

University of Groningen

Updates on an Emperor's Death," Review-Discussion of T. P. Wiseman, The Death of Caligula: Josephus, Ant. Jud. XIX 1–273. Translation and Commentary, revised edition. (Liverpool: University of Liverpool, 2013)

Mason, Steve

Published in:
Histos

IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.

Document Version
Final author's version (accepted by publisher, after peer review)

Publication date:
2016

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Mason, S. (2016). Updates on an Emperor's Death," Review-Discussion of T. P. Wiseman, The Death of Caligula: Josephus, Ant. Jud. XIX 1–273. Translation and Commentary, revised edition. (Liverpool: University of Liverpool, 2013). *Histos*, 10, CXXXIX–CLIV.
<https://histos.org/documents/2016RD13MasononWiseman.pdf>

Copyright

Other than for strictly personal use, it is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

The publication may also be distributed here under the terms of Article 25fa of the Dutch Copyright Act, indicated by the "Taverne" license. More information can be found on the University of Groningen website: <https://www.rug.nl/library/open-access/self-archiving-pure/taverne-amendment>.

Take-down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

REVIEW–DISCUSSION

UPDATES ON AN EMPEROR’S DEATH

T. P. Wiseman, *The Death of Caligula: Josephus Ant. Iud. XIX 1–273. Translation and Commentary*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013. Pp. xxi + 122. Paperback, £20.00. ISBN 978-1-84631-963-1.

Although he has been known from antiquity as ‘the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus’, the émigré priest from Jerusalem (37–ca. 100 AD) surprisingly devoted most of the penultimate volume of his Judaeian *Archaologia* to the murder of Gaius Caligula and its aftermath (*AJ* 19.1–273). Scholars have generally considered this a major digression, illustrative of the miscellany thought to characterise that work’s later volumes. Josephus needed twenty volumes, they have suspected, the number having been made respectable by Dionysius’ Roman *Archaologia*. So he could not be too discriminating about what he used as fill, after his main biblical source ran out half-way through his project. The maestro of Josephus studies for much of the twentieth century, Henry St. John Thackeray, described *AJ* 12–20 as ‘a patch-work, compiled from such miscellaneous materials as were at the author’s disposal’.¹ Given that Josephus could have had little to add to such disparate material, which he basically copied, the scholar’s main interest must be in the nature of the sources rather than in Josephus’ writing.

In Thackeray’s view, Josephus lost the plot when he let his sources for King Herod and Herod’s grandson Agrippa I (ruled AD 41–4) lead him into ‘much interesting, but strictly irrelevant’ detail, about Rome, which was no more his subject than the Mesopotamian material found in volumes eighteen to twenty.² The Gaius narrative in *AJ* 19 is only the most sustained and surprising example of this indulgence. As for its source, Thackeray was not sure about Cluvius Rufus, Mommsen’s choice, but in any case:

Josephus has discovered a lively and circumstantial record, which, to eke out his scanty materials and make up the necessary tale of 20 books ... he has not hesitated *to incorporate entire, notwithstanding its irrelevancy to his proper subject*.³

¹ H. St. J. Thackeray, *Josephus, the Man and the Historian* (New York, 1967 [orig. 1929]) 60. Cf. 61: ‘the main point of interest is the determination of the various sources’.

² Thackeray (1967) 68.

³ Thackeray (1967) 69 (emphasis added).

Those who worked routinely with Josephus' *War*, *Antiquities*, and *Against Apion*, in departments of Jewish/religious studies or European-style 'theology', were not likely to do much with this alien debris in their familiar turf. So it was a boon for everyone when in 1991 the distinguished Exeter classicist Peter Wiseman (hereafter W.), known for his studies of the late Roman Republic and historiography, published a commentary on *AJ* 19.1–273.⁴ Autobiographical remarks on W.'s departmental web page⁵ include this little book under the roof of 'anything else that seems interesting'—in addition to his main research fields. I recall lamenting in the mid-1990s how little known his excellent contribution was in Josephus studies, perhaps because its preoccupation with Latin and Rome confirmed the remoteness of the material for scholars working mostly in Greek, Hebrew, and the Levant.

The book did attract admiring attention from proper classicists—an index of the slow pace at which the walls among ancient-studies disciplines have been crumbling. Arthur Ferrill's review for *BMCR* (1992) included this remark: 'I cannot imagine why this book was not entitled *The Death of Caligula*'.⁶

Well, now it is. When I opened the 2013 version bearing Ferrill's title, it looked so familiar that I wondered whether it was the old content in a new suit, typeface, and page flow. The nine pages (vii–xv) of the original Introduction matched pp. ix–xvii in the new one, and the paragraphs looked the same, though a chart was shifted by one paragraph. The same seven headings that gave helpful shape to the translation reappeared, with a translation in the same page range (1991: 3–39; 2013: 3–39) that looked identical at first blush. Following a reproduced 'note on the text' (1991: 41–42; 2013: 41–42), which lists W.'s departures from Benedictus Niese's *editio maior* of Josephus in 1890, the commentary sections (1991: 43–102; 2013: 43–99) looked virtually the same, though it was easy to spot seven new items in the three-page bibliography—six on Josephus research, half of those on the sources of *Antiquities* 19. Both books conclude with two appendices (on the Augustan Palatine and Cluvius Rufus) and a four-page Index of (Ancient) Names, ending respectively on p. 122 and p. 121. Whatever differences there might have been seemed negligible.

