 53–54. On the other hand, according to the Mishnah, at the highest level was a court composed of three ordained judges, which dealt with indemnity law and with monetary cases. This court theoretically also had the right to pass capital punishment judgments. At a lower level was a court composed of three laymen chosen by the litigants or a court composed of one ordained judge. This court was responsible for civil and criminal cases. Thus, it could judge cases involving money, robbery and assault, award of damages, condemning a wrongdoer to be scourged, and also cases connected with *halitzah*. This court also dealt with religious issues such as the date of the new moon, intercalation of the year, and with some sacrifices such as sin-offerings, or the redemption of the second tithe. See *m. Sanh.* 1, 1–3. The courts described by the Mishna, were, at least till late antiquity, voluntary and parallel to the municipal courts. See Lapin 2006, 206–229. According to Lapin, rabbis remained a marginal group till the second half of the fourth century CE.

³² On the *bouleuterion* of Miletos see Kästner 1992, 56–58.

³³ This subject was Foerster’s Ph.D. thesis. However Foerster did not regard the Hellenistic *bouleuterion* as the only source of inspiration, citing also the *pronaos* of the Eastern pagan temples such as those at Dura. See Foerster 1972. When he published the article, Foerster had only Gamla as a model. The synagogues at Masada and Herodium were two halls transformed by the Zealots into synagogues, but these were not initially planned as synagogues. Foerster links the plan of the “Galilean” synagogues to that of the Roman basilica as a further stage in the development of synagogue architecture. See Foerster 1981, 45–48. On the relationship between the Zealot’s synagogue at Masada and the *bouleuterion*, see Yadin 1965, 78–79. However, Maoz, analyzing the synagogue of Gamla, which, in contrast to the Zealot’s synagogues at Herodium and Masada, was built as such, saw the *telesterion* and the *bouleuterion* as its primary sources of inspiration. See Maoz 1981, 35–41.

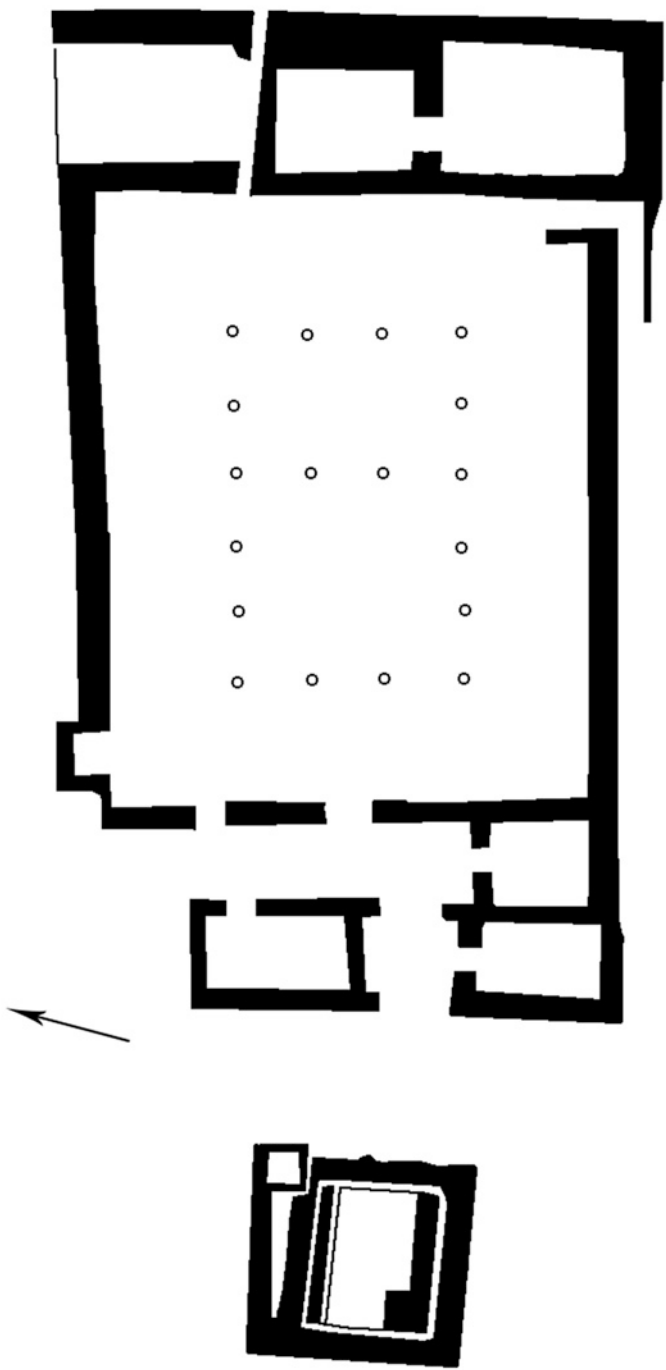
Temple period, the Zealots' synagogues at Masada and Herodium, and the Greek bouleuterion. The excavators identified these buildings as bouleuteria—shaped “synagogues”. I would like to suggest that these buildings, shaped as bouleuteria, had a multipurpose function and served not just as synagogue, but as the place of assembly for the town or village's elders during the week and as seat of the local court as well.

I shall use the term “*bouleuterion*”—shaped to describe these buildings, as the term *bouleuterion* indicates a structure housing the *boulē*, or city council numbering sometimes hundreds of members. Clearly the term *bouleuterion* is not suitable to describe the place of assembly for the town or village elders in towns and villages, hardly numbering more than ten persons. Thus the term “*bouleuterion*”—shaped is much more appropriate.

The “synagogue” of Gamla (See Plate No. 2), a small Jewish fortified city and of Kiriath Sefer (See Plate No. 3), a small village in the Modi'in region, are good examples.

The Gamla “synagogue”, one of the two main buildings excavated in the town,³⁴ consists of a building that was erected as late as the beginning of first century ce, though a mid-first-century BCE foundation, between Alexander Jannaeus and Herod, has also been proposed. Although it is not the only public building of the town, it is the only one that could have served as the seat of the elders, as court of law, and synagogue. The building is rectangular. It lies adjacent to the western

³⁴ In the last few years another public building had been excavated at Gamla. This building, in Area S, is shaped like a short basilica. Its overall size is 16 m east–west and 15 m north–south. The building consists of a wider central nave and two smaller side aisles divided in further rooms. The building was constructed of finely dressed ashlar, including huge ashlar door-jambs, and a lintel decorated with a rosette flanked by two palm trees. See Syon and Yavor 2005, 16–21. See also Syon 2001, 17–19. The excavators suggested the possibility that this building could have served as a synagogue as well. It seems to me, however, that the building is extremely similar to the main hall of the Roman *principia*, found in permanent Roman military camps dated to the Flavian–Hadrianic period. Thus, it was, perhaps, a structure erected to host the city governor on behalf of King Agrippa. There he could have convened his own court of law, in opposition to the court of law formed by the city elders. According to *Life* 46–47, Philip son of Jacimus, King Agrippa II's *eparch*, was wounded by rebels and found refuge near Gamla, sending orders to members of the garrison of Gamla to join him. Evidently, Gamla hosted a small royal garrison. It is possible that the basilica was the residence of the royal commander of the Gamla garrison. Later, Josephus (*Life* 58–61) writes that Philip son of Jacimus entered Gamla and remained there as temporary governor of the fortress-city. On the *principia* see Johnson 1983, 123–152.



Plan 2: Plan of the Gamla "Synagogue" (from S. Gutman, "The Synagogue at Gamla", L. Levine (ed), *Ancient Synagogues Revealed*, Jerusalem 1981, p. 31).—Drawn anew by Dalit Weiblat—Krauss.

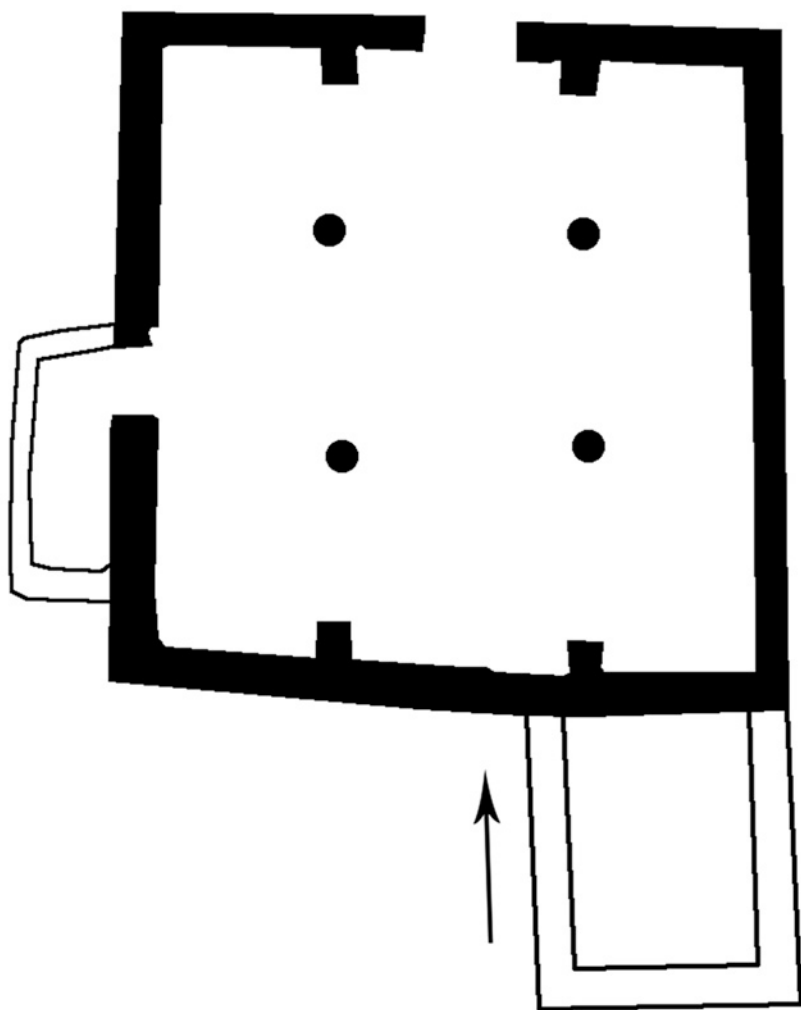
city-wall. It was oriented along a northeast to southwest axis and is 25.5 m. long by 17 m. wide. The main feature is a hall, 13.4 by 9.3 m. In the northwestern corner of the hall is a niche, possibly used for storage. Two entrances are located in the southwest, one clearly the main entrance leading to the hall. Another entrance from the east opens onto the eastern side. A peristyle of fourteen columns surrounded the main hall on all four sides. The corner columns are heart-shaped. Between the wall and the columns, one row of benches surrounds the building. A stepped cistern just west of the main entrance to the synagogue may have been used as mikveh, but it dates from the period of the First Jewish Revolt. East of the main synagogue hall are several rooms, one of which may have had an opening into the main hall and contained benches. This may have been used as a study room.³⁵

The building at Kiriath Sefer, dated to early first and second centuries BCE, was erected in the most prominent part of the settlement. It is a square structure, oriented along a northwest-southeast axis. Its northwestern facade was built of hewn stone. Outside the building was found a large lintel with traces of rosettes and diagonal lines. The floor was paved with flagstones. There are benches along three sides: northeast, southeast and southwest. Behind the benches was an aisle, about 1.8 m. long, similar to one in the synagogue of Gamla. The hall contained four columns with Doric-like capitals. The building was offset from the surrounding complex. It was abandoned in the aftermath of the Bar Kokhba Revolt.³⁶ However it is important to emphasize that the building at Kiriath Sefer served the population of a very small village and thus the building probably served only as synagogue, as there was hardly the need for a meeting house in such a small village.

Clearly, these “*bouleuterion*” shaped buildings were multipurpose, first as the site where the local magistrates and the court (*beth din*) were periodically convened; then, on the Sabbath, the building assumed the secondary function of synagogue. Thus, the Torah was read every Sabbath and the priestly and levitical courses performed their rituals when not in Jerusalem. The shape of the Greek *bouleuterion* likewise suggests both uses. It is important to underline the civic function of both the Torah reading, the reading of the *nomos patrios* or law of the

³⁵ See Levine 2000, 51–52.

³⁶ See Levine 2000, 65–66. See also Magen, Zionit, and Sirkis 1999, 26–28.



Plan 3: Plan of the Synagogue of Kiryat Sefer (from Y., Magen, Y., Zionit, and E., Sirkis, "A Jewish Village and Synagogue of the Second Temple Period", *Qadmoniot* 32, 1 (117) 1999, p. 28).—Drawn anew by Dalit Weiblat—Krauss.

state, and the priestly and levitical courses, which stood for the state and for the exclusive cult of Judaea, that of the temple of Jerusalem.

It is important to draw another parallel to the Greek bouleuterion, which also had a sacral character. There was always an altar in these buildings.³⁷ Any time the boulē met, sacrifices were made to the city patron god. In the Greek world a civic activity was obviously followed or preceded by a cultic activity, a sacrifice to the gods. The purpose of these sacrifices was clear: the sacrifice could bring luck a priori to the decisions of the council, or a posteriori, it could show that the decisions taken followed the favor of the gods. Although sacrifices were not made in the synagogue, the ritual Torah reading on the Sabbath gave the building the same sacral character that sacrifices gave to the bouleuterion. Thus, the same can be said of the synagogue and Torah reading. The purpose of Torah reading each Sabbath, an activity connected to both legislation, the main activity of the city council, and judgment, the main activity of the court of law, was thus as a source of inspiration, or a confirmation from the Holy Scriptures for the activity of the assembly or the judges. Thus, instead of sacrifice, an activity permitted only at the interior of the temple precinct, the Jews read from the *nomos theos*, or the Sacred Scriptures. The main purpose was the same as that of the sacrifices carried out in front of the Greek bouleuteria.

Conclusion

Thus, the *proseuche* of Tiberias fulfilled various functions: as house of assembly for the *boulē*, courts of justice as well as synagogue. The functions of the *proseuche* of Tiberias were reflected in its form, that of a Roman basilica.

In small towns, the situation was similar. A multi-purpose building functioned as house of assembly for the elders, court of justice, and synagogue. While the *proseuche* of Tiberias took the form of a Roman basilica, the public buildings in towns and villages, such as those excavated at Gamla and Kiriath Sefer, were in the form of Hel-

³⁷ The best known example is the Altar of Victoria, which stood in the Roman Curia, where the Senate assembled. This statue stood in the building until 382 CE, or perhaps until 400 CE. See Lançon 1999, 148–50. See also Simmachus, *Relationes* 6, Ambrosius, *Epistulae* 27 and 28.

lenistic *bouleuteria*. In terms of size, space was limited in these buildings. Even without women, children, and slaves, there would have been insufficient room for the entire male community. The Torah was probably read only by and to those who then acted according to its words: judges, city councilors, magistrates, and town and village elders.

Appendix I

It is useful to compare the terminology and function of the Diaspora synagogues in the writings of Josephus with those of the Tiberias synagogue. We shall see that while the Diaspora synagogues and the synagogue of Tiberias fulfilled similar functions on the Sabbath, they normally had different functions. The Diaspora synagogues were used as community centers, while the synagogue of Tiberias fulfilled a political-legislative task. Does the terminology used by Josephus reflect the synagogue both as a communal assembly and as a building? Josephus utilizes the words *proseuche* and synagogue. Here there are some examples:

- In the decree of the city of Halycarnassus on behalf of its Jewish community, Josephus uses the word *proseuche* to indicate a house of prayer/community center.³⁸
- However, writing on the synagogue of Dor, when the local population brought a statue of the emperor into it under the rule of Caligula, Josephus uses the word synagogue which, according to the context, indicates a building rather than an assembly.³⁹
- The word synagogue is also used to indicate the building, synagogue/community center of the Jews of Caesarea Maritima, the desecration of which led to the beginning of the Jewish War.⁴⁰ In this case Josephus notes the congregation of the local Jewish community in the synagogue on the Sabbath to read the Torah and notes the presence of Torah scrolls in the building.

³⁸ See *Ant.* 14.258.

³⁹ See *Ant.* 19.300, 305.

⁴⁰ See *War* 2.285–289.

Josephus appears to use the words *proseuche* and *synagoge* interchangeably. In the Psalms of Solomon, on the other hand, we find a good example of these two terms being used with different meanings: *proseuche* indicates the building, while *synagoge* indicates the congregation.⁴¹ It is noteworthy that Josephus refers to Diaspora synagogues. Halycarnassus, Dora and Caesarea Maritima were Greek cities, with Greek constitutions, regardless of whether Halycarnassus was in Ionia, in Asia Minor, and Caesarea Maritima and Dora were Greek cities in Judaea. Josephus emphasizes the main functions of these synagogues as Torah reading on the Sabbath and the community activities. As we saw above, the activities associated with the *proseuche* of Tiberias were mainly political (as the seat of the *boulē* and of the city magistrates), and only secondarily of a religious nature.

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⁴¹ It is noteworthy that Josephus' double terminology is also present in the Pss. Sol. Thus the term "synagogue" in the Psalms of Solomon appears both as "*synagoge*" (X, 8, XVII, 18, 48, 50) and as "*proseuche*" (VI, 5). The term *synagoge*, however, refers there to the community of believers, while the term *proseuche* probably refers to the building itself.

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PROPAGANDA, FIKTION UND SYMBOLIK: DIE BEDEUTUNG DES JERUSALEMER TEMPELS IM WERK DES JOSEPHUS

Gottfried Schimanowski

*Einleitung*¹

Es ist unbestritten: Der Jerusalemer Tempel spielt in den Werken des Josephus eine ganz wesentliche Rolle. Zum einen natürlich, weil Josephus selbst Zeuge seiner Zerstörung wurde. Nicht zufällig wird der Entschluss der Zeloten für das Ende der Annahme von Opfergaben von Nichtjuden und damit auch für den Kaiser für ihn zum Grund für den Ausbruch des jüdischen Krieges.² Tempelgebäude und Tempelbezirk bekommen eine entscheidende Bedeutung bei der Eroberung und Zerstörung durch die Römer im jüdischen Krieg. In aller Ausführlichkeit wird dieser Teil des Krieges geschildert. In diesem Zusammenhang findet sich auch eine der detailliertesten Beschreibungen des Gebäudes und des ganzen Areals überhaupt.³

Insgesamt existieren von Josephus gleich drei ausführliche Beschreibungen; zunächst der Bau durch Salomo, wobei eigene Kenntnisse durch die Erweiterungen durch Herodes schon das Bild bestimmen werden (Ant. 8).⁴ Der Wiederaufbau nach dem Exil findet dagegen nur kurz Erwähnung (Ant. 11) und bereitet wegen seiner angesagten geringeren Pracht und Schönheit zugleich die nächste Phase vor.⁵ Der Erweiterungsbau und völlige Umbau (ἐπισκευή oder κατασκευή)⁶

¹ Der mündliche Charakter der Konferenz in Haifa ist bewusst beibehalten worden.

² Bell. 2:409 (vgl. Anm. 112.189 zu *Bellum*, Buch 2 bei Michel/Bauernfeind 1963), gleichzeitig mit der Eroberung von Masada. Mit etwas anderem Akzent Bell. 4:318 innerjüdisch als Angriff auf die Priesteraristokratie auf der „ihr Heil [σωτηρία] beruht“ (ebd.).

³ Bell. 5:184–237 (s.u. Abschnitt 3).

⁴ S.u. Abschnitt 1.

⁵ Zunächst wird der Altar errichtet, danach der ganze Tempel, der schnell vollendet wird und die frühere Generation an Pracht und Größe (μέγιστόν τε καὶ πολυτελέστατον) des ersten Tempels erinnerte; der Bau wird dann als „weit ärmlicher“ (ὕπο πτωχείας ἐνδεέστερον) apostrophiert (11:81; vgl. 82: ἐπ’ ἐλάττωσιν).

⁶ Bell. 1:401 ἐπισκευή; vgl. ähnlich von Joas (Ant. 9:161ff) oder Josia (Ant. 10:54ff). Ant. 15:380ff (11:1) oder auch 17:162 (6:3) κατασκευή; vgl. Ant. 7:91ff von den Plänen

unter Herodes gibt Josephus noch einmal Gelegenheit, Einzelheiten des Tempelareals in aller Ausführlichkeit darzustellen (Ant. 15).⁷ Die dritte Beschreibung ist—wie erwähnt—bei der Schilderung der Eroberung der Stadt durch die Römer enthalten (Bell. 5). Die Bedeutung dieses letzten Textes wird dadurch noch einmal verstärkt, dass auch in der Auseinandersetzung mit Apion der Tempel als ein Zeichen der Verständigung und Weltoffenheit vorgestellt wird (Apion 2).⁸ Darüber hinaus muss aber viertens auch die Herstellung und Erklärung des Bundeszeltes mit einbezogen werden.⁹ Schon bei der Wüstenwanderung Israels und Schilderung der Ereignisse und der Taten des Mose und Aarons wird in den Büchern drei und vier der Antiquitates der Blick fortwährend von dem Zelt der Begegnung auf das spätere Tempelgebäude in Jerusalem gelenkt. Das Begegnungszelt wird damit zum „beweglichen“, „transportablen Tempel“ stilisiert, wie auch später immer wieder auf die Wüstenzeit zurückgegriffen wird (Ant. 3:103: μεταφερόμενος καὶ συμπερινοστοῦντος ναός); damit wird für den bestehenden Tempel die Wüstenzeit als die legitime Vorgängerzeit in Anspruch genommen. Beim Tempel kommt es also nicht nur auf das Gebäude an, seine Architektur, Größe und Schönheit, sondern auf die Symbolik, die sich hinter allen seinen Elemente, und vor allem immer wieder bei ihm als gesamte Anlage verbirgt. Dem werde ich nicht in aller Ausführlichkeit nachgehen können.¹⁰ Einige wenige Beobachtungen zu den Texten sollen jeweils genügen.

Davids oder Ant. 11:9ff vom Wiederaufbau nach dem Exil. Der zweite Begriff in Verbindung mit dem Verb κατασκευάζειν ist der häufigste.

⁷ S.u. Abschnitt 2.

⁸ Apion 2,102–109, wo nur der lateinische Text überliefert ist. In dieser kompaktesten Beschreibung des Tempels bei Josephus wird auch die Offenheit in alle Himmelsrichtungen vertreten (vier Tore), vor allem die Reinheit herausgestellt und allen Vorwürfen von geheimen Bräuchen entgegengetreten. Diese Offenheit und Zugänglichkeit ist vor allem seit der Baumaßnahmen durch Herodes dem Großen erreicht worden; bei vergleichbaren griechischen oder römischen Heiligtümern ist in der Regel nur ein zentraler Zugang von einer Richtung her möglich; vgl. Richardson 2004, 293. Japp, 58f weist allerdings einige Ähnlichkeiten mit Tempelanlagen in Nachbargebieten Judäas auf, wie z.B. der Südtempel in Petra: „Die spezifische Anordnung in Jerusalem allerdings scheint genuin.“ Vgl. Bauckham 1996, passim.

⁹ S.u. Abschnitt 4.

¹⁰ Auch der Frage nach dem so genannten Kultus, dem Tempelgottesdienst, der natürlich immer wieder in einzelnen Aussagen mitspielt, kann ich in diesem Beitrag nicht nachgehen. Vgl. z.B. den berühmten grundlegende Ausspruch (mAvoth 1:2): „Schim'on der Gerechte war einer von den letzten Männern der Großen Versammlung. Er pflegte zu sagen: Die Welt steht (עומד) auf drei Dingen: der Tora, dem

Der salomonische Tempel (Ant. 8:61–98 [3:1–9])¹¹

Nach einer sehr ausführlichen—fiktiven und sich an manchen Stellen erheblich widersprechenden¹²—zeitlich genau fixierten Einordnung des Baubeginns durch Salomo wird der Tempel beschrieben nach den Strukturen, die ihm zunächst der biblische Text vorgab:¹³ von den Fundamenten bis hin zu den wichtigen Kultgegenständen wie Altar und Leuchter. Allein schon die Fülle der fünf Zeitangaben hat eine präzise Fixierung unmöglich machen lassen. Sie scheinen voller Symbolik zu stecken.¹⁴ So verbirgt sich hinter der ersten Angabe des Baubeginns von insgesamt 600 Jahren nach dem Exodus (nach 8 Jahren Bauzeit) sicher eine runde Zahl, dass das Volk auf diese Weise ihr vollendetes Heiligtum in Besitz nehmen konnte.¹⁵

Ein besonderes Thema ist die Aufteilung des Tempelbezirks in die Vorbauten, Vorhöfe, bis hin zum Tempelgebäude selbst. Das beinhaltet auch die gewaltigen Erdbewegungen und Fundierungsarbeiten, die zur Vorbereitung des Baus benötigt wurde, um schließlich die Vollen- dung in seiner ganzen Größe und Herrlichkeit tragen zu können. Josephus geht z.B. bei der Beschreibung der Decke auf die Schönheit der

Gottesdienst (על העבודה) und dem Tun von Liebeswerken.“ Vgl. 2 Chr. 31:21 (in anderer Reihenfolge).

¹¹ Der Beginn: Τῆς δ' οἰκοδομίας τοῦ ναοῦ (8:61). Das Ende: τὰ μεγέθη καὶ κάλλη τῶν τε οἰκοδομημάτων καὶ τῶν εἰς τὸν ναὸν ἀναθημάτων (8:99).

¹² Josephus hat natürlich in den zwischen den einzelnen Werken liegenden Zeitabschnitten nicht das früher Geschriebene vergessen; unwahrscheinlich ist auch, dass er seine Meinung zu bestimmten Persönlichkeiten wie z.B. Herodes geändert hat; ebenso wenig überzeugend ist inzwischen die Hypothese der älteren Josephusforschung, er hätte mit unterschiedlichen Quellen gearbeitet. Vielmehr muss in der jeweiligen Darstellung nach der Aussageabsicht gefragt werden; allein das impliziert durchaus unterschiedliche Akzentuierungen und ist für die antike Geschichtsschreibung generell kennzeichnend! Zu Herodes vgl. z.B. Vogel 2002, 14; 17–18.

¹³ Dort 1 Kön 6:1 immerhin auch durch zwei Daten bestimmt: 480 Jahre nach dem Auszug und im vierten Jahr der Regierungszeit des Königs. 2 Chr 3:1 wird nur die Regierungszeit angeführt. Die LXX schließt sich dem an, wenn auch eine HSS merkwürdigerweise nur 440 Jahre zählt. Insgesamt setzt sich die Zahl wohl symbolisch zusammen: 12x40 Jahre (vgl. die Genealogie in 1 Chr 5:29–41). 1 Kön: die sichtbaren Außenbereiche, Innenausstattung, Altar, Tore und Hof. Ganz zum Schluss erst die Fundamentlegung (1 Kön 6:37).

¹⁴ 592 Jahre nach dem Exodus (vgl. MT; hier wohl insgesamt dann 600 Jahre); 1020 nach Abrahams Auszug (Widerspruch zu Ant. 2:318).

¹⁵ Ähnlich Symbolzahlen finden sich in den LAB zur Urgeschichte u.ö. Hierzu vgl. M. Vogel, Tempel und Tempelkult in Pseudo-Philos *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, in: Ego 1999, 251–63.

Verzierungen und des Goldüberzuges ein, dem hellen Glanz (8:68),¹⁶ sodass die Eintretenden von allen Seiten durch den Glanz des Goldes geblendet wurden.¹⁷ Helligkeit, Glanz, Lichteffekte,¹⁸ Edelmetalle, der ganze Zierrat machen die Pracht des Gebäudes aus, die jeden Besucher in seinen Bann schlägt. Wenn man so will zeigen sich hier propagandistische Züge von der ästhetischen Seite her.

Die vier Himmelsrichtungen, als Öffnung in die ganze Welt, spielen gleich mehrmals eine Rolle, sowohl bei dem sog. ehernen Meer (8:80),¹⁹ als auch bei den Toren der äußeren Säulenhalle (8:96).²⁰ Damit war die Welt-Offenheit des ganzen Bezirks in alle Richtungen gewährleistet.²¹ Das setzt auch die Begründung für die Platzierung des Altars vor dem Zentralgebäude voraus (Ant. 8:106).

Insgesamt verstärkt sich der Glanz und die Schönheit der ganzen Anlage, so dass Salomo als König in besonderer Weise in seinem Reichtum und seinem persönlichen Engagement für den Tempel charakterisiert werden kann (8:99).²² Was zunächst bei der Beschreibung der architektonischen Gegebenheiten nur implizit zum Ausdruck gebracht wird holt Josephus nach im anschließenden Gebet Salomos. Das irdische Haus repräsentiert die vier Elemente (στοιχεῖα) von Himmel, Luft, Erde und Meer (τὸν οὐρανὸν...καὶ ἀέρα καὶ γῆν καὶ θάλασσαν), wobei der Himmel das Element des Feuers ersetzt.²³ Ähnlich wie im Werk gegen Apion wird auch in Ant. 8:116f an dieser Stelle der Vorwurf der Menschenfeindlichkeit abgewehrt. Im sog. Tempelgebet wird in liturgischer Form Gott selbst als Zeuge angerufen, dass (8:117)²⁴

wir grundsätzlich nicht menschenfeindlich sind, oder feindlich gegenüber Fremden, die nicht im eigenen Land wohnen, sondern wünschen,

¹⁶ „so dass der ganze Tempel (innen) in einem hellen Glanz erstrahlte (ὥστε στίλβειν ἅπαντα τὸν ναόν)“.

¹⁷ περιλάμπεσθαι...ὑπὸ τῆς αὐγῆς τοῦ χρυσοῦ πανταχόθεν φερομένης.

¹⁸ Vgl. das Kapitel „Light“ bei Hayward 1996, 15f.

¹⁹ πρὸς τὰ κλίματα τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων ἀποβλέποντες.

²⁰ ὃν ἐκάστη πρὸς ἕκαστον τῶν ἀνέμων τέτραπτο χρυσέαις κλειομένη θύραις.

²¹ Vgl. die Möglichkeit der Einsichtnahme am Ende des Abschnittes (8:97), ein Zugang, der an anderer Stelle wie Bell. 5:193–206 und Ant. 15:417–420 in größerer Ausführlichkeit geschildert werden.

²² καὶ πλούτου καὶ προθυμίας ἐπίδειξιν. Vgl. Ant. 15:421.

²³ Zum Ganzen vgl. Jonquière, S. 76.

²⁴ ἡμεῖς δ' οὐκ ἀπάνθρωποι τὴν φύσιν ἐσμέν οὐδ' ἀλλοτρίως πρὸς τοὺς οὐχ ὁμοφύλους ἔχομεν. ἀλλὰ πᾶσι κοινὴν τὴν ἀπὸ σοῦ βοήθειαν καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν ὄνησιν ὑπάρχειν ἠθελήσαμεν.

dass alle Menschen in gleicher Weise die Hilfe Gottes erhalten und seines Segens teilhaftig werden.

In dieser Weise wird die Weltoffenheit—gegen die Aussage des biblischen Textes—verändert. Die Erwählung mit der Absonderung von den Völkern passt nicht in das Konzept des Autors. Dazu dient auch die Bestimmung des Tempels im Besonderen, der mit dem Begegnungszelt gleichzeitig zusammengeschlossen wird (8:106).

Die Erweiterung unter Herodes (Ant. 15:391–421 [11:3–6])

Ganz parallel wie beim ersten Bericht beginnt Josephus den Erweiterungsbau unter Herodes²⁵ mit den Fundierungsarbeiten. Hiermit wird die Kontinuität zum ersten Tempel betont herausgestellt. Wieder werden die Schönheit und das kostbare Material herausgearbeitet, damit „der Anblick des überaus gewaltigen und kunstvollen Bauwerkes wahres Staunen erregte.“ (15:394)²⁶ Immer wieder werden Größe und Höhe des Bauwerkes gerühmt.²⁷ Tore und die Säulenhallen lassen das Zentrum mit dem Allerheiligsten in seiner Besonderheit hervortreten und bestimmen so das „richtige Verhältnis“ (τὸν ναὸν ἅπαντα πρὸς τὴν ἀναλογίαν) zwischen Zentralbau und Peripherie (15:396). Horizontale wie vertikale Dimensionen werden so erschlossen.

Alles in allem ist das Werk neben der Verherrlichung des jüdischen Gottes ein Zeichen der Frömmigkeit des Herodes²⁸—und der Sicherheit

²⁵ Zu Herodes und der „Frömmigkeit“, die durch seine Tempelerweiterungen zum Ausdruck kommt vgl. Richardson 2004, bes. 225–39. Zu seinem Bauprogramm vgl. bes. die allgemeinen Angaben Bell. 1:401–428. Hier im Werk wird—anders als in der im nächsten Abschnitt besprochenen Stelle im Bellum—die (durchaus ambivalente) Rolle des Herodes besonders herausgestellt. Richardson vermutet folgende Faktoren: „His (Josephus’) deliberate neglect of Herod at this point in *War* may have to do with two other factors. On the one hand, earlier Josephus may have been unwilling as a priest to attribute the magnificence of the temple to a commoner as Herod; on the other, he wanted to emphasize the Antonia’s grandeur and its origins in Herod’s fertile activities when he emphasized the pathos of the warring parties within the temple precincts.“ (aaO., S. 264). Zur Aussageabsicht bei Josephus vgl. Vogel 2002, 22 (zu Ant. 14).

²⁶ θαῦμα καὶ τοῦ μεγέθους καὶ τῆς τέχνης τοῖς ἰδοῦσιν, οἷον ἐν πολυτελείᾳ τῆς ὕλης τὸ κατασκευασθὲν ἦν.

²⁷ τὸ τε μέγεθος τῆς δομῆς καὶ τὸ ὕψος in §§ 395.396.399. Damit wird auch der Unterschied zu den früheren Bauten herausgestellt. Vgl. Lindner 2000. Siehe auch als Hintergrund zu Joh 2:20.

²⁸ So in Bell. 1:400 und beim Abschluss in Bell. 1:457–466. Vgl. Ant. 15:380–387.

und Ruhmes des ganzen Volkes, Herodes, der auf diese Weise als allen anderen ebenbürtiger hellenistischer Herrscher charakterisiert wird.²⁹ Ähnliches arbeitet auch die längere Ansprache an die Bürger Jerusalems heraus (15: 382–387).³⁰ Seine eigene Bedeutung übertrifft—wie schon angedeutet—den bisherigen Tempelbau nach dem Exil.³¹ Politisch geschickt vermeidet Herodes es, die Erbauer des nachexilischen Heiligtums für die gegenüber dem ersten Tempel veränderten Dimensionen verantwortlich zu machen; die Ursachen werden auf die politischen Umstände zurückgeführt. Neben einer theologischen Begründung wird an dieser Stelle die besondere Beziehung zu den Römern aufgezeigt (15:387),³² mit denen er durch eine lange Friedenszeit verbunden war. Damit war der Bezug zur Gegenwart gegeben.

Die Schilderung des Tempels vor der Zerstörung (Bell. 5:184–227)

Bei der Schilderung der Zerstörung Jerusalems beginnt Josephus zunächst mit der Beschreibung der Stadt, bevor er zum Tempel und seinen Gebäuden übergeht. Schon bei der Schilderung der äußeren Bedingungen des Geländes sprengt die Erwartung den Rahmen und wird dadurch „ein Werk, das alle Erwartungen weit übertrifft (5:187).“³³ Hier deutet sich an, dass Josephus mehr sagen will als eine nüchterne Schilderung der realen Gegebenheiten. Hier muss man die Wege der traditionellen Exegese der Josephustexte verlassen und die Texte von ihrem eigenen Anspruch her ernst nehmen. Damit werden zwar die Unterschiede und Spannungen zu den Bemerkungen in den

²⁹ Vgl. Ant. 16:153.

³⁰ In ähnlicher Funktion steht diese Beschreibung zum Gebäude wie das Tempelgebet von Salomo.

³¹ Richardson 2004 fasst die Bedeutung und Eigenständigkeit des Herodes und seines Bauprogramms so zusammen: „Herod could not have altered radically the location or orientation of the *naos*, but he was freer to alter the configuration of the *hieron*'s service facilities; he could enlarge the *temenos* and its *stoai*; he was free to develop new functional appurtenances outside or adjacent to the *temenos*, such as bridges and stairs. Some of the gates had liturgical associations; ritual provisions, such as the Red Heifer ceremony, may have been relatively sensitive.” (aaO., S. 281).

³² Zu Herodes und seine romfreundlichen Interessen vgl. Richardson 2004, 226: „Herod was a Romanophile. Some aspects of his buildings can only be compared to and understood against the developments of Roman architecture.“

³³ καίμειζον ἐλπίδος ἐκπονήσαντες ἔργον. Vgl. ähnlich kurz darauf Bell. 5:189 („ein Werk, das alle Vorstellungen übertraf“).

Antiquitates³⁴ nicht unwichtig; aber sie werden doch relativiert, weil es Josephus gar nicht allein um eine objektive Beschreibung der Tempelanlage geht.³⁵ Insgesamt ist zum Verständnis dieser Stelle wichtig, dass er in dem unmittelbaren Zusammenhang des Werkes die Bedeutung Herodes des Großen als Initiator und Motor der aktuellen riesigen Tempelanlage ganz und gar außen vorlässt, obwohl er natürlich darum weiß und sein Wissen zu Anfang durchaus anklingen ließ.³⁶ Hier erwähnt er aber nur Salomon als Erbauer (Bell. 5:185), und vor allem unterstreicht er die Bedeutung für das Volk (λαός; 5:185; 189 u.ö.). Wahrscheinlich meint er damit die schon kurz vorher angesprochenen „am Aufstand Unbeteiligten“.³⁷

Implizit werden die gewaltigen Dimensionen mit ihren symbolhaften Anspielungen bei der Schilderung des Tempels selbst sichtbar. Zunächst wieder im Spiel mit den Zahlen, also implizit. So sind es 12 Stufen zum Tempel hinauf, die Vorderfront wird als Quadrat gezeichnet (100 Ellen). Wieder sind also die Befestigungen und Fundamente der allererste Einstieg, nebst den äußeren Bereichen des ganzen Bezirks, einschließlich der Tore. Eine wichtige Rolle spielt auch die Zentrierung des Gebäudes auf eine zentrale Mitte. Gleich darauf gibt Josephus eine erste Erklärung, die die Symbolhaftigkeit explizit zum Ausdruck bringt, 5:208:³⁸

Damit sollte nämlich zur Darstellungen gelangen, dass der Himmel, obzwar verborgen, so doch nicht verschlossen ist.

Die Offenheit des Tempels schon an dieser Stelle am Eingang der Vorhalle symbolisiert und repräsentiert damit die Offenheit des Himmels.³⁹ So, wie das Himmelsgewölbe den himmlischen Sitz und Thron Gottes von der irdischen Welt abgrenzt, so trennt ein Abbild des Himmels in

³⁴ Z.B. zum Umfang des Tempelareals (Bell.: 6 Stadien; Ant.: 4 Stadien); die Tore und Torflügel; die Höhe des Tempels usw.

³⁵ Eine Zusammenstellung der jeweiligen Schwerpunkte in den Beschreibungen der herodianischen Tempelarbeiten findet sich bei Richardson 2004, 272f.

³⁶ Vgl. Bell. 1:401f; zum Ganzen Richardson 2004, 262.

³⁷ So an der Stelle vorher Bell. 5:101 (τοῦ μὲν ἔξω τῆς στάσεως λαοῦ) parallel zu οἱ δ' ἀπὸ τοῦ δήμου und πολλοὺς δὲ τῶν ἡσυχίων (Bell. 5:102–103).

³⁸ τοῦ γὰρ οὐρανοῦ τὸ ἀφανὲς καὶ ἀδιάκλειστον ἐνέφαινε. Zum Ausdruck ἀφανές als Konjunktur vgl. die Textkritik.

³⁹ Vgl. Hornung 1993, 225: „Der Tempel ist ein ‚Himmel‘ auf Erden... (der das wirkende Bild der Gottheit enthält). Wenn der Priester am Morgen die verschlossenen Schreintüren öffnet, macht er damit die ‚Türflügel des Himmels‘ auf und erblickt das Abbild Gottes im irdischen Himmel.“ Gott selbst ist unzugänglich, aber durch den Tempel wird ein Zugang geschaffen; vgl. Hartenstein 1997, passim.

der Form eines Vorhangs⁴⁰ den irdischen Ort der Gegenwart Gottes, das Tempelgebäude als ganzes, von der übrigen Welt ab. Im Tempel werden also beide Dimensionen, Himmel und Erde, abgebildet.

Gleich darauf kommt es zu einem nächsten Sprung in der Argumentation. Der Tempel wird insgesamt als ein Abbild des Alls (εἰκὼν τῶν ὅλων) verstanden. Konkret wird das durch den schon einmal bemerkten Bezug zu den *stoicheia* ausgeführt: Der (innere)Vorhang des Tempels (καταπέδασμα) wird verglichen mit den vier Elementen: Feuer, Erde, Luft und Meer.⁴¹ Er repräsentiert das ganze sichtbare Himmelsgewölbe (5:214). Der heilige Bereich wird damit von dem Allerheiligsten lediglich durch einen Vorhang abgegrenzt.⁴² Himmel und Erde sind damit getrennt, aber haben eine symbolische Kontaktstelle.⁴³ Der ganze Kosmos ist so präsent, ohne dass das Bilderverbot angetastet werden würde.⁴⁴

Josephus verdichtet diese Deutung nun, indem er den Besucher einen Blick in das Innerste des Tempels werfen lässt. Neben den wieder implizit nur symbolisch zu verstehenden Zahlenangaben der Masse des Tempelgebäudes finden Leuchter, Schaubrottisch und Räucheraltar Erwähnung. Die Lampen deuten wiederum auf einen himmlischen Bereich—nun mit einer Siebenersymbolik,⁴⁵ die Planeten und insgesamt die Brote auf den *Zodiak* mit der Zwölfersymbolik.⁴⁶

Schließlich wird auch der Räucheraltar mit den Elementen Luft, Meer/Wasser, unbewohntes Land und gewohnte Erde zusammengebracht (5:218), damit deutlich wird: „alles ist von Gott und für Gott“.⁴⁷ Damit schließt Josephus diese Beschreibung implizit

⁴⁰ Hayward 1996, 145: „The veil was evidently one of the most eye-catching and memorable features of the Temple furniture.“

⁴¹ Vgl. u. zum Begegnungszelt (Ant. 3:113; 126).

⁴² Vgl. u. zu Ant. 3; insgesamt Feldmeier 1993 und Hofius 1972, jeweils *passim*.

⁴³ Vgl. bei Philon, der QE 2:91 (zu Ex 26:31a) den Vorhang als Scheidewand zwischen der veränderlichen und unveränderlichen Welt deutet.

⁴⁴ Zur Kritik der Bilder am und im Tempel vgl. die sog. „Adlerepisode“ Bell. 1:648–655 (Ant. 17:146–163); vgl. den Exkurs III bei Michel/Bauernfeind (S. 425). Auch auf Münzen hat Herodes (Tier-) Bilddarstellungen bewusst vermieden (zu den Münzen vgl. Schürer, 312f). Zu den geometrischen Dekorationen, Rosetten, Efeuranken, Weinranken u.ä. vgl. Japp 2000, 129.

⁴⁵ Anders Bell. 7:148f: die Wertschätzung der Sieben bei den Juden (Sabbatthematik?).

⁴⁶ S.u. zu Ant. 3 und zum Priestergewand.

⁴⁷ ὅτι τοῦ θεοῦ πάντα καὶ τῷ θεῷ. Wasserbecken? Anderes fehlt ebenso wie ein Anrichtisch!

mit einer weit verbreiteten—bei den Stoikern schon beliebten—Allmachtsformel ab.⁴⁸

Immer wieder wird deutlich, dass Josephus auf der einen Seite für Außenstehende seine Schilderung beabsichtigt.⁴⁹ Ähnlich geht er auch in dem späten Werk gegen Apion vor!⁵⁰ Es ist deutlich, dass der Autor bei dieser Schilderung schon den Verlust des Tempels voraussetzt. Soll sein idealer Entwurf ein Stadium und Modell fixieren, nach dem später einmal ein neuer Tempel wieder aufgebaut werden soll? Das ist aber eher unwahrscheinlich.⁵¹ Dies wird daran deutlich, wie sehr er sich bei den Schilderungen der späteren Antiquitates an ein anderes Muster hält: die Symbolik spiegelt sich explizit nicht mehr an den einzelnen Elementen des Tempels, sondern schon an denen im Vorgängerbau, dem Begegnungszelt, womit wir den kleinen Überblick abschließen wollen.

Das Begegnungszelt in der Wüste (Ant. 3:179–187 [7:7])

Bezeichnend ist damit schon eine der ersten Erwähnungen bei der Anfertigung des Zeltes. Nach der langen Abwesenheit des Mose ist das Volk hoch erfreut, ihren Führer und Gesetzgeber wiederzuhaben. Es ist bekannt, dass Josephus die Episode mit dem Goldenen Kalb völlig übergeht.⁵² Er zieht die beiden Angaben aus Ex 24:18 und 34:28 über seine vierzig tägige Absenz zu einer einzigen festen Angabe zusammen (Ant. 3:99).⁵³ Als erste erläutert er dessen Fernbleiben mit dem göttlichen Auftrag, dem Volk seine politische und kulturelle Verfassung (πολίτευμα) einzurichten (ebd.). Die Israeliten freuen sich über den göttlichen Auftrag am Sinai, einen Ort für die Begegnung mit der Gottheit anzufertigen, sie setzen sich mit allem, was sie besitzen ein,

⁴⁸ Vgl. oft im NT Röm 11:36 (s. Schimanowski 1985, 340 und die Kommentare; auch Norden 1932, 240ff).

⁴⁹ Vgl. Bell. 5:223 ξένοις.

⁵⁰ Der Tempel ist mit rituellen Vorbedingungen verknüpft.

⁵¹ Vgl. die despektierliche Äußerung aus dem Mund von Zeloten, dass der (herodianische) Tempel sowieso schon dem Untergang geweiht sei (Bell. 5:458).

⁵² Ex. 32:7–10 sowie die darauf folgenden Verhandlungen und Gottesbegegnungen (Ex. 32:11–14 und 32:15–35).

⁵³ Die biblische Angabe der Zeit ohne Nahrung verwandelt Josephus als eine ohne „irdische Nahrung“, was bedeutet, dass Mose eben auf dem Berg „himmlische Nahrung“ zu sich genommen hat, ganz im Sinne einer rationalistischen Erklären der Vorgänge (nach dem Buch Exodus).

um den göttlichen Auftrag bereitwillig zu erfüllen; denn an diesem Ort (3:100)⁵⁴

will Gott herabsteigen, so oft es ihm danach verlangt, bei ihnen zu sein.

Es ist deutlich, Josephus zeichnet das Zelt ganz in die Bedingungen des späteren Tempels ein,⁵⁵ bis dahin, dass es nicht nur für Mose, sondern für das ganze Volk der Ort ist, an dem Gott ihre Gebete entgegennimmt. Das Zelt ist der bleibende Ort der Begegnung der Menschen mit Gott. Wie bei dem späteren Tempel wird auch eine Reihe von Menschen mit Namen genannt, die als Baumeister fungieren. So korrespondiert allein schon die Einteilung des Zeltes insgesamt das Universum, den Makrokosmos (3:123). Die entscheidenden Elemente weisen über sich hinaus.⁵⁶ Das Zelt, bzw. der Tempel „symbolisieren“⁵⁷ damit das Ganze der Welt und ihre gute Ordnung. Letztlich ist hier ein Abbildungsverhältnis maßgebend, das Zelt Nachbildung und kunstvolle Darstellung des Weltganzen (180: ἀπομίμησις καὶ διατύπωσις τῶν ὅλων).

Der apologetische Zug kommt dadurch zum Ausdruck, dass die Menschen objektiv (ἀφ' ὁθύνως) und mit Verständnis (μετὰ συνέσεως) an die Konstruktion dieses Gebildes herangehen sollen.⁵⁸ Der größte Bereich ist allen Menschen zugänglich, so wie das Meer und die bewohnte Erde,⁵⁹ wogegen der Himmel und hier das Allerheiligste allein Gott

⁵⁴ Als Parallele kann Sap. 13:5 gelten: „von der Größe und Schönheit der Geschöpfe lässt sich auf ihren Schöpfer schließen.“

⁵⁵ Das Zelt als „portabler Tempel“ (3:103) oder allgemein (3:125;139;142). Im biblischen Kontext ist natürlich die Entsprechung zwischen dem irdischen und einem himmlischen Heiligtum (תְּבִנִית) entscheidend (Ex. 25:9; 40); dabei bleibt aber offen, ob es sich um ein reales himmlisches Heiligtum handelt oder lediglich um einen Bauplan; vgl. Ego 2005, 169f. 1 Chr. 28:11–19 sichert die Berechtigung des salomonischen Tempelbaus theologisch ab durch die Bemerkung, David sei „durch eine Schrift von der Hand Gottes unterrichtet worden (יהוה מִדְּיָהוּה)“; vgl. Faßbeck 2000, 38f (ebd.: „Insofern nähert sich die Vorstellung des Tempel-Tavmits der anderen atl. an, Gott selbst habe den Tempel erbaut“).

⁵⁶ So z.B. auch die Ostung (3:115) und den Einfall der Sonnenstrahlen, die die Gegenwart Gottes symbolisieren.

⁵⁷ Vgl. die Terminologie von „Abbildung“ und „gleichen“ (ἀποσημαίνειν im Abschnitt 3:181–185 gleich fünfmal!).

⁵⁸ Ein Zug, der z.B. für Mose und Salomon grundsätzlich kennzeichnend ist (Ant. 3:12; 8:49).

⁵⁹ § 181: τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν ἀποσημαίνει. Vgl. die Bemerkung 3:118, dass die Proportionen der Säulen dem idealen Verhältnis entsprechen (ἀναλόγει γὰρ ὁ τῶν κίωνων ἀριθμός).

vorbehalten bleibt. Vergleichspunkte von Gegenständen sind wieder die Planeten und kosmische Ordnungsgefüge und Zeitraster.

Josephus wird nicht müde, weitere Beziehungen zur natürlichen Welt herzustellen. So symbolisieren die vier Gewebematerialien der Kleidung des Hohenpriesters und ihre Farben die vier Elemente: Erde, Wasser/Meer, Luft und Feuer. Neben der Kostbarkeit und Schönheit weist das Ganze auf die Schöpfung und den Schöpfer, Ant. 3:184:⁶⁰

Die Kleidung des Hohenpriesters (ἐφαπτίς = **ἔφας** vgl. Ant. 3:162) gleicht der Natur des Alls (τοῦ παντός τὴν φύσιν), was Gott das beste zu sein schien, wenn es aus den vier Elementen besteht (ἐκ τεσσάρων δοχθεῖσιν γενέσθαι τῷ θεῷ).

Der göttliche Ursprung und der göttliche Wille wird so mit den Bereichen des Kultes zusammengebracht: die ganze Welt, die Planeten, Sonne und Mond, erblickt der Zuschauer im Tempelgottesdienst, seinen Elementen und Akteuren in ihrem unwiderstehlichen Glanz. Das ist in diesem Zusammenhang weit mehr als die Bemerkung, dass „alle Dinge ihre Ordnung haben in Übereinstimmung mit der Natur des Universums“, wie es zu Beginn der Antiquitates hieß.⁶¹ Gleichzeitig ist im Tempelkult alles auf eine Mitte konzentriert, letztlich somit den Mittelpunkt⁶² der ganzen Welt symbolisierend, ein Gedanke, der den biblischen Autoren gut vertraut war.⁶³ So wie später Jerusalem, bzw. das Tempelareal als zentraler und erhöhter Mittelpunkt des Landes, ja der ganzen Welt, erscheint, so entspricht hier das Zelt in Aufbau und Ordnung mikroskopisch dem Makrokosmos.⁶⁴ Hier findet sich für die ganze Welt der Garant allen Heils.

⁶⁰ Schon im Aristeasbrief symbolisiert die Kleidung des Hohenpriesters gewissermaßen den Kosmos (Arist. 96–98) mit der Schlussbemerkung: „Der Anblick dieser Dinge flößt Ehrfurcht und Entsetzen ein (φόβον καὶ ταραχήν), so dass man glauben könnte, an einem anderen Ort außerhalb der Welt gelangt zu sein (εἰς ἕτερον ἐληλυθέναι ἐκτὸς τοῦ κόσμου)...“ Darüber hinaus wird die Dicke, Unüberwindlichkeit der Mauer und ihre Bewachung herausgestellt (Arist. 100–102).

⁶¹ Ant. 1:24 πάντα γὰρ τῇ τῶν ὅλων φύσει σύμφωνον ἔχει τὴν διάθεσιν. Der Begriff der φύσις wird aber bei Josephus durchaus auch kritisch—und in Spannung zur Mosegesetzgebung—eingesetzt.

⁶² Oft als Superlativ von μέσος = μεσαίτατος.

⁶³ Vgl. das Stichwort vom „Nabel der Welt“, Tilly 2002 (zu Josephus vor allem 192f). Der geozentrische Überzeugung wird ganz natürlich vorausgesetzt (3:185): τὸν μεσαίτατον τόπον ἔχει. Vgl. von Jerusalem Bell. 3:52 = τὸ ἄστυ τῆς χώρας.

⁶⁴ Zu den anders ausgerichteten Schilderungen des Tempels wie z.B. früher bei Ezechiel, in Qumran wie in 11 QTempl. oder in der Mischna vgl. Richardson 2004, 283f.

Ganz ähnlich versucht auch Philon die jüdische Kultur in die Gesetze der Natur und Schöpfung einzuzeichnen. Ich kann diese Zusammenhänge nur kurz andeuten; sie würden eine eigene Untersuchung ausmachen.⁶⁵ Aber auch Philon bezieht sich immer wieder einmal bei der Beschreibung des Jerusalemer Kultes und vor allem bei der Kleidung des Hohen Priesters auf die Schöpfung und ihre weltbestimmende Gesetzmäßigkeit. Wenn auch der Tempel und seine Architektur nur im Zusammenhang seiner sog. politischen Traktate ins Blickfeld rücken,⁶⁶ so werden doch immer wieder in den Ausführungen zu den jüdischen Gesetzen die Zusammenhänge mit der Natur herausgestellt.

Die ganze Rhetorik und Interessenleitung, auf die schon Helgo Lindner hingewiesen hatte, wird bei Josephus deutlich durch Aufbau und Struktur der Darstellung des Baus und der Erweiterung des Tempels durch Herodes. Schon die Rede an das Volk, das von dieser Maßnahme überzeugt werden soll, ist konstruiert und wird propagandistischen Zwecken gedient haben. Unvorstellbar, dass der Herrscher mit seinen Worten auf die Einwände und Befürchtungen der Zuhörer eingegangen sein soll: „ein demokratisches Vorgehen, das zu dem sonstigen Verhalten des Monarchen in auffälliger Spannung steht.“⁶⁷ Möglich ist durchaus, dass Josephus mit diesen Angaben Herodes als einen neuen Salomo erscheinen lässt, ganz in dem Sinne wie das erste Chronikbuch von dessen Baumaßnahmen berichtet.⁶⁸

Insgesamt kann man als einen ersten Grund für die Bedeutung des Tempels die eigene priesterliche Seite des Autors fest machen.⁶⁹ Das scheint mir aber nicht zu genügen, wenn man den Tempel selbst noch

⁶⁵ Zum Zusammenhang zwischen Philon und Josephus vgl. Hayward 1996, 8f: „both authors appear on occasion to be dependent on earlier Jewish tradition which had already adopted a cosmic interpretation of the Temple and its furniture (...) It is quite possible that both men were motivated by the need to offer an apologetic for Jewish religion, and found in the cosmic, universal aspects of the Temple Service a useful response to Gentile misunderstandings or calumnies.“

⁶⁶ So vor allem im Zusammenhang mit der Absicht von Gaius Caligula, das Bilderverbot durch seine Statue zu verletzen, Legat. 117f u.ö.; vgl. das Stichwort vom „Krieg“ verbunden mit der Bewunderung des herodianischen Tempels (Legat. 119;198;208). Zum Ganzen vgl. Schimanowski 2006, 192–200.

⁶⁷ Lindner 2002, 154.

⁶⁸ Ebd. S. 156. Zum ambivalenten Herodesbild vgl. Vogel 2002, 17f. Ganz ähnlich urteilt auch Japp 2000, 29: Herodes stellte sich mit seinem Bauprogramm „gezielt in die Tradition des Königs Salomon.“ Bezeichnend ist dafür, dass Herodes auch die traditionell auf Salomo zurückgehende östliche Stoa in die Umsetzung seiner Umbauten programmatisch einschloss.

⁶⁹ Vgl. ebd. 159f.

einmal mit dem Vorgängermodell des Zelttes in Beziehung setzt. Das ist gewiss nur eine der verschiedenen Möglichkeiten der Interpretation.⁷⁰

Es fällt auf, wie oft und gezielt Josephus in diesem Zusammenhang auf die Lesenden eingeht, so dass man den Eindruck gewinnen kann, er würde sich in erster Linie an Außenstehende—Nichtjuden—wenden.⁷¹ Auf jeden Fall ist diesen eine solche hintergründige Symbolik mit Bezug auf das Universum wohl vertraut.

Schluss und Zusammenfassung

Vor allem bei der allerersten Beschreibung des Zelttes in der Wüste benutzt Josephus ausführlich die Symbolkraft der Vergleiche mit Natur, Universum und Weltordnung. Das Zelt und seine Symbolik stehen gleichzeitig für den Tempel in Jerusalem. Das ist auf der einen Seite eine grundlegende Entfaltung dessen, was er auch an späterer Stelle allgemein für den Tempel und seine Bedeutung voraussetzt. Andererseits kann er bei dem Zelt nicht die Hintergründigkeit der Tore, Tempelaufgänge und Einblicke des großen Tempelareals mit einbeziehen, so dass er an dieser Stelle grundsätzlich für andere symbolische Inhalte offen sein muss und kann, unter anderem auch deswegen, weil er voraussetzt, dass seine Leser mit diese Symbolkraft wohl vertraut sind und diese für sie einsichtig ist.

Das Faszinosum des Heiligen will er ihnen auf diese Weise näher bringen und so ist sicher nicht ausgeschlossen, dass er dabei auch seine eminente Kompetenz als Priester und Kenner der heiligen Traditionen seines Volkes durchblicken lässt. Schließlich ist er dafür von den Römern als attraktive Persönlichkeit und wertvoller Informant anerkannt und in die Freiheit entlassen worden, eine Wertschätzung von außen, die bei seinen Landsleuten allerdings Neider hervorbrachte und auf Dauer Skepsis und Misstrauen hervorrufen musste.

⁷⁰ Die messianische Auslegung bei Lindner (ebd.) überzeugt mich dagegen an dieser Stelle nicht.

⁷¹ Vgl. Hayward 1996, 152: „(Josephus) explains to his non-Jewish readers that the worship offered in Jerusalem had a beneficial effect for the whole world: perhaps he implies that the destruction of the sanctuary augurs no good for the future.“

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JOSEPHUS, CATULLUS, DIVINE PROVIDENCE, AND THE DATE OF THE JUDEAN WAR

Daniel R. Schwartz

Introduction: Dating The Judean War and Its Last Book

The basic parameters for the dating of Josephus' *Judean War* are clear and stated in any number of handbooks.¹ On the one hand, the last event mentioned in it is the foundation of the Temple of Peace in Rome (*War* 7.158), which—as we learn from Cassius Dio 66.15—came in 75 CE. On the other hand, Josephus reports explicitly in his *Against Apion* (1.50–51), and implies in his *Life* (361), that he completed his work in the lifetime of Vespasian and gave him a copy. Vespasian died in June 79. Accordingly, the book was completed no earlier than 75 CE and no later than mid-79 CE.

However, this basic and clear picture has been called into question from a few directions. First, in the seventies, Menahem Stern and Shaye J. D. Cohen drew attention to the prominence of and praise for Titus in the *War*.² Although this is not so surprising, given the fact that the book focuses on the fall of Jerusalem and it was Titus, not Vespasian, who saw to that, nevertheless the way Titus so overshadows Vespasian, and the way Vespasian even seems at times to serve as a foil for Titus,³ seem to point to a date under Titus, after Vespasian's death. Both of those scholars, moreover, pointed out that Josephus, in the *War* (4.634–644), condemns Aulus Alienus Caecina, who began as a hero under Vespasian (and so Vespasian flattered him—Tacitus, *Hist.* 2.101.1) but became a traitor late in Vespasian's days (Cassius Dio 66.16.3; Suetonius, *Titus* 6). Josephus' treatment of Caecina apparently requires us either to squeeze the *War* into the very end of

¹ See, for example, Schürer 1973, 47–48; Bilde 1988, 79; Rajak 2002, 195, n. 23.

² Stern 1991; Cohen 1979, 84–86.

³ See Stern 1991, 406–07.

Vespasian's tenure, as Rajak suggests,⁴ or—as was already suggested by Titus' prominence—to move the book's *terminus ad quem* down from Vespasian's death in 79 to Titus' in 81. Accordingly, if Josephus claims he presented a copy of the *War* to Vespasian, perhaps he was either lying or referring only to a part of the work. That Josephus at least in some cases distributed his *War* book by book, as completed, emerges clearly from his *Life* 365, where Agrippa II reports on reading Josephus' "book" and asks him to send him "the other ones," just as Agrippa's letter cited *ibid.* 366 treats what he had read of the *War* as work in progress. Indeed, the very fact that Josephus says that it was Titus who ordered the publication of the *War* with public funding (*Life* 363)⁵ seems to indicate that the work was completed only after Vespasian's death.