W. himself describes his new offering, on the Acknowledgements page, as a second edition with updated bibliography, 'adjustments and additions' throughout, and a rewritten Appendix I (vii). For the purposes of this review, given the similarity of the two books, it seems most sensible to reconsider the

⁴ *Flavius Josephus: Death of Emperor* [NB: title and subtitle reversed on cover], translated with introduction and commentary by T. P. Wiseman (Exeter Studies in History 30; Exeter, 1991).

⁵ <http://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/classics/staff/wiseman>

⁶ <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/1992/03.02.23.html>

original, mainly, and then look for the changes that W. considered important enough to include in an edition that conforms so closely to the original.

W.'s approach squares with Thackeray's above, and with the general state of scholarship ca. 1990. Nearly half of the Introduction is a standard overview of Josephus' life and writings: of illustrious ancestry, he allegedly joined the Pharisees as a youth, was fluent in Greek (a recent recognition),⁷ surrendered to Vespasian under questionable circumstances and predicted his accession, wrote an Aramaic mini-*War* from Rome for Jews of the Parthian world, was favoured by the Flavians in consideration of his predictive and propagandistic services, and was in general well connected and culturally fluent. A good third of the remainder, understandably, treats Josephus' sources on Gaius.

Already here in the Introduction W. sketches his case: that Josephus used two Roman historians (not the one generally assumed), and their distinctive viewpoints can still be detected. Although their work is lost and Josephus names no sources here, they were most likely historians known from Tacitus who had some connection with the events: the ex-consul Cluvius Rufus and Fabius Rusticus, a Spanish friend of Seneca. W. does not deny that Josephus occasionally inserted his own comments (see table in 1991: xiii) and also added brief glosses to his sources. The Judaeen priest thus manages to connect the story vaguely with his own theme of divine providence.

But aside from these interventions Josephus was happy to exploit their work, W. argues: 'Fortunately for us, Josephus stuck pretty closely to his sources (even traces of their Latin may sometimes be detected ...)'. His willingness to leave his sources unmolested means that: 'What Josephus has preserved for us is an authentic contemporary Roman view, a generation earlier than Tacitus, of the events that brought about the change' from Rome as Senate and People (SPQR) to Senate, People, and Soldiers (1991: xiv). Moreover, these excellent sources support W.'s picture of Gaius' truly outrageous behaviour, which emerges in the commentary, against scholarly efforts to soften the hated image of the hated emperor.

The degree of Josephus' alleged dependence on his Latin sources, the cornerstone of W.'s argument, becomes clear in the commentary. A rare line that W. ascribes to Josephus himself (19.16) thus refers to 'God', whereas another (19.72) mentions 'the gods' and so 'must come from J.'s source'. (But the later passage reflects the conspirators' perspective, not the narrator's voice.) In 19.17–21 Josephus introduces three antagonists with individual motives for wanting Gaius dead. W. finds the reference to the first man's origin in Cor-

⁷ Thanks mainly to T. Rajak, *Josephus: The Historian and his Society* (London, 1983), which W. had wisely taken as one of his two guides to Josephus research, along with P. Bilde, *Flavius Josephus between Jerusalem and Rome: His Life, his Works and their Importance* (Sheffield, 1988).

doba a clue that the Spaniard Fabius is the source here. (But why would Josephus himself *not* mention this man's distinguishing foreign origin?) After the three-way plot is described, Josephus narrows his focus to Chaerea, and so W. infers that 'J. evidently changes his source' (1991: 49). The obviousness of this may be missed by readers familiar with Josephus' fondness for threes, for exploring psychological motives, and for focusing on one of the three.⁸

After relating that Chaerea's sword did not kill Gaius on the first blow, Josephus appears to deploy his authoritative knowledge of combat psychology to dispute others, who claim (*καίτοι γέ φασίν τινες*) that Chaerea deliberately prolonged Gaius' suffering. Josephus knows better from his experience in warfare: that fear of failure and death would have forced the killers to work quickly (19.106). In W.'s view, however, this reflection is 'arguably the most ill-timed digression in the history of narrative'. It must be Josephus' interruption of his narrative source, and moreover, his dispute must be with that source (1991: 63–4). We should imagine him reading and copying his source, then abruptly stopping: 'Hang on a minute! I don't agree with that', and inserting his own view.

This reviewer finds nothing unusual in Josephus' interruption of his own narrative, in the service of psychological-motivational exploration. Indeed, it seems to me odd that Josephus would use such vague plural language (*φασίν τινες*) to target a particular author.⁹ I do not see how we can get behind the more obvious impression that Josephus is telling his own story and, having related that Chaerea's first blow did not kill Gaius, pauses to wield his own big sword of combat knowledge against sophistic pen-pushers who write about what they do not know. His posture of unique, hard-won expertise trumping the claims of all rivals defines his whole corpus (from *Bj* 1.1–12 via *Aj* 20.262–5 to *Ap.* 1.37–51). The language here resembles his adjudication of different views later in the passage (19.195–8) and his disparagement of writers on Nero in the following volume (*Aj* 20.154–5).

At 19.167, Josephus has (the consul) Cn. Sentius Saturninus begin his great speech 'Although it is incredible, O Romans ...'. W. comments: 'one would expect "senators", but evidently J.'s source did not make Sentius say *patres conscripti*'. Again, why should we look to J.'s source, when J. himself has the habit of introducing speeches (more than a hundred times) with the Homeric-oratorical 'O + vocative'? He does this most often with titles or individual names,¹⁰

⁸ E.g., *Bj* 2.119; 5.2, 21; 6.169–71; *Aj* 13.171–3.

⁹ Contrast *Aj* 14.9; 16.183–4; *V* 336–67; *Apion passim*. This phrasing looks more like the 'many' of the *Bj* prologue (1.1–8), where Josephus takes on a group of writers about the recent war, or his mentioned remarks on Nero's historians.

¹⁰ Cf. Agrippa's ὦ βουλῆ to the Senate in 19.242, part of the Gaius story, but unremarked by W., in a section he attributes to a source on 'the Jewish King Agrippa' (1991: xii).

it is true, but also has ‘O Taricheans’ (*Bf* 2.606), ‘O Hebrews’ (*Af* 3.84), Galileans, citizens, and Tiberians (*Vit.* 258, 278, 302). By contrast, when we see *patres conscripti* in surviving literature it is not normally preceded by Latin ‘O’.¹¹ And why should Josephus not have Sentius address his audience as *Romans*, when the issue is Roman identity, governance, history, and freedom, and he calls upon the Senate to act in the interest of the *δῆμος* (19.189, 194)? The speech certainly looks to be at home in Josephus’ crafted production.

At 19.242 Josephus mentions a senatorial notion that it might be possible to raise an army quickly by freeing and arming slaves. W. immediately asks about J.’s *source*’s inspiration for conjuring such a radical move, and suggests the Roman civil war of 69. But Josephus himself claimed that, in the recent Judaeon War, Simon bar Giora instantly created an armed force by freeing slaves (*Bf* 4.508–9). If he was familiar with the idea, why could he not have given the Senate this thought?

Finally, W. sees in Josephus’ obituary for Gaius (19.202–11) only ‘J.’s source’, which goes easier on the emperor here than elsewhere. But obituaries are characteristic of the *Antiquities*, and they tend to be surprisingly balanced against the preceding narrative, as this one is. Even when the deceased has flagrantly violated divine law or made a complete hash of things, Josephus looks for redeeming qualities in the final assessment.¹²

These examples return us to W.’s main proposition, that ‘Josephus stuck pretty closely to his sources’. It seems surprising that the author of *Clio’s Cosmetics*, which took what some reviewers considered an extreme position on authorial creativity, should seem so uninterested in Josephus as an author. How does the long Gaius episode serve *his* narrative interests, and how did he rewrite it? Why did he bother including it? Was it simply on a to-do list, after which he would leave it to collect dust? Did the story have no meaning for him? If not, why would he include it in his greatest work, which he claims to have been pressed into writing (*Af* 1.8–9)? Did he have no real audience in Rome? What were such hearers/readers supposed to make of a mainly irrelevant digression? In fairness to W., these questions were rarely asked in 1990, even among Josephus specialists. They were being asked, however, by the time of the second edition under review here.

We must leave aside, after flagging it, the intriguing question whether Josephus could have known Latin well enough to be studying Latin histories and using them as sources. Until a few decades ago his knowledge even of Greek, the *lingua franca* of the East, was sufficiently doubted that his work was credited

¹¹ The phrase is most frequent in the speeches of Cicero to the Senate, where it often comes after a lengthy clause or two, and ‘O’ would be rather shocking.

¹² E.g., *Af* 1.256, 346; 2.198–204; 4.327–31; 5.117–18, 253, 317; 6.292–4, 344–50 with 166, 378; 7.37–8, 390–1; 8.211; 13.318–19, 380–3, 430–2.

to literary assistants.¹³ That he was fully conversant *also* with Latin literature, an ability he does not suggest (contrast *AJ* 20.262–5 for Greek), is possible but not common knowledge.

Lacking the Latin sources for comparison, how could we know whether Josephus followed them closely? One tool we might use is comparison between this section and Josephus' corpus as a whole, or its larger sections. If we find in the Gaius narrative elements of diction, style, and theme that are distinctive or characteristic of *Antiquities*, this section of it, or Josephus in general, then it would seem that Josephus was equally responsible for the whole work. The only place where I noticed W. showing any interest in Josephus' characteristic language was his comment at 19.108: that a line about everyone being free to make up their own mind—one of the rare comments that W. credits to Josephus—is 'a favourite formula' of the Judaeian author. That is true, but it is not clear that W. has searched for similar branding marks elsewhere in *AJ* 19.

Two ancillary questions arise. First, granted that Josephus must have used written sources and familiar traditions for matters outside his direct experience, and no one denies that, did he normally follow them in a manner that amounts to preserving the sources for us? The clearest comparison case is his eleven-volume biblical paraphrase (*AJ* 1–11). But there we find him thoroughly rearranging, rewriting, cutting, and supplementing his material in the interest of his artistic creation.¹⁴

Second, in a review of W.'s first edition Anthony Barrett notes the 'awkward Greek' of Josephus in this part of his work and praises W.'s free translation: 'a good decision, since Josephus' anacoloutha and corruptions made a literal rendering almost unreadable'.¹⁵ But then we might wonder (a) why close reproduction of Latin sources should have generated such a mess, and (b) whether Barrett's description would not hold for *AJ* 17–19 altogether, which Thackeray credited to a 'Thucydidean hack'. Although no one today supports Thackeray's notion of a cadre of (sub-par) literary assistants with differing proclivities, he rightly observed that *AJ* 17–19 has a distinctively Thucydidean style, which mostly vanishes as *AJ* 20 relaxes into the plain constructions of the following autobiography.