Second, both Stern and Cohen also noted the special prominence of Domitian in the seventh, and final book of the *War* (7.37, 85–88, 152). This might indicate an even later origin for the *War* as a whole, or, at least, for its last book. Stern shied away from that conclusion (just as later he retracted his earlier tendency to dating the body of the work under Titus),⁶ but Cohen confidently built upon it to establish a Domitianic dating for *War* 7,⁷ bolstering the basic consideration—the hyping of Domitian—with two additional considerations: (a) a few scholars have pointed out that the Greek style of *War* 7 is different, and poorer, than that of the rest of the work;⁸ (b) the way that John of Gischala is denigrated in 7.264, as a violator of Jewish *law*, is typical of

⁴ See Rajak, as above, n. 1. Her argument is based on the premise that Caecina's treason might not have been as late as is usually assumed; so too already Stern (below, end of n. 6). For some recent support, arguing that it in fact may have come in 78 CE, perhaps a year or more prior to the death of Vespasian, see Barnes 2005, 137–38.

⁵ For the use of δημοσιεύσαι or δημοσιῶσαι to indicate publication at public expense, see Mason 1974, 35, s.v. δημόσιος, 4 (which cites *Ant.* 13.265; see also 16.164).

⁶ For Stern's insistence—rejecting a brief suggestion by H. Dessau (*PIR* II, 35, no. 189, that the *War* was completed under Domitian “propter mentiones eius honorificas”—that nothing in the *War*'s references to Domitian requires a date later than the days of Vespasian or Titus, see Stern 1991, 403. For Stern's eventual return to a Vespasianic dating for the whole work, see Stern 1987, 78–79, n. 9.

⁷ “If BJ 1–6 was completed under Titus, BJ 7 is Domitianic” (Cohen 1979, 87). Cohen was followed by Attridge 1984, 192–93.

⁸ For this impression Cohen cites Thackeray 1929, 35 and 105, and Michaelson and Morton 1973, esp. 41–42 and 52. The latter noted that δέ is elided significantly less frequently in *War* 7 than in the rest of the work, while Thackeray offered more general observations: *War* 7 has “a large admixture of phraseology characteristic of the *Antiquities* and less indication of help from the author's able assistants... This evidence suggests that Book vii, in whole or in part, may have been added later” (p. 35).

Josephus' later works and not of the *War* itself, which instead focuses on violations of the *cult* by John and other villains.⁹ However, it is not clear what might be implied by the stylistic consideration, and as for the latter consideration, about "law"—since it builds on one passage of *War* 7 alone, it cannot carry very much weight. Understandably, Cohen left the matter somewhat open, concluding his brief discussion by noting that "The relationship of BJ 7 to BJ 1–6 clearly needs further study. In particular we should like to know when BJ was written, and why Josephus wrote it."¹⁰

That desideratum was picked up a few years later by Seth Schwartz, who devoted a 1986 article to "The Composition and Publication of Josephus' *Bellum Iudaicum* book 7."¹¹ Here, after restating Cohen's observations, and adding one of his own about the somewhat hodgepodge composition of book 7, which contrasts with the better organized first six books of the work, he adds and details a new and very specific argument. Namely, book 7 ends with the death of someone Josephus describes as "Catullus, the governor of the Lybian pentapolis" (7.439), and Schwartz—adopting an earlier suggestion¹²—argued that this person is to be identified with L. Valerius Catullus Messalinus, who was consul in 73 CE and a close friend of Domitian and Nerva, *whose death came no earlier than 93 CE*, as is shown by Tacitus, *Agricola* 44–45. According to Schwartz's suggested reconstruction of events, "he was praetor in the 60s, praetorian proconsul of Crete-Cyrenaica in 72, *consul ordinarius* in 73, and so on."¹³

Schwartz's suggestion seems to have elicited little interest for many years, but the past few years have seen three prominent scholars rejecting it. In 2002, just a year after Steve Mason registered in brief his approval of Schwartz's identification of Catullus and the same year Tessa Rajak noted her acceptance of the conclusion that *War* 7 was completed under Domitian,¹⁴ Christopher P. Jones published an article

⁹ See also below, n. 34. For the later Josephus' focus upon law rather than cult, see also my comments on the comparison of *War* 1.145–150 to *Ant.* 14.63–67 in Schwartz 1999, 35.

¹⁰ Cohen 1979, 89, n. 12.

¹¹ Schwartz 1986, 373–86.

¹² Ritterling 1927, 29 (Josephus' Catullus is "perhaps to be identified with L. Valerius Catullus Messalinus, consul in AD 73").

¹³ Schwartz 1986, 376.

¹⁴ Mason 2001, 169; Rajak 2002, xiii (alluding to "Menahem Stern's demonstration that the seventh and last book of the *Jewish War*, visibly separate from the reset, was almost certainly produced not under Titus but under the emperor Domitian" [but

on the chronology of Josephus' works that mentioned Schwartz's article just as briefly, rejecting it out of hand and adhering to a *terminus ad quem* under Titus for the whole book.¹⁵ Then, in 2005, Hannah M. Cotton and Werner Eck gave the identification of Catullus serious attention and, on the basis of three arguments, rejected Schwartz's suggestion quite decidedly, and their arguments were accepted as final by T. D. Barnes.¹⁶ I too will state, at the outset, that I accept Cotton's and Eck's conclusion that Josephus' Catullus cannot be identical with the ordinary consul of 73 CE.¹⁷ Whenever Josephus' Catullus was proconsul of Crete-Cyrene in the early 70s, it is unreasonable to imagine that he could have become ordinary consul so soon thereafter. Moreover, as Eck added in a letter to me, it is unreasonable to suppose that a patrician such as L. Valerius Catullus Messalinus would have taken, in the first place, so low a position as that proconsulship.

However, Cotton and Eck do not claim that their rejection of Schwartz's identification of Catullus disproves his basic thesis that *War* 7 is later than the rest of the book; these are two separate issues, and they do not address the dating of *War* 7. Indeed, Barnes, who follows Cotton and Eck in rejecting Schwartz's identification of Josephus' Catullus, himself argues, following Cohen, that *War* 1–6 was completed under Titus and *War* 7, given its treatment of Domitian, under the latter.¹⁸ In what follows, I will add my own arguments, based first upon the *War*'s table of contents and then upon the Catullus episode's attitudes toward religion and state, divine providence, and the portrayal of the death of persecutors. All of these arguments support the thesis that at least the Catullus episode is a late addition to *War*.

her allusion to Stern, rather than Schwartz or Cohen, was a slip of the pen; see above, n. 6)).

¹⁵ That is, Jones adheres to Stern's original opinion (above, n. 2). See Jones 2002, 113–14. Jones mentions only one argument against Schwartz's suggestion (the first of Cotton's and Eck's; see our Appendix I), makes no reference to Schwartz's rebuttal in anticipation of it or to any of Schwartz's other arguments, but nevertheless concludes his brief discussion with the verdict that Schwartz's identification of Catullus "has nothing else to recommend it."

¹⁶ Cotton and Eck 2005, 46–48; Barnes 2005, 139, n. 18.

¹⁷ While I accept their conclusion, parts of their argument are less than cogent; see the appendices to this paper.

¹⁸ See Barnes 2005, 139–40.

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The first argument is simply the fact that the summary of the *War's* contents that Josephus supplies in his prologue to the *War* (19–29) gives no indication of much of what concludes book 7, including the Catullus episode.¹⁹ As perusal of any minimally annotated edition of the prologue will show, it offers up to 1.28 a fairly detailed account of the topics to be covered up to and including the end of book 6, but then offers only one more paragraph (1.29) to summarize what is left of the work: “how the Romans crushed the last remnants of the war and demolished the local fortresses; how Titus paraded the whole country and restored order; and lastly his return to Italy and triumph.”²⁰ Josephus’ account of Titus’ triumph concludes at 7.162, leaving the next 293 paragraphs of book 7 unrepresented in this table of contents. And even if, despite the disproportion in comparison to the rest of the table of contents²¹ and despite its disorder as compared to the book itself (where Titus’ return to Rome and his triumph precede the reduction of the surviving fortresses) we were to consent to view the first part of 1.29 as “covering” the accounts in 7.163–218, 252–406 of the reduction of the last remnants of Jewish rebellion in Palestine, including the Masada story, that would still leave out not only the stories in 219–251 about Rome’s relations with Commagene and the Scythians, an omission which would not be very surprising given the extraneous nature of that material, but also the very pertinent Jewish material offered in 407–455 (end of the book), including first Josephus’ account of the rebellion’s aftermath for the Jews of Egypt (407–436) and then our story about Catullus and Cyrene. This is all quite difficult to explain unless we assume book 7 was significantly supplemented and reworked after Josephus first completed the work and prepared its prologue. That is, it seems that our version of the *War* is not its earliest version, which might have ended with Titus’ triumph—a totally fitting ending for a “war-monograph” in service of the new monarchy.²²

¹⁹ As McLaren remarked with only a modicum of overstatement, in concluding his detailed review of the prologue’s table of contents (McLaren 1998, 79): “the only substantial part of the narrative not cited in this list is the subject matter of *War* 7.”

²⁰ Thackeray’s Loeb translation.

²¹ The table of contents (*War* 1.19–29) fills 55 lines in Niese’s edition, but of these only 3.5 (29) are devoted to Book 7—around a sixteenth, rather than a seventh.

²² On the *Kriegsmonographie* (F. Jacoby’s term) see Geiger 1983/84, 5–6 (in Hebrew). For the function of the triumph in establishing the new dynasty, see esp. Beard 2003.

Religion and State

According to the *War's* Catullus story, one Jonathan the Weaver and his followers, who had gone into the Cyrenian wilderness on the basis of his promise that they would there see signs and apparitions, were *unarmed* (*War* 7.440). But that is in fact unlikely, for if they were unarmed why were they considered such a threat by the Roman governor, who sent out the cavalry and infantry against them, killing many of them and imprisoning the others? And, in any case, Josephus' other account of this episode, in *Life* 424, has them being armed. Rather, as we have shown elsewhere,²³ this denial that such desert prophets were armed is a typically Josephean way of separating religion from state, thus making Judeans appear to be Diaspora Jews: religious figures do not take up arms, and those who take up arms are not religious.²⁴ However, this is typical of Josephus in the *Antiquities*, written in the nineties, not in the *War*. Note, for a prime example, the comparison of Josephus' accounts of the Egyptian prophet in the days of Felix, who led Sicarii into the desert (Acts 21:38): *War* 2.262 has him planning to attack Jerusalem, massacre the Roman garrison, and rule the city himself, while *Ant.* 20.170 has him, apparently unarmed, planning to make the walls of Jerusalem fall by his own order. That is, in this case as elsewhere in the *War*, Josephus has no problem about admitting that Jewish rebels claimed a religious agenda (although he condemns it), but in the *Antiquities* he does his best to hide that fact. But he does that in the Catullus story too.

Divine Providence

At the end of the Catullus story (7.453) we read that his sufferings, from which he died, "were testimony, second to none other, to the providence of God, Who imposes justice upon the wicked." (οὐδενὸς ἥττον ἑτέρου τῆς προνοίας τοῦ θεοῦ τεκμήριον γινόμενος, ὅτι τοῖς πονηροῖς δίκην ἐπιτίθησιν). Of this we would like to note the following:

²³ See Schwartz 1992, 29–34 and Schwartz 1999, 34.

²⁴ And the latter tack is indeed the one Josephus took in his account of Jonathan in his *Life* 424–425: Jonathan is armed but not religious, nothing being said of any promised "signs and apparitions."

First, given the fact that this is the last line of the *War*, prior to the final paragraph which opens, immediately thereafter, with “Here is the end of our history...” (7.454), one would expect it to be the bottom line of the book and, somehow, to conclude a theme announced earlier in the book. Compare, for example, the last sentence of Philo’s *In Flaccum*, which states that the wicked governor’s suffering proved that God’s succor had not been withdrawn from the Jews. That corresponds quite well with the fact that the whole latter half of *In Flaccum*, beginning in 102, is dedicated to showing how divine justice intervened to restore the Jews’ fortunes and punish the villain. In Josephus’ *War*, in contrast, no such theme has been announced or developed. But it is a very prominent theme of Josephus’ *Antiquities*, as especially H. A. Attridge has demonstrated.²⁵

Second, it is not only the case that proof of God’s providential administration of the world is not an appropriate bottom line for the *War*. Rather, a check of the *War* reveals that it is very rare indeed for Josephus to attribute anything to God’s providence so simply as he does in 7.453. In fact, he does it only once: in 4.219 he has John of Gischala, who is the book’s arch villain, claiming that “it was by God’s providence” (κατὰ θεοῦ πρόνοιαν) that he had been sent to the Zealots to negotiate, as it were, on behalf of Ananus; this allowed him easily to betray Ananus to the Zealots. This is clearly a parody: the book’s arch-villain explains his being positioned to betray one of the book’s heroes as a result of divine providence.

Otherwise, Josephus’ references to *pronoia* in the *War* fall into a few other categories:

- a. In three cases, Josephus uses *pronoia* in verbal phrases meaning “to take care of”—1.308, 4.317, 5.33.
- b. In three others, *pronoia* appears in phrases meaning “see as his own responsibility”—1.354, 2.389, 3.370.
- c. Moving closer to what we are seeking, in several cases *pronoia* refers to human forethought—5.121, 316, 534; 7.192, 223, 304—as does all *War*’s use of the verb *πρνοέω* 1.75, 299, 395, 588; 2.304, 620; 5.316, 484; 7.94).

²⁵ See Attridge 1976, 71–107. For the “discontinuity” between the *War* (which speaks of “fate,” “fortune” and “necessity”) and the *Antiquities* (which speaks of “providence”) see *ibid.* 154. The relevance of this point for our topic was already noted in brief by S. Schwartz 1986, 374, n. 5.

- d. In one case something is said to have happened due to the *pronoia* of a *daimon*: at 1.82, it was δαϊμονίῳ προνοίᾳ that blood was spilled precisely where a murder had taken place.
- e. In all the other places, however, where Josephus refers to things happening due to a *daimon*'s *pronoia*, he avoids committing himself to this, settling instead for more qualified statements:
 - 2.457: Things happened in Caesarea at the same time as in Jerusalem, “as if due to the *pronoia* of a *daimon*” (ὥσπερ ἐκ δαϊμονίου προνοίας).
 - 4.622: Vespasian *was led to think* (ἤδη παρίστατο τῷ Οὐέσπασιανῷ νοεῖν) that things happened in his favor “not without the *pronoia* of a *daimon*.”
 - 7.82: Vespasian wrote Cerealius “as if due to the *pronoia* of a *daimon*” (ὥσπερ ἐκ δαϊμονίου προνοίας).
 - 7.318—At Masada the wind turned against the Jews “as if due to the *pronoia* of a *daimon*” (καθάπερ ἐκ δαϊμονίου προνοίας).

Indeed, such references to *daimonic* providence are fundamental to the book's structure, for the three major turning points of the war—the fall of the north, of Jerusalem, and of Masada—all occur “as if due to a *daimonic* force” that intervened to the Jews' detriment, making the wind turn against the Jews at Gamala (4.76) and Masada (7.318) and inciting a Roman soldier to disobey his orders and throw the fateful torch into the Temple (6.252).
- f. This leaves only a mere seven passages where the *War* refers to the *pronoia* of *God*—and in all of them, apart from 4.219 and our 7.453, discussed above, Josephus shies away from committing himself unambiguously to the attribution:
 - At 1.593 it “seems” Pheroras' wife was saved by God's *pronoia* (προνοίᾳ ὡς ἔοικεν θεοῦ).
 - At 3.28 Niger's reappearance gladdened Jews “as if” God's *pronoia* had preserved him for them (ὡς προνοίᾳ θεοῦ σωθεὶς αὐτοῖς).
 - At 3.144 Vespasian “thought” Josephus' entry into Jotapata was due to God's *pronoia* (προνοίᾳ θεοῦ . . . οἰόμενος).
 - At 3.391 Josephus came out last in the lottery in the cave at Jotapata, “whether we should say due to fortune, or, rather, due to the *pronoia* of God” (εἴτε ὑπὸ τύχης χρή λέγειν, εἴτε ὑπὸ θεοῦ προνοίας).

- And at 4.366 the Roman generals *thought* the Jews' disunity was a god-send and *said* that God's *pronoia* had been their ally (ἔρμαιον ἡγούμενοι... φάμενοι πρόνοιαν θεοῦσύμμαχον σφίσι).

Thus, Josephus' practice, in the *War*, with regard to attributing things to God's providence, is just like his practice with regard to *daimonic* providence: he reflects the notion but doesn't commit to it. This conforms to the fact that it is very clear that, in *War*, Josephus identified God as the real power in the world, even when he uses *daimon*-language.²⁶ Note, for example, that of the three turning-points of *War* mentioned above (e), in the latter two cases Josephus explicitly says, in adjacent passages, that it was God (*theos*) who was pulling the strings: see 6.250 and 7.319.²⁷ But although he did name God that way (*theos*) at times, he usually preferred other locutions, such as *tyche* or *daimon* or *to theion* ("the divine"), more in conformance with habits of his Roman audience. Moreover, taking the high ground of a rational historian, he avoids speaking directly about divine providence, preferring to hedge by speaking of what happened "as if" by it or what people thought was caused by it. Both practices—use of *daimon* instead of *theos* and avoiding direct declarative statements about the involvement of divine providence—apparently are so characteristic of Josephus, in the *War*, that they leave 4.219 and 7.453 in need of explanation.

Concerning 4.219 the issue is not difficult: by letting John of Gischala speak plainly of divine providence supporting him Josephus just reinforces his own case that John was a villain. Josephus has not signed onto the statement, of course, and instead he leaves it as a hypocritical, even blasphemous attempt of a villain to justify his own treasonous behavior. But 7.453 is indeed Josephus' own declarative statement about God's providence being responsible for the righteous punishment of Catullus; how shall we explain it?

In search of such an explanation we should note that in contrast to Josephus' practice in the *War*, straightforward formulations about

²⁶ On Josephus' *daimon*-language, and its relationship to God, see Villalba i Varneda 1986, 45–46.

²⁷ In the case of Gamala, in contrast, the closest we come to such a statement is that when at one point the rebels got the better of the Romans they "supposed" (ὑπολαμβάνον) it was due to God's assistance. This evidently indicates that Josephus thought they were wrong, just as elsewhere too he portrays overly confident rebels drawing such wrong conclusions from passing successes (*War* 2.539; 4.342; *Life* 24, 301).

God's providence causing something to happen, as at *War* 7.453, are absolutely routine in Josephus' three books of the nineties. Rengstorff's *Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus* (3.538–540) lists, for *Antiquities*, more than thirty cases of something happening due to God's providence, most of them made as simple declarative statements.²⁸ As especially Attridge has noted (see n. 25), they are very much part of the basic agenda of *Antiquities*, announced already in the preface as the main lesson of the book.²⁹ Thus, for four cases where the contrast with *War* is explicit, note that:

- *War* 1.287 reports rain fell at night and filled the reservoirs at Masada, but *Ant.* 14.390–391 reports that God sent rain (κατέσχε δ' αὐτὸν ὕσας διὰ τῆς νυκτὸς ὁ θεός) and the abundance of water was therefore ὡς ἐκ θεοῦ προνοίας.³⁰
- *War* 1.340–341 reports that Herod escaped danger, but according to the parallel at *Ant.* 14.462 he escaped κατὰ θεοῦ πρόνοιαν.
- *War* 1.656 reports only that “the diviners said” that Herod's suffering was a punishment for his execution of some sages. While this indirect statement is repeated in the parallel at *Ant.* 17.170, there the whole paragraph is opened by Josephus' own statement, unparalleled in *War*, that “Herod's disease became more acute, for God was executing judgment upon him for his lawless deeds” (*Ant.* 17.168).
- *War* 2.183 says that Gaius Caligula punished Herod Antipas for his cupidity by exiling him, but the parallel at *Ant.* 18.255 says it was God who exiled him, thus punishing Herodias for her envy and Antipas for listening to her blather.

Similarly, in general we find the later Josephus inserting God's providence into his paraphrases of his sources. Thus, first of all, note

²⁸ See, *inter alia*: 1.225, 346; 2.8, 24, 60, 136, 280, 236, 349; 3.23; 4.10, 47, 60, 117, 128, 194, 239, 316; 5.107, 277, 312; 6.159; 7.65, 93, 245, 338; 10.14, 177, 214, 242; 11.169, 229, 231, 327; 18.309; 20.18, 91.

²⁹ *Ant.* 1.14 (trans. Thackeray [Loeb]): “But speaking generally, the main lesson to be learnt from this history by any who care to peruse it is that men who conform to the will of God, and do not venture to transgress laws that have been excellently laid down, prosper in all things beyond belief, and for their reward are offered by God felicity; whereas, in proportion as they depart from the strict observance of these laws, things (else) practicable become impracticable, and whatever imaginary good thing they strive to do ends in irretrievable disasters.” For the focus on law in this programmatic passage, see above, n. 9.

³⁰ In this case, given the plain declarative statement about God sending the water there is no need to press ὡς as merely “as if.”

that while *πρόνοια* virtually never appears in the Septuagint prior to the post-biblical books,³¹ it appears with reference to God's providence more than thirty times in books 1–10 of *Antiquities*, which paraphrase the biblical books. And as for the postbiblical part of *Antiquities*, note, for some obvious examples of the way Josephus felt it important to insert this theme:

- The *Letter of Aristeas* gives, in its paragraphs 187–292, a long and wearisome account of the table-talk between Ptolemy Philadelphus and the Jewish sages. Josephus skips it all, summarizing it in one paragraph and referring readers to the *Letter* itself if they want details. Nevertheless, he picks out one passage for special attention: *Aristeas* 201 reports that the philosopher Menedemus asserted that all things are governed by providence (*πρόνοια γὰρ τῶν ὅλων διοκουμένων*), and Josephus, before leaving this part of *Aristeas* behind and continuing with its 293 (*Ant.* 12.102), reverts to this paragraph and cites the text nearly verbatim (*πρόνοια διοκεῖσθαι πάντα—Ant.* 12.101). This is the only reference to divine *pronoia* in *Aristeas*, and Josephus did not want to omit it.
- According to 1 Macc 10:51 Alexander Balas asked Ptolemy VI to allow him to marry his daughter, but Josephus, amplifying his application, has Balas explain that it is appropriate that Ptolemy form such an alliance with someone who had regained his kingdom διὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ πρόνοιαν (*Ant.* 13.80).
- In 1 Macc 12:1 it is “time” (*καιρός*) that works for Jonathan, but in the paraphrase at *Ant.* 13.163 Jonathan's success is *πρόνοια* θεοῦ.

The case is similar in his other two books of the nineties as well: in his *Life* Josephus speaks just as directly and unabashedly, without qualification, about God's *pronoia* causing various things to happen (15—κατὰ θεοῦ πρόνοιαν, 301—τοῦ θεοῦ προνοοῦτος, 425—θεοῦ πρόνοια),³² and in *Against Apion* 2.180–181: when he wants to complain about the reprehensible views held by some philosophers, the examples he cites are those who argue against the existence of God or deny His providence over mankind (τὴν ὑπὲρ ἀνθρώπων αὐτὸν προοίαν).

³¹ The word appears in the biblical books of the Septuagint (which Josephus paraphrases in *Ant.* 1–10) only in LXX Daniel 6:18(19). Otherwise, it appears in the Septuagint only in Wisdom of Solomon and 2–4 Maccabees.

³² Note also *Life* 48, 83, and 138, where Josephus expresses his belief in divine providence just as clearly, although without the use of *pronoia*.

What this means is that if, in the *War*, Josephus adopted the poise of a rational historian speaking according to Roman notions, and thus spoke much about *daimones* and Tyche and avoided committing himself to divine providence playing a role in events, in the *Antiquities* and the *Life*, where he prefers to speak of God, hardly mentions *daimones*,³³ and speaks freely about divine providence playing a role—a very central role—in history, he has given up trying to speak like a Roman. Rather, in his unabashed apologies for the Jews and Judaism, and for himself, he speaks of the Jews' God the way they do. But this is the case in the *War*'s Catullus story too.

Death of Persecutors

It is in this same later context, finally, that we should view Josephus' willingness, at the end of his *War*, to revel in the downfall of the wicked Catullus, complete with the gory details of his hallucinations and his bowel disease. This too is something quite extraordinary for the *War*.³⁴ Note, first of all, that in this book Antiochus IV Epiphanes simply dies (*War* 1.40) with no comment on his persecution of the Jews, whereas in *Antiquities* 12.357–359 has Antiochus himself confess that it was his persecution of the Jews, defiling of the Temple and contempt for God that had brought his sufferings upon him, and Jose-

³³ The adjective δαιμόνιος appears twenty-six times in *War* and only twice in *Antiquities* (6.214 and 13.314), while the noun δαίμων appears seven times in *War* (five in *War* 1) and seven in *Antiquities* ([6.168], 8.45, 13.317, 415, 416; 14.291; 16.210). As for *Life*, there is only one passage—402, where received text is the latter and Herwerden suggests the former. None of either in *Against Apion*.

³⁴ See Schlatter 1979, 41–42. His survey of Josephus' accounts of the suffering of the wicked includes, from *War*, only our Catullus story, as well as Josephus' report of the final annihilation of the Zealots. Schlatter does not specify what passage he means for the latter, but the only apparent candidate is, as the Catullus story, in the latter part of *War* 7—268–274. Note, in this connection, that that whole passage (259–274) has quite a religious orientation, uncharacteristic of the *War*: 260 complains about impiety toward God and injustice toward fellows, 262 denounces the *paranomia* of the Sicarii, 263–264 complain (as Cohen noted—see above, at n. 9) about John of Gischala's impiety and violation of the Jewish dietary and purity laws; 267–268 complain that by killing the high priests the Idumaeans caused the cessation of “piety toward God” just as in general they introduced *anomia*. Given the way this section interrupts the flow of Josephus' narrative (as he himself recognizes at 274), it is not difficult to imagine that it is, as the Catullus episode, a secondary addition to his original work.

phus even pauses to argue with Polybius, who thought that the divine retribution was a result of Antiochus' attempt to defile someone else's temple. Similarly, where 1 Macc 9:54–55 reports that Alcimus suffered after making a change in the Temple's architecture, Josephus, in *Ant.* 12.413, makes the causal nexus clear and says that it was God (unmentioned in 1 Maccabees here) who smote Alcimus, just as Josephus also enriches his *Vorlage's* account of Alcimus' suffering—which said only that it was “great”—by prolonging it for “many days.” Again, Gaius Caligula simply dies at *War* 2.203–4 and it only “happened” (203, συνέβη that the messengers bringing Gaius' command that Petronius kill himself were delayed, thus allowing news of Gaius' death to precede them and so save Petronius,³⁵ while in the *Antiquities* both Gaius' death and the delay of the messengers are explicitly said to have been God's doing (*Ant.* 18.306) and Petronius is made to marvel at the divine providence (τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν πρόνοιαν ἐξεθαύμασεν—309) that so rewarded him for his attitude toward the Jews. Similarly, *War* 2.219 has Agrippa I simply dying with no details or comment, while *Ant.* 19.346–350 has him dying with great suffering after competing with God, and Josephus has Agrippa himself admitting that it was God who so sentenced him for doing so (347). Accordingly, when *Against Apion* 2.143 gloats over the sufferings of Apion, it fits right into the habits of this later Josephus—just as does the *War's* Catullus story.³⁶

Thus, even if the most specific case that might be made in this context, namely S. Schwartz's argument that *War* 7 records the death of someone who died no earlier than 93 CE, turns out to be untenable, as so often it turns out the suggestion has heuristic value: it sent us off

³⁵ Note that a few lines earlier, in 2.201 Petronius voices the hope that God will help convince Gaius to revoke his order to desecrate the temple—but Josephus does not, as narrator, say that this in fact happened. At 2.186, however, introducing the story, he does say that God would take care of Gaius' orders—quite an exceptional statement for the *War*.

³⁶ In passing, I will note that Apion's demise, recounted so gloatingly, is followed by Josephus' summary statement (144): “Such, then, was the end of Apion's life, and here let this be the end of our composition” (καὶ τοῦτο ἡμῶν ἐνταῦθα τὸ πέρας ἔστω τοῦ λόγου). That sounds like it is the end of the book, thus leaving us surprised by the next 150 paragraphs—so surprised that Thackeray translated “and here let me bring my remarks [upon him] to a close”—turning λόγος into mere “remarks” and inserting the bracketed reference to Apion. It seems likelier that 2.144 originally ended the work, and that the last long section of *Against Apion* was a later addition. In that case, the original conclusion of *Against Apion* was just like the current conclusion of the *War*.

on an analysis of Josephus' Catullus story that, it seems, lends clear support to the same basic thesis that Schwartz's suggestion was meant to support. Or, nearly the same thesis, for if he wrote about *War* 7 in general, our findings pertain only to the final story of the book. Given the fact that it is both relatively simple to add a story at the end of a book, and that Josephus had (as he reports in *Life* 424–425) a special personal interest in this story that could have encouraged him to do so, it would not be wise to generalize our finding to the rest of book 7, although some other parts too might be late.³⁷ Indeed, some of our evidence distinguishing this passage from the rest of *War*, with regard to declarative statements about divine providence, contrasts it with other parts of book 7 itself. Accordingly, although it may well be that the hodgepodge composition and relatively poor style of *War* 7 indicate that Josephus made changes in it over the years, what seems to be clear, and our main point, is that at least the Catullus story, which concludes the book, should be viewed as a later addition to it.