If we add to these considerations W.'s alert observations on Thucydideanisms in the Gaius passage, as well as the moving reference to the Melian dialogue at the conclusion of W.'s Introduction (1991: xiv)—a passage of

¹³ Thackeray (1967) 100–24.

¹⁴ See L. H. Feldman, *Josephus's Interpretation of the Bible* (Berkeley, 1998); id., *Studies in Josephus's Rewritten Bible* (Leiden, 1998).

¹⁵ A. A. Barrett, 'Review of T. P. Wiseman, *Death of an Emperor*', *CR* n.s. 42 (1992): 435.

known interest to Josephus¹⁶—we must wonder whether the Gaius narrative of *AJ* 19 is not just as much Josephus' creation (in its final form, notwithstanding his undoubted consultation of sources), as the rest of the *Antiquities* is. If it is, would that not complicate the project of recovering Roman sources with their diverse perspectives?

We may be more specific. Let us begin with a simple case of diction. Although the aristocrat Josephus writes frequently of nobles, first, or leading men,¹⁷ he uses *εὐπατρίδης* only eight times in the corpus. Two of these are in the Claudian succession story of *BJ* (2.212–13), the other six all in *AJ* 17–19. W. comments only on the occurrence at 19.132, where he renders the plural 'aristocrats' and explains (emphasis mine):

J.'s word *eupatridai* normally means 'patricians', but here (and at 136 and *Bell. II* 212) it probably translates a more general word or phrase *in his source* ... The description of the pathology of tyranny in 132–7 [also from the source] is reminiscent of Tacitus ...

W.'s commentary occasionally mentions the corresponding passage on Claudius' accession in Josephus' *BJ* 2.204–14, but mainly for the sake of contrast. He attributes it to a Jewish source focused on Agrippa (1991: 93, 95) and so finds it basically different from the *AJ* account, which follows Roman sources. I see many overlaps between the two in content, political interest, and also tone. For example, at 19.251 Josephus names senators who saw themselves worthy of bidding for supreme rule, and W. comments: 'Perhaps J.'s source, like Tacitus later, was conscious of the *capax imperii* theme'. But the *BJ* parallel already sounds 'Tacitean' in my view: first, when it portrays Claudius as determined to move forward *because* merely being called to *imperium* has put him in mortal hazard (*BJ* 2.207; cf. Tac. *Hist.* 2.76); second, when it has the Senate reject 'voluntary slavery' under a new *princeps* (*BJ* 2.209); and third, when King Agrippa admonishes Claudius to keep the Senate alive because only their existence will give meaning to his supremacy (i.e., he needs an elite to dominate)—for he would not want to be king of a desert (*BJ* 2.213; cf., Tac. *Agr.* 30).

However that may be, we have enough information in the mere distribution of *εὐπατρίδης* to wonder about W.'s source-based scheme. What a fluke it would be if the only occurrences of the word in *BJ* concerned the very same incident as in *AJ* 19 (if Josephus relied on independent sources), and if all six occurrences in *AJ* happened to fall in the linguistically distinctive section *AJ* 17–19. The first occurrence of *εὐπατρίδης* in this section (17.307) has nothing to

¹⁶ *BJ* 2.346, 355–8, 365; 5.367. Cf. G. Mader, *Josephus and the Politics of Historiography: Apologetic and Impression Management in the Bellum Judaicum* (Leiden, 2000) 23–54.

¹⁷ οἱ πρῶτοι, γνώριμοι, δυνατοί, etc.

do with Rome. It concerns King Herod (ruled 37–4 BC), whom *AJ* characterises as a tyrant. Josephus says of him: ‘And as for the nobility, he would kill them for ridiculous reasons and confiscate their property for himself (τῶν τε εὐπατριδῶν ὁπότε κτείνειεν αὐτοὺς ἐπ’ ἀλόγοις αἰτίαις τὰς οὐσίας ἀποφερόμενον).’ Is there not a clear thematic link between this and the next occurrence of εὐπατρίδης, concerning Tiberius—but still not part of the Gaius story (18.226)?

For this one man inflicted enormous terrors on the Roman nobles, as he was always quick to anger (πλεῖστα γὰρ ἀνὴρ εἰς οὗτος Ῥωμαίων τοὺς εὐπατρίδας εἰργάσατο δεινὰ δυσόργητος ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ὧν) and unstoppable once he had begun to act, even if his reason for conceiving a hatred of someone made no sense ...

When the narrative reaches Gaius and says of him (19.2),

he regarded it [Rome] with no more honour than other cities but harassed the citizens, particularly the Senate and as many of them as were nobles or honoured for their distinguished parentage (μάλιστα τὴν σύγκλητον καὶ ὅποσοι τούτων εὐπατρίδαι καὶ προγόνων ἐπιφανείαις τιμώμενοι),

it feels like the same narrative, of tyrants abusing the well born. It is hard to see why we should attribute only the occurrences in *AJ* 19.1–273 to a Roman source and not to Josephus. His shift in nuance when using this word, from nobles or patricians to the Senate, matches his practice everywhere, as the commentary volumes would show. However we imagine his sources, we must reckon with the observable fact that he seizes on this word to help describe the behaviour of tyrants from quite different places and times, in *AJ* 17–19.

The great speech by Sentius (19.167–84) gives rise to similar questions. It seems all but certain that, whatever his source material may have been, Josephus became the consul’s retrospective speechwriter. Readers who do not work regularly with Josephus should understand that he uses speeches often. The half-dozen great specimens in his *War*, from that of Agrippa II surveying an empire allegedly at peace (*BJ* 2) to Eleazar’s philosophical monologue recommending self-immolation on the rock of Masada (*BJ* 7), have attracted much analysis. But *Antiquities* also thrives on set speeches. Many of these have to do with the grand themes of politics, as does this one by Sentius.

Two examples from *AJ* 4, which lays out the Mosaic legislation that justifies and undergirds the work, suffice to make the point. In both cases, Josephus exploits the Thucydidean-Sallustian technique of duelling speeches to allow the audience room for critical engagement. So effective are the B-side orations

that a modern western reader might prefer their reasoning, at least provisionally, to that proffered by Josephus and his Moses in *argumenta ad* (divine) *auctoritatem* or even *ad baculum*.

In the first case (*AJ* 4.11–66), Josephus describes a *stasis* unprecedented in Greek or barbarian history, which arose because one Korah, who was ‘among the most distinguished by ancestry and wealth, an able speaker and very persuasive with the crowds’ (4.14), accused Moses of acting the *tyrant* by appointing his older brother Aaron high priest, rather than following the laws and making a case before the populace (4.15–16). In the second example (4.126–58), Moses is again accused of tyranny (4.146, 149), this time for demanding that Israelites divorce their foreign wives in fidelity to his new laws from God. The tribal chief Zimri gives a fine speech, before he and his wife are murdered by a Moses-zealot, to the effect that the tyrant Moses wants to enslave us and rob us of the self-determination that belongs to every free man (4.146). One ought to investigate the truth from many sources, he insists, and not live as though under tyranny (4.149). Who could disagree?

Josephus thus demonstrates his fluency in the political themes of Graeco-Roman culture, and with considerable skill. The powerful speeches of Korah and Zimri, which he also writes for them, are wrong, it turns out, because these men are demagogues. They seek to advance their interests by flattering the mob with plausible-sounding arguments. With most ancient authors, Josephus views the mob as thoroughly tractable, therefore in need of wise and vigilant, public-spirited leadership for its own welfare. Otherwise it remains vulnerable to egoists’ empty promises in the service of their personal glory. Josephus regularly taps the Platonic vein that contrasts play in the world of appearances with a virtuous concern for hard truth. It was thus inevitable that Moses would *seem* tyrannical, being the sole figure to receive the divine law. But that law encapsulates the laws of nature and all human virtue (*AJ* 1.14–26).

Josephus invites the audience to think through the speeches and realise that, in spite of the plausible challenges from the demagogues, Moses was of course no tyrant. On the contrary, he planned for *aristokratia*—the curation of his laws in perpetuity by the priestly collective descended from Aaron—as the only acceptable *politeia* (*AJ* 4.186–7, 223):

The high priest Eleazar, Joshua, the Senate, and the heads of the tribes will propose to you the best counsels, by following which you will continue to find happiness (*αἷς ἐπόμενοι τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν ἔχετε*) ... [if you] do not take ‘freedom’ to mean constant antagonism to what those governing you reckon it best to do (*τὴν τ’ ἐλευθερίαν ἠγείσθε μὴ τὸ προσαγανακτεῖν* ...) ... Aristocracy, and the life associated with it, is simply the best. So do not let the longing for any other constitution snare you (*Ἀριστοκρατία μὲν οὖν κράτιστον καὶ ὁ κατ’ αὐτὴν βίος, καὶ μὴ λάβη*

πόθος ὑμᾶς ἄλλης πολιτείας), but learn to love it, and having the laws for your master, so that you do each and every thing in accord with them, for God is enough of a governor.

Josephus' Moses is as opposed to human monarchy, which inevitably degrades to tyranny,¹⁸ as he is to the mob-rule disingenuously championed by demagogues (*AJ* 1.114; 5.338–9; 6.33–44, 83–5, 262–8).

When we return to *AJ* 19 and Sentius' great speech on Roman freedom and the virtues of aristocracy over tyranny, then, there is every reason to think that Josephus also composed these words for a Roman consul, which suit the occasion but are redolent of his larger themes (19.178):

Since, then, we have gotten clear of such great evils and made ourselves [senators] accountable only to one another—which of all constitutions establishes most securely both present good will and future freedom from plots (αἴπερ πολιτειῶν ἐχεγγυώταται πρὸς τε τὸ παρὸν εὖνουν καὶ τὸ αὐθις ἀνεπιβούλευτον), and in addition to putting the *polis* straight will conduce to our fame—it is right for you individually to make provision for the public benefit as your own (προνοῆσαι διὰ τὸ εἰς κοινὸν αὐτοῦ τὴν ὠφέλειαν ἀπαντᾶν), and freely dissent in your judgement.

Recognising Josephus' profound interest in the subject matter of the Gaius episode opens the possibility that it plays an important role in *AJ*, and books 17–19 in particular. It illustrates, as he elaborately states, the dire consequences of departure from divine law, using the case of Judaea's most notorious enemy, who obscenely demanded treatment as a god and nearly destroyed the *ethnos* (19.4–11, 15–16). The long account of the tyrant-king Herod (*AJ* 14–17) was, after all, motivated by a similar concern with God's handling of tyrants (*AJ* 16.395–404; 17.148, 168–81, 191–2), though Herod never exalted himself as outrageously as Gaius.