This means that, on the one hand, the Catullus story should not be used as a guide for interpreting the *War* in general. On the other hand, however, it seems that this story should be added to the dossier

³⁷ See n. 34. In particular, one might wonder whether the story in *War* 7.407–419 (shortly before the Catullus story) might be of similarly late origin. For on the one hand it is similar to the Catullus story (Sicarii troublemakers in a Diaspora community, the leaders of which informed upon them to the Romans), and on the other hand the way it praises heroic Sicarii, who endured terrible tortures unflinchingly rather than acknowledge the emperor as lord, ought to be out of place in the *War*, where Romans are not supposed to torture and where Sicarii are not supposed to be objects of our admiration. (Note, by way of contrast, that although Josephus does portray Essenes, at *War* 2.152–153, as bearing torture bravely during the war, that is not such a problem, both because Essenes are allowed, even supposed, to be admirable, and because anyway the passage in question, where the verbs change from the present to aorist, as was noted by Smith [1958, 283–284], might well be secondary). True, the Sicarii tortured to death in Egypt according to 7.407–419 are no more praised for their fortitude than the Sicarii who committed suicide in Masada according to the preceding episode of *War* 7 (see esp. 7.405–406)—but maybe that story too is late. Perhaps, indeed, we should point to the fact that the table of contents in the *War*'s prologue refers at 29 to the reduction of the last Judean strongholds *before* Titus' triumph as evidence that an original version of the book had just a short account of the strongholds, and that an older Josephus, preferring to have his book end with Jewish heroes rather than with Titus' triumph (see n. 22), expanded and relocated that narrative, creating a whole new post-triumph conclusion to the work. At present, however, I see no way to make any of this more than an intriguing possibility.

documenting what happened to Josephus along his way from being a Judean to becoming a Diasporan Jew.³⁸

Appendix A: "Not long after" could be twenty years or more

The only argument cited by Jones in his rejection of S. Schwartz's case (see n. 15), and one of those mobilized by Cotton and Eck as well (see n. 16), is not very convincing. To understand it, we must note that Josephus says that Catullus died "not long after" his sins against the Jews in general and Josephus in particular (see below), thus demonstrating God's providential punishment of the wicked. According to Cotton and Eck ("Josephus' Roman Audience," 48),

Although οὐκ εἰς μακράν is vague enough to allow for the passage of an indefinite length of time, it is nevertheless extremely unlikely that we should see it as marking Catullus' death twenty years (or more) later—extremely painful though that was—as punishment for what he had done in the year 72 or 73 in Cyrene and later on in Rome—and even less likely that it can be described as taking place "not long after."

Schwartz already anticipated this argument, answering it by saying that Josephus cared little for chronology and was "not above distorting facts to make a point."³⁹ I don't think we need go that far in this case, and the fact is that Josephus does often seem to be interested in chronology and in fixing it properly. Rather, the fact is that Josephus, just as we modern historians, not infrequently looks at periods of such length, or even longer, as ignorable in terms of causal connections, and that is especially the case when it is being done in the interests of theology and justifying God's ways. For One for whom a thousand years are in His eyes like a single day, why should a twenty-year wait between punishment and crime seem prohibitive? Did any midrashist ever doubt that Mordechai had to "cry out loud and bitterly" (Esther 4:1) because his ancestor, Jacob, had made Esau do so (Genesis 27:34), despite all the centuries in between?⁴⁰ Did the intervening passage of

³⁸ On this theme, see Schwartz 1999. For the differential use of "Judean" and "Jew" see Schwartz 2007.

³⁹ Schwartz 1986, 376, n. 14.

⁴⁰ See, for example, *Genesis Rabbah* 67 (ed. J. Theodor and Ch. Albeck, 757–758): "Anyone who says that the Holy One, blessed be He, is yielding, let his own innards be yielded up. Rather, He is long forbearing but eventually does collect what is His

the entire reigns of Saul and David prevent the biblical writer from seeing the expulsion of Abiathar as punishment for the sins of Eli's sons (I Kings 2:27//I Samuel 2:34–35)? Did the twenty years between Sennacherib's withdrawal from his attack upon Jerusalem in 701 BCE and his death in 681 BCE stop biblical authors from recording the events in two adjacent verses (II Kings 19:36–37//Isaiah 37:37–38), thus finishing off God's vengeance on the Assyrians that began one verse earlier with the destruction of Sennacherib's army before the walls of Jerusalem?⁴¹ Did the forty years between the crucifixion and the destruction of the second temple ever stop Christian writers from viewing the causal relationship between the two as self-evident?⁴² And, as for Josephus, we may note, for some examples, that Josephus concludes his account of Titus' triumph (summer 71) with a reference to the Temple of Peace in Rome which was "very quickly completed" (7.158) but we know that four years went by (Cassius Dio 66.15);⁴³ in *Ant.* 13.254 Josephus says that Hyrcanus began his campaign of conquests "immediately upon hearing of the death of Antiochus" Sidetes, thus implying that it was Antiochus' death that allowed for Hyrcanus' campaigns, but we know that more than fifteen years went by;⁴⁴ at *Ant.* 14.77–78 Josephus complains that the sins of Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II in 63 BCE brought about Herodian rule instead of Hasmonean rule, although he well knew that happened only more than twenty years later; in *Ant.* 20.166 Josephus says that murders in the Jerusalem in the 50's of the first century caused God to turn away from the city and allow it to be destroyed—which in fact happened more than a decade later; etc.

due. [Thus, for example,] Jacob caused Esau to cry out bitterly once, and where was he punished? In Shushan, the capital city, as it is written: 'And he cried out a loud and bitter cry.'" On this type of material, see Heinemann 1970, 90.

⁴¹ For this example I thank Dr. Ronny Goldstein of Hebrew University's Department of Bible.

⁴² For a summary and bibliography, Gaston 1970, 2.

⁴³ This example is cited in this connection by Schwartz 1986, 376, n. 14.

⁴⁴ See Barag 1992/93, 1–12. No one will be surprised if similar discoveries someday undermine the immediacy of *Ant.* 13.356, which functions precisely the same way that 13.254 does.

Appendix B: We Don't Know Who Preceded Catullus as Proconsul of Crete-Cyrene

As often happens, the examination of a hypothesis, even if it results in rejecting it, can engender progress—if only the clarification of what we don't know—on a related topic. In checking S. Schwartz's hypothesis that Josephus' Catullus is to be identified as L. Valerius Catullus Mes-salinus, who was ordinary consul in 73 CE, I noticed that, apart from the argument examined in Appendix I, both of the other arguments mobilized by Cotton and Eck,⁴⁵ as they presented them, are predicated on the assumption that he was proconsul of Crete-Cyrene no earlier than 72 CE, and that that premise is based on an argument that is less than convincing:

If Catullus himself was responsible for the inclusion of Josephus' name, which is clearly implied in *War* (BJ 7.448), then Catullus must have become acquainted with Josephus in Rome before he set off for his proconsulate in Crete and Cyrene. He could not have done so before early summer 71 CE when Josephus first reached Rome with Titus Caesar. In other words, Catullus' proconsulate cannot be dated before 72 or 73 CE—which fits also the chronology of *War* book 7.

However, what Josephus reports in *War* 7.447–448 is that Catullus convinced Jonathan and some of those arrested along with him to bring charges of rebellion against the most noted Jews in Alexandria and Rome. One of those accused as a result of this conspiracy was Josephus, who composed the present work. There is nothing here that implies that Catullus knew Josephus before the accusation was brought. The way the story reads, Catullus urged Jonathan and other Jews arrested with him to attack prominent Jews in Alexandria and Rome, and they did so. If Jonathan was a Sicarius, as seems clearly to be indicated by 7.437, he was probably of Judean origin, and that is also indicated by Josephus' statement (*ibid.*) that Jonathan διαπεσών to Cyrene and also, apparently, by Josephus' reference to the Jews of Cyrene, in contrast to Jonathan, in 438.⁴⁶ But if so, it is much likelier

⁴⁵ That he could not have been ordinary consul in 73 CE because that would require him beginning the term *in absentia* (as he could not yet have arrived from Cyrene) and because the jump from proconsul to ordinary consul is too great for one year—Cotton and Eck 2005, 46–48.

⁴⁶ For the assumption that Jonathan was a Judean see, for example, Rajak 2002, 183, 221–22, also Smallwood 1981, 369–370 and Barclay 1996, 239–40. Note that Josephus' distinction between Jonathan and the local Jews of Cyrene parallels that just earlier, at

that he, rather than Catullus, would know (of) Josephus, have a grudge against him, and put his name on the list of the accused.

To this we may add, moreover, that when Josephus tells the same story in *Life* 424–425 all that is said is that when Jonathan “was sent, bound, by the ruler of the region (Cyrene) to the emperor he said that I had sent him money and arms.” As in the next sentence too, where Vespasian is said to have realized that Jonathan was lying and therefore condemned him to death, there is no indication that the governor of Cyrene had been involved in accusing Josephus.

At this point, therefore, I began to wonder whether Catullus wasn’t in fact proconsul of Crete-Cyrene as early as 70 or 71. True, Professor Eck explained to me, quite convincingly, that while moving the proconsulship up a year or two would avoid the problem about in absentia entry into the consulship, it would not avoid the other problem (too big a jump in the *cursus honorum*) or a third one, namely, that the proconsulship of Crete-Cyrene is too lowly a post for a patrician such as L. Valerius Catullus Messalinus. Nevertheless, the question of Catullus’ predecessor in that proconsulship took on a life of its own, and it may be that reviewing the evidence should lead us to revise a widely-accepted datum. I will present the data in brief:

1. Eck’s list of the provincial fasti includes A. Minicius Rufus as proconsul of Crete-Cyrene in 71 or 72 CE. This depends upon a single inscription from Cyrene, *Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanas pertinentes* (IGRR) I 1036, which shows that A. (or L.) Minicius Rufus was proconsul when some emperor, whose name was not preserved, was “tribunicia potestate III, cos. III, pater patriae”—titulature that fits 71 CE.
2. However, that imperial titulature also fits 40 and 43 CE⁴⁷—for which reason *PIR*² opens its entry on A (L.?) Minicius Rufus by leaving all three possibilities open.⁴⁸
3. True, that *PIR*² entry does go on say that “fortasse” the Vespasianic dating is to be adopted, just as was already stated in *PIR*¹ (II, p. 380, no. 442), which is all that is said in the commentary in *IGRR* I 1036

7.410–416, between other Sicarii and local Jews of Egypt. That those Sicarii were from Judaea is made clear by 410.

⁴⁷ See Ruggiero 1961, 36, 298.

⁴⁸ *PIR*² V/2 (1983) 296, no. 626.

ad loc.⁴⁹ Given the fact that they recognize 40 and 43 as possibilities, this must mean “more probably” (and not just “possibly”). But if we ask them why, we find only arguments which have in the meantime lost their basis:

- a. The only reason *PIR*¹ gives for preferring the Vespasianic dating is the possibility (“fortasse”) that this Minicius is to be identified as L. Minicius Rufus, who was consul in 88. If that were true, already what we know about ancient life expectancy would exclude the possibility that he was a proconsul more than forty years earlier. However, the younger Pliny refers in his *Letters* (10.72) to a letter from Domitian to a Minicius Rufus, showing he had been a governor of Pliny’s own province (Pontus-Bithynia) under that emperor, and Sherwin-White, who is followed by Eck, has argued that the individual in question was L. Minicius Rufus, consul in 88.⁵⁰ But if L. Minicius Rufus was indeed governor of that proconsular province sometime under Domitian, i.e. after 81, it is very unlikely, as Eck argued, that he had already held another position of that rank anywhere else, such as in Crete-Cyrene, a decade or more earlier.⁵¹
- b. The only reason *PIR*² gives for preferring the Vespasianic dating is its statement, supported by a reference to Degraasi, that our proconsul of Crete-Cyrene is likely (“verisimile... potest”) identical with the first of the two consuls mentioned in a so-called *tessera gladiatoria* (ILS 5161k) that reads “L. Minic. [and] L. Plotio,” and that he might (“fortasse”) be of Vespasian’s days.⁵² Now, on the one hand it is clear why Degraasi rejected Dessau’s assumption, in *ILS* ad loc., that this text refers to 88—for in the

⁴⁹ Although with a misprint: *PIR*¹ says “anno fortasse 71...quamquam etiam de anno 40 et de anno 43 cogitari potest” but *IGRR* cites it as if it said “anno fortasse 71...quamquam de anno 40 et de anno 74 cogitari potest” (emphasis added)—a mistake which may have helped reinforce the notion that a Vespasianic dating is to be preferred.

⁵⁰ See Sherwin-White 1966, 659–60.

⁵¹ See Eck 1970, 117, n. 30 and 132, n. 92; *PIR*², V/2, nos. 626–627. For the record, we note that it is not entirely certain that Pliny’s Minicius Rufus is to be identified as L. Minicius Rufus (cos. 88), nor (as Eck notes, *ibid.*, 132, n. 92) that the latter’s proconsular governorship was in Pontus-Bithynia; and we also note that the unlikelihood of the same person serving in two proconsular governorships moved down from “wäre völlig ungewöhnlich” in his 1970 book to only “wäre singularär” in Eck 1982, 290, n. 32. Nevertheless, it is with probabilities that we must work, assuming—in the absence of evidence to the contrary—that our cases followed the usual patterns.

⁵² See Degraasi 1952, 130.

meantime it has become clear that the consul of 88 along with L. Minicius Rufus was D. Plotius, not L. Plotius.⁵³ But, on the other hand, Degrassi is said to have thought that the *tessera gladiatoria* was typical of the days of Claudius or Nero; his only reason for suggesting a Vespasianic date seems to be the suggestion that the *tessera*'s L. Minicius is the same person as the one mentioned in a text from Herculaneum (?) dated to Vespasian's days⁵⁴—but that suggestion is explicitly rejected, albeit for no stated reason, in the very next words of the same entry in *PIR*² (“*ad eum autem non pertinet tab. cerata Herculaneum. PP3, 1948, 149, 1*”). Thus, it seems that we are left, at present, with no reason to prefer a Vespasianic dating, rather than one under Gaius or Claudius, for the proconsul of Crete-Cyrene mentioned in *IGRR* I 1036.

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⁵³ Alfieri 1948, 116, 124.

⁵⁴ Arangio-Ruiz 1948, 149, n. 1, referring to an unpublished text that refers to a pair of consuls named L. Minicius and L. Plotius and reporting Degrassi's opinion that although the *tessera* seemed to be of a type typical of the days of Claudius and Nero, a Vespasianic date could not be excluded.

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JOSEPHUS THE STAGE MANAGER AT THE SERVICE OF JOSEPHUS THE DRAMATIST: MASADA AS TEST CASE

Yuval Shahar

On dawn on Friday May 11th 1838, the American scholar Edward Robinson ascended the pass above Ein-Gedi. "My attention," he wrote, "was particularly directed to the ruin called by the Arabs Sebbeh... situated towards the south upon a pyramidal cliff rising precipitously from the sea... The truncated summit of the lofty isolated rock forms a small plain inaccessible; and this is occupied by the ruin. We had been greatly struck by its appearance; and on examining it closely with a telescope [from a distance of 17 km! Y.S], I could perceive what appeared to be a building on its northwestern part, and also traces of other buildings further east.... This spot was to us for the time a complete puzzle... But subsequent research leaves little room to doubt, that this was the site of the ancient and renowned fortress of Masada".¹ After summarizing Josephus' account, Robinson concluded: "This description of Josephus corresponds very exactly with the character of Sebbeh as seen from a distance; and there is little doubt that future travelers, who may visit the site, will find other and more traces of its ancient strength. The building now visible on the northwest, and the columns described by the Arabs, are not improbably the remains of Herod's palace".²

From now on Herod's palace would serve as the litmus paper for the credibility of Josephus' topographical descriptions of Masada.³ De Saulcy transferred the palace to the western side of the central fortress, identifying it with the Byzantine church.⁴ But the French scholar Emmanuel Guillaume Rey once again located it, as had Robinson, in

¹ Robinson 1841, 525.

² Ibid. 526. In note 6 Robinson credits his companion Eli Smith, who was the first to identify Masada with Sebbeh.

³ For the intricate and fascinating history of research on Masada, see the convenient survey of Yadin 1966, 238–55. Each of the early researchers described the research history of Masada up to his own time; the most detailed one is Schulten 1933, 30–52.

⁴ De Saulcy 1853, 130; he visited Masada on 11.1.1851. Sepp 1863, 671–77 followed this identification.

the north and even strengthened this identification when, on 24 January 1858, he found the remains of a mosaic floor on the upper terrace of what is known today as the Northern Palace.⁵ Tuch did not visit Masada, but his thorough analysis of Josephus' descriptions together with reports of modern field work led him to locate the palace in the north, although he identified it wrongly with the block of storehouses.⁶ However, when Conder mapped the fortress, he noticed the other palace in the west, and assumed ("probably") that *this* was Herod's palace.⁷ Schulten, surveying Masada in March 1932, fixed the view that Herod's palace was in the west and not in the north.⁸

Where did Josephus locate the palace?

Schulten's conclusion seemed natural following Thackeray's 1927 Loeb translation of Josephus, which became the standard translation. This implied that the palace was built on the western slope. Let us examine this passage more closely. καὶ βασίλειον δὲ κατασκεύασεν ἐν αὐτῷ κατὰ τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐσπέρᾳς ἀνάβασιν, ὑποκάτω μὲν τῶν τῆς ἄκρᾳς τειχῶν, πρὸς δὲ τὴν ἄρκτον ἐκκλίνον (*War* 7.8.3 [289]). Thackeray translates this (*LCL*): "There, too, he built a palace on the western slope, beneath the ramparts on the crest and inclining toward the north."

There are two problems here: 'slope' and 'western.' First, it is important to note that Josephus uses the noun *anabasis* only three times, all of them with the meaning of ascent (and not slope).⁹

⁵ Rey 1860, 285–98 and Plates 25–26.

⁶ Tuch 1863, 32.

⁷ Conder 1883, 417–21. On the plan (*ibid.* 419) Conder wrote cautiously: "Ruins. Probably Herod's Palace"; the description itself sounds more certain in tone: "The position is exactly that in which Herod's palace is described by Josephus" (*ibid.* 420). Note also the slight differences in tone from his first publication in 1875 (after his visit in 5.3.1875): "I think..." (*ibid.* 134–135); through his book published in 1878: "where Josephus places Herod's palace" (*ibid.* 142); to the last in 1883: "The position is exactly..." (as quoted above).

⁸ Schulten 1933, esp. 47, 68–72.

⁹ This is the only occurrence in *War*. The other two are in *Ant.* 9.11—the ascent between Jerusalem and Ein Gedi; 18.86—the Samaritans who have rebelled against Pontius Pilate prepare their ascent τὴν ἀνάβασιν up to Mount Gerizim. Both here (87) and in our case (*War* 7.8.3 [280]) Josephus uses the noun ἡ ἀνοδος as an equivalent to 'our' *anabasis*, thus, no doubt, the right translation of both is ascent and not slope. As a matter of fact the 'classical' English translation of Whiston 1737, has "at the western ascent"; there are other translators who choose the same direction, like

In this sentence there are four different prepositional phrases:

κατὰ and accusative in descriptive sentences in Josephus is used to mean 'in or on the place X,' or 'towards or beyond the place X.' In our sentence the phrase κατὰ τὴν...ἀνάβασιν means 'towards the ascent.'

Ἀπὸ and gen. means in Josephus 'coming out of' and in our context ἀπὸ τῆς ἐσπέρας 'coming out of the west,' so that together the two phrases mean 'towards the ascent coming out of the west.'

Ὑπὸ and genitive means 'underneath' and in our context ὑποκάτω...τῶν τῆς ἄκρᾶς τειχῶν 'underneath the walls of the *akra*.'

Πρὸς and accusative means in Josephus 'tends towards' and in our sentence πρὸς...τὴν ἄρκτον ἐκκλίνον 'the (palace) tends towards, i.e. is visible to the north.'

The various translations related to the two first phrases as if they were joined, as 'on the western slope'¹⁰ but in a construction like this Josephus would have used an adjective ἐσπέριος¹¹ or πρὸς and accusative¹² or a locative dative.¹³ He uses a sentence with exactly this structure to characterize the foundations of Phasaelis in the valley north of Jericho (*War* 1.20.9 [418]):

the German lexicon of Gustav Boettger 1789, 176: "an dem westlichen Zugang"; the new German edition by Michel and Bauernfeind (1969): "am westlichen Aufstieg," and some more.

¹⁰ In contrast to the diversity of translations of *anabasis* as ascent or slope, there is a consensus among the various different translators and editions that all combine the 'west' and the 'slope/ascent' as a single expression.

¹¹ ἐσπέριος is used usually for the western *stoa* (portico) on the Temple Mount: *War* 6.2.1 (151), 3.1 (178), 4.1 (220); the western wall of the Temple Mount: *Ant.* 15.410; the valley to the west of the Royal *Stoa*: *ibid.* 411; and in some cases where Josephus locates peoples in the *oikumene*: *Ant.* 1.135, *Apion* 1.65, 67.

¹² For instance in *War* 5.5.8 (238) the Antonia fortress is located between the western and northern porticoes δύο στοῶν τῆς τε πρὸς ἐσπέραν καὶ πρὸς ἄρκτον. This sort of formation is used especially in sentences in which κατὰ and accusative means 'in the place x' and immediately after πρὸς and accusative. It means western/eastern and alike: for example, the gully in the western part of the ravine near Jotapata κατὰ τὰ πρὸς δύσιν μέρη τῆς φάραγγος *War* 3.7.14 [191]; cf. the Psephinus tower *ibid.* 5.4.3 (159).

¹³ Locative dative: e.g. the river Jordan as a western border of the Amorites τὰ πρὸς τῇ δύσει: *Ant.* 4.95. There are also sentences which combine the adjective and πρὸς and dat. loc. For instance: the historians know only those peoples that live along the sea shore both in the east and in the west οἱ παρὰ τὴν θάλατταν καὶ τὴν πρὸς ταῖς ἀνατολαῖς καὶ τὴν ἐσπέριον κατοικοῦντες (*Apion* 1.65).

The palace in Masada	Phasaelis
καὶ βασίλειον δὲ κατεσκεύασεν κατὰ τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐσπέρας ἀνάβασιν...πρὸς δὲ τὴν ἄρκτον ἐκκλίνον	καὶ πόλιν ἄλλην κτίσας κατὰ τὴν ἀπὸ Ἰεριχοῦς ἰόντων αὐλῶνα πρὸς βορέαν. Here Thackeray translates: "in the valley to the north of Jericho"

Mike Livneh and Shemaryahu Gutman, who were the first to correctly identify the Northern Palace, explained what seemed like this inaccuracy by the fact that "the hill is sharp at its northern end, so that the concept of the 'northern slope' hardly exists, and is merely the continuation of the western slope."¹⁴ However our grammatical analysis shows that we do not need any explanations, but should simply marvel at Josephus' exact gaze and expression. From his viewpoint in Camp F, the camp of Silva, he described what he saw,¹⁵ like a film camera panning round the details of the landscape to produce one continuous view:

[the palace] set towards the ascent coming out of the west Underneath the walls of the <i>akra</i> tending to the north	κατὰ τὴν ἀνάβασιν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐσπέρας ὑποκάτω μὲν τῶν τῆς ἄκρας τειχῶν πρὸς δὲ τὴν ἄρκτον ἐκκλίνον
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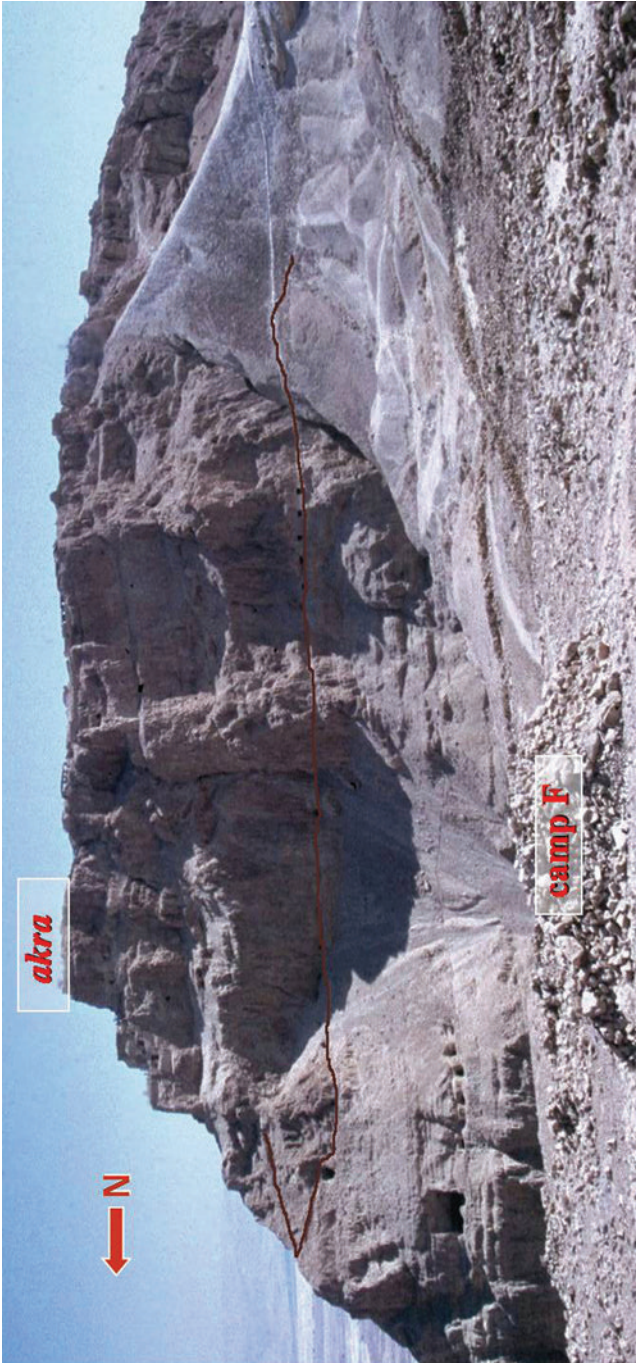
So far so good? Yes and no. Yes, because we can now confirm the credibility of Josephus' description. But no, because following the extensive excavations headed by Yigael Yadin, we now face the challenge of why Josephus neglected the Western Palace, *the* great official palace of Masada.¹⁶ Here we must return to the subject of the title of our paper: Josephus the stage manager at the service of Josephus the dramatist.¹⁷

¹⁴ Livneh 1953, 510. Gutman 1954, 31; 1954b, 267; 1965, 27. Avi-Yonah et al. 1957, 53.

¹⁵ For the importance of autopsy for Josephus and arguments for his presence in the Roman camp of Silva see my discussion, Shahar 2004, 192–207.

¹⁶ Yadin 1966, 117–39; Netzer 1991, 231–18.

¹⁷ For Josephus as dramatist see Price and Ullmann 2002; Chapman 2005.



Picture 1: Masada from Camp F

Topographical terminology as accessories to the scenery

The stage manager sets on his stage only those accessories which are necessary to the plot, and delineates the topographical and architectural features, so that the spectator can see clearly that this is an impassable cliff, this is a protected road which leads to the palace, and there is the weak point from where the besiegers aim to break through the defenses. The historian delineates the scenery with his words. Thus he has to use his terms very precisely, so his reader can distinguish between the various paths, the different parts of the hill, etc. and eventually follow the action in the arena of battle.

Josephus used his topographical terms very precisely in delineating the arena of Masada. I shall use the example of the sentences which connect the path that comes from the west with the palace and the *akra*.

First Josephus declares that there are only two ascents to the rock of Masada, and that the easier one is 'from the west' ἀπὸ τῆς δύσεως (*War* 7.8.3 [280–281]). Then, as we have already noted, he locates the palace towards the ascent which comes from the west, under the walls of the *akra*, and facing the north wind.

καὶ βασίλειον δὲ κατεσκεύασεν ἐν αὐτῷ κατὰ τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐσπέρας ἀνάβασιν, ὑποκάτω μὲν τῶν τῆς ἄκρας τειχῶν, πρὸς δὲ τὴν ἄρκτον ἐκκλίνον (*War* 7.8.3 [289]).

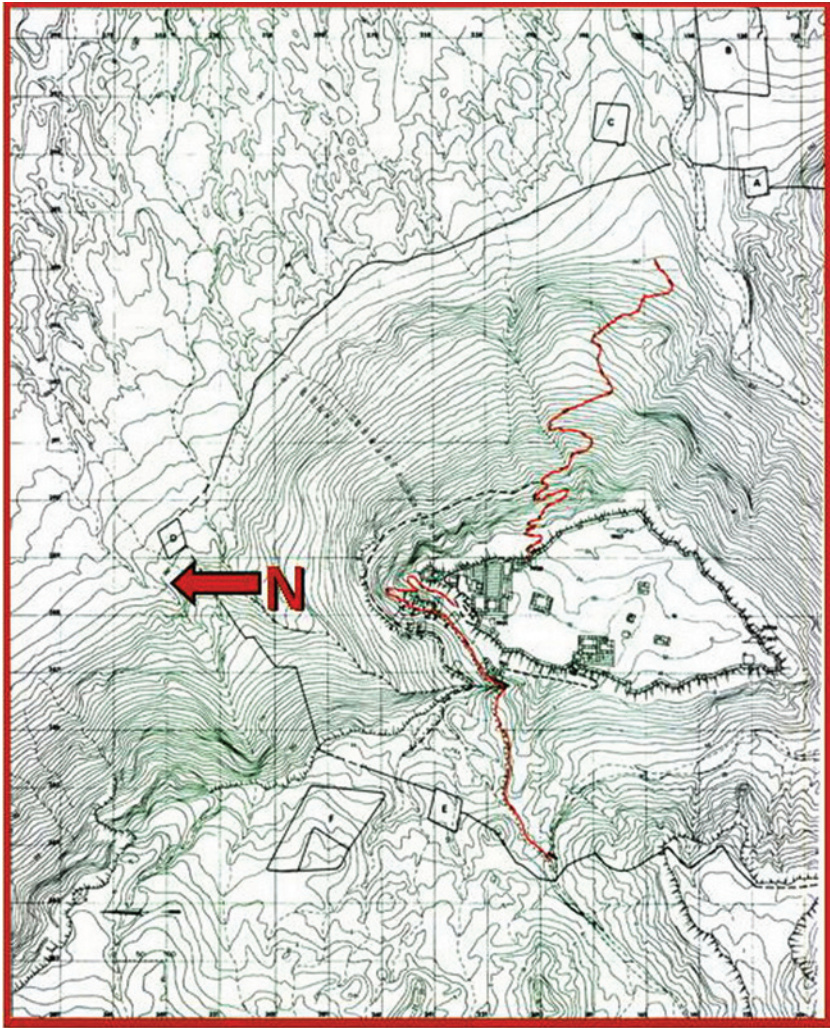
Following this, we are told that King Herod barred the path which came from the west "at its narrowest point by a great tower, distant no less than a thousand cubits from the *akra*."¹⁸ This tower it was neither possible to pass nor easy to capture."

τὴν δ' (ὁδόν) ἀπὸ τῆς ἐσπέρας μεγάλῳ κατὰ τὸ στενότατον πύργῳ διετείχισεν ἀπέχοντι τῆς ἄκρας πήχεων οὐκ ἔλαττον διάστημα χιλίων, ὃν οὔτε

παρελθεῖν δυνατὸν ἦν οὔτε ῥάδιον ἐλεῖν (*ibid.* [293]).

And finally, because the western tower prevented Silva from entering Masada via the path which comes from the west, Josephus writes that the Roman general "had discovered only one spot capable of supporting earthworks. For in the rear of the tower which barred

¹⁸ Thackeray in the Loeb addition translated ἄκρα as crest, but as we shall see later on, it is important to preserve the original term here.