Josephus makes his authorial interest clear by introducing the Gaius episode twice, first proleptically, explaining that such detail is warranted by the need to show God's power to punish a man who had caused the world such misery by exalting himself to divine status (*AJ* 18.306–7; 19.1–16).

An abundance of verbal detail confirms Josephus' authorship of the consular speech. Consider as a reference point one of *AJ*'s many editorial reflections, in the early volumes, on the consequences of abandoning Moses' aristocratic constitution (5.179): 'For, once they were redirected from the order of

¹⁸ Cf. Hdt. 3.80.2–5; Plato *Resp.* 8.565–9; Arist. *Pol.* 3.5.4 (1279b); 4.8 (1295a); Plb. 6.4.8; D. Hal. *AR* 7.55.3.

the constitution (τοῦ κόσμου τῆς πολιτείας), they moved toward living in accordance with pleasure and their own will (πρὸς τὸ καθ' ἡδονὴν καὶ βούλησιν ἰδίαν βιοῦν).¹⁹ Back in *AJ* 19, Sentius bewails Rome's loss of freedom, to tyrants, and the wisdom of the nation's laws:

From the moment when Julius Caesar set his mind on the dissolution of the democracy and put the constitution in turmoil by having violated the order of the laws (διαβιασάμενος τὸν κόσμον τῶν νόμων), placing himself above justice while descending to his own private pleasure (ἥσσων δὲ τοῦ κατ' ἰδίαν ἡδονὴν αὐτῷ κομιοῦντος), there is no sort of misery that has not occupied the *polis*.

Verbal resonances are clear. Indeed the whole speech is dense with *Antiquities'* programmatic constitutional language¹⁹ and characteristic diction,²⁰ salted with the particular linguistic tics of *AJ* 17–19.

Examples of the latter include the articular neuter substantive τὸ ἐλεύθερον, all nine occurrences in Josephus falling in *AJ* 17–19—supporting the Thucydidean aesthetic. Josephus uses this construction as the theme of Sentius' speech, where it occurs four times (19.167, 171, 172, 177), though W. credits that speech to Cluvius. But the other appearances of this phrase are in passages concerning Judaeian affairs (17.28; 18.23) and in a section attributed by W. to the second Roman source (19.248).

It is much the same with τὸ μεγαλόφρον ('liberality'), which accompanies τὸ ἐλεύθερον in 19.172. This articular neuter shows up six times in *AJ*, four in 17–19, but at 18.5, 255 in connection with Judaeian affairs and not from a Roman source. It is clearly a function of Josephus' style in these volumes. Similarly, two thirds (fifteen) of the twenty-three occurrences of τυραννίς (tyranny) in *AJ* are in books 17–19. As W. observes, most of these (twelve) are in the Gaius narrative (six in Sentius' speech, I would add). But the other three in *AJ* 17–19 (i.e., 17.237, 304, 342) concern Herod and his tyrannical son Archelaus. Those examples continue a thread from 14.165 and 15.321, which established the Herodians as arch-tyrants, and link up with the larger theme of tyranny as inimical to the Mosaic (and divine, natural) constitution in the work (from *AJ* 1.114; 4.149; 5.234).

¹⁹ *πολιτεία* occurs three times in the speech, sixty times in the work (programmatically 1.5, 10, 121; 3.84, 213, 322; 4.45, 184, 191–8, 223).

²⁰ E.g., *εὐδαιμονία* (with cognates 151 times in *AJ*, programmatically in 1.14, 20), *ἐλευθερία* (with cognates 218 times in *AJ*), *ἀρετή* (290 times in *AJ*). *πρόνοια* and cognates (human or divine provision, forethought) appear 192 times in *AJ*, creating a programmatic theme (e.g., 1.46, 53; 10.260, 278, 280), six of these in the Gaius episode (material ascribed by W. to Josephus, Cluvius, and Fabius), and one at a crucial point in the speech of Sentius (19.178).

Nearly half (nineteen) of the forty-five occurrences of ὁμιλέω (converse) in Josephus occur in *AJ* 17–19, but only two in the consular speech and six in the Gaius narrative. The articular infinitive τὸ ὁμιλεῖν appears only in *AJ*, twice in 17–19 (also 5.191). But the other occurrence (18.207) has no connection with Roman sources. Again, the rare Thucydidean τὸ ἀνεπιβούλευτόν (‘free from plotting/attack’, Thuc. 2.37.2) occurs three times in Josephus, all in *AJ* 19: once in the speech (19.178), once in remarks from Chaerea (19.43), and once in the narrator’s voice (19.150). Although all three are in material that W. ascribes to Cluvius, to be sure, it is easier to imagine the author of *AJ* 17–19 composing this, in keeping with the ethos of the whole section, than to suppose that a Latin source prompted the Thucydideanisms just here.

The Thucydidean adjective ἐχέγγυος (‘furnishing security’, Thuc. 3.46.1) is attested only seven or eight times before Josephus, who has it four times, all in *AJ* 17–20. Two of these are in Josephus’ own undisputed narrative voice, describing Judaeian affairs (17.249; 20.255), and one in the narrator’s voice of the Gaius episode (19.144). The remaining example we noted above, at the climactic moment of Sentius’ speech (19.178). It causes the least mental strain to imagine that Josephus composed the Gaius episode, including the speech for the consul, as an embedded part of *AJ* 17–19—using some kind of sources, no doubt, but reworking everything in his style to convey his themes. These are only some examples. The speech also includes the recherché verb ἀνταποφαίνω, which is found twice in Thucydides (3.38.2, 67.3) but not again before this occurrence in Josephus, suggesting again a Thucydidean motive throughout *AJ* 17–19 rather than the copying of Latin sources.

We have moved from conception and theme to specific diction. Let us return to the larger issues with the observation that Sentius characterises all Roman rulers from Julius Caesar to Gaius as *tyrants* who overthrow the laws (19.173–7), and praises Chaerea for completing the work of Brutus and Cassius (19.184). This agrees not only with the narrator’s voice of this passage, at 19.187 (‘before the *polis* had been subjected to tyrants’, a century ago, the consuls had commanded the military), but also in what should be unrelated on W.’s analysis: *AJ* 18.169. There the narrator speaks of Tiberius as a procrastinator, ‘if ever another of the kings or tyrants had been’. Given that emphatic rejection of monarchy-cum-tyranny is fundamental to Josephus’ *magnum opus* (e.g., *AJ* 6.33–44, 83–5, 262–8), and that the tyranny theme had already been central to his *Judaean War*,²¹ it would be peculiar to deny him authorship of the whole thing, including these passages, which seem precisely on point.

²¹ The proem of *BJ* blames τύραννοι, who turn out to be John of Gischala and Simon bar Giora especially, for fomenting the στάσις οἰκεία that resulted in Jerusalem’s fall (1.10–11, 24–8; 2.275–6, 442; 4.158, 166, 208, 401; 5.5, 11; 7.261). Both men pursued personal power at all costs, in opposition to Jerusalem’s aristocracy (whom they murder), misleading the populace with absurd promises of radical freedom.

I have provided some detail to avoid the appearance of peremptory dismissal or mere methodological bias. W.'s thesis—that we can still identify in Josephus, buried only in the Antigonean way with a bit of dust, two Roman sources close to the events of Gaius' death—does not seem to explain the textual evidence. There is no reason to doubt, I stress, that Josephus used written sources and stories he had heard for both his briefer account in *Bj* 2.204–14 and the grandly introduced *Aj* 19.1–273. But the prospect that he used those sources in such a respectful way that we can recover them bodily seems as promising as the hope of reconstituting eggs from a cake. Josephus has blended his material, stirring in generous dollops of his own political insight, literary aspirations, and language, before baking.

The differences between *Bj* 2's version of Claudius' accession, which W. does not consider in any detail, and the version in *Aj* are no greater than those affecting all the material from *Bj* 1–2 that is retold in the much longer *Aj* 12–20 plus *Vita*. Josephus' reworking of his own life story from *Bj* 2 to the *Vita* is the most spectacular example, and there the changes cannot be traced to sources. Even within the same narrative, throughout the whole corpus Josephus proves himself capable of changing zoom, focus, and perspective, as well as style and diction, interrupting himself, leaving countless loose threads, and blatantly contradicting himself. How much 'worse' he is in these respects than other historians is not a matter for calibration. But in any case, his shortcomings and surprises cannot be explained, as classes, by his sources.

If Josephus' Roman sources for *Aj* 19.1–273 must rejoin the shades (though Cluvius Rufus is a good candidate along with Fabius Rusticus), perhaps we gain something more valuable in the long run. If Josephus combined oral tales and written sources to craft this story, in the way he wrote his other material, we have a knowledgeable and capable author, with an outsider's critical perspective, somewhat earlier than Tacitus. He was active in Rome throughout the Flavian period, had access to the 'best' people and sources, and wrote thirty volumes that have survived intact. Perhaps that would not be such a bad outcome?

On that scenario, W.'s study of Josephus' *Aj* 19 would retain nearly all of its value, minus confidence about sources: in the substance of the translation and commentary. The former still offers a lively reading that draws the reader in, while the latter provides illuminating links to Josephus' Roman environment. Perhaps it would not be so damaging, historically, if this rich and fascinating material were part and parcel of a Judaeon author's composition. That line of thought might invite further reflection on the level of socio-cultural integration of Judaeon (and other foreign) elites in Rome, and on this prolific author's Roman context in particular.

Everything I have said until now applies to the 1991 edition of W.'s study. That emphasis is justified because the current edition basically reproduces the

first, but also because this foundation will help us isolate the changes in the 2013 book and ponder their significance. That is our remaining task.

Adjustments to the Introduction are subtle. They begin with W.'s opening words, where the end of the Republic 'may be said to have ended' in 49, qualifying his earlier language: 'The Roman Republic ended...' Since W. has changed so little, the compelling reason for this alteration may be consistency with his 1991 commentary note at *AJ* 19.187, which suggests Caesar's first consulship in 59 as a plausible end of the Republic (so Cicero), in explanation of Josephus' remark that in AD 41 the Republic had been lost for a century.

Otherwise, apart from cosmetic changes in the Introduction (notation style or accommodating the moved chart), W. changes the date of Josephus' *Bellum* from 'some time between 75 and 79' (citing P. Bilde) to 'completed about 81' (replacing Bilde with C. P. Jones), and the date of *Antiquities* from 'AD 94' to 'AD 93/94'. The latter adjustment better suits the evidence, but W. would have been safer leaving the original date for *Bellum*. Josephus is clear, after all, that he presented the finished work to Vespasian and Titus (*Vit.* 359–62; *Ap.* 1.50), and *BJ*'s proem assumes that both men are alive (*BJ* 1.3, 7–8), though of course Vespasian died in 79. Reasons for dating the work to 81, because of the prominence of Titus for example, are rather more subjective.