Picture 2: Map of the ascents to the rock of Masada



Picture 3: The tower on the path

the road leading from the west to the palace and the *akroreia*,¹⁹ μετὰ γὰρ τὸν διατειχίζοντα πύργον τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς δύσεως ὁδὸν ἄγουσαν εἰς τε τὸ βασιλείον καὶ τὴν ἀκρόρειαν, (ibid. 5 [305]), was a projection of rock, of considerable breadth and jutting far out, but still three hundred cubits below the elevation of Masada [τοῦ δ' ὕψους τῆς Μασάδας... ὑποκάτο]; It was called *Leuce*."

The last two sentences are speaking of the same tower, that barred the path which came from the west at its narrowest point²⁰ and in the rear of the tower the Romans built their ramp. The distinction between the *akra* (or *akroreia*) and the palace is clear. As in the second sentence, Josephus characterizes the site of the tower on the path by its distance from the goal, i.e. the *akra*, so he adds a note in the third sentence about the distance of *Leuce* below the peak above it, the goal of the Roman ramp: τοῦ δ' ὕψους τῆς Μασάδας... ὑποκάτο.

The distinction between the elevation of Masada, which relates here to the western wall and the *akra*, is not accidental, and goes along with the unique status of the latter. The northern triangle of the rock, which is the *akra*, is indeed the highest point of the peak,²¹ but it is called thus mostly because of the concentration of multi-purpose buildings built there: stores for arms and food, living quarters, access to the palace and the water reservoirs. Shemaryahu Gutman, the scholar who has contributed more than any other to the understanding of Masada, put it like this in 1953, even before the Northern Palace was identified:

Josephus calls it 'the head of the town' or 'the upper town.' It was enclosed in a wall not only on the outer side, but also inside, so that even if the enemy succeeded in breaking into Masada from the west, the besieged could still fight for their lives in the 'upper town', in the place where there were supplies of arms, food and

¹⁹ Thackeray translated ἀκρόρεια as *ridge*. But see the previous note.

²⁰ The first researchers looked for this tower to the west of the Roman ramp, neglecting its location 'at the narrowest point of the path,' see de Saulcy 1853, 227–28; Schulten 1933, 75–76, 167 and Plan 1. For the correct identification of the tower see Gutman 1965, 19–23, and earlier briefly 1953, 471; it is marked as tower 901 in Netzer 1991, 381–82. The tower was investigated by a group headed by Gutman between 9–13.3.1964. It is now totally destroyed, and there are neither indicative finds nor pictures.

²¹ The upper terrace of Masada is elevated to a height of 65 m. above sea level, more than any other place on the rock of Masada. See plan A in Netzer 1991 and ibid. 104, pl. 3.



Picture 4: The ramp in the rear of the tower



Picture 5: *Leuce* below the elevation of Masada

reservoirs of water beneath them. This corner was joined together with the tower and the buildings beneath in one mighty whole.²²

The expansion of the archaeological excavations over the whole of the top, the impressive finds in the Western Palace and the other buildings on the one hand, and the neglect of the study of the water-system and the paths connected with it on the other, have obscured the uniqueness of the *akra*. However, the in-depth architectural analysis by Ehud Netzer in the Final Report on the Masada excavations restores its original unique status to the northern part.²³ Netzer identifies three stages of building from the time of Herod, and he defines the middle stage, at the height of the Herodian period, as follows: "The new policy finds its ultimate expression in the Northern Section, which now assumes the character of an '*acropolis*'."²⁴ Netzer correctly identifies Tower 901 with the Western Tower of Josephus (7.8.3 [193]), except that here, in Netzer's opinion, Josephus added the only information which does not fit the finds on the ground: the Tower is in fact 120 cubits (about 60 m) under the wall, not 1,000 cubits as he writes.²⁵ The textual analysis that we have brought here fits the architectural and archaeological conclusions like a glove, and we can even solve the only difficulty that Netzer raises. The Tower is indeed about 1000 cubits from the *akra* from the point of view of someone who is using the path via the water reservoirs and thence to the palace and the *akra*.²⁶

Selectivity in topographical descriptions

Why did Josephus only describe the surrounding wall, and the *akra* and its access paths? The answer to this is to be found in the

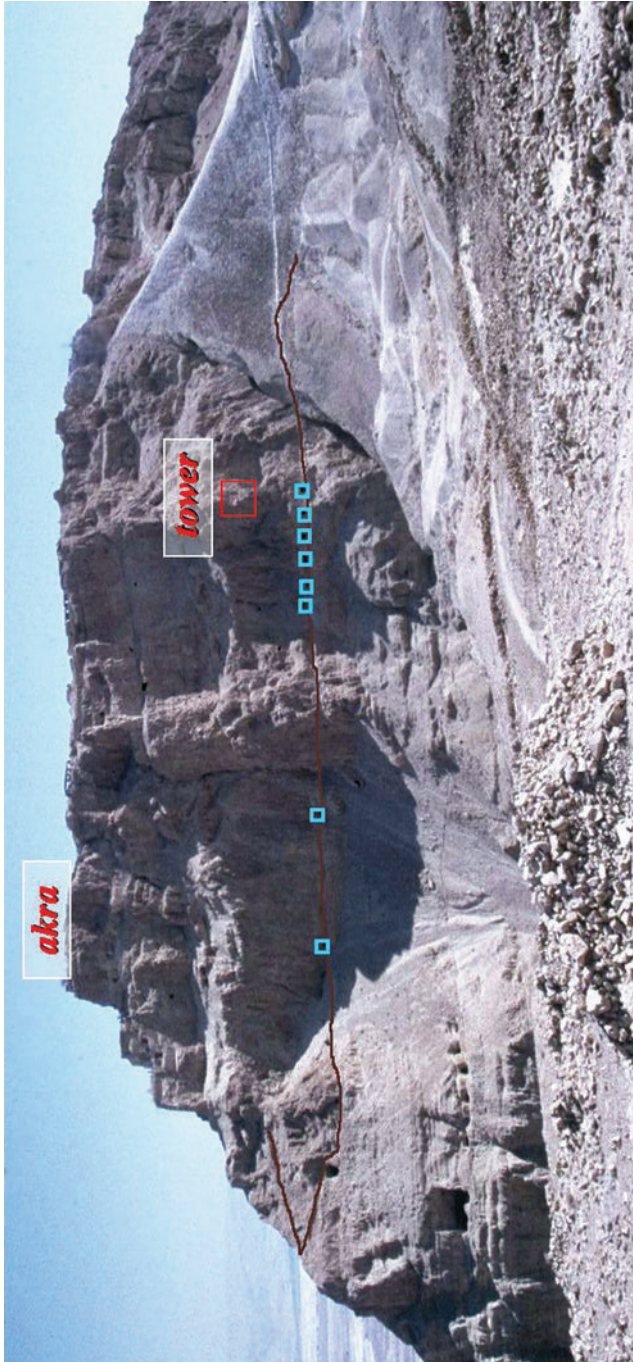
²² Gutman 1953, 472. Many scholars and researchers before Gutman noticed the importance of the northern edge, but the fact that they mounted the fortress from the west, on the Roman ramp, and later on the identification of the palace in the west, blurred the picture. See Tuch 1863, 32; Conder 1875, 135; Schulten 1933, 65–66.

²³ Netzer 1991, esp. 640–655; recently 2006, esp. pp. 27–34.

²⁴ Netzer 1991, 156.

²⁵ Ibid. 381–82, 646; Netzer 2004, esp. 220–21.

²⁶ Tower 901 is above the first two western cisterns in the upper row, about 220m from the last and eastern cistern of that row (Netzer 2002, 357). Only the lower windings of the path coming from the west from the last cistern up to the *akra* were preserved, but it seems that its length was similar to the horizontal section, which connected the cisterns. Thus as a whole we are very near to Josephus' figure: 1,000 cubits= 500 m from the tower up to the *akra*.

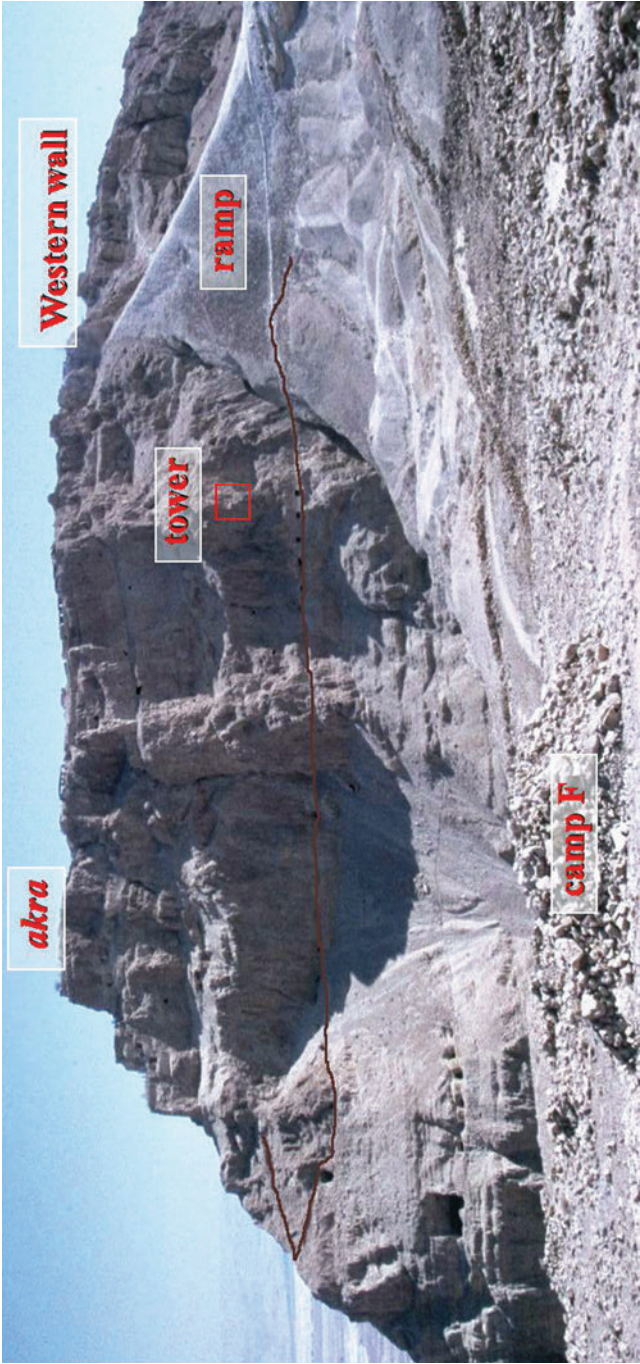


Picture 6: The tower about 1000 cubits from the *akra*

description of the battle: these are the only points described during the Roman preparations and the clashes between the two sides. Josephus the dramatist knew that the battle was only concentrated on the north-western part of Masada, which is why he designed his verbal scenery to cover only that part. The sentence which locates the Roman ramp supplies the reader with all the features necessary in order to follow the battle: the path coming from the west; the tower that barred it; the distance from the tower to the palace and the *akra*; the location of the hill called *Leuce*, above which the Romans built their ramp; the height of the [western] wall of Masada above *Leuce*.

Even before his description of Masada, Josephus tells his reader that Silva, the Roman general, “encamped at a spot which he selected as most convenient for siege operations, where the rocks of the fortress abutted on the adjacent mountain”: καθ’ ὃν αἱ τοῦ φρουρίου πέτραι τῷ πλησίον ὄρει συνήγγιζον, [*War*. 2.277]. Here Josephus takes great care to distinguish between Masada, the rock and the fortress, and between the mountain [τὸ ὄρος]. The latter is used only for the hill nearest to the site. From here the Romans can see and be seen, so that the hill allows them access to Masada, and from it they can make their preparations for conquest of the site. The siting of Silva’s camp opposite the north-west corner, lying between *Leuce* and the northern palace, came from deciding beforehand on the battlefield. The main action of the siege was centered here above the ramp, at the place where the wall was broken and another wooden one was built instead (*War* 7.8.5 [304–319]). The remains of the ramp, the concentration of catapult stones and the fallen debris at this part of the wall are living evidence for Josephus’ description.²⁷ The tragic finale takes place in the palace

²⁷ Netzer 1991, 395–97: Casemate 1045: 70 *balistra* stones found under a heavy burnt layer; *balistra* stones in room 1046 (ibid. 397), in loci 1054–1057 (to the south of the synagogue, ibid. 413); several hundreds (!) of *balistra* stones and 13 other round stones found in the ‘the casemate of the scrolls’ no.1039 (ibid. 419–20). The exact number is unknown because of the loss of the tape of the first season of excavations 13–22.11.1963; 90 *balistra* stones in loc. 1052 (adjoining the ‘scroll room’ to the east, ibid. 423); loci 1050–1051: 130 *balistra* stones (ibid. 424); tower 1038: 2 other round stones. The other round stones were concentrated close to the access paths: 12 were found in casemate 1108–1107 (ibid. 559), 12 in 1102, adjoining the gate of the ‘snake path’ to the east, (ibid. 566). Netzer (ibid. 421–22) assumes that the *balistra* stones belonged to the defenders. It seems to me preferable to ascribe at least some of them to the Romans. Cf. also Roth 1995, 98.



Picture 7: The battle arena



Picture 8: The rocks of the fortress abutted on the adjacent mountain

(7.9.1 [397]) and it is to here that the Romans come, cutting their way through the flames (*War* 7.9.2 [405]).²⁸

Broadening the scope: the site against its surroundings

So far we have examined two principles used by Josephus the stage-manager: the accuracy of his topographic terms; and his selectivity according to the plot. Before moving on to other arenas described by Josephus I would like to point out a third descriptive principle: his use of a pair of opposing sentences to describe the topographical position of Masada in relation to its surroundings and to treat especially the issue of access to the site. The first sentence sets the rule: "A rock of no slight circumference and lofty from end to end is abruptly terminated on every side by deep ravines, the precipices rising sheer from an invisible base and being inaccessible to the foot of any living creature." The second sentence states the exception to the rule: "save in two places where the rock permits of no easy ascent."²⁹ Following a detailed description of the eastern path (the Snake Path), which is barely passable because of its difficulty and danger, Josephus follows his principle of selectivity and concentrates on the exceptional place with easy access, namely the northwestern part and the path which came from the west.

Other arenas designed by Josephus the stage manager

So far we have concentrated almost entirely on Josephus' descriptions of Masada, but these three descriptive principles also hold true for all the arenas described by Josephus where he himself was present there during the battles, either on the Jewish side or as a captive in the Roman camp. We shall now turn to look at his descriptions of Masada as compared to his descriptions of other battle sites.

²⁸ The question of the credibility of the 'suicide story' is beyond the scope of this paper. What concerns us here is the relationship between the 'stage' and the 'plot'. Netzer 2004, esp. 227–29 suggests an interesting reconstruction of the 'last night' according to Josephus and the archaeological findings in 'the rebel's archive at Masada'.

²⁹ Both sentences are in *War* 7.8.3 (280).

	Ravine φάραγξ	Cliff/crag κρημνός	Summit κορυφή	Top/ peak ἄκρα/ ἀκρόρεια	The adjacent hill (modern name) ὄρος
Jotapata	X	X		ἀκρόρεια	<i>Har MiYamin</i>
Taricheae					<i>Har Arbel</i>
Gamala	X	X	κορυφή= ὑψηλὰ=	ἄκρα	Deir Qarukh
Machaerus	X		X	ἀκρόρεια= τὴν ἄνω τὴν κορυφὴν	To the east of the site
Masada	X	X	X	ἄκρα= ἀκρόρεια	The lower part of <i>Har Ben-Yair</i>

Exact topographical terminology

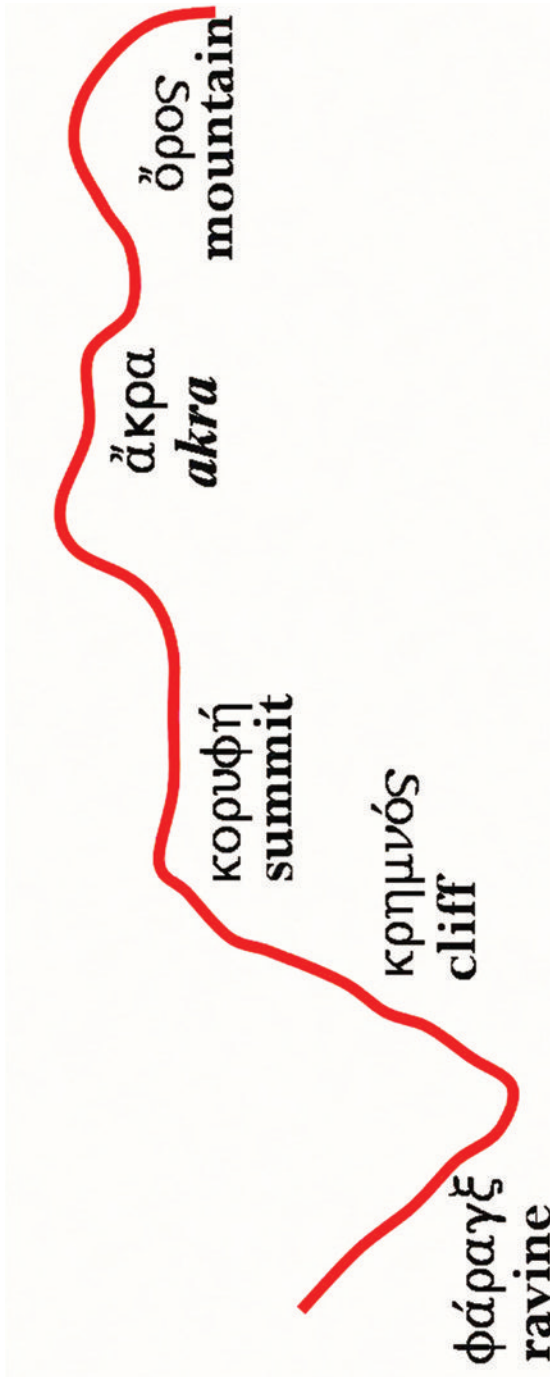
In all Josephus' descriptive passages there is extreme care for semantics and structure, as is seen in the consistently exact topographical terminology. The term hill or mountain, ὄρος, is used to define the adjacent hill nearest to the besieged site, where the Romans encamped. There are four different Greek terms that can be used to distinguish between the different parts of a given site, and Josephus uses these to delineate the topographical reality of each site accurately.³⁰

As at Masada so too at Machaerus there is a difference between the summit and the *akroreia*. In contrast Taricheae lies along the shore of Lake Gennesar (the Sea of Galilee), so the four terms for a precipitous site are irrelevant for its description.

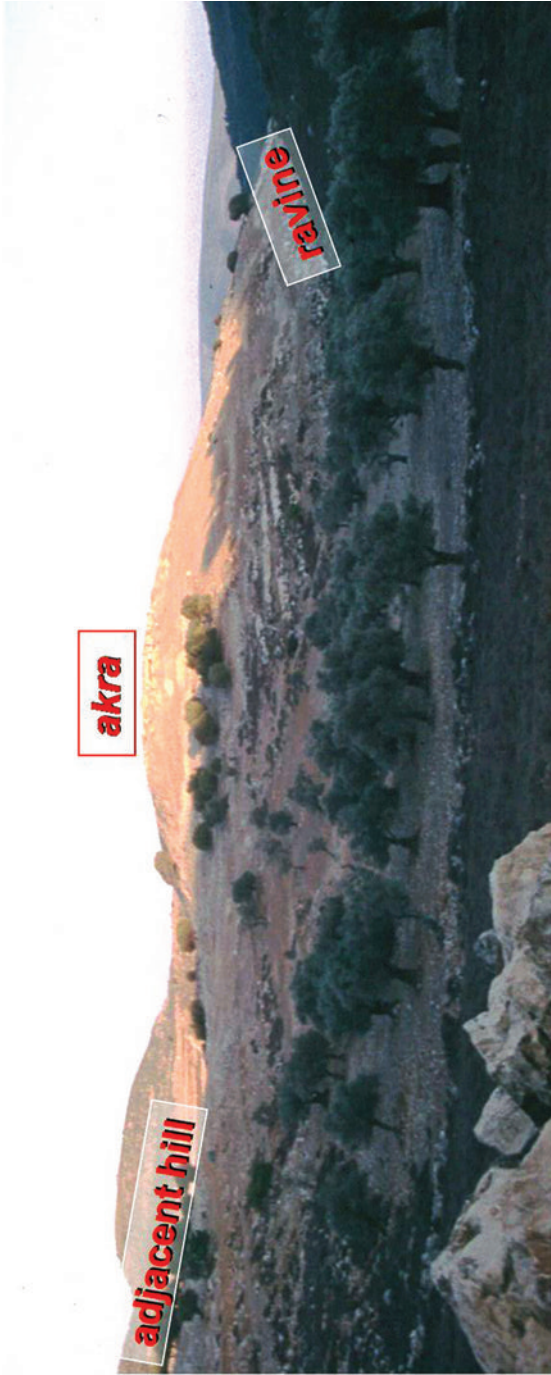
The usual situation of the site against the exception to the rule

Josephus' description of each of these centers of war is constructed of opposed pairs of sentences, with the usual situation, the great difficulty and even impossibility of reaching the site from its various sides, being opposed to the exception to the rule—the one place which is easier of access.

³⁰ See my wider discussion in Shahar 2004, 211–26.



Picture 9: Schematic section of the topographical terminology



Picture 10: Jotapata



Picture 11: Gamala

Jotapata (BJ 3.7.7 [158])	“being surrounded on all sides by ravines so deep that sight fails in the attempt to fathom the abyss.”	“On the north side alone where it lay sideways the mountain, it is accessible”
Tarichaea (BJ 3.10.1 [464])	“being completely walled”	“except on the side washed by the lake.”
Gamala (BJ 4.1.1 [6])	“its sides and face are cleft all round by inaccessible ravines”	“But at the tail end”...
Machaerus (BJ 7.6.1 [167; 170])	“for it is entrenched on all sides within ravines of a depth baffling to the eye” (167)	“the ravine on the east is found to be no less than 100 cubits in depth” (170).
Masada (BJ 7.8.3 [280])	“terminated on every side by deep ravines, the precipices rising sheer from an invisible base”	“save in two places”...

Selectivity

We turn now to Josephus' descriptions of the exceptional place with easier access, which becomes the field of battle. Here the historian simply ignores all those topographical and architectural features of the site which are not involved in the battle. Thus in his descriptions of Jotapata and Gamala the general descriptive structure is very similar, but there is one considerable difference between them. Josephus describes the internal structure of Gamala but does not relate to this aspect at all at Jotapata. Naturally, the differences here do not spring from the writer's better acquaintance with Gamala (the reverse is the case), but because Josephus only describes those aspects which are relevant to the course of the war. Josephus characterizes the appearance of Gamala: the houses are built steeply on the mountainside “one on top of the other, and this perpendicular site gave the city the appearance of being suspended in air and falling headlong upon itself” (4.1.1 [7]). And the houses do indeed actually collapse one on top of another like a house of cards, on Romans and Jews alike (4.1.4 [23–24]), during the first breakthrough of the Romans into the walls. Thus Josephus



Picture 12: Jotapata—the rule as against the exception to the rule



Picture 13: Gamala—the rule as against the exception to the rule



Picture 14: Gamala—houses built steeply on the mountainside one on top of another

actualizes the threat of the danger which he had already hinted at in his earlier architectural description of the town.³¹

The appearance of the buildings forms part of the descriptions at Gamala and the Northern Palace at Masada, since only there is this relevant to the course of the war. This conclusion is important, because on the basis of the terminological and structural similarities alone it might have been possible to get the wrong impression, as if this were a literary convention which Josephus is copying from one battle arena to the next. This sort of claim has indeed been made against the authenticity and reliability of Josephus' evidence.³² But such a claim falls in the light of the fact that Josephus fits the emphases in his descriptions to the concrete and specific topographical and military data in each one of his battle arenas. At Jotapata the Roman ramps are put up only against the northern wall. At Taricheae the enemy does not put up any siege works at all, but captures the hill above, and the cavalry enters the town from the unfortified lake-side. Gamala could not be surrounded with a wall, so the legions concentrate on putting up ramps against the eastern wall, and setting soldiers to guard the other sides. The same is true of Machaerus. Masada, however, was surrounded by a wall all round, in spite of the topographical difficulties. Thus the concretization is not schematic at all: Josephus clearly characterizes the local architecture of the sites only when this is relevant to the battle.³³

Now we can finish our tour and return to Edward Robinson with his telescope. Robinson located the Palace correctly in the north of Masada, as opposed to the extensive surveys on the spot which transferred it to the west. Sometimes it is better to observe from afar through the lens of a telescope—as long as we integrate this with a close textual reading as if through a magnifying glass.

³¹ For the relationship between the description of Gamala—the stage and the battle there—the plot, see the table in Shahar 2004, 201–02.

³² Esp. Cohen 1979, 114–20.

³³ Bar Kochva 1976, 66, attempts to explain, according to his theory, why Josephus did not say explicitly that there were two humps in Gamala: 'Nevertheless it must be pointed out that there is no validity in *argumentum ex silentio* as far as Josephus' topographical descriptions are concerned. They are precise, it is true, but they are usually incomplete'. It is true that they are incomplete in comparison with all the features of the whole site (and the wishful thinking of the modern scholar) but they suit Josephus' use of selectivity as a historiographical yardstick: he describes only those features which are relevant to the subsequent battle. Thus in this respect there is considerable significance in the *argumentum ex silentio*.

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JOSEPHUS AND JUSTUS: THE PLACE OF CHAPTER 65
(336–367) IN *LIFE*, THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS

Pnina Stern

At the end of *Antiquities* Josephus outlines the features of what turned out to be *Life*. He wrote: “Perhaps it will not be a provocation to jealousy, or strike ordinary folks as gauche, if I review briefly both my own ancestry and the events of my life while there are still those living who can offer refutation or corroboration” (*Ant.* 20.266).¹ He confirmed this purpose at the end of *Life* where he wrote: “These, then, are the things that occurred throughout my entire life; from them let others judge my character as they might wish” (*Life* 430a).² The two similar verses indicate that Josephus thought he had accomplished what he aimed to write in *Life*, meaning that he had described the events of his life.

In spite of those specific phrases from *Antiquities* and *Life*, scholars suggested that Josephus’ main purpose in *Life* was to write an apology, in which he was referring to the accusations in the book of Justus of Tiberias.³ Chapter 65 (336–367), where Josephus responds to the accusations, was the basis of that conclusion.

¹ The translations in this paper are from: Mason 2001, except for occasional isolated words or very short phrases. It is accepted that in *Ant.* 20.266, Josephus is referring to what turned out to be *Life*: Feldman 1996a, 141 n. b; Peterson 1958, 259–62. An enlarged discussion and bibliography on the issues of this article see in the relevant chapters in Stern 2005.

² The call to judge one’s character was a literary convention in personal writing or in works about individuals, e.g.: Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, IV, viii, 11. Mason says that these words point to the basic theme of *Life*, which is the character of Josephus: Mason 2001, 172–73 n. 1778.

³ Stein 1936, 8; Laqueur 1970, 7–8; Schürer 1973, 53–54; Schalit 1927, 3, *passim*; Rodgers 2006, 185–86. See discussion on the subject: Mason 2001, XXVII–XXVIII. In an early article Rajak even ascribes apologetic remarks besides chapter 65 to Josephus’ response to Justus’ charges: Rajak 1973, 345, 356–58 (see Rajak in the next note).

Modern scholars felt that that approach left some problems regarding *Life* unsolved, and suggested different solutions.⁴ Although scholars of both groups noticed the uniqueness of chapter 65, they still considered it as an integral part of the original writing-design of *Life*.⁵

There is no denying that chapter 65 is Josephus' direct apologetic answer to Justus' accusations in his book.⁶ But does it indicate the purpose of *Life*? And, above all, was chapter 65 designed to be in the original writing-plan of *Life*?

In this paper we attempt to employ a new approach in order to understand the place of chapter 65 in *Life*: All references to Justus and their interconnections are examined *from a literary point of view*.

Justus is mentioned in *Life* five times before chapter 65.⁷

1. Iustus son of Pistus, the principal man of the third bloc, although he kept pretending to be in doubt about the war, was actually longing for revolutionary activities, intending to manufacture power for himself out of the upheaval. So he came along into the [city] center and tried to teach the mob that the city had always been the capital of Galilee since the time

⁴ E.g.: Josephus responded to Justus' attacks because of his injured pride, and because of enemies apart from Justus. He portrayed himself as observing the Law, in order to win the sympathy of the Yavnean scholars: Cohen 1979, 140, 144ff; *Life* is an apology for *War*, a response to Justus' charges, and it is also an inferior kind of autobiography in which Josephus reveals some personal details: Barish 1978, 64; Josephus defends himself against Justus' charges, which referred to his mission in Galilee, because Josephus could no longer depend on the emperor's protection. He defended himself as well against certain groups of Jews who were in Judah, perhaps against the early Rabbis: Schwartz 1990, 21–22; Josephus referred to written accusations of Justus and of others: Rajak 1984, 146, 152, and n. 19; 1987, 85; *Life* is a defense of Josephus' behavior during the revolt against Rome: Goodman 2000, 205. *Life* explains the connection between Josephus' personal history and his suitability to be the author of his works: Bilde 1988, 110–13; The connection between *Antiquities* and *Life* is not incidental. In *Life* Josephus sets himself as an example of a Jewish person, whose character demonstrates his people's culture and tradition, as portrayed in *Antiquities*, while praising himself: Mason 1998, 53, 73–75; 2001, XLVIII–XLIX.

⁵ Stein 1936, 77 n. 1; "the forensic digression": Mason 2001, XXXVIII.

⁶ Luther suggests that the content and the structure of Justus' book can be reconstructed: Luther 1910, 65ff. But then he himself restricts his suggestion (ibid. 68). See more about this matter: Schürer 1973, 36; Rajak 1973, 354; 1987, 82. It seems that even when Josephus says explicitly that he responds to what Justus has written, no real reconstruction is possible. One cannot be sure how things were actually written or what their place and role were in the whole book.

⁷ The discussion will focus only on the aspects that are relevant directly to the topic of this paper. Mason transcripts the conventional anglicized names *Justus*—to *Iustus*, *Jesous*—to *Iesous* and *Joannes*—to *Ioannes*. So when quoted Mason's translation they will be the way Mason choosed to anglicize them. Otherwise, they will be—Justus, Jesous and Joannes (and see more about *Joannes* in n. 13).

of Herod the Tetrarch, who was its builder, and who had wanted the city of the Sepphorites to *submit to* that of the Tiberians. They had not relinquished this primacy under King Agrippa the father, but remained until Felix was put in charge in Judea. Now, he was saying: 'You yourselves just happen to have been given to the younger Agrippa as a gift from Nero!⁸ And because it submitted to Rome, Sepphoris immediately became the capital of Galilee, and both the royal bank and the archives, having been dismantled, are with them'. These and many other things against King Agrippa he said to them, for the sake of provoking the populace to defection. He added: 'Now is the time to take up weapons, after welcoming the Galileans as allies—for they are willing to begin, because of the hatred they have toward the Sepphorites for maintaining loyalty to the Romans—and with a large force to execute vengeance because of them'. By saying these things, he won over the mob. For he was rather good at manipulating the populace and at overcoming the better arguments of disputants by craftiness and a kind of guile through words. In fact he was well trained in the Greek sort of education, on the basis of which he audaciously took it upon himself to record also the history of these events—as if he could overcome the truth itself by means of this speech-craft. But concerning this man—how sordid his life became and how he was, with his brother, the cause of almost complete ruin—we shall explain as the story unfolds. At that time, when he had persuaded the citizens to take up weapons and compelled many who did not so desire, Iustus came out with all of this men and set fire to the villages of the Gadarenes and also of the Hippenes, which happened to lie on the frontier between Tiberias and the territory of Scythopolitans (36–42).

There are two important things that are to be pointed out in this section: The first—Josephus mentions a written publication of Justus, τῷ λόγῳ τούτῳ (40), which could be a work, a narrative, an account or even a speech, in which the latter decided:⁹ καὶ τὴν ἱστορίαν τῶν πραγμάτων τούτων ἀναγράφειν (40), to record also the history of these events. It is obvious from this phrase that in that publication Justus referred to *the events which have just been mentioned above*, meaning the local tension between Tiberias and Sepphoris, on the ground of the loss of Tiberias' place as capital of Galilee.

Is this the same work that Josephus responds to in chapter 65? It should be said in advance that in chapter 65 Josephus defends his credibility as a historian versus the incredibility of Justus, and does not refer to the local events which were described above. In addition,

⁸ From now on Agrippa refers to King Agrippa II (28—before 93/94 CE).

⁹ See: Stein 1936, 27–28, n. 2. The word λόγος has a wide semantic field: *Greek English Lexicon* 1996, s.v.

Josephus does not mention here that he was personally accused of any of the things he talks about in chapter 65. This is most likely because Josephus did not know about Justus' book at this stage, the one he is going to refer to in chapter 65, and because the publication mentioned in the section above is not Justus' book. Moreover, in chapter 65 Josephus does not say he is referring to anything mentioned before in this narrative, unlike his tendency to tell his audience to look up former references to matters mentioned elsewhere in his works (27, 410, 413). Again, most likely it is because Justus' publication mentioned in this section and Justus' book are two different items.

The second—Josephus says that further on in his narrative he will tell about Justus' depravity and how he and his brother almost brought about a catastrophe (41).¹⁰ So the main narrative about Justus was originally planned to deal with his and his brother's *public matters*.

It seems that Justus' main task was mainly literary in this section (36–42), which is part of Josephus' survey of the situation in Galilee on his arrival there (between his survey about Sepphoris: 30–31, and Gischala and Gamala: 43–45, 46–61). Because of Justus' personality and actions he was the right persona, who through his "speech" Josephus could illustrate the situation in Tiberias and Galilee.¹¹ In addition, Josephus sets here the basis to Justus' characterization as a *public person* for his future narrative, as planned according to v. 41.

2. When they arrived—and Iustus had come along with them—I started saying that I had been sent to them along with these men by the general assembly of the Jerusalemites to persuade them that the house of Herod the tetrarch, which had been constructed containing animal forms (the laws forbid such constructions), should be demolished. I appealed to them as to whether we might deal with this matter quickly (65).

Although only Justus is mentioned by name, nothing is being said about him.¹² Why then is he mentioned at all? Most likely, Josephus is here introducing information about Justus' public affairs that he

¹⁰ The only information about a brother of Justus is that the Galileans have cut off his hand on the charge of forgery (*Life* 177). But it does not necessarily mean that he is the same brother that Josephus is referring to in v. 41.

¹¹ Luther says about Justus' speech that it is "...eine Rede, die er gänzlich aus der Luft gegriffen hat": Luther 1910, 44. Cohen suggests that the purpose of the speech was to prepare the audience for Josephus' comparison between Sepphoris and Tiberias later on: Cohen 1979, 133.

¹² Luther understands from this situation that Justus was one of the the council members who were friendly to the Romans: Luther 1910, 40–41. About the religious

was planning to use later on. But as will be seen, he does not, in fact, mention this again. Is it because Josephus changed the original plan of narrative in order to deal with an urgent matter that demanded an immediate response?

3. Iustus and his father Pistus, in particular, were quick to defect from me and to be counted with Ioannes (88).

The villain of the whole affair (87–102), from which this verse is taken, is not Justus but Joannes of Gischhala,¹³ who tried to kill Josephus. The laconic statement about Justus, which referred to the *political sphere*, was most likely also meant to be used later in the narrative regarding Justus, the public person.

4. Now the Tiberians, once I arrived in Tarichea and they had come to understand the generalship that I had employed against them, were awestruck that I had ended their foolishness without bloodshed. I sent for those of the mob of the Tiberians who were in prison—and made them my dinner guests. After the banquet I said: ‘I myself knew very well that the power of the Romans is utterly overwhelming; but I have kept quiet about it because of the bandits’. I counseled them to do the same, to wait patiently for the amount of time and not become upset with me as general, for they would not easily find the opportunity to meet someone else who was similarly mild. I also reminded Iustus that before I came along from Jerusalem, the Galileans had cut off his brother’s hands, adducing wrongdoing prior to the war in the form of forged letters by him, and that after Philip’s withdrawal the Gamalites had risen against the Babylonians and disposed of Chares—he was Philip’s relative—and how they had with no greater consideration disciplined Iesus, that man’s brother and the husband of Iustus’ sister. These were the things I discussed with Iustus’ group after the banquet. Early the next day I gave orders that everyone under guard be released (174–178).¹⁴

The purpose of this section is to present Josephus as moderate and forgiving and to prove that the local disturbances among the Galilean groups had started before he had arrived.¹⁵

and political reasons for demolishing the palace see: Stein 1936, 34, n. 1. According to Rajak the whole event is about moderating civil problems: Rajak 1987, 90.

¹³ Notice that Joannes of Gischhala is sometimes referred to in this paper as *Joannes* and sometimes as *John*, coordinated with the way it is used in the different researches.

¹⁴ Philip son of Iacimus (= Jacimus) was one of Agrippa’s generals. See also: Mason 2001, 49–50 n. 274.

¹⁵ Rajak says that this apisode serves a central point in Josephus’ defence in *Life*, meaning “...he was a man trapped into fighting a war he did not want to fight...”:

Since Justus is passive in the episode, it seems that here, too, Justus is but a likely means through which Josephus could convey that vital information which portrays him as moderate. Besides, Josephus adds a somewhat negative characterization of Justus the *public person* by claiming that people, who were related to him, were involved in local disturbances.¹⁶

5. The council-president Iesus, holding back nothing, said plainly: 'It is preferable, citizens, for us to submit to four men rather than to one, especially those who are so brilliant with respect to ancestry and so renowned with respect to insight'. He indicated Ionathes' group. Now Iustus came forward and praised Iesus who had said these things; accordingly, he persuaded some of the populace (278–279a).

The villain in this episode is Jesus and not Justus. Without any continuation in the narrative, the mention of Justus in the scene is pointless. So, Josephus most likely meant to use this information too later on, while describing Justus' *public affairs*, according to the original plan of writing referring to Justus (41).

From what had already been written before chapter 65, it can be understood that Josephus planned to relate Justus' *public affairs* later on, as he said he would (41), and therefore he scattered hints here and there (36–42, 65, 88, 174–178, 278–279a), some of them laconic, pointless in themselves, in order eventually, to gather them as circumstantial evidence for the main story about Justus and his brother.

Where does chapter 65 fit in? Will there be any continuity, any reference to the scattered hints in this chapter?¹⁷

Rajak 1973, 353. But it seems that the purpose of this episode is related to Josephus' self-portraing as a moderate public person in *Life*.

¹⁶ It is possible that Josephus wanted to demonstrate the provocative atmosphere round Justus, by which the latter was affected. Luther thinks that it can be concluded from the pro-Roman political stance of Justus' kin that it was Justus' outlook as well: Luther 1910, 40. Josephus does not define the Galileans, but characterizes them as his supporters: Rajak 1984, 144, and n. 1. Feldman suggests that the Galileans are not a defined political group, but the rural citizens of the Galilee. See: Feldman 1996b, 111–13, and notes.

¹⁷ Luther notices the lack of continuity in Josephus' narrative about Justus and his brother, but says that the charge that Justus caused a catastrophe was Josephus' invention. In his opinion in two cases (*Life* 87–88, 279) Justus' name was added to the narrative at a later stage. And as a matter of fact he was not in opposition to Josephus: Luther 1910, 45 n. 3, 46 and notes 1, 2. Cohen refers to some mentions of Justus as "Josephan glosses", which might be an interpolation into an earlier text, and does not fit into the work naturally: Cohen 1979, 137.

There are two basic topics in chapter 65.¹⁸ The secondary topic in this chapter, which is a consequence of the main one, is a refutation of Justus' accusation that Josephus was responsible for inciting Tiberias against the Romans and King Agrippa (340–341ff).

But the main topic and the reason for writing this chapter is to prove that Justus is an unreliable historian of the war (336). In order to prove this point Josephus indicates Justus' faults as a human being (341, 355–356—troublesome, quarrelsome),¹⁹ and only then his drawbacks as a historian, developing his description from bad to worse: Justus did not witness the events he wrote about;²⁰ his report was uneven because he neither took part in the fighting nor based his evidence on the commentaries (the field notes) of the Caesar; he did not publish his book when people who took part and conducted the war—Vespasian, Titus and Agrippa and people of his family, were still alive and could testify to the veracity of his writing.²¹ He shelved his book for twenty years, and only after the people who could testify were gone, did he dare publish it (357ff).²²

¹⁸ Because of its length chapter 65 is not quoted, and only the relevant issues to this paper are dealt with.

¹⁹ The basis for the proof that Justus cannot be a reliable historian is that he is not a *vir bonus*, a good man. It was acknowledged that a good orator must first of all be a good man (Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* XII, i, 9), and Laqueur claims that the same analogy goes for a historian. Probably Josephus responds here to Justus' same kind of accusations, and tries to prove that since Justus is a bad person his history is no better than letter forgery: Laqueur 1970, 14. About a good orator as a good man, see also: Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric*, I, ii, 3–4. See a similar matter in: Cicero, *De Oratore* II, 182. See also: Mason 2001, XXXVIII–XXXIX.

²⁰ Eye-witnessing (ἀντοψία) was considered the most reliable kind in ancient times. See: Plautus, *Truculentus* lines 489–490; Lucian, *How to write History*, 47. In his works Josephus emphasizes his having been an eye-witness to the war, in contrast to others who also wrote about it: *War* 1.1, 2–3; *Against Apion* 1.46. See also: Rajak 1984, 75, and n. 13; Cohen 1979, 115, and n. 57. In itself, eye witnessing is problematic because it is rendered from a certain angle only and subjective.

²¹ Vespasian died in 79 CE and Titus in 81 CE, long before Justus published his book. So it can be understood that regarding Justus, the one person of the three whose opinion about the book was most critical to him, was Agrippa. Did Justus wait with his book until after Agrippa's death out of consideration for his benefactor? Or was it because he was afraid of Agrippa's rage, once he found out that Justus had criticized him? It seems that the latter is more reasonable. The two, Agrippa and Justus lived in the same neighborhood and Agrippa's anger could have a direct and immediate influence on Justus' status. See Rajak's opinion of the matter: Rajak 1987, 83, and n. 7.

²² Is *twenty years* an actual number? Can the date of Agrippa's death, the last witness mentioned by Josephus, help indicate the length of time that had passed since it was written? Is it just a number to demonstrate that a long period of time had passed? See about some of these matters: Laqueur 1970, 3; Rajak 1973, 345, and notes

In contrast to Justus and in parallel to his shortcomings, Josephus depicts his own virtues as a reliable historian.²³ Josephus actually took part in some war operations, and not only alone witnessed them (357). He was courageous enough to publish *War* a short while after the actual time of the events, and gave the books to the emperors for approval. He adhered to the truth, and received endorsement of his narrative. Josephus presented his work to many, including those who took part in the war, like Agrippa and his family. Because of Titus' approval of the books he wanted them to be the sole source of knowledge about the war. So Titus put his signature to them, and ordered their publication. Josephus possessed sixty two letters, sent to him by Agrippa, that testify to the veracity of *War* (361ff).

Nowhere before chapter 65 and nowhere after it are the two persons, Josephus and Justus, depicted as historians. It is unique to this chapter. Neither the character and behaviour of Josephus through his public deeds, nor Justus' behaviour and deeds as a public person are portrayed here, as they are throughout the rest of the main part of *Life*. Chapter 65 is distinctive for its specific characterization of both as historians.

From *Life*, with the exception of chapter 65, it is obvious that in 66–67 CE Josephus did not regard Justus as a worthy rival,²⁴ although there was a certain tension between them, as is usual between a governor and a charismatic and ambitious person.²⁵ Therefore throughout *Life*, apart from chapter 65, Josephus considers Justus as inferior, as φαῦλος (41)—sordid, mean, common, careless, thoughtless. Confirmation of this can be drawn from the fact that Justus is not mentioned in *War*,

5, 6. And if *twenty years* is an actual number—for what reason did Justus shelve his book? Was he forced to do so or was it of his free choice, and why? For what reason was *now* an appropriate time to publish it? Did Justus make any changes in his book during these years?

²³ The denunciation of one's rival, that was aimed to emphasize the (positive) personality of the writer, was a conventional rhetorical means of the autobiographic genre: Rajak 1984, 13; See also: Mason 1998, 51, and n. 87, 66–67; 2001, XL–XLI.

²⁴ At the time of the revolt Justus was of no importance: Luther 1910, 48–49 and notes. Luther probably means that he had no importance as regards national matters. Schalit is doubtful whether anyone in Rome had any interest in Justus, a secretary of an unimportant ruler and an unknown writer, who lived in a distant unimportant part of the eastern Roman Empire: Schalit 1933, 68.

²⁵ Scholars suggest various reasons for the rivalry between Josephus and Justus: That it was on a competitive-commercial literary basis: Laqueur 1970, 14, 21–23; their hatred had personal reasons and not political ones. The result of the hatred was expressed in *Life* in their debate about reliability: Schalit 1927, 47ff, especially 65ff.

although there too Josephus describes the same period of time, when he was the commander of the Galilee (*War* 2.562ff), and records the rebelliousness of Tiberias (*ibid.* 632ff), as he does in *Life*.

Justus' marginality is even more obvious when compared to Josephus' characterization of Joannes, his true rival, who wanted to deprive him of being the commander of the Galilee and replace him, as recorded both in *Life* (71, 74–76, 84–86, *passim*) and in *War* (2.585ff, 614ff, *passim*). If Justus had any importance at all at that time it was in reference to local matters only.²⁶

Why, then, does Josephus write about Justus in *Life* (apart from chapter 65)? *Life* is an autobiography, and as such it was reasonable that Josephus would choose to tell events of a personal nature, even though they were marginal or unimportant from any historical point of view.²⁷ Mentioning Justus was justified because there were tangent points between Josephus and Justus, and Justus' inappropriate behavior helped emphasize Josephus' positive behavior. Moreover, Justus was a suitable literary means to display a variety of facets of the atmosphere in Tiberias and in Galilee, the scenery of Josephus' narrative in *Life*.

As may be seen, chapter 65 is not a continuation of information about Justus, prior to this chapter, and nothing is told about Justus' and his brother's responsibility for almost causing a catastrophe (41). It is because not Justus the public person is dealt with in this chapter, but Justus the historian. And if there is any mention of his public or

²⁶ Rajak points out that John is the negative character. There is little denunciation of Justus while the fierce one is towards John: Rajak 1987, 86–87. About John see also: Rajak 1984, 160–163. Rappaport thinks that the inter-personal relations and local interests were, at that stage, more dominant in Galilean politics than the differences in ideology, which were not remarkable as regards Josephus, Justus, John and others: Rappaport 1994, 288–289. Theoretically, John, who was captured by the Romans and might not have been alive by that time (*War* 6.433–434; 7.118), was no rival to Josephus when he wrote *Life*, while Justus, who was alive, could still harm him. But sometimes just after death the stories about a person and his deeds flourish and become a myth, which makes him more dangerous dead than when he was alive. Therefore John is still a threat to Josephus. Similarly, Polybius criticizes Timaeus, the historian who lived and wrote history hundreds of years before Polybius' time: Polybius, *The Histories* XII, iii, 2, *passim*.

²⁷ Cohen points out that the events mentioned in *Life* about the war are sometimes trivial and with a different emphasis than in *War* and some are not even mentioned in the latter: Cohen 1979, 239. This comes as no surprise. One of the differences between historiography and autobiography (and biography) is that in the latter even marginal or trivial details regarding national affairs can be important for the depiction of character. E.g.: Plutarch, *Nicias* I, 5; *Alexander* I, 3.

political deeds (e.g. setting fire to the villages of Gadara and Hippos), it is secondary to the main topic of the chapter.

Why does Josephus tell about Justus the historian in chapter 65 and does not continue what he originally intended (41)? What brought about the change of plan? Josephus himself gives the answer—the publication of Justus' book (338) compelled him to respond to it immediately.²⁸ It is most likely that only towards the end of writing *Life* (see further on), after reading Justus' book, did Josephus decide that he could not ignore it. That recent book turned Justus, as far as Josephus was concerned, from a marginal public person in the sixties of the first century CE (see n. 24 above), into a serious rival historian in the nineties, to whom Josephus had to respond with all his might.²⁹

By saying that chapter 65 is παρέκβασις (367), a digression, Josephus states that he left the main course of his writing, to say something that *was not* an integral part of the work.³⁰ Still, Josephus tries to integrate the chapter in *Life* in a way that would not interfere with the sequence of the narrative. That is why he places it between two chapters where Tiberias is mentioned (chapters 64 and 66), and where both Josephus' mission to Galilee and the chronological sequence of *Life* almost come to an end. Placing chapter 65 where it interferes as little as possible with the chronology and contents that form the structure of *Life*.³¹ But there is no connection, content-wise or chronologically

²⁸ Laqueur tries to define two literary layers in *Life*, and thinks that Josephus was forced to change *Life* because of the publication of Justus' book. He argues that all that was written about Justus was the consequence of the latter's book and belonged to the second layer of *Life*: Laqueur 1970, 7ff, especially 56ff. See further discussion.

²⁹ Mason says that even chapter 65 does not reveal that Josephus felt threatened by Justus, because he does not defend himself, but attacks his rival mockingly: Mason 2001, XLIX–L. But it might just be the other way round.

³⁰ See παρέκβασις in Josephus' opera, in: Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus 1979, s.v. See its meaning (in the entry παρεκβαίνω) in: Greek English Lexicon 1996, s.v. It seems that a digression from the narrative, in order to explain or tell something that did not belong directly to the main course of the narrative, was a literary convention, e.g. Polybius, *The Histories* III, ii, 7; XXXI, xxx, 4. Sometimes a digression was inserted without pointing out that the following was a digression, e.g. Tacitus' explanation about Britain and the British: Tacitus, *Agricola* 10–17. See also the discussion that there might be two editions to *Life* and that chapter 65 (and other references) was added of *Life* only in the second edition, which was issued after Justus' book was published: Schwartz 1992, 269–72. See also Laqueur in n. 28 above. And see further discussion.

³¹ As today, in ancient times it was also possible to make changes in books during the process of writing them and even after books had already been issued. See: West 1973, 15–16; Schwartz 1992, 252. Cicero wrote to his friend and publisher Atticus saying that by mistake he had sent him the wrong introduction (to *De Gloria*). He

between the three chapters. If chapter 65 is omitted, there will be a natural and fluent continuation between chapters 64 and 66.³²

So, when did Josephus decide to respond to Justus' book by adding the unplanned chapter 65, the digression, to *Life*? Justus is mentioned twice after chapter 65. Can this help answer the question?

1. At about this time, Iustus the son of Pistus eluded me and ran away to the king. The occasion on which he did this I shall relate. When the war by the Judeans against the Romans had made a start, the Tiberians determined to submit to the king and not to defect from the Romans. But Iustus, bent on revolutionary activities himself, persuaded them to proceed toward weapons. Of course, none of the expected things happened. For the Galileans, harboring hostility toward the Tiberians because of anger at what they had suffered from him [Iustus] before the war, would not put up with Iustus' being general over them. And I myself, after being entrusted with the protection of Galilee by the general assembly of the Jerusalemites, often reaches such a degree of rage, when I could no longer tolerate his baseness, that it was almost necessary to kill Iustus. When he became anxious that this mood might once reach fulfillment, he sent Crispus to the king, supposing that he could reside more security in the latter's territory (390–393).³³

There are some strange things in this section.

(a) Why does Josephus call Justus "son of Pistus" as he did when he first mentioned him in v. 36, after addressing him in chapter 65 as only "Justus"? Does he think that he had to remind the reader who Justus was? But can one forget Justus after reading chapter 65? (b) Why does he repeat what he has already said in v. 36 that Justus wanted to take advantage of the war? (c) There is also a repetition of Justus' escape to Agrippa, which was related in chapter 65 (354), but without reminding the reader that it has been mentioned before, a convention Josephus uses in *Life* (27, 410, 413). In other words, *why does Josephus write things here as if chapter 65 did not exist?*

The logical explanation for these oddities is that this section (390–393) was written *before* chapter 65 was added to *Life*, although it was

is now sending him the right one and asks him to cut out the wrong introduction and paste the new one: Cicero, *Letters to Atticus* XVI, 6. Changes were not seen in the published books because the original copy was used only by those who copied it. Surprisingly, the same terms used by Cicero—cut and paste, have been kept in the Microsoft Word.

³² Stein says that this long chapter (65) separates between the two that are consecutive in matter, chapter 64 and chapter 66: Stein 1936, 77, n. 1.

³³ Crispus was one of Agrippa's valets.

eventually placed after it. What was conveyed about Justus was detailed only at the beginning (36–42), and so little, scattered, incoherent and laconic later on (65, 88, 174–178, 278–279a), that before chapter 65 was added to *Life* there was a need to remind the reader who Justus was. So only after repeating basic things and tidying up the loose ends could Josephus continue and complete the story about Justus, as originally planned (41).

2. When Vespasian came to Ptolemais, the principal men of the Ten Cities of Syria loudly denounced Iustus of Tiberias because he had set fire to their villages. So Vespasian handed him over to the king to be disciplined by the subjects of the kingdom. The king, however, [merely] put him in chains, concealing this from Vespasian, as I have explained above (410).

The words ὡς ἀνωτέρω δεδηλώκαμεν, as I have explained above, can refer only to chapter 65 (341–343, 355–356), where the whole episode was related. So this section was certainly written after chapter 65. It means that chapter 65 was written after v. 393 and before v. 410. Only then did Josephus decide to take advantage of the work he was writing, *Life*, and in which he had already written about Justus negative traits, in order to respond to the accusation in the latter's newly published book.³⁴ Only then did he decide to replace the original narrative plan regarding Justus' troublesome deeds as a *public person* (41), for a different, but more urgent matter, and added chapter 65 to *Life*.

The fact that Josephus did not change the remarks about Justus, which he did not use later on in his narrative, is the basic indication that there was only one edition to *Life* (versus notes 28, 30). It seems that there was no reason for Josephus to omit the remarks because after all Justus was a most appropriate literary means to illustrate the backdrop of Josephus' activity in Galilee (see above) as well as to serve as a negative opposite character to Josephus' positive public personality—two purposes that were valid for Josephus' autobiographic narrative, the original purpose of *Life* (see further on).

All the same, Josephus could have published a pamphlet of an apologetic nature as a response to Justus' accusations. But although the impact of a pamphlet would have been immediate, it would have had a short life. So it was more effective to add an apologetic chapter to *Life*,

³⁴ Rajak points out that the direct approach to Justus (meaning chapter 65) comes only towards the end of *Life*: Rajak 1984, 152–153.

which was being written at that time, and in which Justus had already been mentioned and characterized negatively.

Chapter 65, the digression which was added only towards the end of the process of writing *Life*, does not indicate the purpose of the work. It is a unique chapter, different from all the other chapters in the central part of *Life*, in which it is included (see the structure of *Life* further on), not only in concentrating on presenting both Josephus and Justus as historians, but in other aspects as well:

It differs in its internal literary structure and content. While most of the chapters are short (see examples along 13–335, 368–413), this is exceptionally long (336–367). Except for the historical chapters that serve as background (e.g. 43–45, and *passim*), in the rest of the chapters, where Josephus depicts his own character through his behavior as a public person, he describes plots and tells stories (e.g. 62–67, and others).³⁵ But chapter 65 is an apologetic plea, as if Josephus was defending himself in court.³⁶

Life is written in chronological order.³⁷ However chapter 65 is unconnected from this aspect. The whole period of the central part of *Life* lies between 341–342—setting fire to the villages of Gadara and Hippos, and 343—in which Vespasian orders to punish Justus. And as the chapter continues Josephus moves his narration forwards and backwards, ignoring the chronological order (see: 346ff, 355ff). The chronological order is not important, because he does not lay out a plot. Here he is focusing only on defending himself, on building his charges in the most persuasive manner, which made chronological order irrelevant.

Chapter 65 is different in style and language. Unlike the poor language of the rest of *Life*,³⁸ this chapter excels in its rhetorical structure and language.³⁹

³⁵ The exception of *Life*, 80–83, which is a list of virtues, was acceptable in personal writing. See a similar pause in the sequence of the narrative in: Tacitus, *Agricola* 19.

³⁶ Mason refers to chapter 65 as “the forensic digression”: Mason 2001, XXXVIII.

³⁷ Cohen 1979, 69ff, 233; Neyrey 1994, 192. There is hardly any constant linear story, so even if there are flash-backs, which are of the historical background (e.g. *Life* 25–27, 32–61), the writing of *Life* can still be considered chronological. Mason claims that although *Life* seems a continuous narrative, it actually consists of episodes which start with undefined time phrases that do not form an inner chronology, and are conveyed to demonstrate Josephus’ virtues: Mason 1998, 53–54. But certainly Josephus skips periods of time that are not important for his portrayal. After all an autobiography is not historiography.

³⁸ Cohen 1979, 110, 113. See also Thackeray 1967, 108, 110, 115.

³⁹ Stein 1936, 77 n. 1.

How does the comprehension of the place of chapter 65 in *Life*, the additional digression, affect the understanding of this autobiographic work? When we consider *Life* without chapter 65, we are left with the genuine parts of the work. It contains some biographical details at the beginning and at the end (1–12; 414–430), while the major part (13–335, 368–413), is dedicated to Josephus' public affairs.⁴⁰ First he tells about his trip to Rome to free fellow priests (13–16), and then about his public service as the commander of Galilee (17–335, 368–413), a period of about half a year, from December 66 until May–July 67 CE.⁴¹ Throughout his narrative he presents himself in a positive and praise-worthy manner.⁴²

Because of that inner structure, detailing only about half a year of Josephus' life, and very brief or even lacking information of most of his life, *Life* was considered as a autobiography of sorts.⁴³ However, the structure and content of *Life* (without chapter 65) are actually those of the political autobiographical and biographical writing (see n. 40) of that period, where the main part concentrates on character as depicted by the person's behavior and performance in the events of his life in the *public sphere*. But because Josephus was in service for only a short time, about half a year, the proportion between the content and chronological lengths seems uneven. Nevertheless, this is the structure of political autobiographical and biographical writing, and that is what Josephus intended, and had to write in his political autobiography.

Therefore, *Life* is what Josephus said he intended to write according to *Antiquities* 20, 266, and *Life* 430. He wrote a political autobiography

⁴⁰ It can be drawn from biographies of that era that this was the conventional structure and content of personal-writing of public persons (e.g. from the biographies of Suetonius. Although Suetonius wrote some time after Josephus, he can still be used as a demonstration of biographical composition since literary changes were slow in ancient times). It is an acceptable approach in the research of ancient literary works to consider biography and autobiography as one genre. See: Momigliano 1993, 95; Cohen 1979, 102. There is no entry for "Autobiography" in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* 1996, s.v. Instead the reader is directed to the entry "Biography".

⁴¹ Discussion about the period of time when Josephus was commander of the Galilee, see: Mason 2001, XXI and n. 6.

⁴² Praise was an immanent feature of the autobiographic genre. Neyrey finds that *Life* "is not just encomiastic in form but a formal encomium": Neyrey 1994, 188ff, 205. Josephus' negative depiction of his rivals is a literary means of self praise.

⁴³ Misch 1973, 315; Laqueur 1970, 7; Schalit 1927, 1; Rajak 1973, 354; 1984, 43. There are scholars who choose therefore to name the autobiography "Aus meinem Leben (Vita)": Siegert and others 2001, 3, 5. But see further discussion above.

that concentrated on the events of his life as a *political person*.⁴⁴ And chapter 65 which seemed so vital for understanding *Life* was actually an obstacle to its understanding.

Although it deserves a separate discussion, it seems necessary to end this paper by suggesting a reason why Josephus decided to write an autobiography, if not because of Justus. Since the apologetic theme runs throughout *Life*, it indicates that Josephus needed to defend himself and portray his character in a positive way towards (what seemed then) the end of his life, especially in the reign of Domitian.⁴⁵ The reason to write an apologetic political autobiography would be that he had many enemies,⁴⁶ a fact which he himself mentions and enumerates (and there were probably others he forgot or omitted): when he was the commander of Galilee;⁴⁷ during the war;⁴⁸ and after the war.⁴⁹ For a public person to write an autobiography was in accordance with literary convention in Rome. It indicated that the person was sure of the righteousness of his way.⁵⁰ And that is what Josephus wanted his audience to believe.

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⁴⁴ See an enlarged discussion of the subject in: Stern 2005, 136–37, 177ff.

⁴⁵ Josephus tells that Domitian honored him (*Life* 429). But Domitian was a very troublesome ruler. E.g. Tacitus, *Agricola*, 42, 45; Suetonius, *Domitian*, 10ff; Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, LXVII, 3, passim.

⁴⁶ Momigliano says that *Life* “is plainly written in self-defense”: Momigliano 1993, 18.

⁴⁷ *Life* 80, 129, 133, 135, 284, 295–297, 260, 302, 314, and see also 183–184; *War* 2.133, 598–599, 626.

⁴⁸ *War* 3.359–369, 5.362, 375, 541; *Life* 416.

⁴⁹ *Life* 423–425, 428–429; *War* 7.448.

⁵⁰ See: Tacitus, *Agricola*, 1. Mason also claims that that was the reason for which Josephus wrote *Life*: Mason 1998, 75. See more about this matter in: Plutarch, *On inoffensive self-praise*, 539 E, 540 C, passim.