The absence of much change in the Introduction is the most surprising feature of the new edition, because the interval between 1991 and 2013 was a time in which 'Josephus studies' came to life as an active subdiscipline. The beginning of the compositional study of Josephus' works cannot be precisely dated. There were green shoots at the beginning of the twentieth century and in the 1950s. But the gradual appearance of the Josephus *Concordance* (Brill) from 1973 to 1983 and a couple of far-sighted studies that used it in the 1970s began the reorientation to his text. New ways of appraising Josephus as an author were also made possible by studies of Hellenistic-Roman Judaea, culminating in Rajak's 1983 monograph on Josephus and his society, which demolished old assumptions about his (and Judaea's) cultural isolation. Per Bilde's 1988 monograph, *Flavius Josephus between Jerusalem and Rome*, was a watershed. This was an original effort to identify the structures, purposes, audiences, and themes of each work. The new interest in Josephus as an author really took off with a 1992 conference in the Tuscan hills, funded by a bequest of Columbia University's Professor Morton Smith. Virtually all scholars known to be working on Josephus at the time, at all ranks and from around the globe, were invited for what was nevertheless a small conference.²²

Although not all of the attendees favoured compositional study of Josephus, the role of that event as a trigger is clear from what followed: unprecedented annual Josephus conferences, which resulted in numerous collected-

²² The proceedings became F. Parente and J. Sievers, edd., *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period: Essays in Memory of Morton Smith* (Leiden, 1994).

essay volumes; the opening of the taps in Ph.D. research and a flood of dissertations on ‘Josephus and X’, which gradually became shelves of new monographs; the beginning of a commentary to all of Josephus’ works, from an international team (with Brill, 2000–). These studies, which were scarcely conceivable before the compositional turn represented by Bilde 1988, shared the concern to understand every topic raised by Josephus first as part of his narrative—not looking immediately to external referents as in the old days.

One might have imagined that W. would find this new direction in the study of Josephus congenial. Granted that he could not be expected to read much from the gushing stream (who can keep up?), he might have consulted available volumes in the commentary series *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary* (Brill, 2000–). Of the volumes available before about 2010, the overview essay in the first *Antiquities* volume (2000) and the *Life of Josephus* (2001) might have provided useful context, while the commentary to the parallel story of Claudius’ accession in *Judean War 2* (2008) might have challenged W.’s impressions of that episode.

As for W.’s translation in the new edition, it is still superb. He has managed to produce, from Josephus’ often awkward prose, a readable and flowing text, which nevertheless pays careful attention to word choice. Not much has changed here. W. rewrites 19.103 and a few words following, which describe Gaius’ final movements, before being struck by Chaerea. A change at 19.117 is likewise topographical, describing Chaerea’s movements after the deed, though without noticeably changing the sense. As in these passages, at 19.195 and 214 W. replaces ‘palace’ for βασιλειον with (imperial) ‘residence’—to avoid creating the image of a purpose-built palace, as he explains in the notes. Curiously, he keeps ‘one of the palace guard’ at 19.217 for τῶν περὶ τὸ βασιλείον τις στρατιωτῶν. This change raises a difficult and unexplored methodological question, concerning the roles of historical referents in translation. If Josephus uses βασιλειον 163 times, and otherwise it would be understood to mean ‘palace’ or ‘king’s property’, does it matter—for the meaning Josephus’ audiences could understand—what historical reality underlies the story? A change at 19.212 seems to be for the sake of precision: ‘a Caesar’s death’ rather than the emperor’s, for τῆς Καίσαρος τελευτῆς.

The commentary is more obviously updated. Some notes are significantly expanded to include recent research, for example to ‘Pompedius’ at 19.32, to 19.64–9, and to ‘King Agrippa’ at 19.236. I noted above that W.’s reading in Josephus-related research after 1991 seems largely confined to studies of the sources for *AJ* 19. That new research finds mention here.

A rare entirely new note, on ‘to kill a tyrant’ at 19.63, illustrates my critique above. W. stresses the importance of the tyrant theme in the *Gaius passage*, counting occurrences here (only) and tracing the interest to ‘J.’s main source’. He misses the point that the *AJ* thematises tyranny (fifty-two occurrences of the

word group), as the greatest constitutional calamity, and uses Gaius as crowning example.

Two expanded notes at 19.75 clarify the topography of the Palatine imperial zone in anticipation of the revised appendix, also explaining the translation change from palace to residence in the translation. Similar changes related to Palatine topography occur in the notes at 19.90, 103–4, 117, 266.

Some readers may find the modest price of the book justified alone by the wholly rewritten Appendix I, on the Augustan Palatine. In a concise and readable way, W. walks through the early imperial development of the site in light of recent archaeology, locating the original houses of Augustus and Tiberius to recreate the scene at the time of Gaius. This may not be indispensable for the foregoing study, but it is a welcome bonus in the new edition.

W.'s *Death of an Emperor* in 1991 was a valuable contribution from a leading classicist willing to venture into a new area and bring to life a neglected, somewhat obscure passage in Josephus. With undiminished respect for that achievement, I have suggested that W. may have missed an opportunity to rethink the place of the Gaius narrative in relation to the structures, themes, rhetoric, and intended audiences of the larger script to which it belongs, in Josephus' *magnum opus*. Nevertheless, W.'s book remains as valuable as it always was. Students of ancient history in all subdisciplines should be pleased that it is available again, and with a particularly useful update in the new appendix.

University of Groningen

STEVE MASON
s.mason@rug.nl