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A JEWISH PRIEST IN ROME

Michael Tuval

*Introduction: Josephus' Priestly Identity*¹

Josephus' entire literary career took place in Rome, far away from the once holy city of Jerusalem and its destroyed temple.² On the one hand, it is evident that throughout this career, Josephus could not—in any capacity—officiate as a priest of that temple.³ On the other hand, however, it is just as evident that throughout his writings he continued to emphasize his priestly status and descent. Moreover, he even claimed that a number of other positive characteristics and gifts—such as foreseeing the future, familiarity with the biblical traditions and his talent as an historian stemmed from his priestly origins.⁴ Indeed, Josephus' priestly status and origins seem to have constituted the most important ingredients of his self-identity during the decades he spent in the capital of the empire.

However, while the advantages of being a priest in pre-destruction Jerusalem are obvious, those of being a priest of a ruined temple thousands of miles away from its site, and without a possibility to sacrifice, are much less so.⁵ The inevitable question, then, is why Josephus' priestly background and descent remained so significant for him in Rome. The undiminished emphasis on his priestly identity is especially intriguing in the light of the fact that in his later writings he exhibited

¹ I would like to thank Erich S. Gruen, Oded Irshai, Daniel R. Schwartz, Daniel Stökl-Ben Ezra and Michael E. Stone, who read various drafts of this article, for their criticisms, suggestions and corrections. All remaining mistakes are mine alone.

² On Josephus' career and the chronology of his writings see Feldman 1984, 763–862; Attridge 1984, 185–232; Bilde 1988, 27–122; Jones 2002, 113–21.

³ In the light of Josephus' tendency to present himself as the most qualified and reliable witness, it is intriguing that he nowhere explicitly stated that he served as a priest in the temple while it stood.

⁴ See *War* 1.3; 3.352; *Ant.* 16.187; *Life* 1–2; 1.80; *Apion* 1.54. The main relevant key passages are quoted and discussed below.

⁵ On the priests before 70 CE, see Stern 1976, 561–96, 600–12; Sanders 1992, 77–102, 170–89, 317–40, index: Priesthood and priests (Jewish), roles of. On the priests after 70, see Alon 1977, 318–23; Ben-Haim Trifon 1984; Schwartz 1990, 96–109; Irshai 2003, 75–85; Goodman 1994; Levine 1989, 171–76; 2005, 519–29.

much less interest in Jerusalem temple and its cult. This lack of interest is evident in several passages of the *Antiquities*, where he consistently replaced the sanctuary and the sacrificial cult, which appeared in his sources, with the “commandments of the Torah”.⁶ On the one hand, the elevation of the Torah at the expense of the temple is a familiar tendency of Second Temple Diaspora Judaism, and is not surprising in a Jewish intellectual who spent many years away from the Jewish cultic center.⁷ However, on the other hand, the great importance ascribed by Josephus to his priesthood is without good parallels in the literature produced by the Jews of Greco-Roman Diaspora.

Moreover, anyone familiar with the way Josephus described himself in his various writings will know that he never wrote anything unflattering about himself, unless absolutely compelled to do so—whether by the exposing accounts of his rivals, or just because the truth was too well-known.⁸ At the same time he appears never to have missed an opportunity to praise himself and to present himself as the most gifted and qualified in every respect.⁹ The unavoidable conclusion then is that if he in so many words and in such various contexts repeatedly emphasized his priestly status and origins, it was a worthwhile thing for him to do. What and how was he profiting in Rome by presenting himself as a Judean priest? Even though almost every study of Josephus routinely mentions the fact that he was a priest, none of them has endeavored to explain why this fact remained so meaningful to him in the course of the long years he spent in Italy.¹⁰ The undiminished importance of Josephus’ priestly status—in spite of his change of residence and the temple’s demise—is still taken for granted.¹¹

While there seems to be no unequivocal answer to the questions raised above, a combination of reasons may account for the endur-

⁶ Cf. *Ant.* 8.274–281 (Jeroboam’s speech to Abias) with 2 Chr 13:3–12 (I owe this reference to Daniel R. Schwartz); *Ant.* 12.267; 300–304; 406–409; 13.197–199 (Maccabean speeches) with 1 Macc 2:6–13; 3:58–59; 7:33–38; 13:1–6, respectively; *Ant.* 14.64–67 (Pompey’s conquest of Jerusalem) with *War* 1.148–150. In the last case the contrast is between Josephus’ later emphasis on the Law as opposed to his earlier emphasis on the cult. On Josephus’ treatment of the speeches in 1 Maccabees see Gafni 1989.

⁷ See Schwartz 1992, 117–27; 1996, 114–27; 2004, 37–55.

⁸ See Cohen 1979, 114–137.

⁹ See *Ant.* 20, 262–265, and *Life* 1–16. See also Cohen 1979, index, under *vanity*.

¹⁰ See, for example, Feldman 1998a, 61–62; 1998b, 545–46.

¹¹ However, see Rajak 2002, 16–21, who suggests several reasons for Josephus’ emphasis on his priestly background.

ing importance, in Josephus' eyes, of his priestly status and origins. In this paper I shall try to identify some of these possible reasons by placing Josephus in his context, or better, in his contexts: that of the Greco-Roman Diaspora Judaism, that of traditional Roman religion, and finally, that of oriental cults at Rome. In the process of doing this I shall also touch on the perennial question of Josephus' alleged Pharisaic loyalty as well as his position vis-à-vis the nascent rabbinic movement, and attempt to clarify some of Josephus' peculiar usage.

Josephus the priest in the context of first-century Judaism

Priesthood equals nobility

As has already been pointed above, Josephus mentioned his priestly status in different contexts, each time emphasizing one or another of its aspects. A natural place to start the inquiry is to look at what he said about his family origins in *Life* 1–2, even though this is admittedly one of his latest pieces:

Now in my case, my ancestry is rather distinguished, having originated with priests long ago. Just as the basis of noble birth is different among various [nations], so also among us membership in the priesthood is a certain proof of an ancestry's brilliance (ὥσπερ δ' ἡ παρ' ἐκάστοις ἄλλη τις ἐστὶν εὐγενείας ὑπόθεσις, οὕτως παρ' ἡμῖν ἡ τῆς ἱερωσύνης μετουσία τεκμήριόν ἐστιν γένους λαμπρότητος). Now in my case, my ancestry is not merely from priests; it is also from the first day-course of the twenty-four—this is an enormous distinction, this—and indeed, from the most élite of the divisions within this [course].¹²

The quotation could be continued, but even this short passage makes it sufficiently clear that Josephus equated Judean nobility with Judean priesthood.¹³ No matter whether he addressed a Jewish or a pagan audience here, his first claim in the autobiography was: "I am a noble by virtue of being a priest." Throughout his writings, Josephus

¹² Following Mason 2001, 3–5.

¹³ For critical remarks on the gradual development of Josephus' awareness of his (high)-priestly and royal ancestry, see Smith 1999, 225–26. The present author shares Smith's misgivings. See also Cohen 1979, 107–18 n. 33. On Josephus' family tree in *Life*, see Mason 2001, 3–10; Siegert, Schreckenberg and Vogel 2001, 162; and most recently, Schwartz 2007, Appendix 1.

made it clear that he considered the priests to be elevated above the rest of the Jews. In his opinion, the priests were unique.¹⁴

One should also keep in mind that both Jewish and the Roman society of Josephus' time were deeply traditional, attached great value to the age-old customs and institutions, and disparaged innovation—at least, in theory.¹⁵ For the members of the upper classes like Josephus these traditional customs had obvious existential value. If things stayed more-or-less the way they had been, people like him were going to continue to enjoy a predictable, stable and prosperous life. In his version of the Judean history, Josephus emphasized that the priests had always played a central role in the Judean history. Thus, they were appointed by Moses himself to guard the Judean constitution and to oversee its implementation, they were prominent under the monarchy and after the exile, they gloriously ruled the nation during the Hasmonean period, and they successfully represented the nation before the Romans during the 1st century CE. However, whenever the traditional customs were tampered with (that is, the status and privileges of the priestly aristocracy came under threat), disaster became inevitable.¹⁶

In other words, Josephus clearly identified Judean traditional nobility with Judean priesthood, and considered any changes in its status quo as utterly disastrous for the whole of the Jewish people. Vice versa, the upholding of the traditional status of priests would bring forth blessing and stability. In this context it is not surprising that he continued to emphasize his priestly origins.

Priests as leaders of Diaspora communities

It appears that there were other reasons, too. As early as 1984 Jack N. Lightstone speculated concerning the high status of priests in the Diaspora Jewish communities. He noted the awkwardness of the description of one Sceva in Acts 19:14 as “high priest of the Jews” (Ἰουδαίου ἀρχιερέως) in Ephesos, and intimated that this title might

¹⁴ For the list of Josephus' pro-priestly revisions of the biblical narrative, see Feldman 1998a, 60–62.

¹⁵ See νεωτερίζω, νεωτερισμός κτλ. in Rengstorf 2002, 1237–1238 and LSJ, 1172.

¹⁶ E.g., see: *War* 4.151–157; 318; *Ant.* 20.216–218.

be understood in a local, communal sense.¹⁷ In the context of his discussion of Diaspora synagogues, Lightstone wrote:

Communal prayer might legitimately be viewed as a type of group incantation, the repetition of established word-formulae and rites, which may be replicated anywhere and simultaneously in any number of locations... To such a shamanistic model of cultic activity the hereditary priesthood is equally well suited. It is part and parcel of the shamanistic model that rites be carried out at opportune moments and by appropriate individuals... These persons are links between heaven and earth, they would maintain, because deity fashioned them as such; in the nature of things they are of a different order, as their charismatic gifts would indicate. Israelite priests, too, might be conceived to be of a different order of human, chosen by the deity, as indicated not by theurgic powers but by lineage cum etiological myth as to the origins and the 'chosenness' of that lineage.... The Priesthood, the origins of which as a sacerdotal cast lie in the shamanistic type of cult among the Ancient Israelites, later come to play a comparable function in a cult of Yahweh outside of the temple system and in another shamanistic cult of Yahweh in the Graeco-Roman Diaspora.¹⁸

All of this is, of necessity, speculative. Josephus was definitely neither a shaman, nor a magician, nor a divine man—such as inhabited the Diaspora Jewish world according to Lightstone. Nevertheless, it seems at least that Lightstone correctly described the advantages which hereditary priests might have had as potential leaders of the Diaspora Jewish communities.

Apart from the "high priest of the Jews" in Ephesos, mentioned in Acts 19, we have some additional evidence that priests might have fulfilled some cultic and communal functions in the Diaspora. For example, the inscriptions, mentioning Jewish priestesses.¹⁹ Among

¹⁷ Lightstone 1984, 20–21. The Western text of Acts and some other witnesses read ἱερέως. However, most scholars accept ἀρχιερέως as the original reading. See Barrett 1998, 909. for the survey of scholarship and for an intriguing parallel: Juvenal, *Satire* 6.544—*magna sacerdos*. On this last, see Stern 1980, 100–101 (#299), with further bibliography there. For Conzelmann 1987, 164 the problem of Acts 19:14 is easily solved: "The high priest Seva is a purely legendary figure".

¹⁸ Lightstone 1984, 115–16.

¹⁹ These are discussed by Broton 1982, 73–99. It is also important, that Theodotos inscription, the oldest Greek synagogue inscription from the land of Israel, emphasizes that Theodotos was first ἱερεύς, then ἀρχισυνάγωγος. Theodotos was most likely a Diaspora Jew, and some scholars even suggested that his family came from Rome. See Roth-Gerson 1987, 78, 81, and further references there. Stern 1983, 17 accepts that Theodotos was a Roman citizen, but does not think that he came from the city of Rome. On the inscription generally, most recently, see Levine 2005, 57–59.

other options of interpretation, Brooten considers a possibility that the word “priestess” (ἱέρισσα, ἱέρεια) in the inscriptions denotes some cultic capacity in which these women officiated in their communities.²⁰ As early as 1957 in his commentary on a 1st century BCE inscription from Egypt, V. Tcherikover speculated that “[It] may be that as early as the Hellenistic period, priests had to perform some function in the synagogue”.²¹ To this, one could also add the tantalizing fact that Eleazar the martyr from 2 Macc 6:18 is changed into a priest by the Diaspora author of 4 Macc 5:4, the prominent communal/cultic role ascribed to Eleazar the priest in 3 Macc 6, the prominence of priests in the Letter of Aristeeas 310, and finally, the important functions performed by priests according to Philo’s Hypothetica 7:13.

Even if one leaves the shamanistic model aside, it seems to have been perfectly logical for the Diaspora Jews to give prominent place to their priests, since their Bible did. The priests are the most privileged class in the Bible, and in the absence of kings and prophets, the only divinely sanctioned authority that remained at the turn of the era. It should not be forgotten of course, that we are dealing here with the pre-rabbinic period. To summarize this point, it is quite possible that Josephus never tired of emphasizing his priesthood because priests might have been offered additional jobs in Roman synagogues.²²

Priests as Jewish sages

Even more important than the previous point is Josephus’s apparent conviction that it is to his class that the Mosaic constitution was entrusted, and that the priests were the most natural candidates to lead the post-destruction Judaism. This is already clear from the role played by the priests in the Ant., and from the characterization of the Mosaic constitution as “aristocracy” (Ant. 4:223). As has already been pointed out above, it appears that for Josephus “aristocrats” meant simply priests. His understanding of the role of the priesthood in Judaism was made explicit in so many words in Apion 2:184–189:

For us, with our conviction that the original institution of the Law was in accordance with the will of God, it would be rank impiety not

²⁰ Brooten, 90–95.

²¹ Tcherikover and Fuks 1957, 254–55 (#139).

²² On priests as officials in Diaspora communities, see Levine 2005, 523–24. See also: Herman 1998, 136–43.

to observe it. What could one alter in it? What more beautiful one could have been discovered? What improvement imported from elsewhere? Would you change the entire character of the constitution (πολιτεύματος)? Could there be a finer or more equitable polity than one which sets God at the head of the universe, which assigns the administration of its highest affairs to the whole body of priests (τοῖς ἱερεῦσι δὲ κοινῇ μὲν τὰ μέγιστα διοικεῖν ἐπιτροπούσης), and entrusts to the supreme high-priest the direction of the other priests?... [T]his charge further embraced a strict superintendence of the Law and of the pursuits of everyday life; for the appointed duties of the priests included general supervision, the trial of cases of litigation, and the punishment of condemned persons. Could there be a more saintly government than that? Could God be more worthily honoured than by such a scheme, under which religion is the end and aim of the training of the entire community, the priests are entrusted with the special charge of it, and the whole administration of the state (πολιτείας) resembles some sacred ceremony?²³

According to this scheme, outlined by Josephus in his latest composition, the ideal order, “theocracy”—as he calls it in the same work (Apion 2.165)—is ordained by God and administered by priests, “gifted with supreme eloquence, discretion”, and knowledge of the Law. On the basis of the last paragraphs of *Ant.* (20.262–266) and the first ones of *Life* (7–12), it is evident that Josephus considered himself to be close to the top of this intellectual pyramid, if not at the very top.

In this context, I have to remark that my view of Josephus’ religious outlook is similar to that of Steve Mason: Josephus was never a Pharisee, but always remained an aristocratic priest.²⁴ I also think that Mason is correct in interpreting the *Life* as Josephus’ attempt to parade himself as the embodiment of everything which is best in the Judean constitution.²⁵ I would even venture to suggest that in the light of Josephus’ grandiose claims concerning his ancestry, piety, gifts and legal expertise, he might well have seen himself as a natural candidate to the leadership of the Jewish people.

²³ Following Thackeray 1926, 367–69. One could easily compare this passage with Cicero, *De domo sua* 1.1, quoted below. This similarity has already been noted by Mason in Feldman 2000, xxvi.

²⁴ Mason 1991, 325–56; 374. See also his introduction to *Ant.* in Feldman 2000 and his translation of and commentary on *Life* 12 in Mason 2001, 20–21, esp. n. 91.

²⁵ Mason 2001, XLVIII–XLIX.

This view, of course, is hardly reconcilable with those of M. Smith²⁶ and his students (J. Neusner²⁷ and S. J. D. Cohen;²⁸ cf. S. Schwartz²⁹), who claimed that in his later writings Josephus tried to promote Pharisees as the prospective leaders of the Jews, and/or that he was trying to curry favor with the rabbis in Yavneh. In my opinion, however, in his description of the Mosaic theocracy quoted above, Josephus does not seem to have assigned any function to the Pharisaic (or rabbinic) sages. Plainly, in his view he himself was the ultimate sage, and that by the virtue of his being a priest. This he emphasizes a number of times, even as early as in War 3:352:

He was an interpreter of dreams and skilled in divining the meaning of ambiguous utterances of the Deity; a priest himself and of priestly descent (ὡς ἂν αὐτός τε ὢν ἱερεὺς καὶ ἱερέων ἔγγονος), he was not ignorant of the prophecies in the sacred books.³⁰

In this context one could also mention Josephus' description of Jewish historiography in Apion 1:29–59: the priests and the prophets wrote the history of the Jews beginning with the origin of men until Artaxerxes (that is, the Bible). The priests transmitted and preserved it, and it was thus natural for Josephus—himself a priest—to continue this undertaking by composing two histories of his own time. And again he attributes his knowledge of the Bible to his priestly origins:

In my Antiquities, as I said, I have given a translation of our sacred books; being a priest and of priestly ancestry (γεγονὼς ἱερεὺς ἐκ γένους), I am well versed in the philosophy of these writings (Apion 1.54).³¹

²⁶ Smith 1956, 75–76.

²⁷ Neusner 1973, 45–66; 1987, 274–92.

²⁸ Cohen 1979, 140; 237–38. The following sentence is typical: “With his unerring eye for a winner, he [Josephus] had been courting the Yavnean scholars by including Rabbinic propaganda in AJ” (140).

²⁹ Schwartz 1990, 176, 199–200 is much more cautious than Smith, Neusner and Cohen. Nonetheless, he still thinks that *Ant* is propagandistic for the early Rabbinic movement. It should be noticed, though, that he already concluded that Josephus admired the priestly class, and that he hoped that it would become even more influential in the future (ibid., 108).

³⁰ Following Thackeray 1927, 675.

³¹ Following Thackeray 1926, 185; cf. Gray, 1993, 53–58. On the question of Josephus' claims concerning his knowledge of the Bible and its connection with his priestly origins, see below.

Roman priests in Roman society

However, it is highly unlikely that Josephus emphasized his priestly status and origins only for the sake of his Jewish readers. An additional reason for Josephus to emphasize his priesthood appears to have been the image and prestige enjoyed by the traditional Roman priests in the framework of the Roman society.³² Although Josephus did not, of course, claim that he was a Roman priest, it is still likely, that when the Romans heard that someone was “a priest”, they first of all naturally thought of what they conceived as “a priest”. In the Roman society around Josephus priesthood normally was a position of honor, presupposed high social status, demanded much wealth and often served as “the stepping stone for an ambitious person for a subsequent and often distinguished role in Roman political and social affairs.”³³ In my opinion, it is reasonable to suppose that when Josephus was writing his books in Rome, and repeatedly emphasized that he was a priest, he might have had the Roman priests in the back of his mind.

If we suppose this indeed was the case, then his tautological statements that he “was a priest, and of a priestly origin” (ὃν ἱερεὺς καὶ ἱερέων ἔγγονος) [War 3:352, cf. Apion 1.54, quoted above] suddenly begin to make sense. In the Jewish context such terminology is admittedly awkward—one cannot become a priest if he is not of a priestly origin.³⁴ However, in the context of the traditional Roman religion, in which the vast majority of priestly positions were non-hereditary, it made a real difference. In other words, it seems that Josephus was saying: “Not only I myself am a priest, which as you already know, is a great honor, but all my family members before me have had this honorable status.”³⁵

At this point I should mention Mason’s comparison of Josephus priestly-centered description of the Mosaic constitution with the

³² Cf. Beard, North and Price 1998, I: 18–30; 186–96.

³³ Szeemler 1986, 2330.

³⁴ The only instance of comparable usage in the Semitic context which I am aware of is the Hebrew inscription from the synagogue in Susiya, in which both father and son are designated as priests. See Naveh 1978, 115–16. I owe this reference to Daniel Stökl-Ben Ezra.

³⁵ It should be also noted, that the Jewish priests were tied to the temple of Jerusalem, while Roman priests could function as such virtually anywhere. Thus, for the Romans it was perfectly fine to be a priest without a temple, like Josephus. This fact was brought to my attention by Erich S. Gruen.

discussion of the Roman constitution and laws by a Roman priest, Marcus Tullius Cicero.³⁶ The parallels are striking indeed. Mason thinks that Josephus would have been familiar with “[the] constitutional issues that had been in the air for a long time before [him]”,³⁷ and that Roman intellectuals would have sympathized with Josephus’ account of the Judean priestly constitution in the *Ant.* Therefore, it is conceivable that Josephus in his *Ant.* was engaging in dialogue with contemporary Roman thinkers who wrote on their constitution and laws. In this context, Mason quotes Cicero’s address to the College of Pontifices:

Among the many things, gentlemen of the pontifical college, that our ancestors created and established under divine inspiration, nothing is more renowned than their decision to entrust the worship of the gods and the highest interests of the state to the same men—so that the most eminent and illustrious citizens might ensure the maintenance of religion by the proper administration of the state, and the maintenance of the state by the prudent interpretation of religion (*De domo sua* 1.1).³⁸

Neither Mason nor the present author would suggest that Josephus read this particular Ciceronian speech, let alone that he explicitly responded to it. However, it is difficult to overlook the similarities between Cicero’s address and Josephus’ account of the Judean constitution and priesthood. It seems unlikely that they are purely coincidental and in my view are better accounted for by Josephus’ desire to interact with the Roman intellectuals on terms they could understand and to which they could relate.

Josephus, an oriental priest in Rome

The last point relates to the Roman perceptions of oriental cults at Rome, and Josephus’ possible exploitation of Roman positive stereotypes of oriental priesthoods. As M. Beard, J. North and S. Price have emphasized in the title of their already standard textbook, one would do better by speaking of the “Religions of Rome”, rather than of the “Religion of Rome”. That is not to say, of course, that the cults of

³⁶ Mason in Feldman 2000, xxiv–xxvii.

³⁷ *Ibid.* xxv.

³⁸ Following Beard, North and Price 1998 (II): 198.

Cybele, Isis or Yahweh were indigenous Roman cults, but rather that by the time Josephus was writing his works they were all part and parcel of the Roman religious landscape. In other words, it is probable that in the late 1st century CE Jewish priests could hope to lay at least some claim to respectability among at least some elements of the multicultural Roman society.³⁹

Actually, there is evidence that by that time some oriental cults “made it”—as Richard Gordon wrote: “Individual private cults were absorbed by cities, and their priesthoods entered the roll of civic priesthoods. This occurred both in the case of Magna Mater (Cybele) and in that of Isis.”⁴⁰ As a matter of fact, we do have evidence that other oriental priests at Rome at the same period tried to present their priesthoods in a positive light—for example the lengthy and idealizing account of the Egyptian priests by Chaeremon (an Egyptian priest himself). In addition to being an Egyptian priest, he also was a Stoic philosopher and an early teacher of Nero. Similarly to Josephus, Chaeremon emphasized the great learning of his priestly caste. According to his description, the Egyptian priests were the true philosophers, holy, pious, frugal, just, pure, self-restraining etc.:

They divided the night for the observation of the heavenly bodies, and sometimes for ritual, and the day for worship of the gods... The rest of the time they spent with arithmetical and geometrical speculations, always trying to search out something and to make discoveries, and in general always busy with the pursuit of learning. In winter nights also they were occupied in the same activity, being awake because of their love of learning...⁴¹

Time and again, Josephus emphasized that because he was born and raised as a priest, he was a great expert in the sacred writings of the Jews. Some modern scholars still tend to take his words concerning his early education and biblical expertise at face value.⁴² However, if anyone checks how much Bible he really knew in War, and compare it to Antiquities, they will discover the following: in War Josephus mainly repeated priestly traditions, which seriously distorted the

³⁹ On Josephus’ striving for equality between Judaism and the surrounding Greco-Roman religions, see Delling 1965, 263–69.

⁴⁰ Gordon 1990, 246.

⁴¹ Van der Horst 1987, 21. Cf. Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* I. 46. 7–8.

⁴² Cf. Schalit 1944, xxxix–xli; Rajak 2002 (1983), 26–30; Gray 1993, 53–58.

biblical accounts.⁴³ These, in my view, he is likely to have learned in Jerusalem. Twenty years later, in *Antiquities*, he interpreted the Bible mostly in the tradition of Hellenistic Jewish exegetes. In other words, in my view, he mainly appears to have learnt the Bible and its exegesis in Rome.⁴⁴

If Josephus' claim to be a great expert in Jewish sacred writings is put into the context of the Roman perception of the oriental cults, one can suppose that he was trying to impress his Roman audience with the qualities they would have expected from the oriental cultic officials in the first place—that is, familiarity with esoteric traditions and oriental “Sacred Scriptures”. It seems that in some passages Josephus consciously compared Judean priesthood with that of other oriental peoples. For example, in *Apion* 1:28 ff., in the context of his discussion of oriental historiography, he first stated that the Egyptians entrusted the charge and exposition of their chronicles to the priests, and the Babylonians—to the Chaldeans. Immediately afterwards he wrote that among the Jews, the writing of history had been the responsibility of the priests. And Josephus himself is, of course, a Jewish priest-historian *par excellence*.

Conclusion

To summarize, in this paper I suggested a three-fold combination of reasons for Josephus' enduring emphasis on his priestly status and origins despite the facts that the temple had been in ruins for decades and that Josephus himself was in Rome, not in Jerusalem. First, there were reasons immediately connected with the status of priests in Judaism—both in Judea and in the Diaspora. Thus, Josephus equated Jewish priesthood with Jewish nobility, and hoped to continue to enjoy the advantages of the membership in the upper class in the future. Also, there are indications that at least in some places in the Diaspora, the term “priest” had additional meanings as compared to Judea. That is,

⁴³ The most extensive passage dealing with biblical tradition appears in *War* 5:362–419. Cf. *War* 4:460–464; 6:348. Michel and Bauernfeind 1963, 264, n. 150 think that in his speech Josephus is fighting Zealots' temple theology with their own sword—hence the distortions. In the light of the inconsistency of these distortions (for the analysis see Schwartz 1990, 28–32), I remain unconvinced.

⁴⁴ Cf. Schwartz 1990, 23–57.

priests seem to have been prominent as leaders in the Diaspora communities and to have enjoyed additional prestige. Moreover, in spite of the destruction of the temple, Josephus continued to see his class as the natural candidate for the leadership of the Jewish people. As far as his view of himself is concerned, he seems to have thought of himself as the most outstanding representative of the priestly class. Second, it is highly likely that Josephus, writing for a non-Jewish audience, was trying to take advantage of the image and status of the Roman priests in contemporary pagan society. And finally, it seems that he presented himself to his Roman readers as a Jewish priest because they were more likely to consider Near Eastern priests, rather than the laity, to be the guardians of their peoples' national traditions and wisdom.

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“TO BE OR NOT TO BE...”
AN HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION OF 2 KINGS 17
IN JOSEPHUS’ *ANTIQUITIES*

József Zsengellér

Introduction

In his *Jewish Antiquities* Josephus Flavius, the first and best known Jewish historiographer of the ancient times retells the biblical story of the Jewish people at the end of the 1st century CE. Doing this he uses as many sources as he was able to collect in addition to the biblical texts. Retelling, rewriting or paraphrasing previous texts were popular styles, genres of Jewish literature since the 3rd century BCE¹ and Josephus was not an exception in using them. But he made a promise at the beginning of his book, not to add or remove or to alter a syllable of the Scriptures.² Despite this promise, he added details and comments, even whole episodes, while he omitted some passages.

Many biblical stories were reinterpreted in this way in his time, but Josephus was the first who interpreted the passage of 2 Kings 17. This passage presents the fall of the city of Samaria and the Northern Kingdom called Israel. At the time of this catastrophe, however, the territory of Israel was only a small area consisting of the Assyrian province later called Samerina/Samaria. After the Judean return in the Persian Period it was not included within the new Jewish territory called Yehud.³ Due to the forced Hellenization by Alexander the Great and his followers, the city of Samaria and its surroundings became a Greek *polis* which occupied half of the former tribal territory of Ephraim and Manasseh.⁴ The other half of this territory was inhabited by the Samaritans.⁵ Both of these territories were liberated and both

¹ This phenomenon is discussed most recently in Evans 2004; Chazon 2005.

² *Ant.* 1.17; 20.261. Stemberger connected this promise to the priestly pedigree of Josephus. See Dohmen and Stemberger 1996, 35–36.

³ On the problem of the territorial development of early Yehud see Carter 1999; Carter 2003; Hoglund 2004.

⁴ Kasher 1990; Mooren 2000; Haag 2003, 97–107.

⁵ Zsengellér 1998, 163–69; 175–76.

of these ethnic groups were subdued by the Maccabees.⁶ Nevertheless, the province Samaria including Ephraim and Manasseh was in the 1st century still “foreign territory”, an inclusion in “Roman” Israel.⁷ And this was the first area lost by the Jews during the Jewish War against the Romans. Therefore it is not surprising that Josephus connected the Samaritan problem of his own time to the explanation of this story on the exile and repopulation of Samaria/Northern Israel.

The generally accepted view that the Jewish opinion about the origin of the Samaritans is based on the account of 2 Kings 17 could be set to Josephus’ account. Although Ferdinand Dexinger argued that the interpretation of the pericope as referring to the Samaritans might have first occurred just before the destruction of the Gerizim temple (at 128 BCE),⁸ there is no evidence to maintain this. On the other hand it stands to reason that from the time of the destruction of the Gerizim temple, this interpretation could have emerged.⁹ Nevertheless, Josephus’ work is the first evidence of this tradition which has come down to us. In this article we study the elements he used to make this interpretation, whether it was his own, whether it was taken from other previous sources, or the result is just by chance. We try to find the reason Josephus created such a historical interpretation.

Problems of 2 Kings 17

The text of 2 Kings 17 is a difficult redactional complex. It is about the fall of Samaria, the deportation of Israel and the repopulation of the northern area. In the same time it is a Deuteronomistic lesson on religious faithfulness and faithlessness. Thus a historiographical report is combined with religious and literary passages. Marc Zvi Brettler called 2 Kings 17 a “Text in a tell”, having a lot of small pieces sometimes not

⁶ Mor 1989, 18, states: “The Maccabean revolt (167–144 BCE) against the Seleucids started as a struggle to regain religious freedom. It continued as a national battle against the foreign oppression and ended as a war against the different elements living in Eretz Israel”. See also Donner 1995, 442–43; Haag 2003, 93–95; Schwartz 2001, 33–42.

⁷ See e.g. the presentation of Schwartz (2001, 49–100) who neglects this territory in his discussion of the Jewish society in the Second Temple period.

⁸ Dexinger 1981, 107; Respectively Dexinger 1991, 132.

⁹ Coggins (1987, 260) wrote: “we need note only that though Josephus is the first extant example of the specifically ‘anti-Samaritan’ interpretation of the events described in II Kings 17, it is in general more likely that he is drawing upon an already existing tradition than that he is specifically engaged in his own mythmaking, for there is little in his account which goes beyond the biblical material”.

in their original position.¹⁰ In the limited space of this paper we cannot analyse the redaction of the biblical text in detail, but we can follow the main lines of the redactional process in an outline.¹¹

The general literary composition of the chapter can be described as a historiographical sketch and an ideological commentary, in a simple double form:¹²

- 1.1 vv. 1–6 historical report on the fall of Samaria
- 1.2 vv. 7–23 theological explanation
- 2.1 v. 24 historical report on the repopulation
- 2.2 vv. 25–41 theological interpretation

All sections have more small parts, and a lot of exegetical problems we refer to in the notes.

- 1.1: vv. 1–2 Deuteronomical frame
- vv. 3–4 Hoshea and his connection with Shalmaneser¹³
- vv. 5–6 Fall of Samaria and the deportation of Israel¹⁴
- 1.2: vv. 7b–12 the fall of Samaria as the punishment of idolatry¹⁵
- vv. 13–18a; 23 the fall of Samaria as the punishment of different sins¹⁶

¹⁰ Brettler 1995, 112–134.

¹¹ For my previous more detailed discussion of the chapter see Zsengellér 1998, 96–107. I have modified my view since then.

¹² There are different suppositions to the structure of the text. Coggins 1968, 35–49: I. (vv. 1–6), II. (vv. 7–23), III. (v. 24), IV. (vv. 25–28.32), V. (vv. 29–31); Viviano 1987, 548–559: Report (vv. 1–6), Comment (vv. 7–23), Report (24–33), Comment (34–41); Cogan and Tadmor 1988, 195–214: “The Fall of Samaria (vv. 1–6), “Homily on the Fall of the northern Kingdom” (vv. 7–23), “Samaria Resettled” (vv. 24–41). Brettler 1995, 112–134 presents a thorough discussion of the same larger sections 1–6; 7–23; 24–41, but his own structure is more complex: A (vv. 1–2), B (vv. 1–3), C (vv. 5–6), D (vv. 7–12), E (vv. 13–18a.64–40), F (18b–20), G (vv. 21–22), H (vv. 24–33.41).

¹³ There is the problem of double introduction: cf. v.3 and v.5. The king was taken into captivity before the siege of the city: cf. v. 4; v. 6.

¹⁴ Is the king of Assyria the same person as Shalmaneser? Historical answers: the double conquest of Samaria first by Shalmaneser and later by Sargon II are combined. Cf. Tadmor 1958; Cogan and Tadmor 1988, 199–201. Vv. 3–4 and 5–6 are from separate sources. Brettler 1995, 115–19. The places where the people were deported are not known from Assyrian documents. Their identification is presented in Becking 1992, 62–82.

¹⁵ Brettler (1995, 121) suggests vv. 7–12 to be “a misplaced fragment of a speech which justified the exile of Judah.” According to him its original place should be somewhere in 2 Kings 25.

¹⁶ There is an evident link between the sins listed here and in 2 Kings 21, 5–6 concerning Manasseh. Dietrich 1972, 45; Ben-Zvi 1991, 363.

vv. 18b–20	the event from Judahite point of view ¹⁷
vv. 21–22	the sin of Jeroboam ¹⁸
2.1: v. 24	repopulation from Babylon, Kutah, Ava, Hamath, Sepharvaim ¹⁹
2.2: vv. 25–28 ²⁰	pre-Deuteronomistic layer on the deportees ²¹
vv. 29–31.34b–40	the religious practice of the newcomers ²²
vv. 32–34a.41	redactional notes
–32–34/a, and 41	Deuteronomistic redactional frame
–34/b–40	description of the religious life of the deported Israelites in exile

Even on the basis of this sketch it is possible to assume that 2 Kings 17 is not one single work, but a composition of different sources. At the time of its formation it had different purposes. If we take seriously Brettler's supposition about the updating of 2 Kings 17 with the theological reflections of the fall of Jerusalem,²³ then the aim of the final form of the chapter is a *parainesis* for the Judean exiles.²⁴ It is shown that the deported people worship God better than the Israelites at home or in the Exile.

¹⁷ A date later than the catastrophe of Jerusalem in 586 BCE is suggested by Brettler 1995, 126–28.

¹⁸ Condemnation of the North based on texts legitimizing the northern kingship (e.g. 1 Kings 11).

¹⁹ Identification of the places from where the settlers were deported is problematic due to the strange Hebrew spelling of geographical names on the one hand and the inaccurate descriptions of Assyrian campaigns and deportations in the annals on the other hand. Cf. Cogan and Tadmor 1988, 209–12; Becking 1992, 95–103; Zsengellér 1998, 102–05.

²⁰ Coggins (1968, 40) connects v. 32 to vv. 25–28 on the basis of the LXX's addition here. Cf. Montgomery and Gehman 1951, 447, but it does not seem to be too convincing.

²¹ Tale-like story with animals, combined with a pro-Bethel tradition. Coggins 1968. Dexingers (1991, 86) supposed an anti-Bethel tradition here.

²² The two passages contain certain common themes but their language are different. 34b–40 can be placed to a redactional context as well. Cf. Brettler 1995, 130. The problematic reading שומרונים is situated here in v. 29.

²³ Brettler 1995, 133: "...that the north was exiled was of tremendous ideological importance for the Judeans, the story of the exile of the north acted as a magnet, collecting an unusually large number of traditions and reflections".

²⁴ Viviano (1987, 558–59) concludes: "The emphatic nature of the chapter and the allusion to Judah, both viled and explicit, force us to reconsider the view that 2 Kings 17 is simply a reflection on the fall of the North. It is a warning and an exhortation to Judah. Unless Judah fears Yahweh and Yahweh alone, destruction lies ahead".

Now we turn to how Josephus presents and interprets this complicated chapter in his *Antiquities*.

Exposition of 2 Kings 17 by Josephus

Characteristics of redaction

The position of the story of 2 Kings 17 in Josephus' *Antiquities* has at first reading two interesting factors of redaction. First, in the larger context, the story is situated in Josephus' Hezekiah narrative. The celebration of the Passover presented by the Chronicler (2 Chron 30), Hezekiah's religious reforms (2 Chron 31) and his war against the Philistines (2 Kgs 18, 8) is paraphrased before 2 Kings 17 and Hezekiah's war (2 Kgs 18) is presented after it. This later passage already belongs to Book 10. Ingrid Hjelm supposed this position to form a conscious contrast made by Josephus between the pious acts of Hezekiah and the impious acts of the Israelites, who, according to Josephus not only laughed at the king's messengers, but they finally killed the prophets agitating to accept the invitation. (9.265).²⁵ There are some doubts about this motivation of Josephus, since several times in his technique of storytelling we can detect that he takes the themes of different persons, groups, events in general, to make chronological references, or some other connections to previous themes. A form of this technique is called: "historical anticipation"²⁶ On the other hand, in this case one can detect the biblical text as a guide of Josephus' storytelling. In 9.258 Josephus finished the Syrian-Ephraimite war by the death of Pekah as a victim of Hoshea's conspiracy. Dating Hoshea he used 2 Kings 18,1 instead of 2 Kings 17,1, where Scripture makes a chronological connection between Hezekiah and Hoshea.²⁷ Having mentioned Hezekiah Josephus starts to retell his story of life from the Book of Chronicles but following the order of the text in use, that of 2 Kings 18,2–8. When he reached 18,9 mentioning Hoshea again, he turned back to the life

²⁵ Hjelm 2000, 193.

²⁶ The technique of "historical anticipation" used by Josephus is demonstrated first by Giet (1956, 243–49) and its elaboration is given in Villalba I Varneda (1986, 180–88).

²⁷ Here Josephus alters the Biblical account of the third year of Hoshea to the fourth interchanging the chronological references of 18,1 and 18,9. This latter verse is about the fourth year but not of Hoshea rather that of Hezekiah.

of Hoshea. After he finished the story of 2 Kings 17, he goes on with the story of Hezekiah. Consequently his intent of preparing a contrast between the pious Hezekiah and the impious Israelites seems to be by chance, but we are meeting his technique of “historical anticipation.”

The second factor of redaction in the position of 2 Kings 17 in *Antiquities* 9 is that the story is divided into three parts. First, as we already mentioned, in 9.258–259 Josephus describes Hoshea based on 2 Kings 17,2–3, and then goes on with Hezekiah up to 9.276. Here he continues with 2 Kings 17,4–23. Then Josephus interrupts the story and presents the account of the Assyrian invasion of Tyre and Sidon (9.283–287) borrowed from the historiographer Menander of Ephesus.²⁸ Since Menander estimated the siege of Tyre to be five years, Josephus as a good historiographer realized that this event had to be at the same time as the siege of Samaria, and did not forget to mention it. Though it is very sudden and cuts the Biblical narrative, but gives one more chronological basis for his narrative on the fall of the Northern kingdom.²⁹

Next to these redactional factors in our text we can detect some general historiographical traits followed by Josephus:³⁰ Connecting relating data, collecting stories about the same theme and putting them together. He tries to solve some open problems of parallel passages, and finally presents a well structured composition and a readable text.³¹

Presentation of the content

In the following sketch we present how Josephus used the biblical material. The above mentioned redactional and historiographical tech-

²⁸ Josephus cited Menander several times (*Ant* 8,144–146; 8,324; *Apion* 1,116–120; 1,121–126.) See Bowley 1994. This portion is discussed by Begg (2000, 374–379) and Begg and Spilburg (2005, 201–202).

²⁹ Begg (2000, 370–72) discusses the chronological indications of the passage without mentioning this piece of information.

³⁰ For a general treatment of Josephus’ technique of writing history see e.g. Attridge 1976, 29–66; Villalba I Varneda 1986. For details see several articles of the present and of the Dublin volume.

³¹ As Niehoff (1996, 32) states: “Josephus presents a carefully scanned narrative which is in a way meant to replace the biblical text (certainly in the case of a pagan audience not familiar with Scripture). By constructing a closed narrative, Josephus initially determines which material is relevant to a ‘proper’ appreciation of Scripture, because he purposely selects from his sources, omitting disturbing details from the Bible and adding often Hellenizing elements from the surrounding culture”.

niques presented two major types of text-pieces: biblical texts and his own material. Both cases are complicated: the biblical texts are not literally quotations, but paraphrases, and the term “his own material” does not imply Josephus’ authorship of all details.³²

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|------------------|--|---|
| (9.13.1.)
258 | At the same time also died Phakeas, the king
of Israel, the victim of a conspiracy formed
against him [<i>by one of his friends</i>] named
Oseos, who held the royal power for nine
years | 15,30
[own material]
1b |
| 259. | He was a wicked man and contemptuous of
his duty to God. And there came against him
Salmanasses, the king of Assyria, who defeated
him—[<i>for Oseos did not have God propi-
tious to him or as his ally</i> —and made him
subject and imposed a fixed tribute on him. | 2a
[own material]
3 |
| (9.14.1)
277 | Now when Salmanasses, the king of Assyria,
was informed that Osees, the king of Israel,
had secretly sent to Soas, the king of Egypt,
inviting him to make an alliance against the
Assyrian king, [<i>he was filled with wrath</i>],
and marched upon Samaria in the seventh
year of the reign of Osees. | 4a
[own material]
5a + 18,9
modified |
| 278 | [<i>But the Israelite king would not admit him,
where-upon</i>] he besieged Samaria for three
years and took it by storm in the ninth year
of the reign of Osees and in the seventh
year of Hezekiah, king of Jerusalem; [<i>and
he utterly destroyed the government of Israel</i>]
and transported all its people to Media and
Persia, and along with them carried off
Osees alive. | [own material]
5b + 18,10 modified
[own material]
6b–c modified + 4d
modified |
| 279 | And after removing other nations from a
region called Chutos—[<i>there is a river by this
name in Perisa</i> —he settled them in Samaria
and in the country of the Israelites. | 24a
[own material]
24bα + 24f–g
modified |

³² Cf. the statement of Niehoff in the previous note.

(cont.)

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|-----------------|--|--|
| 280 | [So the ten tribes of Israel emigrated from Judaea nine hundred and forty-seven years after their forefathers went out of Egypt and occupied this country under the command of Joshua; and from this time when they revolted from Roboamos, the grandson of David, and gave the kingdom over to Jeroboam, as I have previously related, it was an interval of two hundred and forty years, seven months and seven days.] | [own material] |
| 281 | To such and end, then did the Israelites come because they violated the laws and disregarded the prophets who foretold that this misfortune would overtake them if they did not cease from their impious actions. | 7a (or 18,12b) modified + 13a–b modified |
| 282 | The beginning of their troubles was the rebellion they undertook against Roboamos, the grandson of David, when they chose as their king his servant Jeroboam, who sinned against the Deity and thereby made Him their enemy, for they imitated his lawless conduct. But such was the punishment which he deservedly suffered. | 21 modified + 22 modified + 23 modified |
| (9.14.3)
288 | [As for the Chutai who were transported to Samaria—this is the name by which they have been called to this day because of having been brought over from the region called Chuta, which is in Persia, as is a river by the same name]—each of their tribes—there were five—brought along its own god, and as they revered them in accordance with the custom of their country, they provoked the Most High God anger and wrath. | [own material based on 24] 29a modified |
| 289 | For He visited upon them a pestilence by which they were destroyed; and as they could devise no remedy for their sufferings, they learned from an oracle that they should worship the Most High God, for this would bring them deliverance. And so they sent envoys to the king of Assyria, asking him to send them some priests from the captives he had taken in his war with the Israelites. | 25a modified 26 modified 27a modified |

(cont.)

290	Accordingly, he sent some priests, and they, after being instructed in the ordinances and religion of this God, [<i>worshipped Him with great zeal, and were at once freed of the pestilence</i>]. These same rites have continued in use even to this day among [<i>those who are called Chutaioi in the Hebrew tongue, and Samareitai by the Greeks.</i>].	28a,c [own material based partly on 32a] 34a (or 41a,c) [own material]
291	[<i>but they altered their attitude according to circumstance and when they see the Jews prospering, call them their kinsmen, on the ground that they are descended from Joseph and are related them through their origin from him, but when they see the Jews in trouble, they say that they have nothing whatever in common with them nor do they declare themselves to be aliens of another race. Now concerning these people we shall have something to say in a more fitting place.</i>]	[own material]

Having the structure of 2 Kings 17 and the above line of his presentation in our mind we can follow how Josephus discusses the material in detail. First of all, even in the three main sections he does not follow the biblical order of verses.

1.1

- 258: He makes Hoshea more evil by depicting him as a friend of Pekah, who was killed by Hoshea.
- 277: He solves the problem of the kings by naming Shalmanesser as the king of Asshur in all the cases.³³ Josephus gives an accurate description of the reason of Shalmanasser's invasion.
- 278: Josephus makes clear that Hoshea was taken into captivity after the fall of the city which was in his ninth year of reign. He changes the destinations of the deported Israelites using the last biblical place, "the cities of the Medes" as the only territory, namely Media and Persia.

³³ As (Begg 2000, 368 n.8) rightly notes that seemingly Josephus was not aware of the capture of Samaria also by Sargon II.

2.1

279: Josephus picked up only one of the five places from where the deportees came into Israel. This is Χούθος, and he identified it as the name of a river as well. The deportees were settled “in Samaria and in the cities of the Israelites.” It is not quite clear whether Josephus uses Samaria as a city or as the region, the province of Assyria.

280: Josephus portrays the factual end of Israel; all the “...ten tribes of Israel emigrated from Judea (sic!)...” As usual he gives a chronological calculation of this significant event. 947 years after the Exodus, and 240 years 7 month and 7 days after the division of the two countries, Judah and Israel.

1.2

281: The reasons for the fall of Samaria are given as a violation of Gods law and negligence of the word of the prophets. He uses v. 7 (or 18,12b) and v. 13.

282: The details for the reasons are given according to vv. 21–23, the rebellion against the Davidic line and the imitation of the sin of Jeroboam (more details are not given).

The main lines of the structure of 2 Kings 17 was given as a double parallel of historical reports and theological interpretations. Josephus combined the two historical reports (*Ant.* 9.258–259, 277, 278–280) and afterwards gave one theological explanation (281–282). His third portion (288–291) deals with the third and fourth section of the biblical text.³⁴

The structure of the portion 277–282 is parallel to the passage on the fall of Judah in 10.116–148. There are a) historical descriptions, b) then theological evaluation, and c) at last chronological counting. In book 10 Judah sins by not listening to the prophets, as also is in the case of Israel here, but no other sin is listed. These parallels show that the aim and technique of Josephus is the same in the two cases, namely to give an accurate and historical description of the fall of the two countries. There is no real moralizing, only the prophets are mentioned, who are prominent persons in the whole book of Josephus. He is accurate in

³⁴ In his commentary Begg (2000, 367–386) does not attend to the biblical structure, and displays Josephus material in six units: 1. Samaria’s subjugation and deportation, 2. Samaria resettled, 3 Chronological indications, 4. causes of Israel’s fall, 5. Extra-biblical testimonies, 6. The way of the Samaritans.

following most of the details of the biblical text, but he solves problems caused by its redactional nature.³⁵ He does not utilize the passage in vv. 7–20, and vv. 21–23 are referred to only very partially.

Hoshea as the leader of Israel is portrayed as a wicked and impious person, a neglecter (ὀλίγωρος) of God.³⁶ Here Josephus used his nuanced ironic style, since in *Ant.* 9.277 Hoshea wanted to make an alliance with So, king of Egypt, but in 259 he is told not to have an alliance with God.³⁷ Being the king of Israel he represents the people as a whole. If "God is not benevolent to him" (258), if he has no alliance with God (259) the people suffer the same disfavour as he, his fate is the fate of Israel as well. At the beginning of the description of the fate of Israel its last king is mentioned, at the end of the description its first one, Jeroboam (282). By this frame Josephus emphasizes the personal responsibility of the leaders. It is true even if he utilized the biblical narrative in his account, Josephus does not moralize but underlines divine providence in history, in the final punishment of Israel.³⁸

To be or not to be? Josephus depicts the definitive end of Israel. In his interpretation there is no further hint to the Israelites in exile.³⁹ They are gone and they are lost. He does not know about any remnants of them in Israel. Josephus writes, that all the "...ten tribes of Israel emigrated from Judea (sic!)..." Making this mistake Josephus unwillingly called to attention that the tribes of Simeon and Levi, never belonged to Israel, and the former tribal territories like that of Gad and Reuben situated in Trans-Jordan already were lost long ago. On the other hand this mistake calls our attention to the fact that Josephus does not follow the line of the optimistic idea of a unified Israel after the exile that is found in the books of Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Chronicles. In 11.133 he states that "there have been ten tribes beyond the Euphrates—and countless myriads whose number cannot be ascertained."⁴⁰ To be or

³⁵ Feldman (1988, 477–478) highlights that among the reasons why Josephus had rewritten the biblical stories was "to remove chronological difficulties" and "to provide better motivation and to increase the plausibility of events".

³⁶ Translation of Begg and Spilburg 2005, 193.

³⁷ This worldplay with σύμμαχον is discovered by Begg (2000, 368 n.4).

³⁸ On "theology of history" and "divine providence" in Josephus see Attridge 1976, 71–108; 145–65 and in a shorter form in Attridge 1984, 218–19.

³⁹ It is interesting that the place where Israel was taken into captivity is the same location from where the deportees arrived. No further comment on this connection is available.

⁴⁰ Feldman (2001, 225) suggests that Josephus thought this deportation just an *emigration* since he used the word μετώκησαν, and he never tells about the ultimate fate of the ten tribes. But there is no stronger evidence to maintain this.

not to be: according to Josephus the ten tribes are definitively lost.⁴¹ Only deported people live in the former territory of Israel. At the end of book 9 this story points to a sad milestone in the history of the Jews.

2.1–2.2

- 288: Description of the deportees: Their name is from the region Χούθος, they have five tribes, who have their own gods. This practice made God angry.
- 289: God punished them with pestilence. They received an oracle that the deliverance is to learn how to fear the Most High God. They asked the Assyrian king for Israelite priests.
- 290: They learned God, and his religion, and worshipped Him with great zeal and were delivered. They practice the same rites even today! Their Hebrew name, Χουθαῖοι is Σαμαρεῖται in Greek.
- 291: Their habit of changing relation to the Jews is described. Sometimes they are the descendants of Joseph, at other times they are aliens.

After the interruption by the story of the siege of Tyre, Josephus returns to the theme of the deportees from Χούθος. The text (288–290) more or less follows the biblical order of vv. 24–28.32.34, but he totally omits vv. 29–31. This is the passage on the religious practice of the newcomers and he omits vv. 32–41, a section thought to present the religious life of the deported Israelites. By these shortcuts Josephus set an unambiguous situation. The Χουθαῖοι were pagans and took their deities to Samaria, but they changed their religion to Yahwism (μέγιστος θεός). The last information on this religious practice is that the Χουθαῖοι continued to use it even to the day of Josephus. Etienne Nodet questions the understanding of this “until this day” expression (καὶ νῦν ἔθουσι διατελοῦσιν) as a reference to the time of Josephus. He suggests that “it is a clumsy transcription of the biblical sentence

⁴¹ If one carefully reads the passages referring to the Samaritans one can exclude the possibility that Josephus thought the Samaritans to be the descendants of the northern Jews. Contra Egger 1986. Josephus’ mentioning the tribe of Joseph in Samaritan context is a reflection to the Samaritans own tradition as recorded in the rabbinic literature (Genesis Rabba 94, 7). On the other hand, according the biblical storytelling Josephus mentions Josiah to visit and reform those Israelites who had escaped captivity (10, 68).

of 17.34, or 41.”⁴² Against his supposition we can argue, that Josephus never mentions any non-Jewish practice of the Χουθῶιτοι beside the honor they give to Mount Gerizim.⁴³ Even rabbinic literature calls attention to the strict observance of the Law by the Samaritans.⁴⁴ So the expression, even if it is quoted from the biblical text, is an actualization of the situation.

On the other hand, Nodet rightly calls our attention to the point that this passage of Josephus raises the question whether he here used the Masoretic Text or not. The LXX and MT have different readings in v. 34.

הראשונים עושים כמשפטים הראשונים
αὐτοὶ ἐποιοῦν κατὰ τὸ κρίμα αὐτῶν.
אִינֶם יִרְאִים אֶת יְהוָה וְאִינֶם עוֹשִׂים כַּחֲקֵתָם
αὐτοὶ φοβοῦνται καὶ αὐτοὶ
ποιοῦσιν κατὰ τὰ δικαιώματα αὐτῶν.

In contrast to the MT the LXX omits הראשונים and twice אִינֶם. Consequently the Greek text became a positive evaluation of the religion of the newcomers. Like the change in v.40, where the negative worship refers in LXX to the enemies of God of verse 39. Only v. 41 mentions the γλύπτοι of these people. Thus the LXX presents a positive tradition concerning these deportees, and Josephus seems to follow this way, even reinforcing it by the omission of verse 41.⁴⁵ This version of the LXX however, poses the possibility of a later redaction of this part of

⁴² Nodet 1997, 155. Cf. the opposite view of Coggins 1987, 260: “here we are surely justified in supposing that this account of past events was intended to be construed as reflecting the situation of his own day.”

⁴³ See my discussion on Josephus’ presentation of Samaritan practice and belief in Zsengeller 2002, 62–64; Dexinger 1981, 106.

⁴⁴ In Tosefta Pesah 2,3 “Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel said, ‘Any religious duty which the Samaritans preserved they observe with far greater punctiliousness than the Israelites’”. In this statement, frequently quoted in the Talmud, no real practice of the Samaritans appears, but it is evident: the Samaritans did not observe all the religious rules that the Jews did, but what they observed they did scrupulously. The *baraita* here could portray a late mid-second century opinion, since the participants of 2, 3 are both fourth generation rabbis.

⁴⁵ Cf. Nodet 1997, 158–60. The Lucianic recension follows the MT in this passage with some smaller indifferent changes. On the contrary Coggins (1968, 41) supposes this to be “secondary. ... a deliberate harmonisation of what was already felt by the LXX translators to be an intolerable inconsistency”. Yet we can agree with his concluding sentence: “These variants in the LXX text seem already give some indication of the continuing reinterpretation which has been characteristic of this chapter”.

2 Kings 17, but when and why? If Josephus does not refer to the passage following the MT version, there has to be a different answer, a positive tradition among the Jews.

Josephus made a particular version of the lion intermezzo rationalizing its mythical element. The lions that kill the deported people in Samaria are changed to plague in his text. It is the same change as the one he made to give a reason for Sennacherib's withdrawal from Jerusalem. In Sennacherib's case the biblical text tells about a miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem made by the angel of God killing the Assyrian soldiers (2 Kgs 19:35–36). The two stories are placed quite close to each other: 9.289 and 10.21. Perhaps, due to this proximity, the description of the situations became similar. This seems even more plausible since in the *Jewish War* (5.388) Josephus preserves the biblical description about the “angel of the Lord” destroying the Assyrian host. Of course, one of the hermeneutical principles of Josephus is rationalizing and in these cases he is doing so.⁴⁶ It means that Josephus' interpretation of 2 Kings 17 did not serve as a starting point for the later rabbinic explanation about the origin of the Samaritans as גרי אריות, and it also means that Josephus had no inkling about this channel of interpretation. If he had any hint of it he surely would have used this ironical element, since—as Louis Feldman noted—one of Josephus's methods in stylistic changes of the biblical text is increasing the irony.⁴⁷ In the case of new deportees having foreign religious practices it would have been reasonable to use it, but he did not do so.

Josephus identifies the Χουθαῖοι (כּוּתִים) with the Σαμαρείται. It is thought to be the first written reference of the rabbinical designation כּוּתִים for the Samaritans, which mirrors the usage of this term in Josephus' time. But Jan Milik published a fragment of an Aramaic text from Qumran, the previously so-called Esther paraphrase (4Qpr Est ar^d1),⁴⁸ where לגבר כּוּתִי (for a Chuthean man) appears in col. IV. 5. The text was dated by Milik to the first century CE, since this term was used for the Samaritans first by Josephus. We know that Qumran was destroyed by the Romans in 68 CE, so this date can be the *terminus ad quem* of the formation and first use of this term.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Betz 1974, 25–34.

⁴⁷ Feldman 1988, 479–80.

⁴⁸ Milik 1992.

⁴⁹ On the development of the designation of the Samaritans see Zsengellér 2005.

It is interesting that in making this identification Josephus does not use the most obvious possibility of v. 29. שומרונים as the precedent for the Greek term Σαμαρείται could serve as a good point of reference to make this connection clear. But as we stated above, Josephus did not use the passage vv. 29–41. Or may be he understood the term שומרונים as we did, referring to the former inhabitants of the province. Josephus states the following in *Ant.* 10.184: “because they assumed the name of the country in which they were settled.” Though he never used the form of the LXX Σαμαρίται, he rather used Σαμαρεῖς or as here: Σαμαρεῖται.⁵⁰

The Cuthim (כּוּתִים)—coming from Persia and Media as the only inhabitants of the territory of the previous Northern Kingdom—appear in the further retelling of biblical stories by Josephus. This is the case in *Ant.* 11.19–20 and 84–85, 114.⁵¹ All the conflicts occurring between the newcomer-Jews and the native inhabitants in Ezra 3–6 are connected to them, becoming the basis of the traditional interpretation of these biblical passages. Another instance of the same substitution of terms is found in *Ant.* 11.303 in the description of Sanballat’s descent from “the Cuthean race (Χουθαῖος τὸ γένος) from whom the Σαμαρεῖς also are descended...”. In a very confused form the interpretation of 2 Kings 17 emerges again. In *Ant.* 12.259 the Sidonians of Shechem write to Antiochus IV about the pestilence which urged their forefathers to believe in the Jewish faith. The source which presents this letter, or Josephus himself in 11.257, probably on the basis of this remark, claims that the forefathers of the Σαμαρεῖς were Persians and Medians.

To be or not to be? 9.291 apparently is an independent passage occurring twice more in *Antiquities*: 11.341, and 12.257.⁵² I suppose this passage was placed in 9.291 after the interpretation of 2 Kings 17 was already written: Mainly, because the last sentence states: “Concerning these people we shall have something to say in a more fitting place” (περὶ μὲν τούτων ἔξομεν εὐκαιρότερον εἰπεῖν). Furthermore 11.341 and 12.257 allude to an earlier place which seems to be a conscious

⁵⁰ Cf. Zsengellér 2005, 95–98; Egger 1986, 170–72, 246–58, 313–16.

⁵¹ In these passages all three terms appear in the same connection, namely to be the inhabitants of the North coming originally from Persia and Media.

⁵² *Ant.* 11.341 hints at this previous citation. The segment there belongs to the so-called “Anti-Sanballat-Tradition” dated by Dexinger to a period after Caesar’s time. Dexinger 1991, 139.

harmonization together with the stories reported there. The passage refers to the attitude of the Χουθαῖοι that they change their identity of being a non-Jew or Jew when it is required by the situation. In 11.341 there is such a case. There to gain the support of Alexander they say that they are Jews, but in 12.257 after the formulation of Antiochus Epiphanes' regulations against the Jews they say that they are non-Jews. These two stories form the case written in this formula. So I think it was not involved earlier in Josephus' original explanation of 2 Kings 17.

Goal of Josephus' Exposition

In paraphrasing 2 Kings 17 the main goal of Josephus was to present the end of Israel as rationally as possible using the biblical material combined with a description by Menander of Ephesus and with different or parallel sources. This is a pure historiographical method. He paralleled this description to that of the end of Judah. This parallel was highlighted once again in *Ant.* 10.185–186. The result he portrayed is the loss of Israel, the loss of the ten tribes. There is no further connection with the previous Israelites. There are foreign people in their former place. If we seriously consider the *parenesis* form of the biblical account of 2 Kings 17 a similar tendency can be detected in Josephus' presentation applied to his own time. The situation of the Jewish people after the loss of the Jewish War, the Temple, and the country is analogous. At the end of its twin story, the fall of Jerusalem Josephus writes *Ant.* 10.142:

We have said thus much, because it was sufficient to show the nature of God to such as are ignorant of it, that it is various, and acts many different ways, and that all events happen after a regular manner, in their proper season, and that it foretells what must come to pass. It is also sufficient to show the ignorance and incredulity of men, whereby they are not permitted to foresee any thing that is future, and are, without any guard, exposed to calamities, so that it is impossible for them to avoid the experience of those calamities.

Israel is fallen and lost, and there are even new people in their former country. As a justification of his statement Josephus presents the Χουθαῖοι, the Samaritans of his time.

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